The Sosland Journal

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Preface & Acknowledgements

Those who teach composition know what a balancing act it is between teaching technical skills and writing process while still honoring and encouraging each student's creativity. As I was preparing this year's edition of *The Sosland Journal*, I was struck by the excellence of the entries that we received and the diversity of topics covered in the essays. One of the keys to success as a writer is engagement with the material, and I think our students' active and enthusiastic engagement is evident in this year's selections.

I would like to extend my gratitude to our instructors, who do such excellent work teaching and inspiring our students. Also, many thanks go out to the readers, Scott Ditzler, Miun Gleeson, and Craig Workman, who generously agreed to read the full pool of essays. Special thanks also go to the judges, Crystal Gorham Doss, Thomas Ferrel, and Barbara Varanka who were tasked with determining the winners at each level and deciding

which essays would be published. Finally, I would like to extend a huge thank you to our benefactors. *The Sosland Journal* could not be published without the generous philanthropic work of Rheta Sosland-Hurwitt and the Sosland family. It is our hope that *The Sosland Journal* reflects the Sosland family's commitment to excellence in education.

Thank you!

Kristin Huston, Editor *The Sosland Journal*

Introductory Level

Introductory Level Winner

Gender Bias and the Media
Austin Hornbostel

The introduction of mass media, in one
form or another, has been a pivotal part of
America's history. The inception of the newspaper
in the 1700s spawned countless advanced media
forms that have shaped modern America and
created new and innovative ways to share
information not only in our country, but across the
globe. Today's society practically orbits around the
draw of social media, the digital music market and
national television. The reach of the media has
been, for a long time, practically infinite. However,
not every effect of the media has been a positive
one. Within a sea of benefits, the media has
morphed into a tool which can be used almost too

effectively in manipulating the general public's

viewpoints in, more often than not, a distorted

way. In fact, the implications of gender bias in the

media in the late 20th century and early 21st

century are immensely prevalent in a variety of

sources. These consist of the inclusion of regularly-

broadcasted advertisements targeted at either

gender, the hypermasculinity present in multiple

media sources and in the emergent inclusion of

sexuality as a selling point in not only

advertisements but also in other programs.

   Advertisements, namely ones targeted

specifically at men or women, are commonplace in

worldwide media. However, these ads seem far

more plentiful in the United States just because of

the sheer number of them that pop up during

every commercial break. If one were to do a bit of

math determining the average amount of time

spent broadcasting commercial spots in an hour of

television across 60 channels, they would find that

roughly 720 of 3600, or one-fifth, of the minutes

broadcasted across all of the channels were

advertisements. Most often, one or more of these

ads will catch the attention of the average male

viewer. Advertising in today's day and age serves

to sell to a certain demographic. In the case of Axe

and Old Spice, men's care product lines, the

demographic they are looking to sell to is easy to

tell by the content they present in their

advertisements. In fact, one such ad urges

gentlemen to "wash their balls" (*Youtube.com*) in

order to attract women. Naturally, the implied

message in this case cannot be attributed to both

men and women, as women know they do not

possess the characteristics needed to use the product. This manner of advertisement slants the demographic to include only one gender role.

However, not all advertisements are aimed directly at men. Most Americans know early on that many ads are targeted not only at men but also at women, though more covertly and without the connotations attributed to male-directed ads. For females, advertisements tend to portray what the ideal woman should look like. Rather, these ads show what women are expected to look like and serve to sell not only a product but a look. Typical women's hair care products promise long, flowing hair and unrivaled shine. More extreme cases, however, illustrate women in their expected *roles*. Advertisements for Bounty paper towels show women as "household product-competent

wives" who are "paranoid about germs" (Chemaly).

The goal of female-targeted ads, therefore,

becomes to seal an idea of an image associated

with the role attributed to that product.

   Psychologically, the general public understands

which ads are directed at which gender by the

simplicity in which advertisements are now

presented. Knowing which ads are directed at men

and women respectively is not difficult for one to

determine. This separation of demographics is

demonstrated even at early ages, where

advertisements showcase children's toys

specifically for young boys or girls. The effect,

therefore, is a change in the child's idea of how

males and females are supposed to act. In an

article by Dr. Monica Brasted, Brasted states that

"children's social learning from television

advertisements result in the advertisements showing the children how they should behave" (Brasted). Children are taught to understand at a young age where they must fall in society in order to be considered "normal", and these perceptions are solidified and instilled in them for the majority of their young lives.

   Mainstream music, in and of itself, has become as effective in enforcing gender stereotypes as advertisements have been. In particular, rap music has been a target of much debate in the interest of ethics. Much of what lies below the surface of rap music is overt hypermasculinity, displayed through the actions portrayed in the language or images used in rap songs and videos. Lil Wayne's popular song, Lollipop, describes the rapper letting a woman "lick (him) like a lollipop" and tells her to

"call me so I can get it juicy for you" (Lil Wayne).

The sex-driven lyrics of the song solidify a sense of

extreme masculinity in how hard Lil Wayne seems

to be trying to prove that the behavior he describes

is what he participates in on a regular basis.

Though rap music is a controversial topic, one

genre of music whose demographic is just as large

is country music. Contrary to popular belief,

country music carries with it connotations that can

be just as bad, if not worse, than some rap songs.

Country music simply does a better job of masking

mature and stereotypical themes under metaphor

and innuendo, rather than the straightforward

method taken by rap artists. In Brad Paisley's song,

I'm Still a Guy, Paisley alludes to sex in a less

straightforward but rather more underlying way.

His lyrics "But when you say a backrub means only

a backrub Then you swat my hand when I try, Well what can I say at the end of the day, honey, I'm still a guy" (Paisley) immediately bring to mind what he was trying to accomplish. Country music, however less explicit it is than rap music, still serves to solidify widely accepted gender stereotypes in the media by its insistence of how men and women should be expected to act.

   Today, music is almost unavoidably explicit in one way or another. More and more, albums are being churned out with the familiar black-and-white Parental Advisory sticker plastered to the front. The amount of explicit content allowed in music as of late would have been nearly inconceivable in the 1950s, when the Rock n' Roll forefathers of modern music pioneered the music industry. Today, popular artists like Childish

Gambino reference sex in what seems like every

line of almost every one of their songs. Gambino's

popular track, Freaks and Geeks, includes lines such

as "fly girl on her knees, she don't wanna come

near me" and "yes your booty big as hers, say that

to my white bitch" (Gambino). A popular lyric from

a 1950s song might include something about doing

the twist or mention hound dogs or the jailhouse

rock, but would have never crossed into the

territory discussed in today's music. Media in the

form of modern music has become almost more

about sex than it has about music.

    Evidently, sexuality is a huge selling point in

America's numerous subcultures. Nationally,

sexuality has become a strong tool in selling

products other than music to consumers. In Fig. 1,

the popular fast food chain, Burger King, illustrates

the taste of their "BK Super Seven Incher" in a Singapore ad with a picture of a woman presumably preparing to eat the sandwich with a tagline stating that "It'll blow your mind away". It is easy to assume exactly what the tagline and picture infer to, since these innuendos run so rampant in the media today. In "Two Ways a Woman Can Get Hurt": Advertising and Violence, author Jean Kilbourne states that "the poses and postures of advertising are often borrowed from pornography" and that "sex in advertising is more about disconnection and distance than connection and closeness" (Kilbourne 417). That much can be interpreted as true when looking at advertisements

that so egregiously abuse sexual content in their presentation.

However, overt sexual content extends beyond just advertisements. Regular programming often includes consistent sexual content. Popular "adult" cartoons like Family Guy and South Park seem to take every opportunity to include a sexual joke of some manner. In an episode of Family Guy, main character Peter Griffin proclaims, on a television program that earlier in October received roughly 6.74 million viewers nationally in just *one* night, that "Sunday is (his) porn night" (Macfarlane). The reach of this show, coupled with its lewd humor, allows the messages portrayed to spread beyond just those 6.74 million households from October. Even if the show is simply using the popularity of such humor to garner public support in views and ratings, the effect of sexualized humor saturates

the country in a state of even further sexualized

societal standards.

The last contributor of an over-sexualized

society is the simple fact that Americans have

accepted sexual content as normal. In lieu of

thinking it is something that should be separated

from popular programming, this content is

encouraged through the viewers' responses to any

humor or sexual situations presented on the air on

a regular basis. A 2005 article published by the Los

Angeles Times states that "70% of shows include

sexual content" and the "number has risen over

the years" (Shiver). Considering that almost every

household in the U.S. has access to a television, the

amount of viewers seeing sexual content regularly

is staggering. The simple fact that this much

explicit content is allowed in public broadcasting is

undoubtedly one of the highest contributors to our

highly-stereotypical society.

   The reach of mass media is insurmountable in

comparison to any other way our country shares

and expresses ideas. In many cases, this sharing of

ideas can contribute to a slanted understanding of

how gender bias and sexual stereotypes penetrate

every inch of popular media forms. In order to

combat the recent upsurge of misguided

viewpoints, the entirety of America would need to

begin to lessen the high concentration of

information which supports biased thinking.

Though the eventual discontinuation of music,

advertisements and television programs that sell

droves of products in a Capitalist economy is

miniscule, the fact that these media sources distort

the very idea of an informed and understanding

population is still immense. For America to

progress, the media that shapes the very mindsets

of millions must drown the negative components in

a sea of positive aspects that can, with time, turn

away from the ever-rising tide of gender bias.

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Expectations vs. Reality: Can an Old Dog Learn New Tricks?

Abigail Newsham

Pavlov discovered the great phenomenon of conditioning when he examined that a dog will learn to salivate to the sound of a bell when repeatedly given food afterwards. Believe it or not, the same theory relates to humans. People are conditioned to categorize others into the many stereotypes that have embedded our minds. The reinforcement of many socializing agents influence the way people view social dynamics, specifically of opposing genders. However, the subtleties between genders are not so black and white.

Great incongruences of children's gender identity create an imbalance of what is thought to

be of nature or of nurture. "A Woman's Place in a Man's Life Cycle", by Carol Gilligan, describes our identification as, more so, a product of nurture. When girls identify themselves as female, they "experience themselves as like their mothers, thus furthering the experience of attachment with the process of identity formation" (Gilligan, 393). Although it is biologically natural for a woman to be considered more of a caretaker than men, these qualities are boldly inherited. Thus, females are more likely to be comfortable with affection and closeness. In contrast, boys define their masculinity by "[separating] their mothers from themselves… separation and individuation are critically tied to gender identity since separation from the mother is essential for the development of masculinity" (Gilligan, 393). Taking these

theories into consideration, it seems that

'separation vs. attachment' is the root of human

sexual identity. But not all concepts can be so black

and white. If males are threatened by intimacy,

how do they coexist with such an opposing

species? Generally speaking, it may be apparent

that the "women's failure to separate then

becomes by definition a failure to develop"

(Gilligan, 393). 'Failure' is a misuse of proper

diction because if women's attachment is

considered flawed, the masculine retraction

complex is also concerning. These differences are

proven to have the capability and potential to be

balanced; otherwise opposing genders have no

way of coexisting naturally.

In 1976, Janet Lever conducted a study of the socialization of elementary school children and how sex comes into play, so to speak. Reporting on Lever's findings, Gilligan explained that "boys enjoyed the legal debates as much as they did the game itself… In contrast, the eruption of disputes among girls tended to end the game… [relating the] continuation of the game to the continuation of relationships" (394). It seems that by default, girls are less likely to dispute and argue about rules as they are to react to conflicts personally. As a result, boys establish the ability to be assertive and rebel against rules in which they don't agree on. Traditionally, young girls were more likely to play passive games "like jump rope and hopscotch (turn-taking games), where competition is indirect since one person's success does not necessarily

signify another's failure" (Gilligan, 395). Since a combination of nature and nurture create sensitivity in women, girls become anxious of competition and assertive behavior. Throughout the majority of well-known history, women have settled into a gentle and compassionate stereotype. Feminine qualities are not seen as strength, but weaknesses. Furthermore, success anxiety in adult women indicate a "heightened perception of the other side' of competitive success, that is, the great emotional costs at which success achieved through competition is often gained" (Sassen, 15). Clearly, women are not used to competing for power and success, especially against men. People argue that it is against feminine nature to even be content with the unceasing social changes that have significantly

empowered females. One might agree that, "the male model is the better one since it fits the requirements for modern corporate success. In contrast, the sensitivity and care for the feelings of others that girls develop through their play have little market value and can even impede professional success… Given the realities of adult life, if a girl does not want to be left dependent on men, she will have to learn to play like a boy" (Gilligan, 394). In a period of great social evolution, women have truly learned to 'play like a boy'. By learning about the game, girls have changed the rules so that the modern male model doesn't always fit the requirements for corporate success. This adaptation may be based on their ability to follow rules closely as well as their tendency to take value in relationships and responsibilities.

Feminine traits that were once seen as weaknesses are proving to hold strength in the capability to change the game.

Today, an average of six out of ten college students are female, a ratio that continues to increase for women. Girls may have changed a few guidelines, but are the men of 2012 less inclined to assert themselves than the boys in 1976? In "As Gender Roles Change, Are Men out of Step?" a hypothesis is stated that "boys think that academic disengagement is a sign of masculinity. The less you can do in school, the less connected you are, the less interested you are, the more manly you are" (Kimmel). Although only a general assumption, masculine disengagement formed by early gender identity parallels men's adult academic withdrawal.

Rather than assertively disputing the system, males are so rebellious as to have forfeited their social, and possibly, economic status. The world has changed rapidly in the past ten years. According to Kimmel, "the economy is shifting to a service economy, a knowledge-based economy, a words-based economy rather than an action-based economy has certainly been to the detriment of that traditional ideology of masculinity." Unfortunately for the male gender, society has shifted its values towards book-smarts and rule-following, skills in which girls are likely to understand more than boys, based on the fundamentals of sex identity. However, author of The Richer Sex, Liza Mundy believe that "masculinity is more flexible than we give it credit for… our ideas of what's masculine change."

Mundy's point is valid because if women are able

to change what's feminine, then so can men. It is

wrong to conclude that manhood consists of power

and strength any more than femininity does

sensitivity and weakness. Easily forgotten, our

perceptions of gender differences are simply

cultural and man-made. In Gender, Nature, and

Nurture, author Richard A. Lippa clarifies,

"differences are differences. How they are viewed

is a matter of values." Lately, society has changed

its ideals in a way that gives women more

economic power than men, but social and

economic standing is not a true factor of human

worth. The perspectives in which men and women

are viewed are not to be ashamed of. Woman have

learned to 'play like a boy' in our competitive

society by following rules and learning how to be

pragmatic. Just as children learn from their

parents, adults can be conditioned by society's

views.

