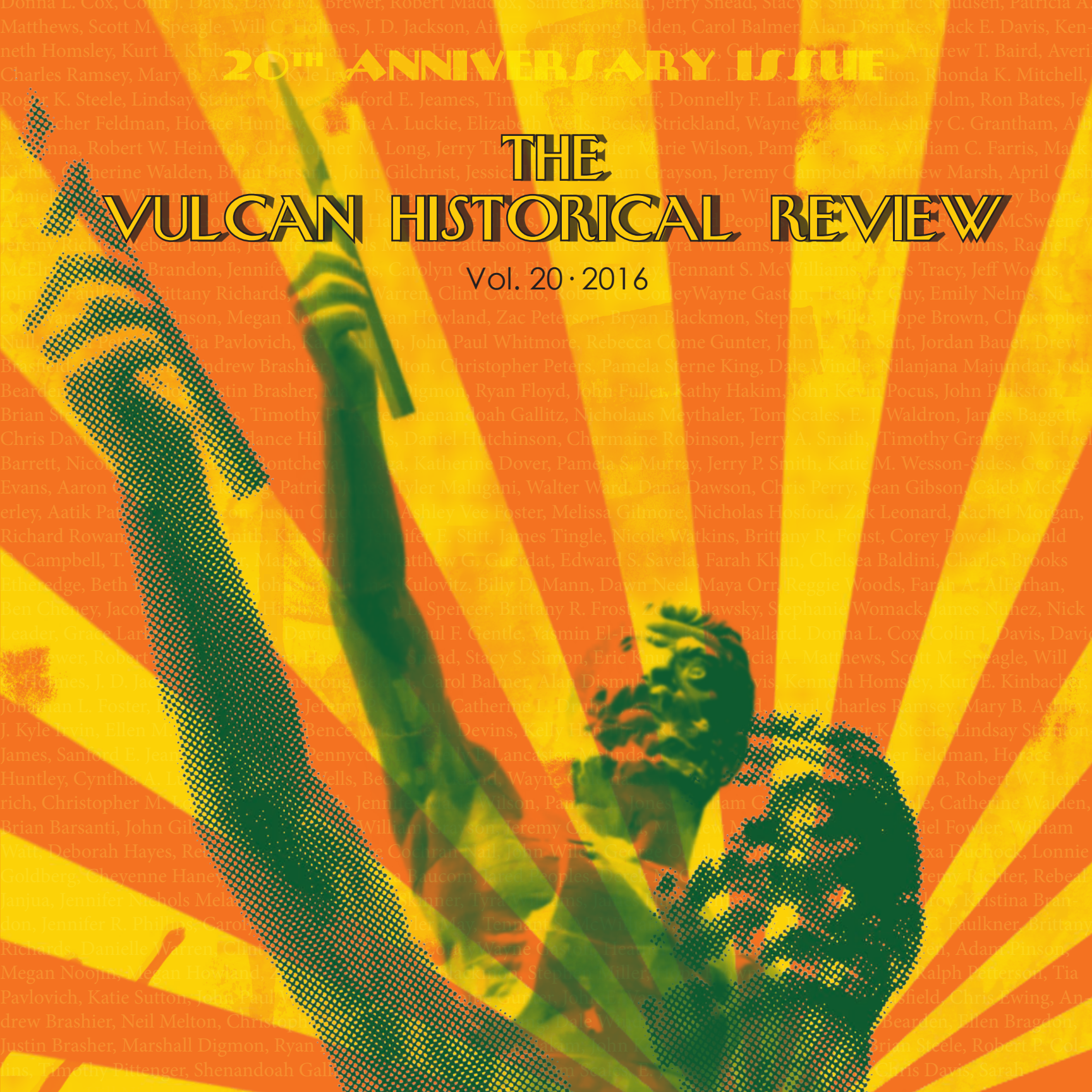
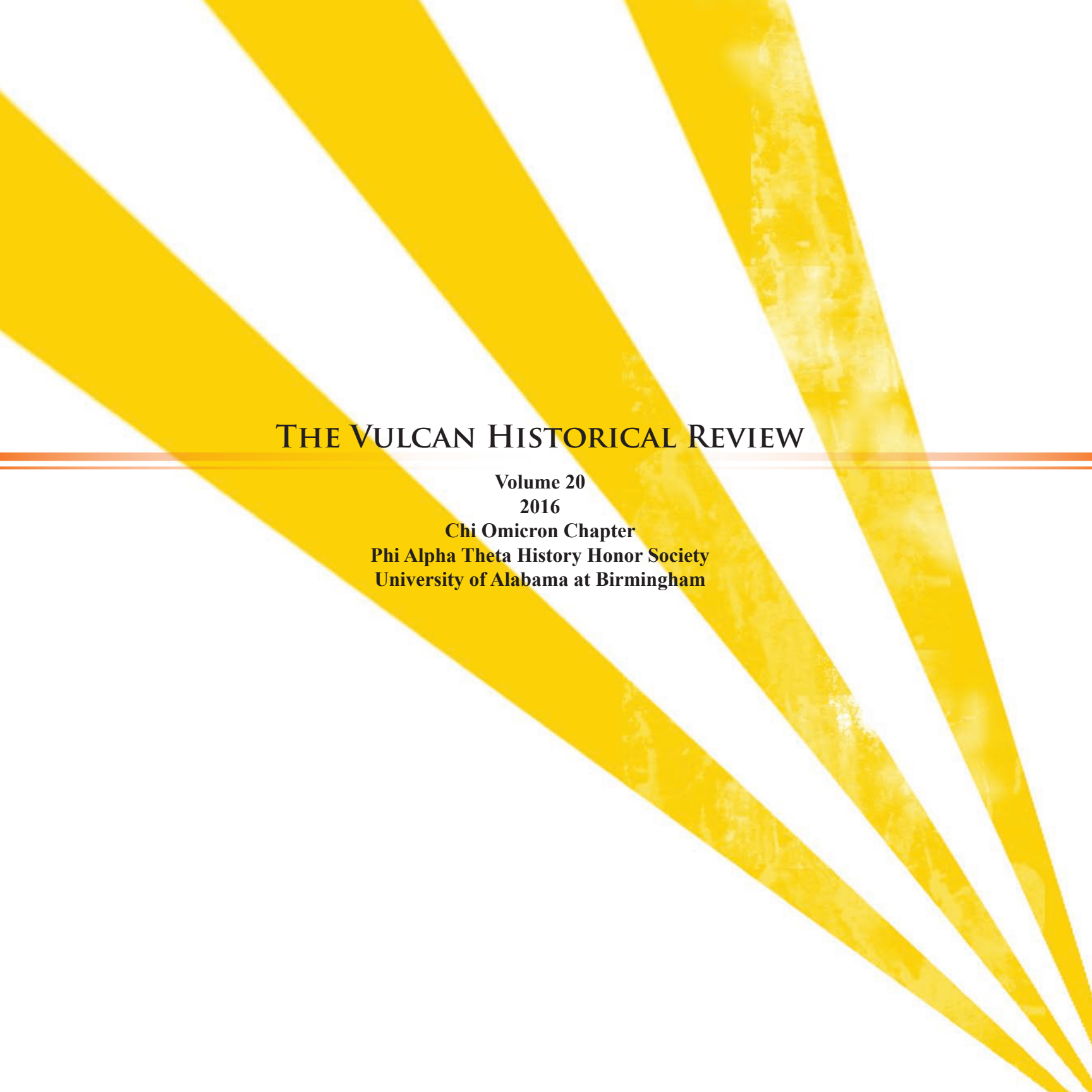




20th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

THE VULCAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

Vol. 20 • 2016



THE VULCAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

**Volume 20
2016**

**Chi Omicron Chapter
Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society
University of Alabama at Birmingham**



The Vulcan Historical Review

Volume 20

2016

2016 Editorial Staff

Executive Editor

Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

Graphic Designer

Brandon Wicks

Editorial Board

Katherine Dover

George Evans

Timothy Granger

Anna Kaetz

Grace Larkin

Nick Leader

Tyler Malugani

Chris Perry

Stephanie Womack

Zoe Zaslowsky

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Walter Ward

Co-Sponsors

The Linney Family Endowment for *The Vulcan Historical Review*

Dr. Linda Lucas, Provost, UAB

Dr. Suzanne Austin, Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success, UAB

Dr. Robert Palazzo, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, UAB

The Department of History, UAB

The Vulcan Historical Review is published annually by the Chi Omicron Chapter (UAB) of Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society. The journal is completely student-edited by undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

©2016 Chi Omicron Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society, the University of Alabama at Birmingham. All rights reserved. No material may be duplicated or quoted without the express written permission of the author. The University of Alabama at Birmingham, its departments, and its organizations disclaim any responsibility for statements, either in fact or opinion, made by contributors herein.

Cover art by Brandon Wicks, based on the picture “Vulcan at Night,” by Morgan Nicole Walston.

All students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, including recent alumni, are encouraged to submit research articles, book reviews, film reviews, essays, oral histories, historical fictions, or other works of historical interest to be considered for publication. Submissions by any currently enrolled history undergraduate or graduate student from other institutions are also welcome. Please send inquiries to:

Phi Alpha Theta Advisor
History Department HHB 360
University of Alabama at Birmingham
1401 University Boulevard
Birmingham, Alabama 35294

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>LETTER FROM THE EDITOR</i>	8
<i>VULCAN HISTORICAL REVIEW</i> RETROSPECTIVE: CELEBRATING OUR 20 TH ANNIVERSARY	11
AUT CONSILIIIS AUT ENSLE / BY COUNCIL OR BY SWORD.....	16

ARTICLES

The Magic City: Birmingham History

<i>End of the Line: The Rise and Fall of Street Railways in Birmingham</i>	23
--	----

by Robby Ballard

The Hot Birmingham Summer of 1894: How a Mine Strike Shaped

<i>Alabama's Racist Political Destiny for More Than Six Decades</i>	32
---	----

by James D. Nunez

<i>The Feminist Myth: Second-Wave Feminism in The Birmingham News Advertising</i>	47
---	----

by Yasmin El-Husari

The 22nd State: Alabama History

True Reform or Just Whistling Dixie? Child Labor Legislation and Alabama's

<i>Progressive Governor and Cotton Mill Owner Braxton Bragg Comer</i>	57
---	----

by Stephanie Womack

<i>We Do Not Want Your Tired and Your Poor: Alabama's Immigration Policies (1870-1910)</i>	73
--	----

by Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

<i>Tried and Blue: The Unionist Origins of Alabama's Blue Spot</i>	90
by David Henslee	
<i>Beyond The Whipping Post: The Judicial Sanctioning of Cruel and Unusual Punishment in Atmore Prison 1964-August 28, 1975</i>	104
by John David Russell	
 Stars and Stripes: U. S. History	
<i>The Seeds of Disfranchisement: How Booker T. Washington Influenced New South Ideals and Paved the Way for Jim Crow</i>	124
by Tyler Malugani	
<i>Drugs, Attempted Assassinations and Shock Therapy: The 1972 Presidential Election's Influence on the Modern Election Cycle</i>	133
by Chris Perry	
 Beyond the Water's Edge: World History	
<i>Survivors to Nation Builders: The Story of the "New Jew"</i>	150
by Zoe Zaslawsky	
<i>A Virgin Population Epidemic</i>	163
by Katherine Dover	
<i>Uneasy Lies the Head: Richard II, Henry IV, and the Struggle for Legitimacy</i>	169
by Timothy Granger	
<i>The Horrible Life of Gladiators: Revisionist History and the Violence of Roman Gladiatorial Games</i>	185
by George Evans	

ORAL HISTORY191

BOOK REVIEWS.....202

Credit, Fashion, Sex: Economies of Regard in Old Regime France.....203

Reviewed by Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

The Great Melding: War, the Dixiecrat Rebellion, and the Southern Model for America’s New Conservatism206

Reviewed by Aaron Getman-Pickering

Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government.....209

Reviewed by Chris Perry

Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government.....212

Reviewed by Paul Gentle

FILM REVIEW215

Suffragette216

Reviewed by Zoe Zaslawsky

TRIBUTE TO JERRY SMITH.....220

IN MEMORIAM.....226

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND EDITORS232

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

IT COULD not have been a more exciting time to work on the *Vulcan Historical Review* (VHR) as we celebrate our 20th anniversary volume. We cannot fail to recognize that we stand here today, because of the efforts of all previous editors, authors, and faculty advisors whose annual hard work has paved the way. In recognition of their work, we have decided to use their names to create the cover of this year's journal. The twenty stepping stones that form VHR's path have been built on the achievements of all those who came before us, and we thought it fitting to represent this visually by using their names as building material for the cover.

Our current issue has been largely inspired by the work and vision of previous editors. The statue of Vulcan, the symbol of the city of Birmingham, AL. and namesake of our journal, was on VHR's first cover: this became a tradition and continued on all covers until Volume 17. This year, in recognition of our roots, we are going back to using Vulcan on the cover, albeit in a more modern interpretation.

In "VHR Retrospective: Celebrating our 20th Anniversary," we asked our journal's first faculty advisor, Dr. Colin Davis, and our first executive editor, Dr. Donna Cox-Baker, to offer us a glimpse of the journal's beginning. We are greatly indebted to these first pioneers who envisioned and brought to fruition the idea of a journal at UAB's History Department thus offering numerous students the opportunity to learn and grow as editors and writers.

In yet another wink at our beginnings, we are featuring an oral history section. This had been a tradition in earlier VHR issues that we have revived this year in a collaborative effort with Samford University's Department of History. We are also very excited to start a new discussion section entitled "Aut Consiliis Aut Ensis/By Council or By Sword," which we would like to establish as a platform for students to engage in discussions on historical issues currently in the public's eye. The question we posed this year, pertinent to the South, was: should Confederate monuments be removed? Our two debaters, who by the caprice of fate are originally from the North, excellently defend the opposing sides of a very sensitive and heated public discussion.

While the last ten months have been largely filled with the excitement and joy of working on the journal, a great sadness touched all of us when on October 19, 2015 we lost one of our excellent faculty members, Dr. Glenn Feldman. Dr. Feldman, a renowned authority on the U.S. South, esteemed colleague, and an outstanding teacher loved by all his students, left a great void in all of those who had the joy and privilege of knowing him. His expertise, good-heartedness, and larger than life personality will be greatly missed. He is remembered in our "In Memoriam" section by his teacher and mentor, Dr. Wayne Flint, and by one of his students, Tyler Malugani.

This 20th volume would not have been possible without all our undergraduate and graduate authors whose excel-

lent articles, book, and film reviews we have the honor to publish. Their outstanding scholarship and passion transpire through the pages of their work, and we all hope that reading this journal will be as enjoyable a journey as it has been creating it. We have been lucky this year to receive articles on a remarkable variety of topics that we have divided in four sections. We open with a selection of papers on local Birmingham history, pass through several articles analyzing different aspects of Alabama's history, proceed with two articles that explore issues pertinent to the whole of the United States, and finish with several papers that examine different aspects and epochs of world history. The richness of topics collected in this volume attests to the varied interests of our authors and offers a colorful kaleidoscope where everyone will find something of interest.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank our faculty advisor, Dr. Walter Ward, for his constant counsel, support, and kindness. We also extend special thanks to the whole faculty at the Department of History under whose guidance all included papers have been produced. We also express our deep gratitude to our Department Chair, Dr. Colin Davis, who has always enthusiastically supported our publication. We would also like to express our gratitude to our Administrative Associate, Melanie Daily, and our Office Service Specialist, Alisa Dick, for their collaboration and support. Timothy Granger, Stephanie Womack, and Katherine Dover, whose advice and help have been greatly appreciated, also deserve special mention. Despite all of our efforts, this volume would not have been possible without the financial support of all our sponsors. As always, we are deeply indebted to the Linney Family for their endowment, to Dr. Linda Lucas (Provost), Dr. Suzanne Austin (Vice-Provost), and Dr. Robert Palazzo (Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences).

Words cannot express all the gratitude that we feel for each and every one who has worked on, or supported, the VHR in the last twenty years. Thank you all. We would not be here today if it were not for your hard work and dedication.

***VULCAN HISTORICAL REVIEW* RETROSPECTIVE:
CELEBRATING OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY**

Remembering Work on the First Volume of the Vulcan Historical Review

by Dr. Colin Davis, Chair of the History Department at UAB, first faculty advisor to the *Vulcan Historical Review*.

HOW TIME flies. In 1997, I had been the Faculty Advisor to Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) for about a year. During discussions with PAT members it seemed like a worthwhile endeavor to try and produce a historical journal. Fortunately, we had Donna Cox who had experience in publishing. Entering a strange and frightening domain, the students (and I) began the process of gathering essays and reviews. Luckily, we had an excellent editorial board. David Brewer comes to mind. David came to UAB after working for a period of time. His enthusiasm for local history made him a natural for inclusion in the first volume. His essay on Blount County set the scene. Just as fortunate, Staci Simon (now Staci Glover) had done excellent research on the Slavic community of Brookside and sent in an essay on the topic.

As we began the process of organizing the journal, it became apparent we needed funding to help offset the costs. I took on the responsibility to meet with Dean Tennant McWilliams who graciously offered to help. I also met with Joan Lorden, the Dean of the Graduate School, she also agreed to support the journal. As I was quickly discovering, this process was a collaborative one. So many people, students, faculty and administrators were eager for it to work.

As the deadline approached for the publication, there was an air of eager anticipation. Once printed, the first *Vulcan Historical Review (VHR)* had four essays and book reviews. It was off to a flying start. Since then, there has been a *VHR* produced every year. And as the process has continued, the *VHR* has received rave reviews from students and faculty, and, of course, from the national headquarters. Each year, a new cadre of students has taken on the task of producing another volume. I applaud all those editorial board members and contributors for making the *VHR* such a tremendous success.

Finally, I must thank all those administrators from the Dean's office to that of the Graduate Dean and Provost for their continuing support. The recent editions of the *VHR* attest to the vitality of our History majors and graduate students. Thanks one and all.

Remembering Work on the First Volume of the Vulcan Historical Review

by Dr. Donna Cox Baker, Editor-in-Chief of *Alabama Heritage*, first executive editor of the *Vulcan Historical Review*.

IT IS both poignant and wondrous to realize that twenty years have passed since we first began to talk of creating a journal—an extracurricular project that became *The Vulcan Historical Review*. The twenty years have been enhanced in numerous ways because of that project. In fact, I truly owe my career to it.

I remember the first mention of the prospect. The UAB history graduate students were asked to gather one night in a classroom in our old Ullman building—originally a 1901 grammar school that still smelled of crayons. We were assembled to meet our new department chair, Raymond Mohl, an urban historian who had come from Florida. I was working on a master’s degree in history in hopes of pursuing a career in historical publishing, so I was thrilled when Dr. Mohl rolled out the idea of starting a journal in the department. We were going to walk out of UAB “published” and with editorial credentials. I worked full-time and went to school at night, but this was one extracurricular activity I was not going to miss.

The task fell to Dr. Colin Davis to make the vision happen. He seemed to us the young pup among the faculty at that time, a scholar on his way up, full of energy and vision—qualities he appears to have maintained over the decades. Our first editorial board had four talented, bright, ambitious students: David Brewer, Robert Maddox, Sameera Hasan, and Jerry Snead. Together, we brainstormed, argued, synergized and took the project from idea to finished product.

I don’t remember how I became the managing editor exactly. I think it just evolved as we began to wrangle over all the details. I have been told I can be bossy, so I probably just took over. We were all leading in various ways, though - all-creating - and it was a joy. We were certainly happy with the outcome.

Compared to the very impressive journals *Vulcan* editors have produced in recent years, our first issue looks relatively unsophisticated, with its grainy image and taped binding. Of course, the Internet was just catching on back then, and “desktop publishing” was a relatively new invention. It was, for its time and budget, “state of the art.” We were proud of it as a first effort, but I don’t think any of us imagined it could compete with the long-established journals of the country’s best history programs. Yet it did.

We were thrilled and rather astonished when the national Phi Alpha Theta history honor society awarded the premier edition of the *Vulcan Historical Review* second place in its annual journal competition. Though I had been very happy with my education at UAB, I think this was when I first realized the quality of our academic leadership. Every paper in that journal owed itself to great teaching by dedicated professors, and it was a privilege to be a part of it. The national honors in the next couple of years, finally bringing home the gold in our third year, reinforced that sense of

privilege in being a product of the UAB history graduate program.

The Vulcan Historical Review, and its awards, opened the door for me from my private-sector computer career to a publishing job in history, making a long-cherished dream come true. When the University of Alabama announced a job opening for the editor-in-chief of *Alabama Heritage* magazine, I would not have made even the short list without *The Vulcan Historical Review* on my résumé. Taking on this role, I am paid to read history, chat with historians every day, and build historical materials that will outlast me. As an employee of the University of Alabama, my PhD education was also funded, another dream come true. I owe it all to the decision five of us made to add a special project to our standard curriculum—one of the best decisions of my life.

The greatest legacy of that extracurricular project in 1997 is this continuing publication, which survives, thrives, reinvents, and outshines Volume 1. I am proud to see the ongoing work of so many students who have had the good fortune to study under UAB's exceptional history faculty. I trust that many have found their future careers enhanced by their choice to serve on the journal's board or to submit work for publication.

To the current editorial board, thank you for inviting me to reminisce and giving me the opportunity to thank the late Ray Mohl, Colin Davis, the Volume 1 editorial board, our professors, and all who had a part in bringing that project to fruition.

Thank you for the privilege.



AUT CONSILIIS AUT ENSLE / BY COUNCIL OR BY SWORD

Should Confederate Monuments be Removed?

By Aaron Getman-Pickering

YES. YES they should. But before I explain why, I feel compelled to mention that I am from New York, an area to which I have never felt any real emotional connection; I have never reveled in my Union ancestry (partially because most of my family arrived after the Civil War), nor do I feel pangs of sectional allegiance. I am not, by any means, attempting to portray myself as possessing some requisite level of disinterestedness. I say this all by way of saying that I understand that I am lacking a certain perspective. That, for some readers of true southern heritage — to whom this issue may be deeply personal — I may not be bona fide. I do feel, however, that as an American and a faux-southerner (studying at a southern University), I do have the right to opine.

While I do support the removal of statues, I would rather proceed by starting with what I find worrying about the opposing arguments. To the pro-monument crowd, to take down statues of Confederate leaders is to rewrite history. They feel that to remove statues would cause a distortion in Confederate history — that perhaps the citizens of their states might forget the valor with which their ancestors served. I disagree. This argument is premised on the belief that history is static. History, by its very nature, is not sentient, solitary, or inert. History is what we write, and the revision of history is done constantly, and generally, to the benefit of the growing body of human knowledge. Inherently, there is nothing wrong with rewriting history; powerful historical writing challenges an accepted understanding by way of intensive study and scholarship. Historical revision becomes dangerous when it is used purposefully to alter what people understand as the nature of events. It becomes dangerous when historians seek to legitimize a presupposed viewpoint under fallacious evidence and selective reading. Ironically, this is exactly what has happened in the American South following the Civil War with the erection of numerous statues and monuments to the illegitimate Confederacy.

I would argue that the monuments themselves are an attempt to rewrite history, and that their removal is only an attempt to set the record straight. The South has attempted to rewrite history by saying that: a) the cause of secession was both noble and philosophical (the so-called lost cause); b) the implication of a), that slavery played little part in the war; and c) that slavery was not nearly as brutal as we know it was. These monuments almost always convey the heroism of the Confederacy in fighting what was, at its base, a violent, treasonous campaign in an attempt to preserve a system of chattel slavery. Indeed many men of the Confederacy fought valiantly, and the great majority of their soldiers did not own slaves — this is a fact not to be controverted. However, the statues of the great Confederate generals make public heroes of men whose underlying cause was to fight a war against their own country in order to keep an economic system that necessitated abuse of an entire population. This fact also cannot be escaped. Let's say we grant the fact that there should not be confederate flags hanging on statehouses (and that South Carolina made the obviously correct decision). Low hanging fruit it would seem. But, confederate monuments are not fundamentally different. What monuments display, most manifestly, are people, events, or ideas that we as a public deem positive (a vague term to be sure). Both are established in *public* spaces, generally parks or municipal, city, or state grounds. For the capital's State to erect a

monument to the famed Robert Lee, for example, is saying that said State endorses the causes he fought for. Private peoples should be able to do as they wish, but public monuments are different. They represent our civil society, and as such actively defend a racist institution. To cover these monuments and to leave them standing is only further feeding the lost-cause myth.

Those worrying about the vigor of historical education would be better suited to look into the vast, nebulous field of education and educational reform. If we wanted citizens to be properly educated on American history, it would seem more appropriate to change the way history is taught, especially in the South (I mean here primary education not University education). While it is not the purpose of this essay, there are some fascinating arguments as to how the South has managed to rewrite history and ways in which they have purposefully distorted the truth. Removing statues does nothing to change history, only the way in which the public views that history. And to remove confederate monuments would not remove confederate history, it would only serve as a reminder that the state does not sanction the celebration of men who fought a war to preserve slavery. I do not think people in the South will forget about their confederate history any time soon — and they should not have to. But that is not what this argument is really about.

The United States is still struggling to deal with the painful legacy of the American South and the wound the Confederacy inflicted on American unity. African Americans, in particular, have and continue to live a nightmarish situation: Two hundred fifty years of slavery; ninety years of Jim Crow; sixty years of separate but equal; thirty-five years of racist housing. The extension of the carceral state, i.e. the “New Jim Crow.” And there was never an attempt to heal these wounds. South Africa, for example, held the Truth and Reconciliation Council after the fall of apartheid in an attempt to nurse the festering wound of systematic racism. America, and the South in particular, has gone in the opposite directions to maintain and extend white dominance. The constant reminder of the Confederacy and the veneration of its leaders only aggravate the pain left by the Civil War. Conflated stories and mixed messages need to be swept away and the monuments removed. We cannot move on as a country until we accept these realities at their face. For while these statutes continue to stand in the heart of Dixie, the heart of Dixie will never heal.

Should Confederate Monuments be Removed?

by Nick Leader

BEFORE I delve into this controversial topic, I would like to state two important parts of my background in regards to it. First, I was born in the North, Chicago to be specific; however, I grew up and have spent most of my life in the South. To my knowledge, I have no ancestors that fought for either side during the Civil War. Second, I am a military man. I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at eighteen and left a week after graduating high school. With this noted, I full-heartedly believe that the Confederate monuments should remain standing to preserve the heritage of the South and as a national reminder of our history.

As a Northerner, it is hard to understand why so many southern people have such a strong opinion on a war that they lost; there still seems to be a disconnect between regions. For those who do not study history, it is easy to fall into the general opinion that the war was over the establishment of slavery. Slavery played a large part, and hopefully nobody is rejecting the fact that it was a horrid institution; however, the Civil War had so many more causes and factors. The biggest of which was the infringement of State's rights. If one reads the Declaration of Causes issued by Texas, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina, they would see that the issue of State's rights is discussed significantly more than slavery. Slavery was the spark to the fire of the Civil War, but the issue of State's rights was the firewood that allowed it to burn for so long. All this being said, Confederate monuments stand as a reminder that our federal government is formed by the people, for the people and we, as Americans, have the right and ability to fight for our beliefs. Although Southerners chose to fight to shackle men of other races, now their cause stands to remind us that we cannot, and should not, be shackled by our own government.

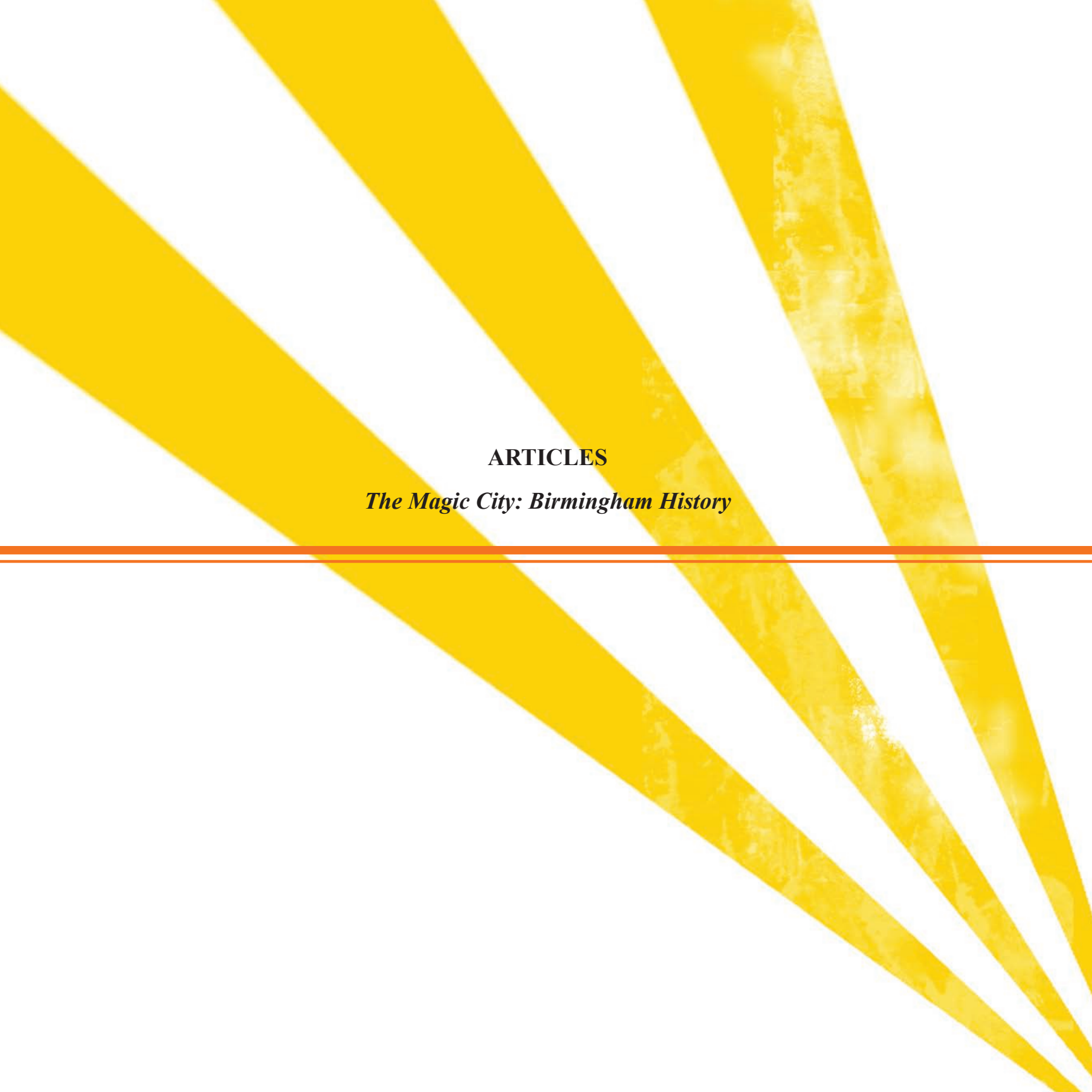
On a more personal standpoint, in regards to military service, Confederate monuments remind future generations of the valor and bravery that was displayed by men and women on both sides of the war. In every war there are good men who lay down their life for a cause they deem bigger than themselves; even if they do not fully understand the big picture, they have a sense of pride that drives them through. To take down the monuments is a degrading act that shames and infuriates proud, long-standing southern families. Furthering this, removal of such monuments portrays all of those who fought for the South as evil men who only fought to preserve slavery; however, this is not the case, a large majority of those who fought for the South had little or nothing to do with slavery. That is the problem our nation faces, as this generation has fallen low due to a lack of knowledge about its past adversities. These monuments should be preserved, not only for the families and heritage, but also for the memory of each individual man that fought for what he thought was right.