The metaphorical turning of our socially

statistical tables is liberating for not only females,

but males, too. Dean Delahunty, in the article "As

Gender Roles Change, Are Men out of Step?"

explains that today's schools "reward self-control,

communication, verbal and written

communication, and expressiveness… all qualities

that girls are really good at… generally better at

than boys." Rather than focusing on competition,

schools are teaching kids to 'play like a girl', which

isn't easy for young boys. Thus, changes in

educational strategies are making learning

increasingly more difficult for boys. However, just

because the education system is appearing to be newly female-friendly, alterations have opened new doors for men. New Yorker Matt Schneider, who chose to be a stay-at-home dad, agrees that "schools have been geared towards kids who can sit still for long periods of time, who can focus on a subject for long periods of time… But especially for young boys… to sit still for more than 10 minutes isn't a reasonable expectation." Since society has become reliant on book-smarts, the power dynamics between males and females are significantly changing. For the first time in modern history, being a male doesn't automatically assume power. Whether or not the change is negative for gender roles depends on perspective. Liza Mundy sees the glass as half-full, expressing that women's contribution to society is "a good thing for men… It

gives men within marriage more choices. They

don't necessarily have to go into a career they're

not interested in just to be the breadwinner, just to

be the wage earner. They're not going to be judged

simply on their ability to generate a salary". Not

only do these changes mean more opportunities

for women, but men are also finally able to have

the flexibility to make their own happiness. The

number of stay-at-home fathers has doubled since

1994 and for that, people should take pride.

Satisfied, Schneider expresses that "this is a great

time to be a man, because we've opened up the

definition of what a man can be". Now is the time

where both man and woman can choose their own

roles in society rather than rely on stereotypes. If

societal patterns proceed, gender roles will

dissolve and eventually become nearly irrelevant.

By breaking out of the social-mold of gender roles, people are learning to be more accepting, open-minded, and liberated. A person's role in society has progressively become a matter base off of personal preference instead of sexist beliefs. Rather than learning to submit to conventional views, people have learned to establish themselves in a way that is emancipating the both genders. Authority and power is not a measurement of human value thanks to a new kind of conditioning. Expectation shies away with its tail behind its legs, because Reality has proven that an old dog can surely learn new tricks.

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Intermediate Level

Intermediate Level Winner

Tolkien & the Cultivation of his Vision

Nathalie Solger

Fairy tales, folklore, fantasy, and mythology exist in all aspects of culture and history. Whether it is a tale about ghosts or ancient mythical people, ideas of the unknown and the mysterious are things that people are often attracted to and find incredibly fascinating. Fantastical and mythological stories create a world that is completely unique from reality; there is usually magic, different societies of people and creatures, and all sorts of other strange and mesmerizing things that can transport a reader into a whole other time, place, and frame of mind. For modern day fantasy writers, being able to effectively transport readers

to a new world and frame of mind is certainly a goal, as well as being successful with their works. Though for a writer to successfully do this and actively engage a reader is a lot easier said than done; it can not be achieved simply through starting a story with "in a land far, far away," throwing in a few magical creatures here and there and then ending on "and they lived happily ever after." Nor can it be achieved by trying to mimic or take from the same inspirations as successful fantasy writers like J.K. Rowling, the author of the *Harry Potter* books or J.R.R. Tolkien, the author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* books, and the author most arguably known to have set the standard for modern day fantasy writing.

Many modern day fantasy writers, in hopes of gaining some of the success that Tolkien has,

have tried to critically analyze and make parallels to his inspirations, and then copy his inspirations or his style of writing in their own work. However, what writers should really take note of is that Tolkien did not gain success with his works by mimicking the story telling of the epic fantasy writers before his time. In fact "Tolkien was irritated all his life by modern attempts to rewrite or interpret old material, almost all of which he thought led to failures of tone and spirit" (Shippey 343). Certainly Tolkien was influenced and inspired by certain things and authors, but whatever those specific influences were are not the whole story, or even a major part of the story Tolkien wanted to write. Instead of critically analyzing Tolkien's sources of inspiration, it is more important to realize that the success of Tolkien's stories

occurred because Tolkien had a uniquely crafted

vision, influenced both consciously and

subconsciously by his life experiences.

Tolkien had a great influence on modern

fantasy writing, and while there are still writers

trying to mimic exactly what Tolkien did, there are

plenty of others who, still following in Tolkien's

steps, stay true to their own vision. Anyone can

examine and mimic Tolkien's "delicate balance of

having both 'complete knowledge of completed

events' and multiple authorship; focalized

narration and authoritative history…" in their own

works, though this will not necessarily bring about

the same results that Tolkien had (Bowman 288-

289). Those who go in search of these direct

sources and then try to imitate the way in which

Tolkien wrote tend to be unsuccessful because "an

inferior writer simply copies, whereas a good writer

puts a fresh slant on a familiar subject" (Monroe).

This can be seen with J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*

books. J.K. Rowling was familiar with Tolkien's

works as she read *The Lord of the Rings* as a

teenager, and while she may have been consciously

and subconsciously influenced by his works, she

had a vision of her own and put a new spin on

many elements of fantasy, which made her books

very successful (Monroe). This aspect of staying

true to one's own vision was an important part to

the success of Tolkien's novels.

Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the*

Rings are considered to be some of the most

influential pieces on modern fantasy writing today,

"for [they] introduced modern readers to forms of

literature that are unafraid to explore truth as well

as ambiguity, beauty as well as ugliness, good as well as evil, and heroism as well as cowardice" (West 2). His tales were wholly imaginative, and as stated by Peter S. Beagle in the forward of *The Fellowship of the Ring,* part one of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien was "a great enough magician to tap our most common nightmares, daydreams and twilight fancies" (Tolkien 3). Tolkien was an incredibly successful storyteller and he wrote an epic fantasy where he created an entire world and history, blurring the line between fantasy and reality; he created a Secondary World, allowing a reader's mind to enter inside and believe Tolkien's world to be true (Bowman 284). Tolkien's epic mythology was not an easy story to write, but his imagination and knowledge of what he believed made a good narrative guided him through the

process of creating a story that he enjoyed, and much to his surprise that many thousands of people around the world came to enjoy as well.

Though, while Tolkien's works have become very successful, and now "any book featuring elves, dwarves, hobbits, and/or goblins [is] borrowing elements of his works," Tolkien was not the first fantasy writer to come up with characters like hobbits, goblins or dwarves (Fultz). These elements of fantasy have constantly been used and recycled over and over again, even long before Tolkien's time. Tolkien may have borrowed elements of fantasy from works he studied or enjoyed, but that is not what made his novels so successful; Tolkien's works became so successful because he "popularized his vision of these creatures to such a towering degree that his take on them has largely

replaced the actual folklore that birthed them"
(Fultz). Tolkien also did not have a formula or plan
for writing *The Lord of the Rings,* it "[was] not
moulded by some controlling vision of things which
is at the same time its *raison d'être*" (Shippey 334).
Tolkien figured out what he was writing about as
he wrote it, and often pieced things together,
working in different intervals; stopping, then
starting and figuring out where to go next. Tolkien
drew from all of his life experiences and studies
and created stories out of things that he was
disturbed and angered by, and things that he was
truly fascinated and interested with.

However, before examining these things, it
is important to keep in mind Tolkien's vision for his
works to remain as his own creation, and not to be
picked apart and misrepresented. Having his own

vision for his works was an important aspect of his

writing, but there certainly were specific things in

Tolkien's life that also influenced his writing.

Tolkien has said that the biggest reason he wrote

Lord of the Rings was because of "the desire of a

tale teller to try his hand at a really long story that

would hold the attention of the readers, amuse

them, delight them, and at times maybe excite

them or deeply move them," and any other

allegorical or topical meaning was not his intent

(Tolkien 9-10). As criticizers tried to pick apart

where exactly Tolkien drew his story from, Tolkien

continually emphasized that his story merely grew

from things that he found interesting, though he

acknowledged "an author cannot of course remain

wholly unaffected by his experience, but the ways

in which a story-germ uses the soil of experience

are extremely complex" (11). Keeping in mind what

Tolkien said, when analyzing his works it is

important to not destroy the integrity and

originality of them, because "examin[ing] them for

what they might reveal, would be critically

irresponsible" (Fisher 32). To adhere to Tolkien's

vision, it is therefore only necessary to look at his

personality, experiences, and sources and how

they may have, whether consciously or

subconsciously, influenced his imagination when

writing his successful novels.

An important part in trying to understand

Tolkien's vision when he was writing *The Lord of

the Rings* is to try and understand Tolkien's life

experiences and how that changed and shaped his

views and personality. Tolkien began creating his

fantasy stories during a time when his own

country, England, was being torn apart by war.

Tolkien was very much a man of his studies, and

when England declared war on Germany in 1914,

Tolkien was very indifferent about the idea of

enlisting, contrary to many other young men at the

time (Carpenter 80). Tolkien wanted to stay at

Oxford and finish his studies, and did not know

quite what to do until "he learnt of the existence of

a scheme whereby he could train for the army

while at the University but defer his call-up until

after he had taken his degree" (80). During his time

at Oxford, Tolkien began experimenting with

writing in verse and prose, and he even began

writing some poems. 'The Voyage of Earendel' was

one the first verses that Tolkien wrote, and which

he later used to work into the larger story of *The*

Lord of the Rings (83). Though, by 1915 upon

receiving his degree, Tolkien was posted to the 13th Battalion as a second lieutenant in the Lancashire Fusiliers (85). During his time in the war, Tolkien occupied himself with signaling and coding messages, while also experiencing the "animal horror of trench warfare" and the loss of two of his dearest friends, Rob Gilson and G.B. Smith (91-93). By 1916 Tolkien had fallen ill from trench fever and was transported back to England where he took up his life again with his wife Edith (Chance 4-5). Back home in England, Tolkien was still not far from the war and what he experienced during his time serving in it. What he observed of the war during his time at home loomed over him as he began writing the poems and stories that would later become a part of *The Lord of the Rings.*

Because of Tolkien's experience in World War I, some have come to the conclusion that "*The Lord of the Rings* … is a war book, [and] also a post war book, framed by and responding to the crisis of Western civilization, 1914-1945 (and beyond)," though this was not entirely Tolkien's intent (Shippey 329). Certainly *The Lord of the Rings* is a tale about war and the threat of evil power, but Tolkien did not mean for his story to reflect the situation of England during World War I or World War II, as he states "the story would have developed along essentially the same lines, if that disaster had been averted" (Tolkien 10). What the war inspired in Tolkien was his intense hatred of it; he hated that it destroyed the land of his country and killed his closest childhood friends (11). Tolkien's hatred of war developed mostly from

personal as well as ideological reasons, and in 1941

he wrote "I have in this War a burning private

grudge against that ruddy little ignoramus Adolf

Hitler for ruining, perverting, misapplying, and

making for ever accursed, that noble northern

spirit, a supreme contribution to Europe, which I

have ever loved, and tried to present in its true

light" (Carpenter 197). Also during World War II,

much to Tolkien's despair, his son Christopher

went to South Africa to train as a pilot for the war

and this was very upsetting for Tolkien and his

whole family (200).

It was during this time when Tolkien was

again feeling an intense animosity toward war, that

he began piecing together the story for *The Lord of*

the Rings. With this hatred of corrupt power and

war, Tolkien's "tale grew in telling, until it became

a history of the Great War of the Ring and included

many glimpses of the yet more ancient history that

preceded it" (Tolkien 8-9). Tolkien did not let his

opinions towards war dominate his writing, but he

let them guide his writing in unexpected ways,

allowing his story to develop into a tale of tragedy,

something that he was all too familiar with.

Whether this was Tolkien's conscious intent is not

certain, but Tolkien certainly was not unaware of

how war causes "profound tragedy…unavoidable in

a fallen world" (West 4). Besides the tragedies of

war, Tolkien experienced other tragedies during his

childhood that also greatly impacted his view on

the world.

      To understand how Tolkien's views changed

as a young child, it is necessary to look back to

almost the beginning of his life. Tolkien was born in

South Africa in 1892, and at the age of three his family moved to England, near the town of Birmingham (Chance 3). Then, at the age of four Tolkien lost his father, and by the age of twelve, he had also lost his mother (4). Later in his life reflecting on his childhood experiences, specifically when he moved, Tolkien stated, "quite by accident, I have a very vivid child's view, which was the result of being taken away from one country and put in another hemisphere—the place where I belonged but which was totally novel and strange" (quoted on Chance 3). Tolkien's childhood innocence was corrupted from the tragedy of his parents' death, growing up in poverty, and his constantly changing environment. Though his epic stories contain a considerable amount of tragedy and warfare, they are "far more about mercy than vengeance—mercy

to Gollum, mercy to Saruman, mercy to the

Quisling Hobbits in the Shire at the end of the story

(West 4-5). This aspect of Tolkien's novels brings

about the religious side to his life, which was a

pretty big part of his life, especially while he was

growing up.

The influence of religion in Tolkien's stories

is something that has been largely debated, but as

Tolkien was a devout Roman Catholic, it would only

make sense that some elements of religion,

whether intentional or not, found its way into his

works (Carpenter 99). Growing up Tolkien's mother

was a devout Catholic, and was a great influence

on Tolkien, and after her death he spent the rest of

his life living up to her memory by strongly

adhering to his faith and his beliefs (Drout 85).

After both his mother and father's deaths, Father

Francis Morgan a priest at the Catholic school

Tolkien attended, became a fatherly figure to him

and also a great influence in solidifying his faith

(86). Tolkien was never very public about his

religious beliefs, which is why many people

question its influence in his works. However,

Tolkien discussed religion quite a bit with his

closest friends including C.S. Lewis who was known

for being quite public about his religion (86). In his

writing, Tolkien's complex narrative certainly

makes it difficult to pick out any obvious religious

parallels, but he "cast his mythology in this form

because he wanted it to be remote and strange,

and yet at the same time *not be a lie*" (Carpenter

99). Tolkien did not want to make his works

obviously religious, as God remains largely unseen

in his novels (99). However, as it turned out "*The

Lord of the Rings is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first, but consciously in the revision (Chance "Letter 142"). With his own personal religious beliefs always being a constant part of his life, he would not have remained true to himself if he did not let the influence religion had on him conspicuously make its way into his novels.

Other than religion, most of Tolkien's influences and experiences had a way of conspicuously making their way into his writing without him even being consciously aware of them until after he was finished writing his novels. This made the narrative structures of Tolkien's books, especially *The Lord of the Rings,* very complex and layered, making it difficult to try and pick out and make parallels or draw a larger meaning to what

specific sources may have impacted his writings.

There are only a few specific things that Tolkien has

acknowledged himself as being direct influences on

his writings. Tolkien has said that *Beowulf* had a

large influence on his writing, though he "claim[ed]

that what he owed to *Beowulf* was unconscious"

(Fisher 32). He also admitted that he drew

influence from Old Norse mythology and Anglo-

Saxon Runes (32). In particular the poem of

Solomon and Saturn and *The Saga of King Hendrick*

the Wise were two Old Norse writings that Tolkien

was quite familiar with (Shippey 345). Though

Tolkien states that he borrowed from these things

specifically, it is important not to categorize his

works as being entirely influenced by these things.