A large majority of history is written and preserved by the victorious side; little is ever recorded by the defeated and their memory and causes are often misplaced. This is not the case for the American Civil War; we have a vast amount of primary and secondary sources regarding battles, acts of government, personal lives and family hardships. To topple monuments that have stood for so long is to take history into our own hands and rewrite it in a skewed

Should the Confederate Flag be Removed?

viewpoint. Just because the Civil War is seen as a blemish on American history, that does not mean we should attempt to cover it up. In life it is the small blemishes, scars and oddities that make us our own individual person that we can be proud of when we present ourselves to society. America is not perfect, it has never been and never will be, but by covering up our past how can we honestly present ourselves to other nations?





ARTICLES

The Magic City: Birmingham History

End of the Line: The Rise and Fall of Street Railways in Birmingham

by Robby Ballard

“THE STORY of transportation in Birmingham is fascinating... I wonder if the people who live in Birmingham today... can imagine a Birmingham when a pair of extra mules stood all day at the foot of Twentieth Street hill to be hitched to each car in order to furnish the extra power needed to get the car up the hill.”¹ So spoke T.G. Brabston, the superintendent of transportation of Birmingham Electric Company, in 1937. Tasked with ensuring that the residents of Birmingham had adequate transportation to suit their needs, Brabston, speaking to a reporter from the now defunct *Birmingham News-Age Herald*, discussed the arrival of their newest and most lauded fleet of thirty-four petroleum-powered busses. Acclaimed a year earlier in a July 20th edition of the *Birmingham Age Herald* as “...a revelation in comfort and convenience...,” the busses would eventually spell the doom of Birmingham’s street railway services. It seems that, even in 1937, owners of the Birmingham street railway system were looking for an exit. In 1900, the system served a total of ten million passenger trips, whereas in 1948, the system served an annual total of ninety-three million passenger trips and could carry commuters all the way from Irondale to South Bessemer.² The system’s final run, on the evening of Saturday, April 18, 1953, marked the end of an era that many thought Birmingham would never see. The system had an inextricable impact on Birmingham



SOUTH 20TH STREET HILL, LOOKING NORTH

South 20th Street Hill, Looking North, 1908. Courtesy of Birmingham, Ala., Public Library Archives.

ham and the surrounding areas, profoundly affecting the city, even up to the present day. The closure of the system was not without precedent, however. Trends, both national and regional, shuttled Americans further away from community-based public transportation and into the driver’s seat of private automobiles. The capitulation of the Birmingham street railway system, which, while in operation, affected long-lasting implications for the both city’s design and racial demographics, was an inevitable outcome resulting from shifting expectations from consumers, governmental regulations, the city’s intractable

1 James Saxon Childers, “Mule Drawn Cars to Busses in 50 Years,” *Birmingham News-Age Herald*, March 7, 1937.

2 Alvin W. Hudson and Harold E. Cox, *Street Railways of Birmingham* (Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 1976), 44, 56.

stance on segregation, and the unwillingness of private concerns to provide public services.

Located in an area abundant with resources, including the three elements necessary for the production of steel (limestone, coal and iron-ore), Birmingham has always shown great potential, as well. Following the Civil War, industrialists sought new opportunities within the relatively untapped southern regions of the United States. In fact, in 1871, maps of Jefferson County still failed to mention the presence of Birmingham, no lodging for visitors was available in Birmingham, and there were no dependable railroad links to the city. Despite all of this, advertisements throughout the United States and Europe heralded the riches to be made in Birmingham.³ Unfortunately, it was not only Birmingham's natural resources that piqued the interest of investors, but also the region's availability of inexpensive, unorganized black labor pools. Many potential investors felt that utilizing black labor resources would provide them with a competitive advantage over northern industrialists who contended with strikes, labor regulations and labor unions on a regular basis.⁴ Labor concerns would remain at the forefront of the industrialists' minds as, even up until the Great Depression, many refused to allow their workers to grow corn on their plots for fear that they would hold secret union meetings behind the stalks.⁵

“ THE SYSTEM HAD AN INEXTRICABLE IMPACT ON BIRMINGHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS, PROFOUNDLY AFFECTING THE CITY, EVEN UP TO THE PRESENT DAY.

3 Leah Rawls Atkins, *The Valley and the Hills: An illustrated History of Birmingham and Jefferson County* (Tarzana, CA: Preferred Marketing, 1996), 53.

4 W. David Lewis, *Sloss Furnaces and the Rise of the Birmingham District*, 2nd ed. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 31.

5 Diane McWhorter, *Carry Me Home* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013), 15.

Despite the somewhat sordid reasons for its development, the city and its surrounding areas grew exponentially over the following decades.

The city and its surrounding areas formed quite quickly, following the convergence of two major railroads in the Jones Valley region of Jefferson County in 1871. Although sporadic setbacks did occur, such as a cholera outbreak in 1873 that caused much of the Birmingham area to turn into a glorified ghost town, the Birmingham region prospered. Within thirty years of its founding, Birmingham would, almost by miracle, be the 100th largest city in America, thus earning its nickname,

the Magic City.⁶ Developers laid out settlements in an east-west orientation along the base of the iron-ore rich Red Mountain. While the central business district, characterized by wide avenues laid out on a grid pattern atypical of other southern cities at the time did exist, the relatively far flung nature of settlement in the area, and the demands of industrial owners to provide their workers with access to the factories, necessitated a public transportation system early on in the region's history.⁷

The decentralized population and abundance of wide open spaces allowed Birmingham to pioneer usage of steam engine street cars at a time when the engines proved too dangerous, cumbersome or impractical for other large, more congested cities. From the outset, Birmingham possessed the nation's largest streetcar network run on steam engines; only Los Angeles' system approached the size of Birmingham's. While mule drawn carriages were utilized primarily in the city's center, the steam engine streetcars

6 Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 7.

7 Ibid., 9.

serviced areas far flung from the central business district, allowing those areas to prosper as well.

In the formative years of Birmingham's public transportation, over a dozen companies operated street railways in the area. Similar to other major cities in the United States at the time, Birmingham lacked a centralized municipal authority to coordinate its public transportation opportunities. Electric utilities saw streetcars as a way to capitalize on their investment in infrastructure by providing electric streetcars. The multitude of different streetcar companies and the diverse equipment they used caused a great deal of confusion for the citizenry and the government alike. For example, property rights became an issue as many farmers in the area refused to make way for the new streetcar systems. One farmer refused to demolish his barn that sat in the middle of one line's right of way. Equally stubborn, the railway company laid its tracks such that trains would pass through the barn, rather than go around it.⁸ At another point, two companies became embroiled in a dispute over whether one should be allowed to cross its tracks over the tracks of the other, the Birmingham Railway Company. The dispute reached such levels that locals kidnapped and held a night guardsman in captivity while work on the disputed intersection was complete.⁹ Other suspicious events, including companies removing the rails of their competitors during the night and replacing them with their own to secure a coveted route, occurred frequently throughout the early years of Birmingham's public transportation. Although characterized by shady business practices and dubious dealings, creation of street railways in Birmingham had a profound and long lasting impact on the city.

The industrial sector of Birmingham's economy

affected the city in such a profound way as to defy any possible explanation, other than that the city simply would not exist had the industrial demands not been present. The industrialists of Birmingham placed a high degree of concern and importance on maintaining the segregation of their employees. As one Sloss Furnaces executive noted in 1896, employing African Americans worked to their benefit considering "...our negroes trade 65% to 70% of their earnings in the Company store."¹⁰ The business interests encountered problems with this, however, as providing adequate housing for the African American employees proved troublesome. Thus, utilizing an effective means of public transportation worked to these industrialists' interests as African American laborers could live elsewhere, commute to their work, and still spend the majority of their earnings in the company store. Additionally, while African Americans and whites would work side by side in steel mills, they were expected to live in separate areas of the city.¹¹ The foundry and mill owners wanted to keep their workers segregated, however they needed them available to work. Thus, maintaining an effective public transportation facilitated their needs.

In Birmingham, as in many American cities, the accessibility of venues to the populace primarily determined the viability of recreational opportunities at the turn of the 20th century. With the ubiquity of the automobile several decades away, the availability of public transportation determined whether attractions were accessible to the population. Often times, public transportation concerns would even fund the creation of public amusement parks so as to encourage more travel on their lines. Several parks

⁸ James Saxon Childers, "Mule Drawn Cars to Busses in 50 Years," *Birmingham News-Age Herald*, March 7, 1937.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Lewis, *Sloss Furnaces*, 191.

¹¹ A turn of the century *Birmingham News* article summed up the prevailing attitude quite succinctly, noting: "The taste of blood makes them [African Americans] reckless. They will readily, surely give vent to their hatred of some white men, and sooner or later kill white men." Quoted in Lewis, *Sloss Furnaces*, 249.

in Birmingham, including Avondale Park, Lakeview Park, East Lake Park, and Red Mountain Park, were founded by transportation companies in order to increase ridership to the city's outskirts.¹² In addition, the parks would lure visitors by offering either special promotions or events. The park located atop Red Mountain featured a luxury hotel and casino, the Red Mountain Hotel, as well as concerts in summer evenings wherein park owners promised turn of the century patrons free ice and water, a novel marketing campaign for the time. Additionally, as of 1900, East Lake Park, at one hundred acres in size, boasted the largest manmade lake in the South, a theater and pavilion, a casino, a restaurant, a tea garden, and baseball and football clubs.¹³ The parks mirrored the city's segregationist leanings as well. Two of the five parks owned by the streetcar lines served African Americans, while the other three served whites only.¹⁴ In addition to parks, many neighborhoods sprang forth from the streetcar system. Neighborhoods such as Redmont, Edgewood, Forest Park, Avondale, Lakeview, East Lake, Gate City, and Highland Park sprang to life either by direct investment from the streetcar companies or as a direct result of their proximity to streetcar lines. Just as the streetcar lines profoundly affected residential neighborhoods in Birmingham, so too did they impact the industrial sector.

With the coming of electrically powered street railway networks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, fewer companies would be able to afford the infrastructure costs associated with this new means of locomotion. The Birmingham Electric Railway Company, founded in 1890, began consolidating various railway

companies shortly after its inception as these companies found themselves unable to handle the skyrocketing infrastructure costs. It faced an uphill battle, however, in convincing the local population of the enhanced safety and efficiency that electrically powered streetcars could provide when compared to their steam powered counterparts currently in use throughout Birmingham. Exacerbating this problem of public coercion, a serious issue occurred after the streetcar network in Montgomery, Alabama had

“ PETTY BATTLES OVER THE PROPER WAY FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS TO BOARD STREETCARS ... EMBROILED THE COMPANY IN LENGTHY AND COSTLY BATTLES WITH THE CITY GOVERNMENT.

been electrified a year earlier. In 1891, the horse belonging to the mayor of Montgomery stepped on an exposed current carried in a ground level rail and died instantly.¹⁵ The Birmingham lines converted, however, to cleaner and quieter electricity, and the end of the steam engines in Birmingham approached. Aside from some frightened mules and various dogs presumably angered by the first run of an electric street car in Birmingham, the first trip along the Highland Avenue line succeeded in winning over the public and ironically marked the beginning of a new, troubled era for Birmingham public transportation.¹⁶

Following the successful implementation of electric railways in Birmingham, more substantial consolidation continued. In 1901, the Birmingham Railway, Light and Power Company, organized under the leadership of famed real estate developer and local business mogul,

12 Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 216. The Red Mountain Park noted should not be confused with the modern nature preserve of the same name.

13 Ibid., 44.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid, 35.

16 Ibid, 36.

Robert Jemison, following the merger of fourteen individual railway companies that could not handle the rising infrastructure costs.¹⁷ Despite an ensuing series of setbacks including both car-barn and office fires, the system seemed primed for further success.

In 1915, however, the automobile came to Birmingham in force, fueled by the inexpensive Ford Model T and the sprawling nature and wide avenues that made automobile driving both easy and practical. Revenue decreased for the streetcar business until the United States entered World War I in 1917. Although revenue from ridership increased, operational costs also soared as a result of the decreased supply of materials available to non-war related industries. The Birmingham Railway, Light and Power Company sought a fare increase to cover its deficits. However, foreshadowing future troubles, the city commission of Birmingham denied the request, foretelling future struggles the company would face with the city. The war-related difficulties remained following the armistice, and riders often refused to pay fares, and sometimes even attacked or threw stones at the streetcars, as the quality of service declined precipitously because of the refusal to increase fares¹⁸. Compounding the Birmingham Railway, Light, and Power Company's troubles, the city of Birmingham initiated strict demands for more extensive implementation of Jim Crow laws in the 1920s. Arguments over the appropriate size of signs indicating segregated



Birmingham Railway, Light and Power office in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, 1910. Courtesy of Birmingham, Ala., Public Library Archives.

seating onboard streetcars as well as petty battles over the proper way for African Americans to board streetcars so as to cause minimal disturbance to the white passengers embroiled the company in lengthy and costly battles with the city government.¹⁹ Additionally, the introduction of jitney services offered the first substantial competition the streetcar system had faced.

Jitneys, a mode of transportation smaller than a bus but larger than a private vehicle, began operating in the city in the early 1920s, and thus drained the Birmingham Railway, Light and Power Company of valuable passengers. In exchange for increasing the stringency and enforcement of Jim Crow regulations on streetcars, the city banned jit-

17 George M. Cruikshank, *A History of Birmingham and Its Environs*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1920), 149.

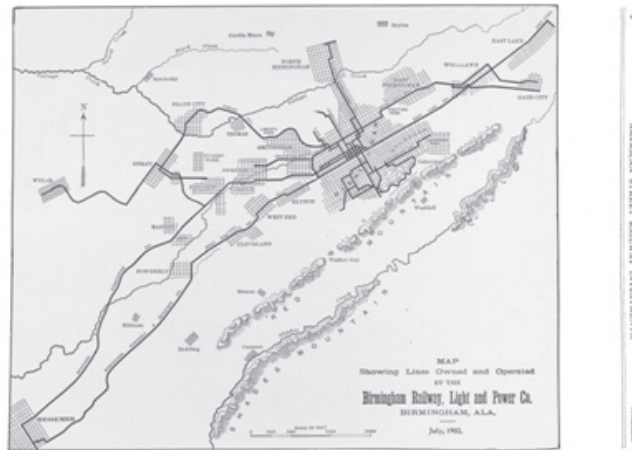
18 Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 48.

19 Ibid., 52-3.

neys in 1923. Although some jitneys operated by private individuals attempted to skirt the ban by disguising themselves as private taxis, their trade all but ended.²⁰ Unfortunately, however, the extensive financial damage as a result of both the jitney's as well as the inability to increase fares to the streetcar system forced the company into bankruptcy. Reorganized as the Birmingham Electric Company, the system continued operation

throughout the 1920s, but faced severe cutbacks during the Great Depression. The economic collapse of the Great Depression struck a terrific blow to Birmingham's main industry, and pushed the city into a steep decline. While Birmingham attained the highest rate of illiteracy in the country, and as its murder rate earned it the title "Murder capital of the World," Franklin D. Roosevelt deemed Birmingham "the hardest-hit city in America" as a result of the Great Depression.²¹ Although the profitability of streetcars had somewhat rebounded following the jitney ban, facing intense difficulties and serious deficits, the Birmingham Electric Company wisely refused to discontinue its rail service in order to remain solvent. Just as foreclosure and dismantling seemed imminent, however, the United States' entry into World War II saved the company from collapse.

World War II, and the tire, gasoline and travel restric-



Map of the lines owned and operated by the Birmingham Railway, Light and Power Co., Birmingham, Alabama, July 1903. Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin.

tions that accompanied it, helped the Birmingham streetcar network reach its greatest heights. Wartime demands for steel goods sent Birminghamians back to work in droves. In 1942, the system served an average of six million passenger trips per month.²² The streetcar system saw little infrastructural improvement during the war due to rationing of industrial parts, however, and the operators knew that the end of the war would signal the end of the pas-

senger influx. Thusly, the Birmingham Electric Company made providing as high quality a service as possible their primary goal.²³ Post-war safety improvements and equipment upgrades could not, however, stop national trends from affecting the demise of the network.

The United States government began systematically favoring the construction of roads over the maintenance and expansion of American cities' public transportation infrastructure prior to World War I, and continued this practice through the end of World War II.²⁴ As automobile interests lobbied more and more for greater roadway expenditure, the federal government began effectively subsidizing the use of automobiles with its seventy-five million

²⁰ Ibid., 53.

²¹ McWhorter, *Carry Me*, 14.

²² Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 56.

²³ Ibid., 56.

²⁴ James Howard Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape* (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 90.

dollar Federal Road Act of 1916. Simultaneously, the federal government provided public transportation concerns with precious little funding.²⁵ As public transportation companies in cities across America struggled to remain solvent, municipal governments neither allowed transit companies to discontinue unprofitable routes, nor would they allow them to raise their rates.²⁶ Cities across America ripped their streetcar lines from the pavement and replaced their routes with gasoline-powered busses. Indeed, the interests of automobile manufacturers reached a pronounced tempo in 1950 when General Motors was indicted by a federal grand jury for criminal conspiracy. The company had systematically purchased over one hundred streetcar lines in California before dismantling and replacing them with busses. As a result, the company was fined five thousand dollars, which “was about equal to the company’s net profit on the sale of five Chevrolets.”²⁷ In addition to automobile interests, federal regulations promoted the closure of streetcar systems in America.

As the solvency of the Birmingham Electric Company became more and more precarious, owners of the company sought an exit. While the Birmingham Electric Company supplied power for the city of Birmingham and some of its inner suburbs, the Alabama Power Company supplied electricity for the surrounding areas. Indeed, the Birmingham Electric Company purchased much of the electricity it sold to consumers from the Alabama Power Company. Thus, in 1950, a merger of the two seemed both reasonable and inevitable. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), however, only approved the merger after the Alabama Power Company agreed to sell off the streetcar system. The ruling, enforced under policy adopted by the SEC

as a part of the New Deal in order to aid the automobile industry, “forced higher operating expenses on independent transit facilities and spurred conversions from trolley to bus service.”²⁸ In fact, only one major utility company, New Orleans Public Service, escaped the SEC mandate. Having already closed its streetcar networks in Huntsville, Anniston, Tuscaloosa, Gadsden, Florence, Sheffield and Tuscumbia, the Alabama Power Company sought to avoid reentry the streetcar business. Thus, the SEC’s decision was a welcome solution to Alabama Power’s problem.²⁹ Although the Alabama Power Company enjoyed an easy exit from an industry in free-fall, the system’s closure, all but finalized in the 1950 ruling, was tinged with racism.

Although jitneys had been outlawed in 1923, pub-



Streetcar loading passengers in Downtown Birmingham, Alabama.
Courtesy of Birmingham, Ala., Public Library Archives

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 91-2.

²⁸ Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 59-60.

²⁹ Ibid., 60.

lic busses began taking prominence on Birmingham's roads in the post-war period. Additionally, many illegal jitney companies still operated under the city's radar. A Birmingham *Post-Herald* article from 1952 noted that "[s]uggesting that transit has reached a crisis is almost an understatement."³⁰ Another *Post-Herald* article from 1950 noted that a transit spokesman, in a city council meeting in Birmingham, promised a "complete modernization" of the Birmingham transportation system, which "...means that almost all streetcar service will be replaced by busses or tackles trolleys."³¹ The city councilors applauded his statement, and praised the Birmingham Electric Company for its previous removal of several streetcar lines. Although replacing streetcar lines with busses had been characterized as a safety and efficiency conscious endeavor since the process began in 1936, the motivations for replacement often sprang from apparent racism, as well. A 1936 Birmingham *Post* article announcing plans for the Birmingham Electric Company to begin removing streetcar lines and to replace them with busses noted curtailing the operation of "negro jitneys" as a reason for the change. The "negro servant trade," the article contends, preferred the illegal jitney service over the streetcar system because the jitneys "charge as a rule only five cents, and carry their passengers directly to their destination, whereas the street cars miss some of the houses in Forest park and on top of the mountain by nearly a mile."³² The Birmingham Electric Company reasoned that bus service would cut back on the jitney trade. Whether the jitney

“AS LINE AFTER
LINE CLOSED, THE
NETWORK BECAME
A SHADOW OF ITS
FORMER SELF.

services truly caused an unsustainable financial burden to the Birmingham Electric Company or not, the motivations for transition to bus service clearly maintained racial undertones.

A 1935 redline map for Birmingham lists the neighborhoods of Forest Park and Redmont, both on the city's south side, as "still desirable" and "best," respectively.³³ Mortgage lending companies used redline maps in the mid twentieth century to classify the racial makeup of cities. The maps deemed areas of African American concentration as undesirable for resale, and thus lenders hesitated to provide mortgages for those areas. More desirable areas had fewer African Americans, and, thusly, the lenders readily loaned to clients in these areas. Redline maps serve as important documents classifying the racial makeup of cities, and help explain

the pattern of the discontinuance of Birmingham's streetcar system. Considering that both, the popular view in the mid-twentieth century dictated that bus transportation far exceeded streetcar transportation in terms of cleanliness, efficiency and safety, as well as the institutionalized segregation in Birmingham during the mid-twentieth century, the predominantly white neighborhoods would, theoretically, be the first to receive bus transportation, while the predominantly African American neighborhoods would be the last. Indeed, the sequence of the conversion of Birmingham's streetcar network to busses holds this to be true. White neighborhoods, such as Forest Park, Redmont, Lakeview and Avondale received bus transit first. Neighborhoods such as Ensley, Wenonah, West End and East

30 J.H. Rutledge and J.D. Rees, "Many Cities Find Transit Business a Bumpy One," *Birmingham Post-Herald*, April 8, 1952.

31 "BECO Promises Action to Improve System," *Birmingham Post-Herald*, October 10, 1950.

32 "BECO and City Agree on Buses," *Birmingham Post*, March 9, 1936.

33 "Redline Map for Birmingham, Alabama," NARA- Residential Security Maps, 1933-1939 - Maps and Charts, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed August 2, 2015, <http://catalog.archives.gov/id/6082401>

Lake lost their streetcar service last, and, coincidentally, were classified on the redline map of 1935 as being centers of “negro concentration.”³⁴ The cancellation of streetcar service in predominantly white neighborhoods prior to citywide closure indicates that the population of Birmingham, as a result of the bus-line’s ability to reach closer to homes, truly did see bus transportation as a preferable means of public transportation. Not surprisingly, the system remained segregated until the very end.

By 1953, the streetcar network in Birmingham had been gutted. As line after line closed, the network became a shadow of its former self. The city turned out, however, to celebrate the final run of a streetcar in Birmingham. The last photograph taken on board a streetcar in Birmingham, as car #812 made its final journey from Ensley early in the morning of April 19, 1953, shows a crowd of white passengers smiling as they huddle together and collectively bid farewell to relic in the making. Barely noticeable, however, in the almost empty “colored” section of the car, stand two African Americans. No white passengers stood in the “colored” section of the streetcar.³⁵ Crowds cheered as the streetcar reached the end of its line.³⁶ The Birmingham Transit Company, formed after Alabama Power’s acquisition of the Birmingham Electric Company, sold the remainder of Birmingham’s fleet to transit concerns in Vancouver, Canada, Mexico City and Toronto.³⁷

As the majority of Birminghamians abandoned public transportation and, instead, opted for private automobiles throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the transit infrastructure in the city floundered.³⁸ Although the city, seeking to spur further development in Birming-

ham’s revitalizing downtown, requested proposals in 2008 for a planned thirty-three million dollar streetcar system in order to spur further development in the city’s downtown, which many business leaders lauded, the plans floundered as civic support waned. The federal conviction of the mayor spearheading the proposal did not help matters either, and the plan was subsequently abandoned.³⁹

From its early days of mule drawn wagons traversing dirt roads in a relatively lawless village in the American Deep South, the streetcar network of Birmingham grew to be the largest of its type in the country. Mirroring the magic growth of the city around it, the network grew by leaps and bounds. Finally, just as the city it called home stood at the doorway of unprecedented racial strife, the streetcar network in Birmingham ceased operation. The system’s effect on the city remains visible through the parks, neighborhoods, and roads it either influenced or created. The streetcar network in Birmingham not only allowed, but also encouraged, the city around it to grow as fast and as well as it did. Although national trends, racism and a lack of interest in maintaining the system all contributed to its closure, the streetcar network in Birmingham indisputably defined the city, and helped form it into its present form.

34 Ibid.

35 Hudson and Cox, *Street Railways*, 61.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ashley Creek, “On the Bus: Part One,” *Weld for Birmingham*, November 6, 2013.

39 Jimmy Debutts, “Transit Authority Soliciting Streetcar Proposals,” *Birmingham Business Journal*, April 30, 2008; “Streetcars Can Bring in New Money,” *Birmingham Business Journal*, March 2, 2008.

The Hot Birmingham Summer of 1894: How a Mine Strike Shaped Alabama's Racist Political Destiny for More Than Six Decades.

by James D. Nunez

THE GUBERNATORIAL election of 1894 proved to be a catalyst in marginalizing African Americans within Alabama politics. Black leadership in the Birmingham area made a critical political decision that severely restricted African American participation in the legal political process for nearly seventy years. Black leaders sought guarantees for African American rights and job opportunities as well as protection from injustice and access to rail transit. Such assurances and promises were made, resulting in the election of Bourbon Democrat William Oates. The very influence of the African American constituency within the election of 1894, however, combined with great concerns about alliances being built between poor whites and African Americans in the wake of the coal miners' strike of 1894, proved to be a catalyst for destroying any hope for true democracy in Alabama for more than six decades. William Oates not only won the election of 1894, but he became an instrument for the Democratic party of Alabama to spear-head efforts to mitigate African American influence within future elections through disfranchisement within the Alabama Constitution of 1901. The loss of voting privileges by blacks within Alabama not only blunted political influence, but also led to political dereliction inhibiting economic and social justice for blacks who had not yet benefitted from citizenship.

A heated political campaign occurred in the summer of 1894. The power of the Republican Party, and its benefits to emancipated slaves, was coming to an end. African Americans, lawfully elected to the U.S. Con-

gress and the Alabama Legislature, knew they were losing power. Former confederates and oligarchs, who had survived Reconstruction, were reassuming political control. Black leaders expended significant energy searching for ways to increase the political significance of the black community within this new reality. This erosion of power took place despite effective leadership performed by black representatives. According to the archives of the U.S. House of Representatives, the first African American representatives were well-read, highly articulate and effective in promoting the interests of their constituency – both black and white. Benjamin S. Turner, for example, was the first African American elected to Congress in 1870. Turner was born a slave in North Carolina and moved to Alabama when he was five years old. The African American Congressman was a self-educated man and became an effective businessman near Selma. Turner was elected tax collector of Dallas County in 1867 and became a council member of the Selma City Council prior to his election to Congress in 1871. The archives of the U.S. House of Representatives note that Turner worked tirelessly on behalf of the state. Turner called for Congress to provide funding for Selma's reconstruction and to allocate two-hundred thousand dollars for the construction of a federal building that, he argued, would benefit its struggling community by providing jobs. Speaking on the House floor, he stated: "The Government made a display in that unfortunate city of its mighty power and conquered a gallant and high-toned people. They may have sinned wonderfully, but they

suffered terribly.”¹

Another African American leader that would play an important role prior to the 1894 election was James Thomas Rapier. He was elected to Congress in 1872 defeating former Civil War hero, and 1894 gubernatorial candidate, William C. Oates. Rapier was deemed a prudent and diplomatic legislator.² The first action Rapier took as a member of Congress was to sponsor a bill he believed would help Montgomery economically. This measure became Rapier’s most enduring legislation. The bill to designate Montgomery as a federal customs site was signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1874.³

Jeremiah Haralson is believed to have been the most effective African American Congressman of the Reconstruction era. The archives of the House of Representatives contend: “Throughout his career, Haralson demonstrated a natural shrewdness and a gift for politics, yet contemporaries described him as forceful, “uncompromising, irritating and bold.”⁴ Haralson enjoyed friendship with former Confederate States of America President Jefferson Davis as well as important Democratic Party leaders from Mississippi and Georgia. He opposed Radical Republican policies of martial law contending: “We must drive

out these hell hounds and go in for peace between the two races in the South.”⁵ By the end of Haralson’s only term as a member of Congress in 1876, Alabama Democrats in the state had neutralized African American influence by making it nearly impossible for a black candidate to win a seat within the Congress and the Alabama state legislature.

Former confederates and business leaders were re-entering the political machinery of the state of Alabama. Their primary goal was to reclaim power and prestige for white men and to redirect political concerns to those demanded within the Anglo-Saxon community.