Many other medieval pieces of writing and

language influenced him, as "medieval literature

was Tolkien's professional expertise as well as a personal passion" (Fisher 33). In particular, medieval language, among all Tolkien's other life experiences, was the main driving force in the creation of his novels.

Tolkien loved his studies, especially language, which he passionately pursued at Oxford. He was mainly interested in the classical and medieval languages, which led him to become part of the staff of *The Oxford English Dictionary* in 1918 (Chance 4). Then later on he became an English language professor at Leeds University in 1920, a professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford in 1925, and a professor of English language and literature at Oxford again in 1945 (4). As language took over Tolkien's profession and life, it also became a strong motive for him to write *The Lord of the*

Rings. Tolkien thought of the books as a philological experiment, where he "created an entire world in its spatial and chronological dimensions, peopling it with languages which have, in a necessarily stylized and simplified version, all the basic features of language…" (Kirk 10). Tolkien used language as a way to develop the history and narrative of Middle Earth, and "by presenting his book[s] as a translation and correlation of material from various languages," Tolkien was also able to create "a counterpoint between different sorts of images and expectations as they relate to experience" (13). This also helped to give his story of Middle Earth a great amount of lavish detail "with its vast store of plants and races, names and languages and individuals and landscapes" (Shippey 235). Though, what is unique about

Tolkien's language in his novels is that he did not just use languages that already existed; he created his own languages.

When creating his languages for the novels, Tolkien drew from his studies of the classical and medieval languages. Even as a young boy Tolkien had invented a number of languages, many of which he developed to a complex degree (Carpenter 101). One of his invented languages that he was particularly pleased with he called Quenya. Finnish heavily influenced this language, and by 1917 Tolkien had already developed a sophisticated vocabulary for it (101). Though, as "Quenya was derived, as any 'real' language would have been, from a more primitive language," so were the other languages Tolkien created (101). The second language that Tolkien created was

called Sindarin, the language of the Grey Elves, which he ended up using in *The Lord of the Rings*. The basis for this language came from Tolkien's love-hate attitude with Celtic things; at times he found them rather unreasonable, but having studied Irish and Welsh, the original Celtic languages, Tolkien was definitely not ignorant of "things Celtic" (Fimi 156). With his studies of Celtic languages, Tolkien became very drawn to them, especially Welsh. Tolkien explained that the Sindarin language was "deliberately devised to give it a linguistic character very like (though not identical with) British-Welsh" (quoted on Fimi 156). While Tolkien admitted this, he often refuted assertions of his works being influenced by Celtic things, mostly because he did not want his works to be regarded as Celtic novels, because they are

not. Celtic things were just a small part of the larger picture involving language in his novels. Part of Tolkien's use of invented language in his novels also came from the love Tolkien had for his country. Along with all the languages Tolkien was familiar with, he was also well versed in Anglo-Saxon philology, and very proud to be an Anglo Saxon (160). As a result he had a desire to make a mythology for England and "restore the reputation of his country, which lacked a proper mythology…" (159). Tolkien's invented languages allowed him to develop the mythological tales of Middle Earth and create the pseudo-history for England that he felt it always needed.

With *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien crafted a beautiful story out his beliefs and his own vision of what he wanted the story to be about. As an

incredibly knowledgeable person, and someone who experienced a lot during his life, his writings of course did not remain unaffected by these things. Though, for the most part, Tolkien was not consciously aware of how his studies, beliefs, and life experiences affected his writing until after the fact, which gave his story an uncanny originality, making it seem that Tolkien was the father and inventor of all things relating to mythology and fantasy. Though there were, of course, many mythological writers before Tolkien's time that he was influenced by, in many ways, Tolkien is now considered the father of modern day fantasy writing, as he successfully wrote a story that created an original and believable fantasy world, and also demonstrated that good and successful writing comes from a true and uniquely

imaginative place, and not from the analysis and

copying of other successful writing. Tolkien states:

> One writes such a story not out of the
> leaves of trees still to be observed, nor by
> means of botany and soil science; but it
> grows like a seed in the dark out of all that
> has been seen or thought or read, that has
> long ago been forgotten, descending into
> the deeps. No doubt there is much
> selection, as with a gardener: what one
> throws on one's personal compost-heap;
> and my mould is evidently made largely of
> linguistic matter. (Carpenter 131)

What can be learned from this statement, and

overall from Tolkien's writing is that a writer should

merely just have a desire to tell a fantastic tale, and

let all other experience and knowledge serve as

unconscious guiding forces, and not intentional

driving forces, for that would only undermine the

vision and the process of a true storyteller.

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Video Games Challenging the Traditional Arts: An Interactive Artistic Experience

William Freeman

Video games are a compilation of creative ingenuity both artistically and developmentally. From bulky boxes which use vacuum tubes and transistors to modern micro computer handhelds, video game systems have changed throughout time as well as the games themselves. Video games have come a long way in the recent years, from starting out as blips on a screen played by only the dedicated few, to developing into a multi-billion dollar industry. Since their inception in the mid-60s to modern times, video games are a part of history and have an ever increasing effect on our culture. But video games have faced an uphill battle in the fight to be considered a significant form of art

instead of a being viewed as "…a brainless

shooting-gallery" (Ebert). Sadly, video games are

viewed in this manner all too often. In order for

this negative view of video games to change one

must take a look into the development process

which video games undergo. From the

conceptional stage of an independently developed

game to the midnight release of a major triple-A

title, video games carry an element of interactivity

which creates an experience, unlike any other form

of art, that invokes creativity in the both the user

and developer.

In order for one to begin to understand

video games as a form of art one has to look back

to the conception of one of the very first video

games created. The very first commercialized video

game was conceived by a man by the name of

Ralph Baer. In 1966 Baer was an engineer employed as a military contractor whose primary focus was on radar detection (Goldberg 1). Baer was waiting around at a bus terminal for a colleague when all of a sudden, "Baer began furiously writing notes…It was like some spirit, some videogame ghost, was doing the writing…His brainstorm produced a passel of ideas for an ingenious 'game box' he initially called Channel Let's Play!" (Goldberg 1-2). To many this may not seem like an artistic process on the surface but, when Baer's process is broken down, it truly is a creation of art. What Baer did was take scrambled ideas within his mind and piece them together to create a working game. Instead of creating a painting, song, or sculpture, Baer took a mix of various electrical components which by themselves

would be completely useless and pieced them

together to create an interactive visual produced

on the television. Is this not what art is all about?

Art involves creating a masterpiece starting with an

idea conceived by the artist and using the tools at

the artist's disposal. Roger Ebert weighs his opinion

as to what art is in his article "Video Games Can

Never be Art" when he says:

> …I tend to think of art as usually the creation of one artist. Yet a cathedral is the work of many, and is it not art? One could think of it as a countless individual works of art unified by a common purpose. Is not a tribal dance an artwork, yet the collaboration of a community? Yes, but it reflects the work of individual choreographers. Everybody didn't start dancing all at once. (Ebert)

In Baer's case he was the choreographer, and the

individual components within his machine were the

dancers all united for a common purpose. These

components within the machine would do nothing

at all individually and something completely

different if Baer did not arrange them in the proper

order. After the initial concept, Baer's creation

went through many prototypes and Baer tweaked

the device to perfection. By the time it was

released six years later in 1972 it was renamed

Odyssey (Goldberg 14). Just like any work of art,

the artist will tinker with various different works

until they find their masterpiece. Baer went

through a very similar process that any artist goes

though. Odyssey was a unique form of art which

took electronic signals and painted a picture onto a

home television screen in which the user

interacted with.

       Video games continued to develop

artistically as technology continually improved. As

time progressed, technology improvements

allowed creators of video games to include music,

better graphics, and a storyline. Some of the very

first video games created were designed to sucker

in people for their money or simply just arcade

games. A couple men by the names of Nolan

Bushnell, Ted Dabney, and Allan Alcorn, set out to

create a game that was so addictive and simple to

play that was, "So easy, a drunk could play"

(Goldberg 20). Their main goal was not to create

something that will be remembered for centuries,

but in reality that's exactly what they created

without even realizing. The three started a

company which is still well known to this day in the

video game industry called Atari. When Atari first

released *Pong* in bars, people became so

determined to beat a machine they would empty

their pockets and spend hours playing virtual ping

pong against a computer opponent (Goldberg 21).

Early video games, like *Pong*, lacked many artistic

elements that modern video games include. Karren

Collins acknowledges these elements in her essay

"Grand Theft Audio? Popular Music and Intellectual

Property in Video Games" when she says, "…[A]

game is a complete cultural artifact, a

gesamtkunstwerk (or 'totally integrated work of

art') in that its music, sound, performances, and

visual style are all part of the experience" (44).

Early video games lacked these elements and were

only designed to keep players coming back for

more. While these primitive arcade games did not

tell an epic story or create a symphony of music,

they did inspire the world with their technological

advancement. Just like Ebert said in his article

when talking about cave paintings, "They were great artists *at that time*, geniuses with nothing to build on, and were not in the process of becoming Michelangelo or anyone else" (Ebert). The early stages of video game history can be closely related to the cave paintings where cave paintings eventually led to the great works of art that we consider today. Video games were in an infant stage, just starting out, and these developers of early video games like Alcorn, Bushnell, and Baer, may not have been the great artists but their work on these early creations led video games to their maturation stage today. Video games and technology continually develop hand and hand, and these primitive arcade games have influenced many of the video games created today. Modern video games have developed epic storylines,

beautiful graphics, and masterful audio pieces, but modern video games gather their influence from these primitive designs.

Modern video games contain eye dazzling graphics showing off in an artistic manner the designs of many digital artists. Even as Stephen Wilson noted in his article, "Computer Art: Artificial Intelligence and the Arts," "The focus of these artists' work challenges traditional ways of thinking about making artworks" (16). Even in 1983, Wilson was recognizing the visuals created on screen as a form of art. If the visuals displayed in 1983 were art to Wilson, then how would he classify modern graphics? These visuals that were created during that time paled in comparison to the graphics that are displayed in modern video games. To create such a spectacle in a digitized world takes an

extreme amount of talent and is not something an everyday person could accomplish. Just like Irene Chien mentioned in her article "Deviation / Red vs. Blue: The Blood Gulch Chronicles," "...video games strive for cinematic photorealism—pushing processing resources towards rendering lush, immersive worlds that replicate cinematic devices down to camera angles, close-ups, and even lens flares" (26). Accomplishing this quality of craftsmanship is no walk in the park. The visuals within a game help to create an immersive environment which mirrors a real one. As Wilson says, "Imagine, for instance, a sculpture that solicits and understands comments from viewers and responds in accordance with a personality provided to it by its sculptor" (15). Creating a scene of this nature takes time, skill, and a lot of

practice. In modern times for big triple-A games the developers are seeking employees with special training using graphical tools to create these breathtaking scenes. There has been recognition by many universities to offer such training. Aaron Smuts, in his article "Video Games and the Philosophy of Art," notes "a few MFA programs exist to train artists in the technology used in game development…" (Smuts). Not all visual graphic artists need to be trained in this manner, but what Smuts said leads to the fact that even universities are now recognizing the importance of the artistry within creating visuals. Creating visuals within a video game involves a complex design process and without training the average individual cannot simply go and create breathtaking visuals. To create such a visual image it requires dedication

and practice just like traditional forms of art. It simply does not just appear on screen out of thin air. Wilson expresses his opinion about the creating these visuals when he says, "I view the visual arts as attempts by artists to externalize aspects of their intelligence and sensibilities for presentation to viewers" (18). The individual creating these visuals expresses themselves through digital graphics. Computer generated graphics are visual spectacles in which the artist expresses his creativity and is able to show off all their proficiency in the art. Graphics are just one way which video game developers show off their artistic capabilities to the audience through the virtual scenes which they create.

Nowadays video games include audio used to enhance the gameplay experience, but in order

to create such an experience it requires a great

deal of artistic capability. Modern video games

often use specialized voice actors to record the

speech included in the game. Voice actors use their

unique talent to get the best sound possible

included into the game. Just as Collins points out

when she speaks about these voice actors she

notes, "…unlike screen actors, specialized voice

actors are specially trained in microphone

techniques" (36). Voice actors must be proficient in

their trade because getting the best voice possible

straight out of a microphone is completely

different than the way in which screen actors

voices are recorded. So not only do the actors have

to be talented in one field, they must be efficient in

two. Voice actors' talents add to the artistic

capabilities which video games offer. To go along

with voice actors, video games include soundtracks in order to create a suspenseful feel while playing. These soundtracks are often created by popular artists. In 1996, Trent Reznor from Nine Inch Nails was involved in the creation of the music and sound effects used in the video game Quake (Collins 38). Video games are dedicated to giving the user an interactive experience through the use of sound. Without a soundtrack and sound effects games would just not be the same. Just think of a recent horror movie without suspenseful and frightening music or sound. That movie would not be able to create the hair-raising horror without a masterful work of sound. Some may argue and say that soundtracks included in video games are just like any other soundtrack included with movies. But as Collins points out, soundtracks within video

games are a unique event all in their own:

"…games require songs that may need to adapt to gameplay states or player interaction." (43). Soundtracks within video games are always changing and to create an immersive feel the soundtrack must go along with what the player is experiencing. The audio within a video game creates the mood for the player, and if this mood is set incorrectly, it can throw off an entire project. It takes skilled artist to create the audio within a game adding to the artistic value found within video games.

The art of creating a story within a video game involves using significant talent, increasing the artistic value of video games. Storytelling within video games has become a norm within any modern game. The story itself is often not

progressed through gameplay within video games but through another narrative element called cut-scenes. Chien points this out in her essay by saying, "Games themselves commonly contain non-interactive animated movies called 'cut-scenes' that narratively frame the gameplay and serve as rewards for progress through game levels." (26). These cut-scenes allow the game to develop a story to coincide with the gameplay. But the artistic portion within the cut-scene is not only displayed through visuals but also the narrative included within the scene. Some of these stories told within video games are quite lengthy, as Smuts points out: "Today, games such as 'Halo' and 'Max Payne' structure themselves around elaborate narratives that may take upwards of twenty hours to complete" (Smuts). Not only does Smuts point out

that the narrative within games are complex but the story itself is quite lengthy.

Writing a story within a game involves significant artistic talent not seen within books or film writings. In order to tell a story but also keep the player interested, the story within video games is not told exclusively through cut-scenes; otherwise it would just be a digitally rendered movie. In order to maintain player's interest and not make an interactive movie, the key narrative moments are actually introduced during gameplay. Flint Dille and John Zuur Platten, who both have worked on video game scripts, point this out in "The Ultimate Guide to Video Game Writing and Design" by saying, "…let the player have control of key narrative moments either by triggering them through their actions, or in fact, having the game

reveal key story moments" (16). This makes for a

unique style of writing not seen within movies or

novels. The writer must cater to the user's

interactions. There will often be gaps within the

storyline of video games where the player makes

the story. Dille and Zuur state, "When playing, you

[the player] created your own story to give context

to what you were doing" (39). This means the

writer must also be considering what the player

might be thinking about the story along with their

own thoughts. This makes writing video game

script more difficult than writing a linear story

within a novel or film. The story within a video

game is a mixture of gameplay and scripts thought

up by the writers. This makes for a unique

interactive story experience not found in movies or

films, but there is still an artistically developed

story within a video game, which can only truly be experienced through gameplay.

All three of the elements, graphics, sound, and narrative, contribute to the artistic capabilities found within video games, but there is one element which sets video games apart for any other artwork and is the most artistic element of them all. The art of creating an interactive experience for the player tops the list for validating video games as an art form. Storylines, graphics, audio, are all elements found in film but, video games take these elements and expand upon them by adding a fourth element. Creating an interactive experience for the user is the underlying art within video games. Interactivity is a unique artistic element which only video games offer. Smuts

discusses just how interactivity within video games

affects them as an art by saying:

> Video game players are anything but
> mentally or intellectually passive during
> typical game play for, as Collingwood might
> put it, video games are possibly the first
> concreative, mechanically reproduced from
> of art: they are mass artworks shaped by
> audience input. Interactivity marks a crucial
> distinction between decidedly non-
> interactive mass art forms such as film,
> novels, and recorded music and new
> interactive mass art forms. (Smuts)

Smuts brings up an excellent point that video

games are in fact a new type of art form based

mainly on interactivity. Smuts places video games

on the same level as films, novels, and music but

states that interactivity is what sets video games

apart from the other three. Video games combine

all the artistic elements, storytelling, graphics,

narrative, and interactivity, to create this

immersive environment for the player, but with

video games, the player, or art appreciator, is placed into this environment and through their interactions within the game the environment changes, the story progresses, and the player develops an attachment to a virtual character. Interactivity is a unique element only to video games which creates a whole new emotional experience never before seen in any other art form.

Interactivity is often the most overlooked artistic element found within video games, which leads many to miss out on the full experience brought on through video games. Jimmy Grist, who presented at the 2011 Midwest Modern Language Association Conference on the interactivity found within video games, points out that, "A lot of people overlook interactivity" (Grist). Interactivity

is not something that is apparent from the visual

perspective. It is only experienced by the player,

which is why interactivity is often overlooked in

video games. By missing out on the interactive

element, the whole of the experience is lost. One

of the artistic elements would be missing. One

must interact with a video game to experience the

artistry, it cannot just been seen by idly witnessing

gameplay. As Grist points out, video games are the

"only medium where the user experiences the

story along with an on-screen character" (Grist).

Grist continues on by saying, "The user discovers

story through interaction" (Grist). Without

interactivity, video games would not be a unique

art form. There would be no distinction between a

video game and digitally created films. Interactivity

is unique to video games but can only be

experienced by playing video games and is often overlooked because of that. It is the artistic element which sets video games apart from any other form of art.

The artistic elements found within video games have even influenced others to consider using video games to create their own form of art. Video games often allow the user to be creative beyond their own imagination. Ebert argues that, "One obvious difference between art and games is that you can win a game. It has rules, points, objectives, and an outcome." (Ebert). But what about video games in which the goal is to be creative with no rules, no real objectives, and no outcome? One developer, Will Wright, has been creating this type of video game for years. F. Ted Tschang points out in his essay, "Balancing the

Tensions Between Rationalization and Creativity in the Video Game Industry," says, "Will Wright's first big success—*Sim City*—was a city-building simulator/strategy game known for its sandbox kind of open-ended, goalless type of play" (1004). This type of video game gives the player an empty pallet to create and design whatever the user desires. As they are referred to being sandbox type video games, they have no goals or clear objectives. While some video games may have rules set upon by the developers, often these rules are just to guide the player along with a learning process and later the player is broken free from these rules. This idea goes against everything Ebert said that a game must have. Yet sandbox games are still video games. There are quite a few video games where the central goal is to be creative. One

such game, in which I have had a personal

experience with, called *Little Big Planet* 2, is an

example of a creative video game. The main goal of

the game is to create levels, and even whole new

mini games, and have others play and rate your

level design. An entire community exists within

Little Big Planet 2 containing millions of user

created content. The content ranges anywhere

from simple level designs, to musical compositions

using in game audio, and multileveled complex

storylines. All created by players. Collins mentions

creative games, saying "There are also popular

music-based games in which music plays a central

role in the game's narrative and is a primary aspect

of gameplay, including creative music games and

rhythm-action games. Remixing, production, and

composition of original songs are significant

functions in creative music games" (38). Collins

continues, "Remixing tracks and fan compilations

are becoming increasingly popular, with internet

distribution and ministardom within remixing

communities, also altering the relationship to and

meaning of songs for players and listeners" (43).

This brings to light the fact that what started out as

a simple video game has turned into an internet

sensation. Video games have allowed the user to

express themselves in ways they would have never

thought. Video games are the platform for

influencing, as Collins points out, the creative

minds behind these popular remixes.

Even when the goal of a video game is not

to be creative, players have still found a niche

creating in-game movies called "Machinima,"

which are videos recorded within a video game

(Chien 24). Some players have gone so far as to

create short films within a video game universe

instead of completing the desired goal of the game.

One such short film even was evened shown at a

popular film festival as Chien notes: "As the first

machinima film to premiere at a major festival,

Deviation's theatrical screening at Tribeca marked

the breakout of this Internet-fueled, gamer-geek

mode of virtual filmmaking into mainstream

cinema" (25). To be able to gain this type of respect

is a major advancement in the video game world.

This shows us how one can vary from the norm and

seek to create something unusual with influence

brought on from video games. Some may argue

that video games are not the artwork; the film

made from the video game is the art. Smuts

suggests that, "Perhaps, games are more like

performative artworks where the artwork is

intended for the performers" (Smuts). This

statement can be proven from the creations of

various players who sway from the norm of video

games and break away from the gameplay to

create their own style of art. Video games offer a

unique contribution to the artistic community by

offering an art form that involves interacting with

the art but also gives the user the ability to create.

Video games inspire users to think creatively,

allowing them to get in touch with their own

artistic roots to create their own work of art.

        The main criticism video games face today

that goes against being considered an art form is

the fact that they are produced in order to make

profit. Indeed this much is true and there is no

denying the fact that major triple-A titles are

advertised by big name publishers. But the

developers of these titles are still attempting to

create something that expresses their creativity.

They are just being limited by the profit-making

publishers. As Tschang points out, "…[P]ublishers

usually fund the game's development, and

therefore seek most of the royalites, with the

studios only starting to see royalties if the game

becomes a *hit*...Unfortunately for the studios, few

games become hits." (994). Tschang then continues

saying, "…[M]any publishing heads themselves

know very little about games or game

development." (994). The developers within the

studios are the ones who dedicate their lives to

creating and envisioning video games while the

publishers sit back and collect on their investment.

Publishers are bigger companies with more power

and are often seen more in the public than the studios. This leads many to overlook the developers, the artists, and see video games as merely a moneymaking machine. Kellee Santiago, who is both a designer and producer of video games, was giving a speech for a Technology, Entertainment and Design Conference at University of Southern California when she said, "These games are being rewarded by audiences by high sales figures" (Santiago qtd. from Ebert). This is absolutely the very reason video games are not being perceived as art. Focusing on profit does not show how the developers and designers put their heart into every game they create. Tschang takes a different approach than Santiago, saying, "Our interviews with lead designers revealed that they create new game concepts by using their diverse

backgrounds, imagination, inspirations, and insights." (994). Tschang does not focus on the profit side and instead goes to the source of a video game's creation, which are the developers and designers. This shows just how the designers take their life influences and put their soul into their creations, which sounds an awful lot like Ebert's definition of art: "My notion is that it[art] grows better the more it *improves* or *alters* nature through an passage through what we might call the artist's soul, or vision" (Ebert). Video game creation alters nature by creating an immersive environment for the player. And many developers and designers do put their heart and soul into every video game they create.

While it is easy to focus on the moneymaking portion of video games and not the

development process for major titles, there is an

ever increasing popularity of independently

developed video games being created which

contest the idea of video games merely being

created for profit. Independent games, or indie

games for short, are free from the publisher's

constraints. As Tommy points out in Lisanne Pajot's

documentary *Indie Game: The Movie*, "We don't

have a publisher, we don't have investors, we don't

answer to anybody" (*Indie Game*). Indie games

allow the developers to be free from the marketing

constraints put on major titles by the publishers. It

gives the developer more freedom to do what they

want with a video game and allows developers to

express themselves even more as pointed out by

Phil Fish when he is talking about his video game

Fez saying, "It's me, my perception of myself. This

is my identity" (*Indie Game*). The developers of indie games put more heart into their creations. The freedom of not being held down by publishers truly allows for a better expression of the developer's vision. The only problem is that indie games are often not seen in the public's eye because of the lack of a publisher; therefore, little recognition is given compared to major titles. So in order to see the art within major titles one must look past the marketing aspects of publishers and must look harder to discover a true artistic creation of an indie game.

Video games are truly a unique type of art by challenging traditional ways that one perceives an art form. To fully discover video games as an art one has to experience them instead of simply viewing. Video games offer eye dazzling visuals

which nowadays are becoming more and more

photo-realistic. To create such a spectacle requires

experience and training which takes years to

master. Video games include masterful

soundtracks which vary with what the user

experiences and challenge traditional ways of

creating music. They also require special voice

actor training in order to master the use of a

microphone to get the best sound quality possible.

Buried behind gameplay, video games include a

narrative story often lasting longer than most films

nowadays. To see the story within a video game

one must look deeper into the video game and not

focus solely on gameplay. All of these elements are

combined to offer one of the most unique

experiences offered by no other art form. The

interactive element within video games sets them

apart from novels, films, and music. Without

interactivity video games would simply not be.

Interactivity is unique to video games, and in order

to experience video games as an art to their fullest

they must be played and not viewed. Video games

even inspire creativity, to a level unseen within

other art forms, allowing users to generate their

own creations. But video games are often viewed

by the public as a creation for profit and not

viewed as an art work. To get past this stigma one

must look over the big time publishers and look

into the studios which create the games. Looking at

all these different factors it is apparent that video

games do offer a unique addition to the world of

artistic creations. But when one or more of these

elements are overlooked, which they often are,

video games seem to be just a way to make profit

and for the user to pass their free time. Video

games must be looked at fully, and one's view

cannot focus simply on a few samples of video

games they have witnessed. Video games are an

art form in which the creators put their heart and

soul into every day and the players may even

become artists themselves.

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It's Okay to Cosplay

Caresse Ryan

My friend comes into the room with a heart-shaped brooch on her chest. It is not a necklace or a minor trinket. It's a permanent tattoo, and it's part of her cosplay costume. She is Neo-Queen Serenity from the *Sailor Moon* franchise. This brooch completes her look, which at this point also includes a silver *odango* wig, a beautifully handcrafted white dress with gold embellishment, white princess slippers, a moon wand, white wings, and an assortment of pearls. To most people this would seem over the top, but we belong to a group that readily accepts the creative and imaginative. We are *Otaku*, devoted fans of anime and manga. Where once we were a small,

scattered group of unsociable individuals, we are

now a massive subcultural group that challenges

the place of popular culture in America.

People are now finding themselves in the

position of defying popular culture, what Samulyan

defines as "empty of ideology" because it does not

allow for the expression of individual creativity (1).

This is in part due to an American emphasis on a

commonplace expression of identity and cultural

oneness. Samulyan goes on to say that "popular

culture was a capitalist tool designed to oppress

students and anyone else working for change" (6).

It is for this reason that multiple subcultural

practices developed; *Otaku* is one such subculture

that flourishes in America because it is an outlet of

creative expression like Bohemianism or Fetishism.

Otaku promotes the individual. It is individual

appeal that has allowed it to grow into a full-fledged subcultural entity that receives just as much attention in the "geek world" as San Diego's Comic-Con and video game franchises like *Resident Evil* and *Halo*. *Otaku*, and more specifically cosplay, allows individuals to escape their mundane lives through the mutation of self-identity, the promotion of socialization and group identity, and the expression of do-it-yourself (DIY) creativity that allows individuals to participate in a social setting that reflects their own ideologies much like the social settings of mainstream popular culture. Somehow, by wearing a costume, people are finding the freedom for self-expression, which is needed in a world where the geek is rarely acknowledged for his unique perspective.

For the three days that Naka-Kon comes to Kansas City, my friends, here dubbed Serena after Neo-Queen Serenity's human alias Serena, not only embodies the imaginary royal figure, she is that royal figure. Cosplaying is not simply putting on a costume and attending a convention. Cosplay is a cultural phenomenon that allows individuals to shed their current identities in order to express themselves through an imaginary character's persona. Melucci suggests they are no longer defined by their "group memberships, their situations, or their heritage," but are instead distinct individuals (113). For those three days of Naka-Kon, Serena's identity shifts from the simple mundane girl to the regal otherworldly princess and she is not the only one to take on another personality. Thousands of people attend Naka-Kon

- so many last year that they stopped admitting people. The majority of the people are dressed in costumes, parading around me is a sea of anime, manga, and video game characters. There are sailor *senshi*, schoolgirls and schoolboys, robots, demons, and more. This is normal at the anime convention because these Americans have accepted the oddities that come along with belonging to a subculture. People can express themselves in whatever way they want without the fear of being ridiculed and laughed at for their appearances. Self-identity mutates and becomes bizarre and glamorous. Individuals can become whoever they want to be and the people they surround themselves with willingly accept the new identity.

Serena was not the only Sailor Moon at the convention. In fact, the entire *Sailor Moon*

entourage was there, and sometimes I had to call

Serena by her alter ego's name in order to gain her

attention. Her immersion into the role was so

complete that the only way to address her was as

Neo-Queen Serenity. This immersion was

characteristic of most of the cosplayers, who

preferred to be referred to by their characters'

personas rather than their actual identities.

Cosplayers have few limitations on their

personalities, instead using their imaginations to

create the character (Winge 69). They do this

because to them anime and the modified self-

identity represent an escape from mass culture

(Smulyan 158).