Yet, despite changes in political organization in the post-Reconstruction South (reducing the threat of black representation), African American voter strength in 1894 caused great worry among white Democrats. They were concerned about the impact of African American votes in spite of a recently enacted election law restricting voter participation. According to Southern historian Wayne Flynt, the 1893 Sayre Election Law provided limited opportunities for voters.⁶ Voter registration was restricted to the month of May. The candidates running for office were arranged on the ballot alphabetically, and their party affiliation was not allowed on the ballot. Finally, a voter identification certificate had to be displayed before a person could vote.⁷ The Sayre Election Law would become a template designed to counter African American power through the development of a series of complicated rules that could not be understood or easily accomplished by

“ THE PUBLISHED REPORTS PROVIDED AMMUNITION TO DEMAGOGUES WHO BEMOANED THE FAILURE OF THE SOUTH TO MAINTAIN ITS ANTEBELLUM MYTH.

1 *History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives*, “TURNER, Benjamin Sterling,” accessed May 4, 2016, <http://history.house.gov/People/Detail/23140>.

2 *History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives*, “RAPIER, James Thomas,” accessed May 4, 2016, <http://history.house.gov/People/Detail/20161>.

3 Ibid.

4 *History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives*, “HARALSON, Jeremiah,” accessed May 4, 2016, <http://history.house.gov/People/Detail/14507>.

5 Ibid.

6 Wayne Flynt, “Alabama’s Shame: The Historical Origins of the 1901 Constitution.” *Alabama Law Review* 53, no. 1 (Fall, 2001): 67.

7 Ibid.

uneducated free blacks. Stated simply, the rules were designed to inspire confusion among the African-American constituency rendering effective opposition to the policy of white supremacy very difficult to achieve.

African American leadership urged their fellow black Republicans not to vote in the 1894 election. They believed a boycott of the election by African Americans would reduce pressure upon the black community, both politically and socially. Scholar Jack Abramowitz noted:

By not voting Negroes hoped to accomplish two things: first, they avoided personal difficulty and, second, they reduced the number of votes cast thus making it theoretically difficult for the Democrats to steal too many ballots. The negroes did not register or go to the polls. The negroes have quitvoting for the reason that their votes were counted for the democratic ticket.⁸

Despite the call for an African American Republican vote boycott in the 1894 Alabama governor's race, a *New York Times* article predicted the "Negro" vote would have a major impact on the election:

In spite of the manifesto issued by Chairman Moseley of the (Black) Republican State Executive Committee, asking negroes not to register in the black belt, "in order to enable the Democrats to count for themselves" ... registration is very lively in that section and none are coming up more rapidly than the negroes.⁹

Historian R. Jean Simms-Brown believed African American voters found themselves in a very difficult po-

sition because the Republican Party was re-directing its political concerns toward the business interests of the industrial North leaving a leadership void within the South. Democrats were going to fill the void, and it seemed neither of the two parties was concerned about African-American well-being.¹⁰ Booker T. Washington recalled a conversation he had with one particular black voter reporting:

...I tell you how we does, we watches de white man; we keeps watching de white man; de near it gets to lection time de more we watched de white man. We watches him till we finds out which way he gwine to vote. After we find out which way he gwine'r vote; den we votes 'zactly de other way; den we knows we's right.¹¹

Simms-Brown summarized the conundrum facing black voters in 1894 with a quote from another African American voter saying: "The Republican Party does not know what to do with us and the Democratic Party wants to get rid of us, and we are at sea without sail or anchor drifting with the tide."¹²

The Belligerents

The gubernatorial election of 1894 in Alabama saw a highly contested competition between the Democratic candidate William Oates and the Populist candidate Reuben Kolb. Oates was a "hero" of the American Civil War serving with distinction at the battles of Gettysburg, Chickamauga, and Petersburg. Oates was wounded two

8 Jack Abramowitz, "The Negro in the Populist Movement," *The Journal of Negro History* 38, no. 3 (Jul., 1953): 281.

9 "Registration in Alabama," *New York Times*, May 8, 1894.

10 R. Jean Simms-Brown, "Populism and Black Americans: Constructive or Destructive?" *The Journal of Negro History* 65, no. 4 (Autumn, 1980): 355.

11 Ibid., 357.

12 Ibid., 355.



William C. Oates. Courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

times. He was wounded in the leg at the Chickamauga and lost an arm after being shot in battle.¹³ According to biographer Paul Pruitt, Oates had a fervid personality that sometimes got him into trouble politically. His aggressive nature may have damaged his career as a military officer within the Confederate army when he advocated the use of slaves in military operations. He believed the lack of will to use “chattel” for the war against Northern aggression may have cost the South the war.¹⁴

Biographers report that Oates left the army and resumed a successful career as an attorney prior to entering into the political sphere. He was defeated within a run for

Congress in the 1870’s by African American Republican Jeremiah Haralson, however, Oates ultimately won election to Congress in 1880 and served six terms as congressman. Biographers contend William Oates entered the 1894 Alabama governors’ race to thwart the Populist movement. According to Pruitt: “A staunch Democrat and white supremacist, he entered state politics to stave off a populist movement that would have placed political power in the hands of small farmers and freedmen.”¹⁵

Oates’s opponent within the race for Governor in 1894 was the Populist candidate Reuben Kolb. Kolb was himself a veteran of the Civil War. Upon his return to Eufaula, Alabama, at the end of the war, Kolb became an innovative farmer. He argued that a progressive agriculture approach held the greatest promise for the post-antebellum South. Writing an agriculture-centered biography concerning Reuben Kolb, William Rogers noted that Kolb’s farming operation might have been “the most remarkable farm in Alabama,” and that Kolb grew a highly profitable strain of watermelon he called the “Kolb Gem” that became one of the most popular watermelons in the nation.¹⁶

Kolb’s farm was heralded as one of the most unique agriculture businesses in the nation. Kolb was one of the first progressive farmers to combine growing fruit, harvesting the product, and using truck transport to become wealthy within agribusiness. According to William Rogers:

By practicing crop rotation, proper fertilizing and other scientific methods, Kolb made his farm pay. He employed day labor exclusively and paid his hands off every Saturday at the rate of fifty cents a day...Kolb’s achievements were valuable

13 Paul McWhorter Pruitt Jr., “William Calvin Oates (1894-96),” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, last updated September 30, 2014, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1410>.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 William Warren Rogers, “Reuben F. Kolb: Agricultural Leader of the New South,” *Agricultural History* 32, no. 2 (April, 1958): 111.

for the rest of the state.¹⁷

Rogers notes that Kolb became a member of the Granger movement. He was also a strong supporter and member of the board of trustees for the newly established Institute of Higher Learning that would eventually become Auburn University. He also became leader of the state's Agricultural Department - providing farm advice utilizing his own approaches to farming as well as other innovations occurring within farming across the United States. Rogers contended:

Under Kolb's leadership (1888) the agriculture department became the chief agency for promoting immigration. He developed a plan of visiting the northwest...persuading the people to come and share Alabama's resources. He wanted to encourage immigration until every hill became a vineyard and every valley a farm, every plain a factory and every mountain a furnace.¹⁸

Reuben Kolb, however, loved politics even more than agriculture and entered Alabama politics as a Farmers' Alliance populist. According to many primary documents, Kolb very nearly won an election for Governor in Alabama in 1892. Because Kolb thought his Democrat opponent, Thomas Jones, "stole" the race in 1892, the key plank within Kolb's gubernatorial election bid of 1894 was election reform. However, Kolb's positions regarding convict lease programs, mine inspectors, and restrictions regarding the employment of children working in mines, would become huge issues in Birmingham during the summer of 1894:

The platform called for a free vote and honest count, a contest law for state officers, free coinage of silver at sixteen to one, a circulating medium of fifty dollars per capita, a graduated income tax, and better educational facilities. In addition to the familiar planks, the platform demanded removal of convicts from the mines, lien laws for minors, establishment of a state inspector of weights and measures, election of mine inspectors, and a law prohibiting children under thirteen from working in mines.¹⁹



Reuben Francis Kolb. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

The Promise of the Populist Movement

The erosion of national Republican political support for the African American constituency provided the

¹⁷ Ibid., 112.

¹⁸ Ibid., 116.

¹⁹ William Warren Rogers, *The One-Galled Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), 272.

Farmers' Alliance with a unique opportunity to build a political coalition among poor farmers and African-Americans across the West, Midwest and South. Black farmers who were part of what was called the Colored Alliance despised Southern Democrats who they knew championed the cause of white supremacy. The Farmers' Alliance targeted the Colored Alliance for political support promising to replace the Republican Party whom African Americans believed was abandoning them.²⁰ The Farmer's Alliance seized the platform of the Populist political movement to achieve its aims.

According to William Rogers, the platform of the Populists was one that was generally well supported within the African American Community. Rogers was strongly influenced by the writings of C. Vann Woodward, who maintained that southern populists championed the cause of agrarian economic concerns. Vann Woodward saw the Populist Party as the champion of "land, markets, wages, money, taxes and railroads", and added that the party was bold enough to take on "the cult of racism" through opposition by farmers, black and white, who were unified by agriculture concerns.²¹

Historian Simms-Brown also highlighted Woodward's optimistic belief about the Populist movement noting:

Populists were sincere in their efforts to help blacks. Their platforms included an anti-lynching law, denounced the convict lease system, and advocated the political rights of blacks. "Populist officers saw to it that Negroes received such recognition as summons for jury service...Further

evidence of this togetherness in politics is to be found in rallies, which were arranged for both races; and by the number of "Negro populist clubs"-organized by both party workers and black populists.²²

Robert Saunders contended the allure of Populism was effective at the grass-roots level particularly among those who worked hard for a living. Arising spontaneously and bringing to light attitudes not carefully hammered-out at political conventions, "non-platform issues" frequently went to the core of traditional black-white mores in the South. In such areas as lynching and jury service, historians today credit the Populists with uniquely enlightened views for the time.²³ Saunders' article claims that reforms in election laws, the convict lease system and the state's school systems were appeals directed toward African American voters. However, he also noted that the Populist Party was severely restricted by the political realities of the time. Not only would the advocacy of social equality have been political suicide, it was also contrary to beliefs the Populists held in common with other white Southerners.²⁴

The Press – Law, Order and the Problem of the "Negro"

There were several major events that affected the election of 1894. Many of those events affected a voter constituency that Reuben Kolb believed was critically important to his election bid. Within a few short months, Kolb would have to navigate a minefield of challenges to court African-American support. By the date of the elec-

20 Abramowitz, "The Negro," 258

21 C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South: 1877-1913*, in *A History of the South*, ed. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, vol. 9 (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1951), 249.

22 Simms-Brown, "Populism and Black Americans," 351.

23 Robert Saunders, "Southern Populists and the Negro 1893-1895," *The Journal of Negro History* 54 (July, 1969): 245-246.

24 Ibid.

tion, Kolb had failed to win the support he sought, and the political choices made by African-Americans would impact generations to come.

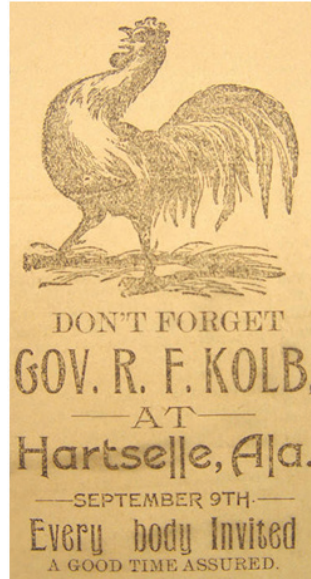
There are unique circumstances that occurred during the election of 1894 - particularly in the Birmingham area - that complicated the political campaign of Reuben Kolb (many of those events highlighted the sociological challenges of patriating former slaves into the fabric of citizenship in the South). With each event, whites who sought to maintain a segregated political arena experienced increasing levels of mistrust, fear, and anger. It became apparent that conciliation between whites and their former bond-servants would not be tolerated by those who desired the privilege of leadership.

One such event was the reunion of the United Confederate Veterans held in Birmingham on April 25 and 26 of 1894. According to published reports in *The New York Times* and the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, 30,000 visitors, including Governors from five different states, flooded into Birmingham for the commemoration. So many confederate veterans were on hand that five hundred different campsites were created for the event. A temporary meeting place was created, called the Winnie Davis Wigwam, to stage the enormous event. The facility held ten thousand delegates who unanimously supported a statement requesting that an accurate history of the secession, and the recent U.S. Civil War, be written and shared within schools. Delegates also approved a memorial for the casualties of the Civil War. They issued what the convention called an ideal of the Re-

public which read: "Imperium in Imperio – dedicated to the principle of the right of man to own men...something better, nobler, braver, purer and more "southern" than the government of the U.S."²⁵ There is little doubt the reunion, and its defiant tone, concerned African American political leaders quite deeply.

A second factor, within the series of events that undermined efforts to build a black-white coalition during the election of 1894, was the obsession of local publishers with highlighting misbehavior allegedly perpetuated by black citizens. The published reports provided ammunition to demagogues who bemoaned the failure of the South to maintain its antebellum myth. Throughout 1894, newspapers across Alabama printed a large number of stories involving criminal activity reportedly involving African Americans. Newsgathering entities have been obsessed with sensational stories from the early days of our Republic, however, evidence reveals disproportionate copy was dedicated toward violent crime involving "negroes" during the election cycle of 1894. Newspapers rarely published a daily without at least one report of a "negro" involved in illegal activity. Taglines for many of the dispatches demanded

law and order. The *Daily News* reported a triple hanging in Montgomery of three black men on July 20, 1894. The headline read: "Triple Hanging: Each convicted of a different crime but all go to glory together."²⁶



"Don't Forget Gov. R. F. Kolb at Hartselle, Ala. September, 9th." Political advertisement from the 1894 gubernatorial campaign in Alabama." Courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

25 "Confederate Reunion," *Birmingham Age-Herald*, April 26, 1894.

26 "A Night of Unrest," *Daily News*, July 20, 1894.

History testifies the Alabama press of the 1890's did not engage in unbiased reporting. Like many of the newspapers during the founding of our nation, most Alabama publishers were purveyors of information reflecting a particular political philosophy. Many of the largest newspapers in Alabama were funded and operated by individuals who supported the Democratic Party. However, supporters of Reuben Kolb also bought or built their own publications to print a Populist perspective of current events. The intent of the publications was to sell news. However, news is most often disseminated with a point of view. In the case of the Democrats and Populists, that point of view was designed to campaign for votes. Alabama's newspaper publishers impacted elections in important ways during the late 1800's. William Warren Rogers claims that the political atmosphere in Alabama created a newspaper war between 1887 and 1896. According to him, the *Montgomery Advertiser* was staunchly pro-Democrat, as were the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and the *Daily News*, along with the *Mobile Register*.²⁷ Researcher Sheldon Hackney called the *Montgomery Advertiser* Alabama's most influential newspaper in 1894.²⁸ However, a very strong argument can be made that Birmingham newspapers played the most important role in the election of 1894.

Both the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and *Daily News* provided harsh reports concerning Reuben Kolb - the self-proclaimed Jefferson-Democrat/Populist candidate within the election. Much of the coverage decried Kolb for being disingenuous to the African-American voter he courted. Robert Saunders wrote:

One prominent Kolb supporter, according

to the *News*, denounced Negro voting and favored "shooting every God damned one who goes to the polls to cast his ballot!" Saunders also noted, "Reuben F. Kolb equivocated on a rapprochement with the Negro and from time to time let a strong strain of antipathy for the Negro erupt which made Negroes hesitant to support him."²⁹

An argument can be made that the partisan approach of the publishers of the *Birmingham-Age Herald* and *Daily News* aided the candidacy of William Oates. But Reuben Kolb, himself, provided ample opportunities for the press to pounce. The Populist candidate was guilty of making one misstep after another on the campaign trail.