        In addition, in America, anime conventions

often feature galas or competition for which

cosplayers can present themselves to the observers

in a more imaginative way. At galas, cosplayers can immerse themselves in an anime world where they are complete representations of their imagined selves. This is in stark contrast to the regular exhibition hall presentations where they simply walk around with friends observing the stands and buying anime to add to their collections. The competitions allow cosplayers to perform for an audience. Winge says it is in the competition skits that the audience gets to see these individuals "mime their chosen character" (73). These competition skits provide a more in-depth display of the characters' personas that can be critiqued by the audience and by a panel of judges. My friend Serena does this every year. She gets up on stage with Neo-Queen Serenity's husband Prince Endymion and performs a skit in which she

illustrates Neo-Queen Serenity's exceedingly

brilliant personality and regality. In miming her

character, Serena validates her own interpretations

of Neo-Queen Serenity and demonstrates the

escapist nature of cosplay.

Expression of the self-identity extends

beyond the individual when discussing subcultural

groups like *Otaku*. For example, Serena has over

200 friends on Facebook. They are not her friends

that she communicates with on a daily basis or

even people she knew from school. They are

Otaku, like us, who she met at the Naka-Kon

conventions. Her cosplay has opened doors for her

socialization skills and greatly improved her

feelings of group identity. She is part of a

community and fits in with the social norms of that

group. This community is what subcultures like

Otaku are designed to do. They allow individuals who would not normally be associated with a popular form of culture to express themselves in a manner that not only gives them a special self-identity, but also a holistic group identity. Subcultural groups are designed to cater to specific sets of individuals; Anime is one of these "specialized forms" that unites people together in a common cultural identity (Smulyan 158). Because all these individuals are invested in the same ideas, they are drawn to one another in a way that creates a collective identity and allows for greater socialization.

In the past, people with certain interests like these would keep to themselves, afraid to stand out from the norm. Subcultural groups provide elective identities that individuals in our

modern society seem to latch on to in order to

avoid being defined by "profession, party, state, or

class" (Melucci 113). These elective identities

promote socialization through cosplay, which

necessitates an audience and a gathering. Cosplay,

and *Otaku* in the broader sense, requires people to

step outside their norms and become a part of a

community. One costumed person in an exhibition

hall is not a cosplayer, just a fanatic in a costume.

However, three hundred costumed individuals in

an exhibition hall is a community of likeminded

individuals participating in a culturally accepted

event. Cosplay within the subcultural setting

"permits the cosplayer to role-play the character

he or she is dressed as and engage in such social

activities within a safe and supportive social

structure" (Winge 74-75). It allows individuals to

participate in social activities without fear of

persecution or ridicule. In addition, cosplaying

promotes socialization by giving cosplayers positive

experiences in a social setting (Winge 75). My

friend won the competition medal for best

character enactment last year because she is so

devoted to her character and other people could

recognize that devotion. She also had the

opportunity to take photos with the entire *Sailor

Moon* entourage, and through this event, she made

several new friends that she added to her

continuously growing list of Facebook friends,

including a man who created a Tuxedo Mask

character with the *Super Mario* franchise character

Boo as his head. It was through her experiences at

Naka-Kon that her social identity grew, and she

became a part of a group that defied popular culture mentalities.

Yet, self-identity and socialization are only possible in cosplay if an individual has already committed themselves to a costume and an identity. The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) stage of cosplaying is just as important, if not more so, in promoting alter ego creation and socialization because it allows the individual to form a bond with the character they will eventually play. The investment in creating a cosplay costume requires time, energy, and dedication that provide the foundation for the exploration of the mutated identity and the promotion of socialization. Serena spent months prior to her first Naka-Kon, getting together the resources in order to create her alter ego Neo-Queen Serenity. She had a friend

construct the dress and then added the detailing to the costume herself. She had to order her *odango* wig from a foreign country and purchase the various other jewelry elements of her costume from *Etsy*. She had to buy the princess slippers and have a friend handcraft the moon wand that she then painted. I even helped in making this costume. I sewed a princess handbag for the costume and added pearl embellishments. I even bought the tiara to go with the costume for her birthday. I was just as invested in the overall identity as she was because the development of the costume was necessary for the development of the persona.

The so-called "draw of DIY" is closely linked to its ability for the individual fan to engage in the object of their fascination to a greater extent like

the artists and producers of anime engage in the

genre (Kelts 147). Cosplaying is in large part a form

of public entertainment, which means the

individuals who create the costumes are just as

dedicated to the success of an event, like a

convention, as the people who produce and fund

the event. Serena even scheduled the *Sailor Moon*

meet for the convention in order to get pictures

with the entire entourage. Yet, people who invest

their time and energy in producing costumes do so

at their own expense, and it is not cheap. Serena's

costume, once everything was made and ready for

the event, cost a grand total of over 300 dollars. A

friend of ours spent over 3,000 dollars on his

costume, quite a sum larger then Serena, but the

quality of the costume was far greater as well. DIY

cosplaying requires its participants to have a

thorough understanding of the character and the

anime out of which their mutated self-identity will

evolve. This means hours of *Otaku*-like obsession

over the minute details of the character from the

exact color of their hair to the exact puffiness of

the *hakama* pants the character wears (reference

to *InuYasha*). We take what Japanese culture has

given us and morph it into our own interpretation

in order to create a Japanese-American product for

our individual use and pleasure. DIY aspects of

Otaku make this subculture "participatory and

communal" which provides the foundation support

for socialization and mutated self-identity (Kelts

147).

Nevertheless, in the end, Neo-Queen

Serenity leaves the convention, walks out the

doors, and immediately Serena returns. She is

hungry and ready to head to the nearest restaurant to discuss the success of this convention. She leaves proud because her mutated self-identity was a success, and she now has some new friends she can talk to online about anything and everything anime. She was even successful in her DIY costume, and the tattoo on her chest just added to the intrigue of her otherworldly persona. She is *Otaku* in every way that counts, and here in America, that is not a bad thing. Popular culture no longer provides the outlet for expression that individuals seek. It is not a means to creativity and imagination. Instead, subcultures are now the standard form of expression in America. In conclusion, this subculture phenomenon has pushed the limits on the acceptable and now, it is okay to cosplay. Serena is not alone and neither are

the thousands of other individuals across America

who create and put on costumes, go to

conventions and socialize, and change their

personalities to fit into the subculture of their

choosing.

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Conceptions of Authenticity in Hip Hop:

An Examination of Tupac

Emma V. Winkler

As one the most influential and iconic hip hop artists, the significance of the life and work of Tupac is intimately related to the significance of the genre of hip hop as a whole. He has been subject to much of the same criticism and praise as the genre. Throughout Tupac's short but prolific career as a rapper he was clearly transformed by his experiences in the industry and hip hop was shaped in important ways by him as well. A critical examination of the last decade of Tupac's life sheds light on the tragic nature of hip hop as a medium through which historically marginalized populations can express themselves and critique

society, but which also perpetuates destructive

attitudes in vulnerable communities. These themes

are the glorification of violence and materialism,

misogyny, and the emphasis on authenticity that

dually serve to both empower and oppress, to

break and maintain stereotypes. Tupac's pre-fame

worldview is undercut by his transformation into a

famous rapper, coming to be, although well-

intentioned, a promoter of these destructive and

often contradictory messages. What critics such as

Stanley Crouch see as irredeemably negative

aspects of hip hop are not simple black and white

issues, but when analyzed shed light on the

subtleties of both Tupac's significance and that of

hip hop to America.

In an interview done two years before his

death, Tupac describes the way he sees society

trying to limit his behavior. He says, "everyone in

this business is always whispering in your ear about

what you can't say, what you can't do, what you

can't wear in this world and in this world. It's two

worlds: white world and black world" (Ed Gordon

Interview). What Tupac did was "stand in the

middle and say 'I'm living in both worlds'" (Ed

Gordon Interview). Perhaps Tupac's embrace of

what he saw as distinct worlds has contributed to

the scope of his popularity and the range of his

audience. Coinciding with his rise to global fame

came a development of a "thug" image. He began

to adopt the attitude that he was hearing from the

industry about what he could and could not do in

certain situations, about who he could and could

not be. He began to subscribe to an ideal of black

authenticity and creates a narrative based on this

concept, exemplified by his popular phrase "thug life" which he has tattooed on his stomach.

One criticism that hip hop receives is that it promotes materialism, or the devotion to wealth and material possessions. Although Tupac promotes materialistic ideals perhaps less than many other mainstream hip hop artists, his music does embody some of the same themes. Teresa Reed writes that "[Tupac's] legacy also underscores that paradoxical connection between the stain of poverty and the glitter of commercial success" (Reed 160). Tupac disdains greed throughout his life. In the interview of him at seventeen he asks why President Reagan, who claims to care about the issue of homelessness does not take some of these homeless people into his big White House. Tupac is rightly troubled by the greed of the society

he saw around him. He grew up very poor. He said,

. "I wanted to go to college. The only thing that stopped me was money. All the kids at my school was writing applications to go to college and I didn't have no lights, no electricity" (Ed Gordon Interview). Tupac knows that he missed out on a lot of things being raised poor, but he realized that it taught him valuable lessons about the reality of life. He says "I'm going to be a little bit more ready than someone who has grown up in Disney World, thinking that Santa Claus is coming" (seventeen interview). Tupac "know[s] that poverty is no joke" (seventeen interview) but seems to value the morals and ideals his mother raised him with more than he resents growing up poor. Later in his career as a rapper Tupac places an increasing emphasis on material possessions. He says there

are ten rules to "the game": "Now rule one -- get

your cash on, M.O.B./ That's Money Over Bitches,

cause they breed envy" (Blasphemy). He sees

money as integral to calculating success. He says, "I

sold five million in two months. Biggie's album

been out two years, he'd barely touching two

million" (VIBE). Money is not what truly makes

Tupac successful. He does gross a larger profit than

most artists in the business, but his heartfelt and

socially aware lyrics, his charismatic personality,

and his artistic talent are what really make him

successful. He boats, "Diamonds shinin lookin like I

robbed Liberace" (California Love), and "Equipped

with money and a Benz, cause bitch I'm barely

broke" (Ambitionz Az a Ridah). Tupac's glorification

of material possessions, mirroring a theme

pervasive in hip hop as a whole seems to make

sense considering the context of the genre.

Boasting seems like a natural reaction to growing

up in a society that told Tupac, like so many other

black young men, that he deserves nothing, and

then succeeding in a way that even the society

could understand- materialistically. However, the

contradictions between Tupac's earlier disdain for

wealth and his later boasting of his wealth shows

the negative changes that accompany his "thug"

persona. He says "I'm about Benz cause that's what

niggas do" (Thug Angel). This self-stereotyping is

counterproductive. It perpetuates the negative

stereotypes of young black men by grouping them

together and saying, in almost a deterministic way,

that they all share common concerns like cars. He

even says, "mama pushed me out her womb, told

me, "Nigga get paid" (Krazy). This contradicts his

earlier statement that his mom chose to raise him with knowledge, respect, and honesty rather than with money. Tupac realizes that his new obsession with material possessions is problematic. He says, "In time I learned a few lessons/ Never fall for riches" (White Man'z World) and "Hope to raise my young nation in this world of greed/ Currency means nothin' if you still ain't free/ Money breeds jealousy, take the game from me" (Hold Ya Head). Tupac acknowledges that money can be a distraction and can lead to jealousy. Although Tupac knew, from early on, that money is not what is truly valuable, he was also raised knowing its importance because of his experiences with poverty growing up. In one of his later albums he rapps, "I entered the game/ look how much I changed/ I'm no longer innocent; casualties of

fame/ Made a lot of money, seen a lot of places/

And I swear I seen a peaceful smile on my mama's

face/ when I gave her the keys to her own house"

(Krazy). Tupac acknowledges how fame has

changed him. He uses the term "casualities," which

carries the connotation of death. Even though

Tupac grew up under adverse circumstances,

surrounded by pimps and drug dealers, he seems

to be saying that it was his experiences becoming

famous and wealthy that lead to a loss of his

innocence. He also justifies these changes by

showing what good came from his success, which is

that he is able to provide for his mother and give

her a new house. Tupac was very generous with his

wealth, and always maintained a responsibility to

the community. Overall, however, Tupac's boasting

of having diamonds and Mercedes Benz distracts

from his more socially aware and real messages about the suffering of oppressed groups and inequalities in society.

Hip hop receives criticism from prominent black figures such as Oprah Winfrey, Stanley Crouch, the politician C. Delores Tucker and the poet Julian Curry for the ubiquitous presence of the n-word in its music. Tupac is no exception, some form of the n-word making an appearance in most of his songs and in the title of his album "Strictly 4 My N.I.G.G.A.Z." Oprah and Curry see the word as inseparable from its ugly history as a derogatory term for black people. They see the use of the n-word by black people as an internalization of this racism directed toward themselves and one another. Tupac's use of the n-word is emblematic of a transformation in his views. In an interview

with him when he was only seventeen years old he explains the n-word as Tupac sees the word "nigga" as creating solidarity between those who share similar experiences; he sees it as a term for all the oppressed people in the world, regardless of their race. Like rapper Jay-Z who explains on Oprah that "We took the word and we took the power out of that word. You know, we turned a word that was very ugly and hurtful into a term of endearment," Tupac's original use of the word was positive (Jay-Z interviewed by Oprah). Tupac saw the use of the n-word in hip hop as an example of taking a word that has been used offensively and turning it into a term of endearment, not only for black people but for all kinds of marginalized people.This is representative of Tupac's global vision. Later in his career Tupac seems to use the n-word as a

synonym for a "thug". He says, "Niggas is the ones with gold chains hangin out at the club" (Interview with Tabitha MTV). Although critics of the prevalence of the n-word in hip hop like Oprah fail to see the positive aspects of the use of the n-word, they are right that there are troubling aspect as well. The solidarity created between people of a group simultaneously works to reinforce differences between members of the group and outsiders. This can promote a conformity to ideals that can work to reinforce stereotypes.