Kolb worked very hard to build a secret coalition with Republicans, particularly African Americans. One crucial supporter was black and tan leader William Stevens. In the midst of the Kolb-Stevens courtship, Stephens attempted to publicly endorse Kolb during the Populist Party convention in 1894. "When Stevens rose to endorse of the Negroes the Populist platform which had been adopted, he was driven out under Police protection. The Stevens faction of the Republican party then decided to put out its own ticket."³⁰

The *Daily News* reported in its July 19th 1894 edition that a black Democrat, named Jack Brownlee, was severely beaten and driven from his home by a Kolb supporter. The incident was sparked by an event reportedly involving a group of "negroes" during what was called a "Kolb Club" organizational meeting. According to the *Daily News*, speeches were made in which two "negroes" joined the Kolb club. Brownlee, who was at the same

27 William Warren Rogers, "Alabama's Reform Press: Militant Spokesman for Agrarian Revolt," *Agricultural History* 34, no. 2 (April, 1960): 62.

28 Sheldon Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism in Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1969), 9.

29 Saunders, "Southern Populists," 255-256.

30 Mary Louise Tucker, "The Negro in the Populist movement in Alabama 1890-1896" (master's thesis, Atlanta University, 1957), 28.

meeting, was reportedly able to recruit what the *News* called a good list of members to the Democratic Party. The *News* reported that a mob “surrounded the house shooting into it and “raising Cain” [sic] generally. Both front and back doors were battered down and the negro caught. The crowd, which numbered some thirty or forty disguised men, then took him out into the yard and proceeded to administer an awful whipping with whips and withes.”³¹ The report went on to say the victim in the incident fled the county.

Only four days later, the *Daily News* reported that a shooting had taken place at a “negro” school near Milltown. Printed as a dispatch from the *Montgomery Advertiser*, the article reported a warning had been nailed to the schoolroom door of D.D. Kaigler, an apparent supporter of William Oates. The note warned Kaigler to stop supporting Oates. The communication was allegedly signed: “R.F. Kolb’s men and yours to hear, KKK. PS Fair Warning.... And then on February 20 instant, someone concealed in the woods fired into the school house while this teacher, Kaigler and twenty-one children were in the school house.”³²

Kolb also miscalculated the impact of his endorsement of workers involved within a coal-miners’ strike in Pratt City in the hot summer of 1894. The Pratt Coal and Coke Company provided coking coal to the Birmingham Iron Industry. Pratt City miners had become involved in a national strike in the summer of 1894. Pratt Coal and Coke Company owner Thomas H. Aldrich hired African Americans, and sought prisoners within a convict lease program, to replace striking workers at the Pratt City mine. Kolb’s endorsement of workers proved disastrous when the strike ultimately turned bloody on July 17, 1894.

Murder and Mayhem at the Pratt City Mines

Alabama Governor Thomas Jones had anticipated possible violence at the Pratt City mines for months preceding the inevitable tragedies that took place there. Jones sent military units to the area in a bid to prevent bloodshed during the strike. He hired detectives within the Pinkerton Detective Agency to monitor the situation and had removed the military from the scene only days before chaos erupted. An urgent dispatch was written and telegraphed to Governor Jones shortly at 5:40 pm on July 17th: “Send deputies and troops. Strikers are killing my negroes at slope No. 3 – MOORE.”³³

The Chicago Tribune reported the event approximating yellow journalistic fervor:

The murderous outbreak of striking miners at Pratt City, Ala., Monday afternoon was the worst outrage these Anarchist aliens have yet committed. A crowd of these fellows, several hundred strong, collected around the entrance to the mine and as they came out to go home the mob turned loose upon them with their rifles and began shooting them down. The unarmed and defenseless Negroes fled in all directions, but a ton of them were killed by the cowardly brutes, and many more of them were more or less severely injured.³⁴

The Birmingham press also reported that “[b]etween the hours of 6 and 5 o’clock a mob of about one hundred strikers armed with Winchesters, marched in a body to No 3 slope at Pratt Mines, shot down negro miners as they came from their work, ruthlessly murdered B. W.

31 “An Outrage,” *Daily News*, July 19, 1894.

32 “Ku Klux Kolbites,” *Daily News*, July 23, 1894.

33 “Two Killed,” *Birmingham Age-Herald*, July 17, 1894.

34 “The Murderous Alabama Aliens,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 18, 1894.



Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, Pratt Mines, Coke Ovens at Shaft Number 1, Alabama. Courtesy of Birmingham, Ala., Public Library Archives.

Tierce, chief deputy in charge of the guards, and wrought havoc generally.”³⁵ The *Daily News* reported the attack upon No. 3 slope was followed only moments later with a second incident involving an attack upon a train carrying workers in which the superintendent of the mines (Moore) was nearly killed.

The following day, The *Birmingham Age-Herald* reported: “[T]wo different meetings were held involving striking workers prior to the violence. One of those meetings involved approximately 200 workers at a wooded area near the Pratt City mines. Upon ending the meeting workers reportedly marched toward the number 4 slope

of the mining operation.”³⁶ The *Daily News* reported five dead, including a police officer (Deputy B.W. Tierce), a white man identified as “Frenchman”, and three African-American workers, Andrew Gambell, Jim Haannabel and an unknown African-American who was found dead in the woods.³⁷

A miner, W.J. Kelso, was ultimately arrested, along with 58 other miners. The *Daily News* reported that Kelso made a “very anarchistic and incendiary speech to the miners assembled...he told them that the output of coal was daily increasing and the force of scabs was widely increasing and that there had come a time to act.”³⁸ The *Daily News* also reported that an equal number of whites and blacks were arrested.

The Birmingham papers reported other acts of violence, including an attempt to dynamite Jefferson volunteers. They reported an explosion near Pratt mines that was targeted at African-Americans working within Pratt Coal and Coke Company.³⁹ The violence and threats of more aggression continued for three days despite the arrival of military troops to restore order at the mines. The *Daily News* reported on July 20th that there were multiple gunshots fired by a detail of troops assigned at the Pratt mine for protection of workers. The account reported the incident occurred at three o’clock in the morning after two

35 “Bloody Battle,” *Daily News*, July 17, 1894.

36 “Two More,” *Birmingham Age-Herald*, July 18, 1894.

37 “Five Men Are Dead,” *Daily News*, July 18, 1894.

38 “A Leader Caught,” *Daily News*, July 19, 1894.

39 “Five Men Are Dead,” *Daily News*, July 18, 1894.

white miners refused an order to halt. The two were arrested around slope 4 of the facility and no one was injured in the incident.⁴⁰

A variety of committees of safety were quickly formed with the intention of investigating the violence and building political consensus regarding civilian response to the crisis. Birmingham area African Americans were among those calling for the restoration of order within the strike. The *Birmingham Age Journal* reported on July 18th:

We the colored citizens of Birmingham, Jefferson County, hereby tender our service to aid our governor...in any way we can for the protection of human life and property. We condemn the action of any and all persons who ride over the laws of the state of Alabama in trying to prevent any person from working for such wages as they will not work for.⁴¹

This African American committee of safety group would play a pivotal role in determining the outcome of the 1894 gubernatorial election in Alabama.

Reuben Kolb provided continued support to striking workers at Pratt City, endorsing the cause for which they struck. Kolb was motivated to offer support after a secret caucus of ten thousand North Alabama miners endorsed the Kolb ticket. The support of Kolb by miners was steadfast because the Populist candidate pledged to remove convicts from mining details. Miners also supported Kolb because they disagreed with Governor Thomas Goode Jones' use of Alabama military forces, arguing that it incited violence between strikers and the military.⁴²

State Democrats seized the opportunity to attack

Kolb's bid to win African American votes, by utilizing the African American committee of safety. Committee chairperson E.E. Cummings, a black Democrat, wrote a letter to the *Birmingham Age-Herald* promoting African American support for Democrats. Cummings wrote: "The day is dawning for the negro. The whites have learned that he is



Rev. J. E. A. Wilson, Pastor Rising Star Baptist Church, Pratt City, Alabama. He was likely involved in the ministerial negotiation with the Democratic Party of Alabama. Courtesy of Rare Book Collection, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC – Chapel Hill.

the reserve force in the time of trouble. The negro is here and here to stay, so let our loyalty wane not, but increase in the last great battle...Let us march to the polls in one great phalanx and vote the Oates ticket from the top to the bottom."⁴³

40 "A Night of Unrest," *Daily News*, July 20, 1894.

41 "Grand Outpouring," *Birmingham Age-Herald*, July 18, 1894.

42 Rogers, *The One-Gallused*, 275.

43 "The Negroes," *Birmingham Age Herald*, July 21, 1894.

On July 20th, a group of concerned African Americans began meeting together in an effort to mitigate violence and to seek promises from the Democratic leadership for a higher quality of life for the black constituency. The *Daily News* reported that African American ministers wrote a letter to the leadership of the Democratic Party in response to a request by Alabama Party operative H. F. DeBardelben for a meeting with black ministers. The letter indicated that “colored” ministers in the city had discussed

“ THE COAL STRIKE OF 1894, AND THE ASSOCIATED VIOLENCE IN PRATT CITY AIMED AT AFRICAN AMERICANS, PROVED PIVOTAL IN THE BLACK LEADERSHIP’S DECISION TO ENDORSE WILLIAM OATES.

“the present condition” of the African American race in Birmingham and assured the Democratic Party leaders that the ministers had no interest in money, “personalized aggrandizement, notoriety or “social equality”.⁴⁴ What the ministers did want was an assurance that black men, women and children would be protected. The ministers claimed this protection must ensure physical safety as well as the opportunity for employment and the chance to experience a good life.⁴⁵ The letter contained specific requests including: enforcement of the law for equal and separate accommodations for blacks and whites on rail cars, fair punishment for African Americans found guilty of breaking the law, and the passage of laws to “protect our poor women, weak in intellect, weak in underdeveloped moral force, and weak in their poverty from the ravages of the

licentious white or black”.⁴⁶

Nineteen Birmingham area ministers signed the letter, including chairman Rev. T.W. Coffey. The *Daily News* reported that Alabama Democratic Executive Committee Chairman H. C. Thompkins responded to the letter by saying that he believed the “negro race are entitled for that which they ask.”⁴⁷ He gave assurances to the ministers that new laws would be passed to address their concerns. Thompkins concluded he would offer “whatever inference” he possessed to see that African Americans were protected “in their lives and persons, in all their rights before the law.”⁴⁸

Just one day after receiving H. C. Thompkins’ pledge, the ministers issued their endorsement of William C. Oates saying it was in the best interest of African Americans to support the Democratic ticket. Their endorsement assured black voters that Democrats were in favor of law and order and would rectify “the unjust and cruel attacks” to deprive African Americans of equal rights: “And feeling assured from pledges made to us on the stump and otherwise by the leadership of that party....we hereby urge upon and beg our race throughout the State of Alabama to vote for and with...the Honorable W. C. Oates.”⁴⁹

The ministers’ endorsement proved pivotal to the gubernatorial election. Researcher Karl Rodabaugh noted: “A black convention soon convened to discuss the respective positions of Kolb and Oates on the Negro; the delegates first announced that the Democrats promised to enact laws beneficial to blacks that Kolb’s party refused to consider; then they voted unanimously to endorse Oates.”⁵⁰ Reuben Kolb’s campaign soon began to unravel as Wil-

44 “Best Interests of the Colored Race in Alabama,” *Daily News*, July, 20, 1894.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 “The Negroes,” *Daily News*, July 29, 1894.

48 Ibid.

49 “The Negroes,” *Daily News*, July 30, 1894.

50 Karl Rodabaugh, *The Farmers’ Revolt in Alabama 1890-1896* (Greenville, N.C.: East Carolina University, 1977), 73-74.

liam Oates told black voters he was the best candidate for African Americans. Oates promised black crowds that he would protect them from mob violence and pledged them equal protection under the law. He warned the crowds that race relations would deteriorate under the leadership of Rueben Kolb and the Populist Party.⁵¹

Near the end of the campaign, a William Oates supporter found a flyer purported to reveal Reuben Kolb's future intentions regarding African Americans. Oates contended the flyer was found on the road near Lanett, Alabama and, speaking before a group of African American voters, read the alleged flyer:

All we want is to get Kolb in, and then we can have laws that will make this grand old state like it was before the war. The men who own farms must live on them, or put white men on them to run them, and not turn them over to a lot of negroes to become our neighbors. If we can keep the negro out of town, we can make him live on half of what he gets now, and we will get the benefit of it.⁵²

A few short days later, William C. Oates was elected Governor of Alabama by a margin of twenty-six thousand votes.⁵³

A Hypothesis: The White Flight and Classism

The Gubernatorial election of 1894 hinged upon black support. Reuben Kolb attempted to win that support in an ineffective effort to build an alliance with Afri-

can Americans in central and north Alabama. Newspapers played a critical role within the election by being a mouthpiece supporting the Democratic Party and fanning into flames concerns about the impact of African Americans on law and order. Reuben Kolb made a series of highly publicized political errors that severely damaged his own campaign. The coal strike of 1894, and the associated violence in Pratt City aimed at African Americans, proved pivotal in the black leadership's decision to endorse William Oates. And black support proved extremely important in giving William C. Oates a twenty-six thousand vote margin of victory within the election.

Within seven years, the promises Oates' campaign made to African Americans to assure his victory within the 1894 election were broken. The Democratic Party's pledge to offer safety, equal job opportunity and access to transportation lay in shambles. The 1901 Alabama Constitution eclipsed the promises made to Birmingham ministers during the hot summer of 1894. Many researchers have argued that Alabama's 1901 Constitution, one of the most racist in the world, was triggered by the election of 1894. If that is the case, the African Americans may have hastened their own political demise by making what might now be viewed as an ill-considered agreement with Alabama Democrats. However, a deeper investigation into the mine strike itself sparks another possible theory.

Much of the early research regarding the establishment of the 1901 Alabama Constitution revolves around the disfranchisement of African Americans. In 1949 scholar Joseph Taylor wrote:

The campaigns of 1892 and 1894 re-opened sores on the Alabama body politic that were thought to have been healed during the peaceful years immediately following 1874... There was no doubt that the new leaders, with their "alien" doctrines were

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² "A Kolb Striker," *Daily News*, August 3, 1894.

⁵³ "Oates Majority in Alabama," *New York Times*, August 9, 1894.

feared because of the belief that they might enlist the aid of Negroes in their attempt to wrest control from the old leaders.⁵⁴

R. Jean Simms-Brown adds that the farmers and workers of north Alabama embraced the promises made by Oates and the Democratic Party for protection and equal opportunity for jobs.