Philippe Bourgeois and Jeff Schonberg's ethnographic study *Righteous Dopefiend* follows a community of homeless heroin and crack addicts on Edgewater Boulevard in San Francisco in the 1990's. Bourgeois and Schonberg observe the way in which conceptions of authenticity, often drawn

along racial lines, are deeply influential to the

behavior of their subjects. For instance, the African

Americans they befriend in the book came

together around the ideal of the "outlaw," similar

to Tupac's conception of himself as an "outlaw";

whereas the white people in the book created a

group identity of the downtrodden war veteran,

sometimes even claiming to be "Vietnam vets"

when they had never been to war. These

conceptions of authenticity, although socially

created, manifested in very real ways such as on

their bodies. Even drug choice and injection

practices were linked to respective ideals of

authenticity (*Righteous Dopefiend*). Although the

subjects in the book created identities and a sense

of community around these views of authenticity,

these ideals worked against them by promoting

stereotypes they had to struggle against when making friends across racial lines and standing up to prejudiced local business owners, law enforcement officers, and public officials. A parallel can be drawn between conceptions of authenticity among the subjects of "Righteous Dopefiend" and the "thug" image present in hip hop visible in the narrative Tupac creates for himself.[1]

Tupac's ability to empathise with society's outcasts stems from his childhood. He was born only a month after his mother Afeni, prominent in the black panther movement, was released from Greenwich Village Correctional Center on charges of conspiring to bomb several public places. He and

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[1] In "Righteous Dopefiend" the subjects use of the term "dopefiend" to refer to one another in a playful way is similar to the use of "nigga" in hip hop. In both cases a marginalized group is taking a word traditionally used in a negative way and incorporating it into their vocabulary to show that they are proud of who they are- as a way of pushing back against a discriminating society.

his family experienced chronic poverty and homelessness as Afeni struggled, as a single mother, to provide for the family while battling a crack addiction. Tupac's childhood left him slightly bitter about life, but also taught him empathy for and a responsibility to help those in adverse circumstances. This sense of responsibility to the community is something that, overall, remains present throughout his life. Once when he heard about a young girl who was attacked by a pitbull, he asked his driver to turn the car around so that he could visit her and her family in the hospital (Thug Angel). He also visited a young boy dying of a terminal illness as part of the Make A Wish Foundation.

A characteristic that does change during Tupac's rise to fame is his increased association

with a "thug" image. This change is visible in his

attitude towards women. Hip hop as a whole has

been widely criticized for its sexism. The depiction

of women in hip hop, although often troubling,

does have its redemptive qualities. Despite

objectifying women, it gives credit to black women

and their bodies for their beauty, unlike

mainstream fashion magazines and most corporate

commercials where the majority of the women

represented are thin, blond, anglo-europeans.

Tupac rapps, "Some say the blacker the berry, the

sweeter the juice/ I say the darker the flesh then

the deeper the roots" (Keep Ya Head Up). This is a

celebration of the beauty of black women. The

popular beauty company Dove has "beauty"

products that bleach women's skin lighter, sending

disempowering images of what beauty is and

creating hegemony based on a normative ideology,

similar to the case of linguistic hegemony discussed

previously. Chris Rock's documentary "Good Hair"

shows the way in which mainstream media depicts

black women's hair as ugly and inferior, labelling it

"nappy". In this respect, even if hip hop focuses

only on the physical beauty of women, at least it

takes a slightly more positive stance toward black

women than can be said about the mainstream

media. Hip hop music, despite the notable

achievement of artists such as Foxy Brown and

Missy Elliott, Lauryn Hill and Lil Kim, is primarily a

male niche and within it sexism is rampant. As

Tupac is immersed in his fame and transitions into

his "thug" persona, he begins to adopt this sexism.

In an interview of seventeen year old Tupac

done by a classmate before his rise to fame, Tupac

reveals a healthy and positive attitude toward women, saying "I've seen guys speak to women with this much respect, and I deplore that" (Interview 17). He says that his mom raised him to respect women. Later on in Tupac's career this sentiment is clearly still present. His song "Keep Ya Head Up" is "a holler to [his] sisters on welfare," saying that Tupac "cares and don't nobody else care." The song shows that Tupac is aware of the many problems young women, especially poor ones, face on a daily basis, including teen pregnancy and absent fathers: "You know it makes me unhappy/ When brothas make babies, and leave a young mother to be a pappy"; and harassment: "When you come around the block brothas clown a lot/ But please don't cry, dry your eyes, never let up." Tupac is as aware of the plight

of women as he was at seventeen, however these views about women become conflicted later in his life. On the same album as "Keep Ya Head Up" is the song "I Get Around" in which Tupac gives "respect to those who break they neck/ to keep they hos in check". Tupac empowers women to be independent and expect more from men in "Keep Ya Head Up": "Forgive but don't forget, girl keep your head up/ And when he tells you you ain't nuttin don't believe him/ And if he can't learn to love you you should leave him/ Cause sista you don't need him." His credibility is undermined when, later in the album, he says "don't be picky just be happy with this quicky," (I Get Around). He boasts about how many women he sleeps while criticising "hos"- a double standard typical of, but not limited to, hip hop music.

Hip hop music has been accused of misogyny. Tupac does not hate all women, as is made clear by songs like "Keep Ya Head Up." Tupac's friend Jada Pinkett says that he categorized women in a binary way, as either "hos" and "bitches" or as angels with redemptive power. It could be argued that Tupac was too simplistic about women; that he believed only in two groups of women, good and bad. However, this does not seem to capture Tupac's complicated views of women either. In "Dear Mama" Tupac pays homage to his mom Afeni. He is bitter about growing up "poorer than the other little kids" and without a father. He admits that when there was "drama/ When things went wrong we'd blame mama." And despite the hardship he endured growing up he says "And even as a crack fiend,

mama/ You always was a black queen, mama." He

admits that his mom made mistakes, but that she

did the best she could and that he appreciates her.

Tupac's conflicted relationship with his mother

shows that he does not see women as just good or

just evil. Perhaps, it could be argued, the example

of his mother is a special case and not

representative of his attitude toward women as a

whole. However, there are other examples such as

his song "Brendas Got a Baby" that support the

claim that his view of women is not one-

dimensional.

In "Brenda's Got a Baby" Tupac shows

empathy for a young woman driven to do

regrettable things like throwing her baby into a

trash can and prostituting herself. He does not

moralize or damn "Brenda," instead showing a

sensitivity to the larger issues that lead to

prostitution such as familial neglect and abuse:

"her family...didn't really care to see, or give a

damn if she/ Went out and had a church of kids/ As

long as when the check came they got first dibs";

the failing educational system "Brenda's got a

baby/ But, Brenda's barely got a brain/ A damn

shame/ The girl can hardly spell her name," and

lack of relevant social services. He acknowledges

that many young women enter prostitution out of

necessity, "So now what's next, there ain't nothing

left to sell/ So she sees sex as a way of leaving

hell." Yet in other songs he refers to women,

especially those women who use their bodies to

attract wealthy and famous men, derogatorily as

"bitches" and "hos". In the interview of Tupac at

seventeen he demonstrates a sensitivity to sexism,

gently showing disdain for his peers' use of "the b-word" (interview 17). This is in stark contrast to an interview he does later in his life when his respect for women has clearly become more contingent. This is clear from what he says in one of his interviews: "Niggas need to stop givin these bitches all the attention, that's why niggas is dyin...we gotta start sayin 'fuck these bitches man'...if you fuckin with a bitch you need to break her ass and shake her ass" (Thug Angel). One of his friends, who noticed a difference in him once he became famous, says "Pac changed as far as his attitude. He had gotten to the point where he felt like he didn't have to respect anybody" (Thug Angel). This increasing disrespect for women is tied to his metamorphosis into a more "authentic thug". He says, "I'm gonna stay black, I'm not finna act white

just cause y'all want me to act white. I'm about

Benz cause that's what niggas do...Imma smoke

weed cause that's what niggas do, Imma pack a gat

cause that's what niggas do" (Thug Angel). This

shows the troubling way in which Tupac interprets

what it means to be authentically black as doing

drugs, being materialistic, and owning a gun.

Michael Eric Dyson writes that "[Tupac's]

emulation of real gangsters and thugs implied

surrender to the stifling literalism that trumped

many of his critics" (Holler 169). Tupac did have

firsthand experience of many of the things he

rapped about, like life in the ghetto and poverty.

He mistakenly thought that he had to represent

"thug life" by becoming a "thug," with devastating

consequences. Although most people who knew

him do not believe he is guilty of the sexual assault

charges brought against him in 1995, it is clear that

over the course of his rise to fame he underwent

many changes in his adoption of a "thug" image

that includes a decrease in respect for women.

In addition to increasingly negative ideas

about women, the development of Tupac's "thug"

identity corresponds to an increase in violence,

both in his life and lyrics. Violence is a quality for

which hip hop often receives criticism. Tupac

admits that he didn't get a criminal record until he

put out his first record (Ed Gordon Interview).

Tupac hold conflicting views of violence. On one

hand he was very against violence, saying, "The

same crime element white people fear, black

people fear" (Ed Gordon). On the other hand, he

justifies violence as a means of protecting oneself

from a corrupt, racist police force. Tupac, himself,

was victim to police brutality when he was unfairly hassled for jaywalking in New York City. His friend Leila Steinberg remembers that once, while Tupac was living in her home, the police showed up on complaints that their music was too loud. Tupac, to Leila's chagrin, told the officer to wait while he adjusted the volume. Tupac then proceeded to turn on the song "Fuck the Police" (Thug Angel). This scenario is demonstrative mostly of Tupac's playfulness and arrogance. Police brutality and racial profiling is a serious problem in the United States and Tupac is justified in addressing this problem. However, an uglier side of his "fuck the police" mentality, associated with his conception of authenticity, showed when a Texas teen found guilty for murdering two police officers claimed

that Tupac's music had led him to do it (Thug

Angel).

Placing the blame on Tupac for the crime in

Texas, or hip hop music for inner city violence, is

overly simplistic. Tupac was condemned at the

republican national convention for his violent lyrics

(Thug Angel). This is an example of "symbolic

violence" on the part of politicians masking their

own culpability in the creation violence by stripping

social welfare programs, promoting laissez-faire

capitalism that removes jobs from inner cities, and

espousing counterproductive policies like the "War

on Drugs." The politicians blaming Tupac's music

for violence is their way of avoiding real social

problems, which they have the power to fix. Tupac

says "They got money for wars but can't feed the

poor" (Keep Ya Head Up). He acknowledges that

politicians are hypocritical and are not doing enough to help those in poor communities. In a response to criticism he received for his often violent and misogynist lyrics Tupac would often claim that his music was descriptive not prescriptive, showing the reality of life in poor urban communities rather than saying how it ought to be. He says, "Don't blame me/ I was given this world I didn't make it" (Keep Ya Head Up). While Tupac cannot be expected to have the same responsibility as American politicians and officials, he did have a significant influence on people through his music. In his life, Tupac did take part in making the world and should be subject to the same analysis and critique as those responsible for creating the world he inherited.

Hip hop provides a channel for the expression of historically marginalized groups that are not given a voice in many other areas of society. Tupac tried to be representative of poor black males, by adopting a public image of the "thug." This is problematic because along with it Tupac began to exhibit characteristics stereotypically associated with young black males. Gang violence is a real problem faced by those in urban communities. Tupac was painfully aware of this problem. In his song "Life Goes On" he laments the early death of "brothaz [who] fell victim to tha streetz" (Life Goes On). He says, "time to bury another brotha nobody cry". He sees these deaths as futile and largely ignored by society as a whole. Instead of purely bringing public awareness to this problem and documenting the struggles faced by

black men, among others, Tupac's adoption of a "thug" image promotes g something eerily similar to gang violence. He places himself at the forefront of the so called "east coast/ west coast" rivalry with the rapper Notorious B.I.G. Tupac says he "learned all that gang shit from the government" (Thug Angel). True as this observation might be, it does not justify emulating the behavior, especially since he is so critical of the gang mentality when it comes to the U.S. government. Tupac's involvement in these gang-like feuds developed as his association with "thug life" crystallized. Whereas Tupac's earlier raps were about important political and social issues as well as silly things like misplaced microphones (Thug Angel), his later lyrics show an increased focus on petty issues such as slamming rival rappers. A prime example of this

is when Tupac rapps, "I ain't got no motherfucking friends/ That's why I fucked your bitch/ You fat motherfucker" (Hit 'Em Up). This is directed at the rapper Notorious B.I.G. with whom he had public animosity. This preoccupation with being what Tupac sees as an authentic "thug" is an example of blurring the lines between what is real and what is represented, with devastating consequences.

In analyzing Tupac it is important to keep in mind his youth. In an interview he says, "in the future...I want people to be talkin about me like 'remember when Tupac was real bad'...like Sean Penn, he used to knock people out and everything... I wanna be that...ya know everybody changes, everybody becomes better people, we all should get that chance" (Interview with Tabitha). Tupac was tragically deprived of this chance when,

only twenty-five years old, he was shot and killed.

Young Tupac remarks, "Adults complicate things

and children don't...Everything wasn't meant to be

analyzed" (Interview 17). It is not productive to

criticize Tupac and point to the shortcomings of hip

hop just for the sake of it. Analyzing hip hop can

help to determine which of its aspects might and

might not be problematic and can help illuminate

hip hop's cultural significance, just as analyzing

Tupac reveals the significance of his life and legacy.

Tupac was a martyr for black male existence

and urban desperation, but the image of the "thug"

he began to conform to was problematic in several

regards. It was not representative of the range of

his character. He grew up with role models who,

"although they sold drugs...showed a young brotha

love" (Dear Mama). He was charismatic and could

make almost anyone like him. He listened to all kinds of music, from gangsta rap to Kate Bush (Holler 70). We was writing plays at the age of six (72). He read voraciously, from Shakespeare to Kurt Vonnegut to political philosopher Mikhail Bakunin (93). Perhaps because of this great range, Tupac felt conflicted about his identity. In a personal poem published after his death he writes, "How can I be in the depths of solitude/ when there R 2 inside of me/ This duo within me causes/ the perfect opportunity/ 2 learn and live twice as fast/ as those who accept simplicity" (The Rose that Grew from Concrete). The "2" inside of him could be referring to the inner conflict he felt about his identity, "trying to remain identified with black street life while trumpeting the urgency of political awareness" (Holler 157). It could have been the

stress due to trying to unify too many

characteristics of his personality into one unified

identity coupled with the stress and influence of

fame that ultimately led him to settle on simplicity,

on the identity of a "thug." Over the course of his

rise to fame, his metamorphosis into what he

mistook for "authentic," ultimately did a disservice

to himself and his fans. In his attempt to be

"authentic," Tupac became a little less "real". He

strove to represent the life he rapped about, and in

living up to this ideal he distanced himself from his

early idealism about solving society's ills, and

ultimately helping to fuel these ills by promoting

materialism, misogyny, and violence. In his attempt

to be "authentic" he reduced his many talents and

idiosyncrasies into the stereotype that too many

people refused to see him as anything but. Tupac

proved, regardless of the "thug" image he tried to

develop, that he could not be reduced to only

being a rapper or an actor, a victim or an instigator,

a hero or a villain, a thug or a ghetto angel.

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Advanced Level

Casting Light on the Statistical Life of Florence Nightingale

Jenna Miller

"Lo! in that house of misery,
A lady, with a lamp, I see
Pass thro' the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room."
H.W. Longfellow, Santa Filomena, 1857 [12]

This excerpt is from a poem by H. W. Longfellow, written shortly after an article was released describing the horrors of the Crimean war taking place in the Ukraine [1, p. 95]. The article described a nurse named Florence Nightingale making her way "alone, with a little lamp in her hand," through "those miles of prostrate sick." [2, p. 4] Santa Filomena, or Saint Philomena, whose name means "one who loves the moon," was about to be canonized as a Saint during the Crimean war

and the comparison to Florence Nightingale's

practice of caring for the sick all through the night

would not have been missed among readers [1, p.

96]. Longfellow's poem greatly contributed to the

iconic status of Florence Nightingale, or "Saint

Nightingale" as he called her [1, p. 96]. Known as

the founder of modern nursing and "The Lady with

the Lamp", Florence Nightingale loved

mathematics and "believed that statistics could be

used to improve the condition of humanity." [3, p.

172] Her contributions to the world of numbers

and her incredible determination in healthcare did

just that.

      While on a two year tour of Europe, a

wealthy British couple gave birth to their second

daughter Florence Nightingale in Florence, Italy on

May 12, 1820 [3, p. 159]. During the 19th century,

women didn't attend universities, so Nightingale

was educated at home by her father, a man who

understood the importance of education and had

studied at Edinburgh, Scotland. He was well

educated particularly in languages and philosophy.

Nightingale had a great interest in numbers. On

their family trip through Europe, "she kept a

notebook to record the distance traveled each day,

the times of departure and arrival, and notes on

the laws, the land systems, the social conditions

and benevolent institutions of the regions they

traveled through." [3, p. 159] Thus, it was no

surprise that when she was 20 years old, she

pleaded with her parents to "let her study

mathematics instead of doing worsted work and

practicing quadrilles." [9] The Quadrille was a type

of French square dance that was very difficult yet

extremely popular at that time. [11] According to

her mother, a proper lady should be spending her

time dancing and participating in social activities so

as to one day be married and keep a home.

Eventually, after much prodding, her

parents finally gave in to her desires and she began

studying under a tutor. Nightingale's love for

mathematics began to flourish and was expressed

in several letters. In a letter to her sweetheart she

wrote, "There is a most lovely character given of

D'Alembert's the great mathematician's

lightheartedness. It says that it is the exclusive

privilege of the exact science [mathematics], to

enjoy every day some new truth which comes to

reward one's work." [9]

Her father, through his connections with

many intellectuals of the time, created

opportunities to be exposed to many leading scientific figures of their day which, in turn, allowed her to create relationships with numerous scholars from across Europe. Nightingale had no trouble making lasting impressions as she was very bright, well-mannered, and lovely in appearance. [4, p. 67] Her enthusiasm and determination in her work was often met with hostility from her family who had hoped she would soon be satisfied with her education and marry. After being presented to a suitor followed by a long courtship, Nightingale, to her parents' disappointment, decided that she wouldn't be satisfied by marrying and "making society and arranging domestic things." [2, p. 2] In fact, she wrote in her diary that marriage meant "to be nailed to a continuation and exaggeration" of her present life and like "suicide." Nightingale

knew that God had a different plan for her. She continued to worked tirelessly studying statistics, mainly on public health and hospitals, often during the night and morning hours so as to not neglect her family duties. [4, p. 67]

Nursing in the 1800's was not a profession of high regard. In fact, nurses were generally ill-bred women of questionable morals with little if any training that were known to partake in frequent drunkenness and promiscuity [3, p. 160]. Nightingale, however, was drawn to the profession and truly felt that she was being called by God "to help her fellow human beings" [3, p. 159]. She began to gather information on hospitals by sending out questionnaires "on health administration and duly tabulating and analyzing the returns in her bedroom" [4, p. 67-68]. She

collected an impressive amount of statistical data on health and hospitals which essentially made her a professional in the field.

She accepted her first job in 1853 at 33 years old as an unpaid superintendent of an institution for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances, in Harley Street to which her mother "stormed, lamented and had to be given sal volatile [smelling salts]" and her sister "wept, raged, worked herself into a frenzy with hysterics, collapsed and had to be put to bed." [3, p. 161]

While she was only at Harley Street for about year, she made some incredible improvements throughout the facility. According to Bernard Cohen in his book *The Triumph of Numbers*, "She trained the nurses, saved money on

supplies, straightened out the accounts,

reorganized the housekeeping and cleaning, and

improved the food." [3, p. 161] She also kept

specific records of each patient noting their illness,

treatments, outcomes, discharges and deaths. [3,

p. 161] Nightingale recognized that, although

keeping such detailed data of social statistics was

uncommon at this time, reliable records were hard

evidence that could be used to evoke reform and

also demonstrate the idea that "social phenomena

could be objectively measured and subjected to

mathematical analysis." [2, p. 1]

While Nightingale was exploring her call to

nursing and statistics, a dispute was brewing

between Russia and Turkey and British and French

troops were sent to the Crimea, a peninsula of the

Ukraine located on the northern coast of the Black

Sea, to support Turkey. A War Office sent out a request in 1854 to take a party of nurses to Scutari Hospital. Scutari, located near the southwestern bank of the Black Sea on Bosphorus, the Istanbul Strait, was where the sick and wounded of the Crimean war were taken. Poor sanitation had become a serious issue among the patients.

During the first seven months of the Crimean war, a wounded soldier had a better chance of survival if left on the battlefield than being taken to an Army hospital. As Cohen states, "a goodly number of the expeditionary force came down with cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, and other disorders, and many died." [3, p. 162] Hospitals were absolutely unequipped, filthy, lacking in trained nurses, infested with vermin, and utterly incapable of providing successful healthcare

whatsoever. The particular hospital in Scutari was built over sewers and the strong stench would rise into the rooms. [3, p. 162]

When Nightingale and her team of nurses arrived at Scutari Hospital, they first scrubbed clean the wards and used boilers to clean the laundry. They obtained goods such as furniture, clothing, and better food through donations or through Nightingale's own donations. Cleaning the latrines, removing a dead horse carcass from the water supply, and ventilating the wards, are just a few of the many tasks they did to improve Scutari Hospital, things we would call now "common sense".

On top of all of this administration work, Nightingale still found time to care for the sick patients, usually late at night carrying a lamp,

hence the source of the name "Lady with a Lamp".

She didn't allow other women into the wards at

night, so she did her endless rounds alone which

led to one of the several legends surrounding

Nightingale, the "ministering angel" of the Crimea.

Nightingale, of course, kept detailed

records of the patients. The first months of the

Crimean campaign produced the morbidly high

mortality rate of 60% from disease alone. This

percentage is greater than that of the Great Plague

of 1665 in London.   As reported in Bernard Cohen's

Triumph of Numbers, "In January 1855 the

mortality in all British hospitals in Turkey and the

Crimea (excluding men killed in action) reached an

annual rate of 1,174 per 10,000, calculated on the

average patient population. Of this number, 1,023

deaths per 10,000 were attributable to epidemic,

endemic, and contagious disease." [3, p. 164]

Therefore, if this rate had continued for a year

without replacing those who died, "disease alone

would have wiped out the entire British army in the

Crimea." [2, p. 5] Cohen adds, "In February, 1855,

the mortality rate at the hospital was 42.7 percent

of the cases treated." [2, p. 4]

While people had been collecting statistical

data for hundreds of years before Nightingale's

time, analysis and presentation of such data was

not a common practice. Nightingale used

comparative tables, charts, colorful diagrams and

graphs to show her results in a myriad of ways.

The use of several methods to calculate and

compare the numbers was extremely innovative

and helped not only to promote the use of

statistics but to illustrate the impact of disease,

reform and the results of their efforts. We will see

some examples of these methods later.

According to Nightingale's statistical data,

once the new sanitation reforms were put into

place, by the Spring of 1855 the mortality rate

dramatically dropped from 42.7 percent to 2.2

percent. "By the end of the war, according to

Nightingale, the death rate among sick British

soldiers in Turkey was 'not much more' than it was

among healthy soldiers in England; even more

remarkable, the mortality among all British troops

in the Crimea was 'two-thirds only of what it [was]

among our troops at home.'" [2, p. 5]

Though in the 1800's not much was known

about disease, how it spreads, or how to prevent it,

Nightingale's numbers were clear evidence of the

correlation between good health and clean air and

proper sanitation, and she wasn't about to stop at the numbers. Nightingale was determined to use this information to change the face of nursing and health care. Eventually, with great determination, she finally was granted a formal investigation of military health care in May, 1857, which established the Royal Commission on the Health of the Army.

While this was a big advancement for Nightingale, she knew, as a woman (even an educated one), the difficulties of being heard; furthermore, she knew that in order for the government to reform, it had to base its decisions on significant fact. Thus, she gathered together a group of people, each in a special field, to collaborate and validate her information. She called upon the help of many leading statisticians

in England, particularly Dr. William Farr, a doctor who had dedicated much of his studies to sanitation, a statistician, and a close friend of hers. [4, p. 68] Dr. Farr, as Diamond and Stone put it in their 1981 article *Nightingale on Quetelet*, "was able to advise FN [Florence Nightingale] on statistical procedure and, more importantly, to provide her with information from official statistical sources, sometimes before these statistics were made generally available... As a motto for their work, he suggested a line from Goethe: 'It has been held that the world is governed by numbers: (be that as it may) this I know that numbers teach us whether the world is well or ill-governed.'" [4, p. 69]

Nightingale's report "Notes on matters affecting the health, efficiency, and hospital

administration of the British Army, founded chiefly on the experience of the late war," is a collaboration of her work on the health of the British army. She reviewed health services, addressed the health of the British soldiers in peace time, included her calculations, comparative tables and diagrams (seen on pages 8-10), even explained how to provide nourishing food for 1,000 soldiers with only 26 cooking pots.

One thing Dr. Farr and Nightingale did not agree on was the addition of the colorful diagrams and illustrations. Dr. Farr thought the presentation should be more of hard facts than impressions. Diamond and Stone relay his argument,

"'We do not want impressions, We want facts' he wrote critically in 1861. 'Again I must repeat my objections to intermingling

Causation with Statistics ... The statistician has nothing to do with causation; he is almost certain in the present state of knowledge to err   ...   You complain that your report would be dry. The dryer the better. Statistics should be the dryest of all reading. What I complain of is that on reading your report I am   conscious of receiving a wrong impression,   because   your   details   are   not sufficiently dry   and sufficiently extensive.'" [4, p. 70]

 On the contrary, in a letter to Sidney Herbert, the commission's chairman and longstanding friend of Nightingale's, she writes, "None but scientific men ever look into the appendices of a Report. And this is for the vulgar [common] public. ... Now, who is the vulgar public who is to have it? 1. The Queen. ..." [3, p. 174] For this reason, Nightingale thought

the presentation would be better received with illustrations of soldiers in their barracks and diagrams, as she did for her "Observations on the Sanitary State of the Army in India" commenting that "the queen might look at her copy 'because it has pictures.'" [3, p. 174].

While Nightingale wasn't an inventor of the statistical diagram, she was certainly an innovator in creating a new design. [3, p. 173] She invented polar-area charts, a sort of pie chart with wedges complete with color-coated sections. "The statistic being represented [the colored section] is proportional to the area of a wedge in a circular diagram." [2, p. 6] The colors were not only to look nice, but to also emphasize the extent "to which deaths in the Crimea campaign has been preventable." [2, p. 6] She referred to these as

"coxcombs" in her report, since their shape and colors resemble the crest on the head of a cock. Her original creation of the chart is represented in Figure 4, known as the "bat's wing" which she revised into the final product in Figure 5.

Nightingale's reports were submitted to the Royal Commission and became the leading authority on the medical administration of the armies. Charts from the Royal Commission's report submitted by Nightingale can be seen in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3. If you notice, she compares the death rate of the British army to that of the civilians which allows the reader of her reports to get an accurate idea of how poor the conditions were.

Age.	English Soldiers.				Completed Years of Service.
	Living.	Dying and Invalided.	Dying.	Invalided.	
20	10,000	350	169	181	0
21	9,650	325	168	157	1
22	9,325	305	166	139	2
23	9,020	289	164	125	3
24	8,731	278	162	116	4
25	8,453	270	160	110	5
26	8,183	265	159	106	6
27	7,918	264	158	106	7
28	7,654	263	157	106	8
29	7,391	266	155	111	9
30	7,125	271	153	118	10
31	6,854	275	150	125	11
32	6,579	282	147	135	12
33	6,297	288	145	143	13
34	6,009	296	144	152	14
35	5,713	302	144	158	15
36	5,411	307	143	164	16
37	5,104	313	141	172	17
38	4,791	315	138	177	18
39	4,476	318	135	183	19
40	4,158				

Figure 1: As it says above the chart, "TABLE showing, of 10,000 recruits, at Age 20, the Numbers remaining at each successive year of Age, up to 40, and also the Numbers annually eliminated by Invaliding [illness] or by Death. -- It has been constructed by the facts supplied by the Army Reports and the paper by Dr. Balfour [the Army Doctor recruited onto Nightingale's team for research] on Invaliding. The principle of construction is the same of that employed at the General Register Office in constructing Life Tables. It is assumed that soldiers enter the service at the Age of 20 years. [10, table marked F --a]

Lines

Representing the Relative Mortality, from different Causes, of the Army in the East in Hospital and of the English Male Population aged 15—45.

Causes of Death.	Annual Rate of Mortality per Cent.	Deaths.	
All Causes	1·0		Englishmen.
	22·9		English Soldiers.
1. Zymotic Diseases	·2		Englishmen.
	18·7		English Soldiers.
2. Constitutional Diseases	·4		Englishmen.
	·3		English Soldiers.
3. Local Diseases	·3		Englishmen.
	·9		English Soldiers.
4. Developmental Diseases	—		Englishmen
	—		English Soldiers.
5. Violent Deaths	·4		Englishmen.
	3·0		English Soldiers.

James Lewis, del., General Register Office.