In a 1995 article entitled “Racial Conflict and Racial Solidarity in the Alabama Coal Strike of 1894: New Evidence for the Gutman-Hill Debate,” Alex Lichtenstein analyzed dispatches written by the Pinkerton Detective Agency to then Governor Thomas Jones concerning activities during the coal miners’ strike in Pell City. Lichtenstein claims that these dispatches likely inspired concerns by Jones, and the Democratic Party, regarding white supremacist aims. Dispatches reported how “black and white miners socialized together in integrated saloons in Birmingham, and held interracial mass meetings without incident. Moreover, when resentment against black strikebreakers boiled over into violence or threatened violence, black and white strikers participated in that violence together.”⁵⁵ Lichtenstein accurately reported that equal numbers of blacks and whites were arrested in the aftermath of violence at the Pratt mines. “A Pinkerton reported that black and white wives and children of the miners demonstrated together against the “blacklegs” being brought to the mines.”⁵⁶ Other public demonstrations of solidarity were also included in the Pinkerton reports: “Wilson’s saloon, in particular, seemed to be a place where black and white miners came together informally to discuss strike

matters.”⁵⁷

African Americans did play a strong role in determining the outcome of the elections of 1892 and 1894, however, the quest for their support of the Democratic Party does not appear to have been enormously difficult to achieve. Research suggests Kolb failed to garner African American support in 1894 because he made far too many mistakes during the campaign. What appears to be of greater significance, however, was the fear among Democrats that the appearance of collegial relationships between poor blacks and whites in the coal miner strike of 1894 would forge an alliance. The possibility of such an alliance between the poor may have seemed far more dangerous than concerns regarding the black vote.

During the debate concerning disfranchisement enumerated within the 1901 Alabama Constitution, former Governors Jones and Oates offered surprising positions regarding the black electorate. Joseph Taylor gave this compelling quotation within his article “Populism and Disfranchisement in Alabama”:

Former Governor Oates said that, as a result of the development of the habit of cheating... White men have gotten to cheating each other until we don’t have any honest elections . . . I am for making a Constitution which will elevate the suffrage and I am for eliminating from the right to vote all those who are unfit and unqualified, and if the rule strikes a white man as well as a Negro, let him go.⁵⁸

The suggestion that poor whites and blacks cooperated within the coal miner’s strike to challenge the existing political oligarchy, offers another tantalizing perspec-

54 Joseph H. Taylor “Populism and Disfranchisement in Alabama”. *The Journal of Negro History* 34, no. 4 (Oct., 1949): 417-418.

55 Alex Lichtenstein, “Racial Conflict and Racial Solidarity in the Alabama Coal Strike of 1894: New Evidence for the Gutman-Hill Debate,” *Labor History* 36, no. 1 (Winter, 1995): 70.

56 Ibid., 73.

57 Ibid., 73-74.

58 Taylor, “Populism and Disfranchisement,” 424.

tive concerning the evolution of Alabama politics. Had an effective coalition between poor whites and blacks been allowed to flourish, the political history of Alabama may have been far different. In the end, only federal intervention would break the death-grip of control the wealthy white Democratic Party apparatus had created to limit the influence of the poor upon the affairs of the state in the 'Heart of Dixie'.

The Feminist Myth: Second-Wave Feminism in *The Birmingham News* Advertising

by Yasmin El-Husari

THE FEMALE images portrayed in advertisements often reflect a society's attitude towards its women. The 1960s and 1970s were the years of the Second Wave of Feminism¹, a time when America shook with a movement known for breaking through gender stereotypes and placing women on equal legal footing as men in many aspects of society. Despite a tangible change in the portrayal of women in newspaper advertisements in the years between 1960 and 1980, the underlying message of stereotypical gender roles remained firmly in place. The subject of this study, *The Birmingham News*, provides clear evidence of that phenomenon.

Generally, postwar Americans viewed traditional family roles as necessary for the stability of the family unit², so American society in the 1960s demanded that the husband fulfill the roles of breadwinner and protector while the wife played the role of nurturer by “stabilizing

internal familial relationships [and] focusing her full attention on the housekeeper-wife-mother functions within the family.”³ In 1960, 38 percent of families included two workers, but society limited women to the occupations of secretary, teacher, nurse, or, the ultimate ideal, housewife.⁴ Viewed as dependent individuals by the public sphere, even a woman living on her own needed a male cosigner to get a credit card or mortgage.⁵ Unwritten societal laws tied women to their families, and there was very little that could be done to reduce the pressure.

Regardless of what a woman did before marriage, unwritten societal rules commanded that she get married as soon as possible and happily give up everything by way of outside goals and career for her husband and children. Elizabeth Anticaglia wrote in her book, *A Housewife's Guide to Women's Liberation*, in 1972: “We women have traditionally been instruments of service, paragons of the Madonna-seductress-demure on the one hand, sexy on the other. In times of war, we are urged to go out and work; in peacetime, to stay home!”⁶ Even though Anticaglia saw this so strongly, most women hardly ever noticed

1 The First Wave of feminism took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and mainly focused on the issues of suffrage and equality under the law and was interrelated with the temperance and abolitionist movement. The Second Wave spanned from the 1960s to the 1980s and came into being following the civil rights and anti-war movements. It drew attention to a broad variety of social issues such as sexuality and women's roles within the family and workplace. Third Wave Feminism began in the early 1990s as a response to what were deemed as “failures” of the Second Wave and is still ongoing today. Its themes are much less concrete than those of the first and second waves, and includes a variety of issues such as gender-role expectations.

2 The uncertainty of the Cold War era prompted many Americans to seek refuge in the stability of traditional family roles.

3 Joan D. Mandle, *Women & Social Change* (Princeton: Princeton Book and Company Publishers, 1971), 113-114.

4 Mandle, *Women & Social Change*, 82; Elizabeth A. Anticaglia, *A Housewife's Guide to Women's Liberation* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1972), 90-91.

5 Gail Collins, *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women From 1960 to the Present* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009), 22.

6 Anticaglia, *A Housewife's Guide*, 26.

or questioned the state of their lives because they knew no different. Society dictated that men earn money while it expected that respectable women stay home and spend it. Off-limit careers did not shock women because they only compared themselves to each other, so to them, their experience seemed no different than anyone else's.⁷

“ADVERTISEMENTS PORTRAYED WHITE WOMEN WHO MATCHED THE 1960 BEAUTY IDEAL OF ‘A BARBIE-LIKE WOMAN WITH A SMALL WAIST AND LARGE, FIRM BREASTS- THE KIND OF FIGURE THAT WAS DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE WITHOUT A GREAT DEAL OF REINFORCEMENT.’”

Several studies⁸ conducted in the 1940s and 50s indicated to marketing companies that women were not only the primary consumers and buyers of the household, but they were also more attentive to advertisements than men. A 1940 survey conducted by Rutgers University Department of Journalism among women shoppers found that 93.5% of housewives interviewed liked to see advertising published in the newspaper. Over 80 percent of women used advertisements to stay “style conscious,” and over 93 percent of women used advertisements to know prices and make their shopping lists. From display ads to store ads to the classified section of the paper, most women read advertisements everywhere and based their shopping lists upon deals and products they read.⁹ Advertising companies tar-

geted women so openly that David Ogilvy, the Father of Advertising and creator of Ogilvy & Mather, one of the largest ad agencies in the world, constantly referred to the consumer as “she” in his 1963 how-to book on advertising, *Confessions of an Advertising Man*. In fact, the book often refers to the consumer as “reader,” “consumer,” or “she,” but it never refers to the consumer as “he” or “him.” Ogilvy could not have been more plain about his target audience than when he wrote, “The consumer is not a moron; she is your wife.”¹⁰

Advertisements at the time reflected cultural expectations, and Ogilvy's book shows the natural and unconscious (what would be considered in modern times) sexist mentality. Although he wrote in his book that women were smart and that attempting to trick them with advertising would be foolish, he also recommended that advertisers write their copies while pretending to answer a woman's question at a dinner party. He advocated strengthening headlines with “emotional words” such as “darling,” “love,” and “baby,” and warned advertisers from using “highfalutin language” when advertising to “uneducated people.” He followed with an anecdote about how 43 percent of housewives did not know the meaning of the word “obsolete.”¹¹ Advertisements targeting women often had little appeal to the intellect, a reflection of society's overall attitude towards women. Feminist Gloria Steinem once pointed out: “Advertising is a very important form of education. It is estimated that 40 percent of all of our

7 Collins, *When Everything Changed*, 25.

8 For in-depth study of motivation research in the fifties, see Vance Packard's *Hidden Persuaders* (New York: Van Rees Press, 1957)

9 American Newspaper Publishers Association Bureau of Advertising, *The Newspaper as an Advertising Medium: A Handbook of the Newspaper in North America* (New York: American Newspaper Publishers Association, 1940), 66; Leo Bogart, *Strategy in Advertising*

(Harcourt: Brace & World, Inc, 1967), 202; ANPA, 104.

10 Constance L. Hays, “David Ogilvy, 88, Father of Soft Sell In Advertising, Dies,” *New York Times*, July 22, 1999, under “Business Day,” accessed May 3, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/22/business/david-ogilvy-88-father-of-soft-sell-in-advertising-dies.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>; David Ogilvy, *Confessions of an Advertising Man* (Atheneum, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1963), 96.

11 Ogilvy, 108; Ogilvy, 106; Ogilvy, 12.

subcultural intake comes from advertising.” In the case of *The Birmingham News*, the most widely circulated daily newspaper in the state with a wide range of advertising patronage, the potential for influence cannot be ignored.¹²

The Birmingham News began as a four page evening newspaper in 1888 in a seventeen- year-old city. Launched with the slogan, “Great is Birmingham and *The News* is its Prophet,” the paper grew quickly. By 1891, it claimed the largest circulation of any daily paper in the state of Alabama. The constant expansion and improvement undertaken by the paper as well as its intent on remaining deeply connected to the community as a whole contributed to the paper’s growing popularity. Over the years, *The News* enjoyed growing circulation and a large amount of advertising patronage while financial circumstances forced other daily papers in the state such as the *Birmingham Ledger* and *Birmingham Age Herald* to consolidate under *The Birmingham News* management. By 1945, the circulation numbers reached over 100,000 and continued to grow.¹³ A 1961 call for advertisements in *The Birmingham News* boasted that *The Birmingham News* and *The Birmingham Post Herald* were read by over 90% of Metropolitan Birmingham families and three out of ten families in Central and Northern Alabama.¹⁴

In the 1960s, *The Birmingham News* included a section titled “For and About Women,” a section originally begun in 1943 by the insistence of female journalist Alyce Walker who persuaded management that women needed a specialized section of the paper to themselves.¹⁵ Four sub-

headings titled Household, Foods, Fashions, and Beauty introduced the section. If anything, the subheadings practically summarized what society considered “women’s interests.” Advertising for women in the *News* centered on self-improvement while advertising for men was self-affirming and full of praise. One glaring example is a section in the *News* titled “A Lovelier You,” which always featured a short article by way of advertising booklets such as “Beauty of Housework” and “Painless Reducing” that women could obtain for a mailed fee of five to twenty cents each. The ads promised that the booklets would give homemakers tips on “how to give yourself a beauty treatment while engaged in your duties” and to give “damsels moaning for longer skirts” a way to “lose up to 10 pounds without a struggle.” Articles on subjects such as how mothers can make daughters more interested in their own appearance (begin at a “tender age”) always accompanied these promises.¹⁶

The key tool of many advertisements aimed at women was sexuality. Adolescent psychologists Elizabeth Douvan and Carol Kay wrote in a 1962 article that sexual identity forms the “real core of feminine settlement,” reducing the purpose of a woman’s life to pleasing men. Advertising companies used the “sex sell” to target women regardless of their age or economic status to market everything from soap to china.¹⁷ Illustrations of women in 1960 advertisements in *The Birmingham News* seem to move between women in dresses and lingerie with little room in between. African American women were not shown in advertisement until many years later, and men were never shown in advertisements of women’s products. Instead, the advertisements portrayed white women who matched the 1960 beauty ideal of “a Barbie-like woman with a small

12 Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes: A Cultural History of American Advertising* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1998), 325; Emily Jones, *The Birmingham News: Our First 100 Years* (Birmingham: Birmingham News Co, 1988), 199

13 Jones, *The Birmingham News*, 9-10, 197-200.

14 Ibid.; “The Medium: for Sales Results,” *The Birmingham News*, January 1, 1961.

15 Jones, *The Birmingham News*, 122.

16 “For and About Women,” *The Birmingham News*, March 3, 1960.

17 Mandle, *Women & Social Change*, 67; Anticaglia, *A Housewife’s Guide*, 45.

waist and large, firm breasts- the kind of figure that was difficult to achieve without a great deal of reinforcement.”¹⁸ Advertisements often paired these daunting images with promises of solutions for a less than ideal figure. A Warner’s “Tomorrow” bra for example, offered a “magic” bra because “no one is a perfect size.” Girdle advertisements promised “extra tummy control” and “magic elastic” for a “slim, unbroken line from bust to hips . . . just right for today’s fitted fashions.” Editors spread these advertisements evenly through the entire paper, so that they could be found gracing the national news section just as easily they did the women’s social section. Modesty had little influence over the ubiquity of seductive images of women smiling in their underwear throughout the *News*.¹⁹

Generally when compared to women, advertisements for men’s products portrayed men as suave and in control. Fully dressed and posed in stances that exude confidence, the men in advertisements usually posed with their faces turned forward and their hands busy with various objects such as cigarettes or legal pads. This contrasts sharply with the objects women hold, which range from bouquets to single flowers to babies and young children. Any financial advertisement involving banks or investing companies found in *The Birmingham News* targeted men with the use of professional language about preparing for the future. One telling advertisement for Delta airlines promised “a fresh point of view” on business trips or vacations with “comfort, speed, and hospitality.” The subject of the photograph advertisement was a man in a reclined plane seat holding a newspaper and smiling at a stewardess who was handing him a cup of coffee. Although women were regularly portrayed through both text and image as

serving men, not a single advertising image portrays a man serving a woman, keeping in line with societal roles for both genders.²⁰

In addition to using sexuality when advertising to women, advertising companies also appealed to the traditionally feminine roles of wife and mother. In his book, *Confessions*, Ogilvy recommended that advertisers use photographs of babies to attract the attention of women while warning them away from the use of humor as “feeding her family is a serious business for most housewives.” Indeed, a Frigidaire advertisement for washing machines in *The Birmingham News* used two babies for extra effect. The advertisement promised “to get baby’s diapers clean and fresh” at a low price while the illustrated advertisement showed a young woman wearing a crown and cradling a baby who looked up at her adoringly. The woman looks more like she should be going to a formal event as she stands behind the open washing machine wearing high heels, lipstick, and a pencil skirt. Advertisements for milk, vitamins, and aspirin all promise the best for the family and often show images of a woman and a child exchanging loving glances. An advertisement for something like a car, which involves credit and recognition by society, is most definitely not marketed at women. A Pontiac advertisement, for example, boasts the support of an award for Outstanding Design presented by the International Fashion Council. Using the individualistic tagline: “Shouldn’t one of these eye-catching cars belong to you?” the advertisement consists of a photograph of a man driving a Pontiac and smiling at the camera with none of the characteristic mention of family usually found in advertisements targeting women. Mountains and open road fill the background, and a woman staring off into the distance sits at the man’s

18 Collins, *When Everything Changed*, 30.

19 Loveman’s Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1960; Pizitz Playtex Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1960.