All the lines on this Diagram would require to be lengthened Tenfold to be on the same scale as the lines on Diagrams A and B.
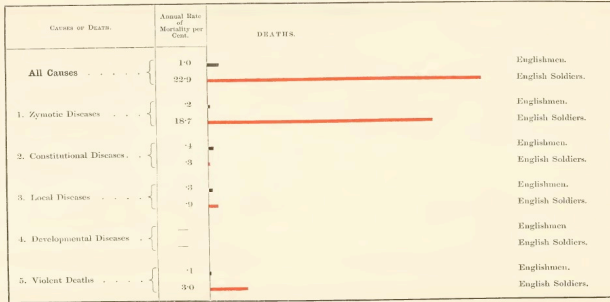
Figure 2: Relative Mortality of "Englishmen" (top bar of each category) and "Soldiers"(bottom bar of each category) from different causes for ages 15-45. From top to bottom, the causes are as follows: All Causes, Zymotic Diseases [Zymotic is an old name for a contagious disease, thought to have developed in the body after infection, similar to the process of fermentation and growth of yeast], Constitutional Diseases, Local Diseases, Developmental Diseases, and Violent deaths. [10, p. 11]
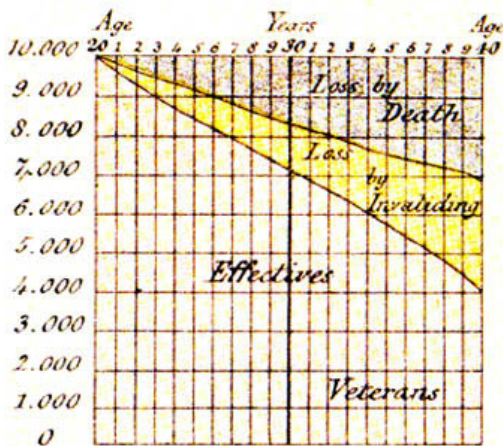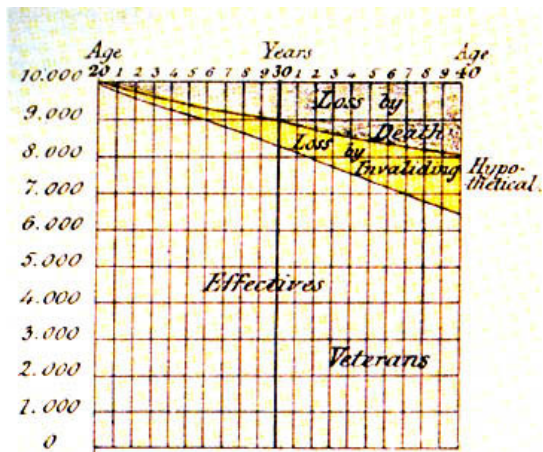
Figure 3: Displayed is the loss of manpower in the British army due to excess mortality or invalidity. These assume that 10,000 new 20 year old recruits enter into the force annually and that each soldier's career lasts 20 years. "Effectives" refers to the

years that a soldier is ready and fit for service, which is between 20 years old and 40 years old. "Young Soldiers" refers to beginning soldiers from 1- 10 years of service or from 20 to 30 years old. "Veterans" refers to men that have had 10-20 years of experience in the army which is from 30 years old to 40 years old. Each rectangle represents 1,000 men. [2, p. 5] Left: Represents the Army at Home [British Army] at its present state. Right: Represents what the Army would be like if the mortality rate were the same as the Civilian mortality rate and if the Invalidating bore the same proportion to the Deaths as it does in the one on the left. The invalidating may be more but would probably be less than it is represented on the right. [10, p. F]
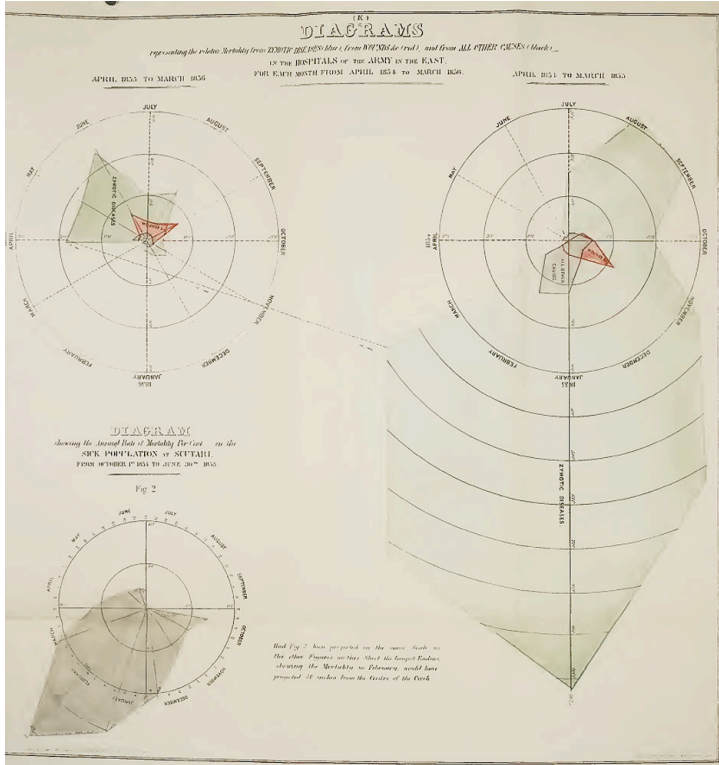
Figure 4: Nightingale's original coxcomb diagram. The green (largest lightly shaded outside region) represents deaths from disease. The red (inner darker shaded region) represents deaths from wounds. The following explanation appeared with the original: "The diagrams represent the ANNUAL RATE of Mortality per 1000 in the Hospitals of the Army in the East [British Army hospitals like Scutari] for each Month from April 1854 to March 1856.
"The inner circle shows the Mortality which the Army would have experienced if it had been subject to the same rate which prevailed in one of the unhealthiest Cities of England (Manchester). The

distances between the Centre and the second, the second and the third circles &c. each represent 100 deaths to 1000 living. The Annual rate of Mortality in any particular Month is shown by the length of the radial line extending from the centre in the direction of the Month indicated on the outer circle. "Thus: In January 1855 the Annual rate of Mortality per 1000 was 1174: a higher rate than that which prevailed during the Month (September) when the Mortality was highest in the year of the Great Plague, 1665." [10]
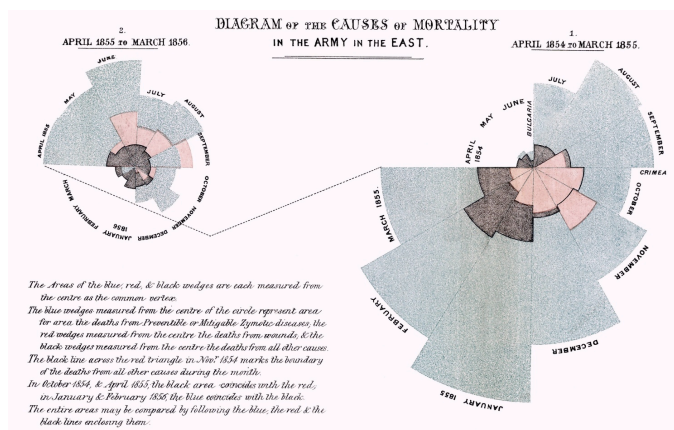

Figure 5: The "coxcomb" diagrams. As the chart says, "The Areas of the blue [outside gray], red [light gray], & black [darkest inside gray] wedges are each measured from the centre as the common vertex. The blue wedges measured from the centre of the circle represent area for area the deaths from Preventible or Mitigable [able to be alleviated] Zymotic diseases, the red wedges

measured from the centre the deaths from wounds, & the black wedges measured from the centre the deaths from all other causes. The black line across the red triangle in Nov. 1854 marks the boundary of the deaths from all other causes during the month. In October 1854, & April 1855, the black area coincides with the red, in January & February 1856, the blue coincides with the black. The entire areas may be compared by following the blue, the red, & the black lines enclosing them." [10]

The Royal Commission established four sub-commissions for the purpose of carrying out certain reforms in its report, almost word-for-word from Nightingale's suggestions. A commission took control of physical alterations such as ventilation in military barracks and hospitals, sewage disposal, water supply, heating, etc. Others worked on drafting a code for the army, setting up a medical school and revamped the system for collecting statistics. [2, p. 6]

Nightingale's work in the Crimean War led to countless improvements on the British home-

front; however, that was not enough for Nightingale. She continued to push the Royal Commission to consider the conditions of health care and sanitation of the British stations in India. Along with her trusty partner Dr. Farr, she researched the mortality and sickness rates from the India Office, which included a death rate six times higher than the rate among civilians in England. They determined that several causes of this rate include, as stated in Bernard Cohen's article *Florence Nightingale*, "defective sewage systems, overcrowding in the barracks, lack of exercise and inadequate hospitals", causes very similar to those in the Scutari Hospital [2, p. 6]. After the submission of Nightingale's report of conditions in India and ten years of sanitary

reform, she reported the decline of the death rate from 69 to 18 per 1,000 [2, p. 6].

Nightingale's knowledge of the impact of utilizing statistics was certainly way before her time. "Uniform and accurate hospital statistics, she wrote, would 'enable the value of particular methods of treatment and of special operations to be brought to statistical proof '; in short statistics would lead to improvement in medical and surgical practice." [2, p. 6] As Nightingale learned, hospitals during that time were not very organized and didn't keep detailed records; thus, Nightingale, Dr. Farr and other physicians came up with a Model Hospital Statistical Form. This new form set new standards on how to keep records in hospitals and, unfortunately, was never put into general practice due to its complexity.

Nightingale, having made quite the name for herself, became a consultant both to the United States during the American Civil War and the British war office in Canada on matters of army health. "Her mathematical activities included ascertaining 'the average speed of transport by sledge' and calculating 'the time required to transport the sick over the immense distances of Canada.'" [9] In 1858, she was elected to membership in the Statistical Society of England based on her impressive work in statistics and advancements in healthcare.

In addition to her work improving military healthcare, Nightingale took statistics to a whole new level, believing that statistics can reveal truths about mankind, philosophy, even the laws of God. During the International Statistical Congress held in

London in 1860, organized by Dr. Farr, Nightingale,

who didn't get to attend due to invalidity after the

Crimean War, was determined to meet a

statistician named Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874).

She was quite familiar with Quetelet's book

Physique Sociale (1835) and was utterly inspired by

the work. She told Dr. Farr, "I never read

Quetelet's *Physique Sociale* (which I have done

over and over again) without being astounded at

the force of genius and accurate observation which

has produced such a work." [4, p. 71]

Nightingale knew the importance of

informal interaction and offered her home to any

delegates from the Congress, specifically Quetelet.

[4, p. 71] Her meeting with Quetelet, like most of

Nightingale's meetings, turned into a friendship,

much to her delight. Nightingale sent Quetelet her

book *Notes on Lying -- in Institutions* and in return

Quetelet sent her two volumes of *Physique Sociale*,

revamped in 1869, and another work of his,

L'Anthropometrie, a work particularly of interest as

it monitored the supposed decline of the average

man which Nightingale, as well as other sanitarians,

feared would occur if the environment didn't

improve. [4, p. 72]

Quetelet's writings also touched on

philosophy, a topic, as mentioned earlier, very dear

to Nightingale. "Throughout her life, she was

attracted by certain aspects of mysticism, and

statistics became part of her search for God." [4, p.

72] Through Nightingale's study of Quetelet, she

believed he was truly "seeking the Laws of the

Moral World" and "has done so much to discover

the action or plan of Supreme Wisdom and

Goodness". [4, p. 72] To Nightingale, this was the

basis for practical application of statistics, as she

explains to Quetelet,

> "On my part this passionate study is not in
> the least based on a love of science, a love I
> would not pretend I possessed. It comes
> uniquely from the fact that I have seen so
> much of the misery and sufferings of
> humanity, of the irrelevance of laws and of
> Governments, of the stupidity, dare I say it?
> of our political system, of the dark blindness
> of those who involve themselves in guiding
> our body social that ... frequently it comes
> to me as a flash of light across my spirit that
> the only study worthy of that name is that
> of which you have so firmly put forward the
> principles." [4, p. 72]

Nightingale wrote extensively over the margins in

her copy of Quetelet's *Physique Sociale*. Her

writings can be read in the article Diamond and

Stone produced in 1981 called *Nightingale on*

Quetelet II: The Marginalia. [5] Nightingale also

wrote a critical essay of Quetelet's writings which

she called *Essay in Memoriam,* dedicated to

Quetelet shortly after his death in 1874. In this essay, she approaches the concept of Moral Law, discusses importance of learning these laws and how they are supported by solid numbers. She writes about ideas of "Original Sin", a "perfect God", and even quoting historic philosophers like Plato.

For example, she explores the correlation between criminals and education, bringing in Quetelet's work of course:

> "We have now the most exact numbers of how many thefts there will be *per annum:* always *pre-supposing* the present Social State to continue -- at precisely what ages these thefts will be committed -- how many of the thieves will be able to read & write, how many to read only, & how many neither to read nor write. ... There is also a most curious speculation as to how far education -- not diminishes crime but-- only increases the probability of a criminal 'getting off' -- i.e. of his not being committed or not being convicted -- so much so that Quetelet gives us a *Table* of

what are our superior advantages for not being convicted." [6, p. 336]

She uses Quetelet's *Table* to show that one predictor for not being convicted is a superior education. The Essay continues on using the statistics provided in Quetelet's writings to dive into more issues regarding marriage, suicide, murder, and other social issues. One can read fully her philosophy on Moral Law as translated in Diamond and Stone's 1981 article, *Nightingale on Quetelet III: Essay in Memoriam.* [6]

Florence Nightingale was a woman of long-lasting determination and deep thought, and her love of statistics stemmed from a constant struggle for truth. Nightingale took her calling from God to be a nurse, an administrator and a mathematician whole-heartedly which meant battling her family,

her superiors, political figures, and even societal norms concerning women. Through all of her efforts and with her statistical sword at her side, Nightingale succeeded in transforming hospitals around the world and ascertaining a deeper understanding of the Laws of Man. To conclude, the penultimate stanza of Longfellow's poem accurately illustrates Nightingale's legacy:

"A Lady with a Lamp shall stand

In the great history of the land,

A noble type of good,

Heroic womanhood." [11]

Appendix

Saint Filomena (1857) - Saint Nightingale -- a
tribute to Florence, the saint of the Crimea
When'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls
And lifts us, unawares,
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow,
Raise us from what is low!

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead--
The trenches cold and damp--
The stared and frozen camp--

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain--
The cheerless corridors--
The cold and stony floors.

Lo! in that house of misery,
A lady, with a lamp, I see
Pass thro' the glimmering gloom,

And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened, and then closed suddenly,
The vision came and went,
The light shone, and was spent.

On England's annals, thro' the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily, the spear--
The symbols that of yore
Saint Filomena bore.

H. W. Longfellow [11]

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Austin Hornbostel is going to attend Truman State University and major in journalism. He wrote this paper after observing the influence of gender roles in mass media. He lives in Raytown, Missouri with his mother and sister.

Jenna Miller is interested in a myriad of subjects and is a student at UMKC studying Music, Nursing, and Math. Originally from Wichita, Kansas and the youngest of four diverse children, Jenna's thirst for knowledge has continued to provide such variety and joy to her life.

Abigail Newsham is a student from St. Louis, Missouri with an unexplainable passion for observing the interactions around her.

Caresse Ryan is an undergraduate student at UMKC. She previously graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with degrees in Art History and Archaeology and Anthropology. She is currently working on an English degree with an emphasis in Classical literature at UMKC. She also spent several months in Cardiff, Wales learning to

love the Welsh and sheep. She hopes to one day return and possibly stay.

Nathalie Solger loves learning and studying new things, especially if it is in her field of interest. She is the type of person that when she becomes interested in something, she has to learn and understand everything about it. She also does not give up on things easily, she pushes herself to keep going until she has learned or perfected whatever she is doing.

Emma V. Winkler is from Kansas City. She likes to kayak, make films and take walks.

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