20 Delta Airlines Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, January 1, 1961.

side, a spectator watching while the man excels.²¹

The language used in advertisements affects the way people think about themselves, and the English language includes words that place men and women in different categories. Consider that an advertisement for boys' clothing from Burger Phillips used the words "Very grown up styling for young gentlemen" while an advertisement for women's shirtwaist coveralls promises to help "Keep pert and pretty despite the chore of the moment!"²² In these cases, advertisers encourage young boys to look like a young "gentleman," a term that exudes authority. The women's advertisement however, implies a focus on household chores while playing on the feminine vanity. Sociology professor Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley wrote: "Words associated with males more often have positive connotations; they convey notions of power, prestige, and leadership. In contrast, female words are more often negative, conveying weakness, inferiority, immaturity, and a sense of the trivial."²³ One only needs to know that the words captivating, feminine, charming, and slimming, which describe women superficially and through their ability to please others, accompanied women's advertisements while men's advertisements use words such as luxurious, popular, and athletic, which are more dependent on achievement and prestige, to see the difference in language.

Women noticed the different methods used to advertise to them, even though they might have avoided voicing their concerns. When speaking about the impact advertising has on mothers in their 1952 book, Sidonie Gruenberg and Hilda Krech wrote,

She [a mother] thinks of the pictures in the advertising and other pages of the magazines: fashionably dressed women dashing out to card parties; the electric robot washing, drying, ironing the clothes; the electric stove cooking the entire dinner by itself; the beautifully coiffure, high-heeled, smiling (always smiling) women gaily trotting around the house with the vacuum cleaner doing the house in ten minutes flat. Then she thinks of the picture that she herself makes. . . Her smile is ready enough for children and husband and friends; but somehow it isn't brought on by emptying the vacuum cleaner or cleaning the toilet bowl.²⁴

The glamorized image of the perfect wife and mother became increasingly at odds with the realities of women's lives in the late 1950s and 1960s as higher education made young women dissatisfied with the fate of being bound to motherhood. Women searched for equality in opportunity and choice as one feminist wrote that the equality she and others were seeking was freedom of choice rather than a chance to be exactly like a man.²⁵ In 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, a powerful criticism of the dissatisfactory situation of women in the United States which was a major factor in sparking the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s. She criticized advertisement companies for their depiction of women by stating:

The manipulators [advertising companies] and their clients in American business can

21 Ogilvy, *Confessions*, 136; Frigidaire Washing Machine Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1960; Pontiac Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1960.

22 *The Birmingham News*, March 3, 1970; Pizitz Prince Charmers Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 3, 1960.

23 Mandle, *Women & Social Change*, 61-62.

24 Sidonie M. Gruenberg and Hilda Sidney Krech, *The Many Lives of Modern Woman: A Guide to Happiness in her Complex Role* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, inc, 1952), 18.

25 June Hannam, *Feminism* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2012), 78; Anticaglia, *A Housewife's Guide*, 20.

hardly be accused of creating the feminine mystique. But they are the most powerful of its perpetrators; it is the millions which blanket the land with persuasive images, flattering the American housewife, diverting her guilt and disguising her growing sense of emptiness. . . If they are not solely responsible for sending women home, they are surely responsible for keeping them there.²⁶

As awareness about women's issues began to grow among women's circles as well as in the public sphere, a movement began and change naturally followed. In 1966, the National Organization for Women (NOW) formed under the leadership of Betty Friedan to fight for equal opportunity in the workforce, and rallies and protests abounded. By the 70s, women began to see the fruits of their activism in the form of legislation. In 1972, Congress passed Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments to the Civil Rights Act requiring equal access to education and equal funding for school sports regardless of gender. In 1974, Congress passed the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the Educational Equity Act, both broadening women's opportunity and independence. And in 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission added sexual harassment to its guidelines on discrimination.²⁷ Women had gained equal opportunity in work and education while acquiring legal protection from any masculine sense of entitlement to their sexuality, and advertisement companies worked to conform to the new society.

In 1974, Tina Santis, the public relations representative for Colgate- Palmolive said in a statement: "Today's

woman is not going to be influenced by the same advertising and promotional message that may have motivate her a few years ago." Women began making conscious decisions to accept or reject traditional gender roles of becoming a sweet and pretty wife and mother, and they therefore no longer represented irrationality to the media. In fact, feminists took to criticizing advertising companies quite openly as they began placing "This Ad Insults Women" stickers on billboards and posters they felt portrayed women in offensive or exploitive ways. The National Advertising Review Board even produced a checklist, which they distributed among advertising companies to ensure that

“ ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE LATE 1970S AND EARLY 80S BECAME DEVOID OF “TRADITIONAL” SEXIST IDEOLOGY, BUT NEW SEXISM APPEARED UNDER GUISE OF WOMEN’S LIBERATION.

ad makers avoided any blatant sexism in their advertisements. Question groups on the checklist ranged from "Are the women portrayed in my ad stupid? For example, am I reinforcing the "dumb blond" cliché? Does my ad portray women who are unable to balance their checkbooks?" to "Are sexual stereotypes perpetuated in my ad? That is, does it portray women as weak, silly, and overemotional?" to "Is there a gratuitous message in my ads that a woman's most important role in life is a supportive one, to cater to and coddle men and children?"²⁸ The checklist itself,

26 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, inc, 1963), 228.

27 Juliann Sivulka, *Ad Women: How They Impact What We Need, Want, and Buy* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2009), 279.

28 Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes*, 322; Jennifer Nelson, "Feminism Gave Rise to Superwoman in Advertising," *Women's eNews*, November 4, 2012, under "Books," accessed May 3, 2016, <http://womensenews.org/story/books/121102/feminism-gave-rise->

complete with its thorough questions and accompanying examples, provides proof that these deeply ingrained stereotypical attitudes about women would be challenging to overcome.

A 1970 full-page advertisement for Old Gold Filter cigarettes serves as the ultimate example at a failed attempt to market with feminism in *The Birmingham News*. The advertisement states the following:

Behind every independent man there's a crafty coupon clipper. But she'd better stay behind him. She'd better not try being outspoken. Let her suggest to her independent man that they smoke Old Gold Filters so they can save the coupons, and it'll be all over. After all, he knows he smokes Old Gold Filters for the flavor. So don't try to talk him out of it. Let him enjoy the flavor. And thank him for the coupon.²⁹

A photograph of a man smoking a cigarette while a woman leans over his shoulder and holds a package of cigarettes and a coupon up towards the reader accompanies the text. Both models wear wedding bands to match the scenario in the text. This advertisement clearly shows an example of an ad maker attempting to combine reverse psychology with feminist humor. The problem with these types of ads is that it continues to encourage old stereotypes. The woman remains behind the man, the man should still remain in control, and the woman should be happy she gets coupons out of the deal to go shopping with.³⁰

An ad for tuxedos from Burch & Tant Formal Shops in *The Birmingham News* in 1980 also proved that the use of women as advertising props still existed. The

advertising text states: "Because all brides are beautiful. . . everything about the wedding must be perfect. The style and colors must be perfectly coordinated. . . Nothing can be left to chance!" The illustration featured a groom staring heroically into the distance while his bride stands behind him with her head on his shoulder. Not only had advertisers continued to use a woman's beauty for advertisement, but they remained stuck in the sense of feminine subordination. The ad still depicted a confident male being supported by women with no individuality.³¹

Advertisements in the late 1970s and early 80s became devoid of "traditional" sexist ideology, but new sexism appeared under guise of women's liberation. Lingerie ads gave way to swimsuit ads, sections advertising weight loss for a "Lovelier You" shifted to large boxes with women's testimonies for weight loss programs that made their husbands proud of them, and companies advertised men's underwear with illustrations of half-dressed men just as they advertised women's underwear before. Images of women feeding their families still accompanied grocery advertisements while advertisers flattered women for being "smart shoppers" when buying their products. A 1980 Estee Lauder makeup ad in *The Birmingham News* promised colors that are "bright but not fierce, brilliant but not blinding, light but not pallid, deep but not somber" for a fresh, energetic look. With careful analysis, it becomes obvious that the ad used a fashion message to tell women what beauty standards they should strive for by pushing them towards "fresh and energetic" as an ideal woman of 1980 ought to be.³²

31 Burch & Tant Formal Shops Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1980.

32 A.E.A Swimwear Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1980; Alabama Medical Weight Loss Clinic Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1980; Food World Meat Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, August 1, 1979; Estee Lauder Transatlantic Colors Advertisement, *The Birmingham News*, March 2, 1980.

superwoman-in-advertising; Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes*, 326.

29 Old Gold Filters Advertisement, *Birmingham News Parade*, March 1, 1970.

30 Ibid.

Ironically, despite the blatant sexism in advertising, unlike many other professions in the past, advertising companies always openly employed women in writing positions. Employers knew that a lot of money could be made using women to market to their primary consumers. The overarching idea of “If you are selling to women, nothing succeeds like a woman’s viewpoint” dominated. Women knew their own faults, and they played on their own weaknesses to advertise to their own. Friedan stated in her book, “Properly manipulated. . . American housewives can be given the sense of identity, purpose, creativity, the realization, even the sexual joy their lack- by the buying of things.” Despite the fact that companies readily hired women for advertising jobs, they made it quite clear that they had no place in leadership positions at newspapers or any other business. *The Birmingham News* serves as a typical example since it had seen a rise in the number of female journalists in the office since World War II, but the newspaper editors and their assistants remained male past the end of the Second Wave of Feminism.³³

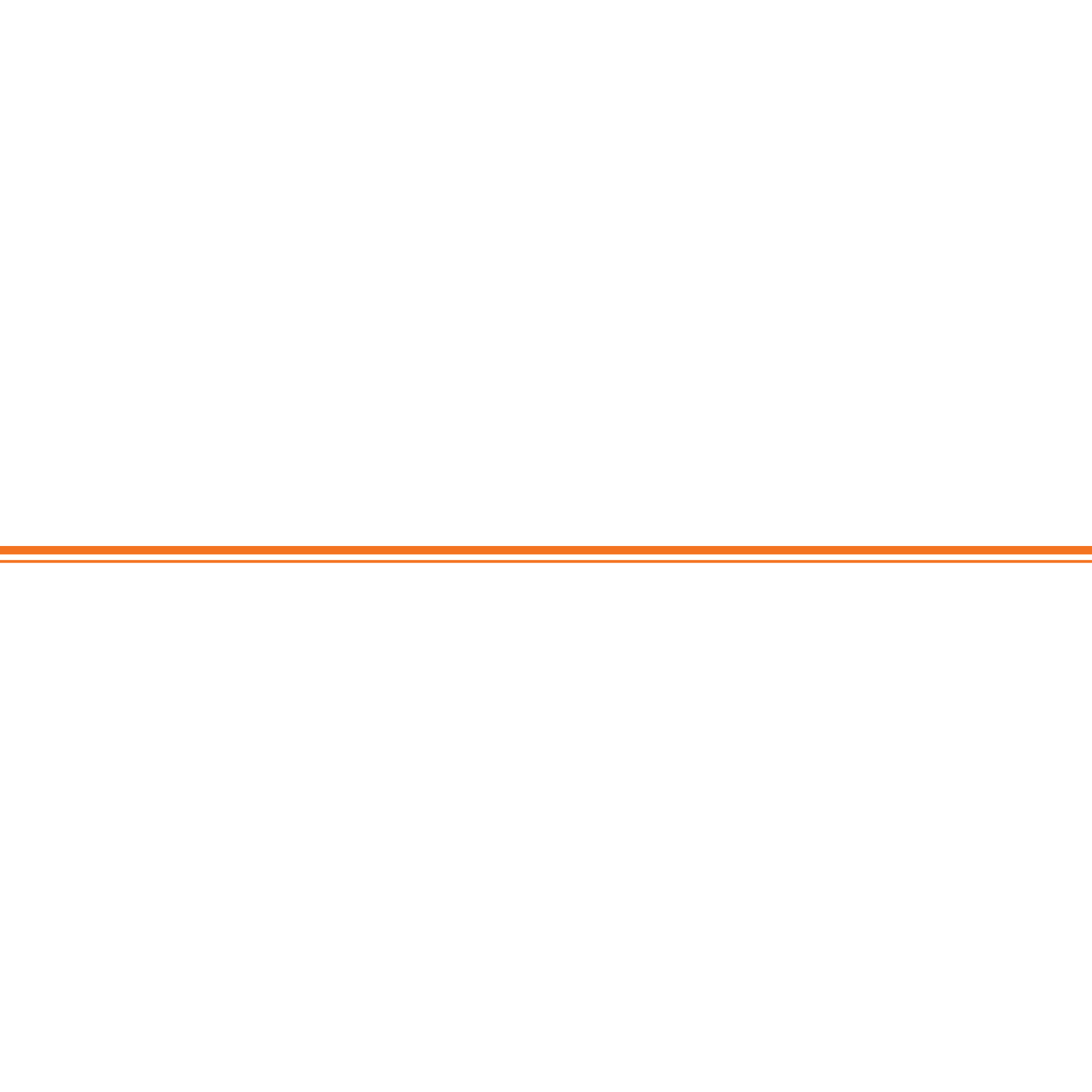
Sexist advertising did not end with Second-Wave feminism. It only took on a different form, one that became more difficult to recognize. Today, women’s bodies remain objectified and exploited to advertise products while masked as “celebrating femininity” while Photoshop makes impossibly flawless women a common phenomenon. The housewife in advertising has now been replaced by supermom, a woman who wears khakis and a button-down, who maintains a job and an immaculate house while planning play dates for her smiling children³⁴. In short, not only have stereotypes not gone away, but they have

been compounded by expectations of perfection, causing a greater feeling of dissatisfaction than before. The struggle to reform societal perceptions towards women has not ended, and conscious individuals continue to fight for equality where they find it lacking. Activists have raised awareness in the public sphere, and many companies and corporations have joined the fight by countering negative ads with what are considered more positive ones. The public should remain vigilant and wary of old ideas repackaged and marketed in a new form. Sexist advertising can end, but only through heightened public awareness and appropriate response.



³³ Collins, *When Everything Changed*, 26; Sivulka, *Ad Women*, 13; Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 208; Jones, *The Birmingham News*, 122.

³⁴ For more on this subject, see Jessamyn Neuhaus, *Housework and Housewives in American Advertising: Married to the Mop* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).





ARTICLES

The 22nd State: Alabama History

True Reform or Just Whistling Dixie? Child Labor Legislation and Alabama's Progressive Governor and Cotton Mill Owner Braxton Bragg Comer

by Stephanie Womack

THE PHOTOGRAPH taken in 1910 is haunting. It captures a half-smile spread over a young boy's face; his eyes twinkle with mischief, his cap smartly set atop blonde hair. The subject of the photograph, an eleven-year-old boy, nicknamed "our baby doffer" by workers at Avondale Mills, proudly posed at his workstation while a child labor activist documented underage employees of the mill. Alabama's governor, Braxton Bragg Comer, owned the mill where the baby doffer toiled. Hailed as a progressive three years prior to the taking of the photograph, Governor Comer signed a law prohibiting youngsters such as the baby doffer from employment by mills such as Avondale. Was Governor Comer truly a progressive, or was he just another mill owner exploiting the labor of children? Despite Comer's recalcitrance toward comprehensive child labor legislation, the textile industry's historical reliance on child labor, the speed with which the South's textile industry grew, and a comparison the child labor law enacted under Comer compared to those of other southern states, point to the conclusion that Gov-



"Our Baby Doffer" working in Avondale Mills, Birmingham, Alabama, 1910. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

ernor Comer was neither a progressive governor on child labor nor a proponent of child labor exploitation.

Who Was Braxton Bragg Comer?

In the past, historians documented Braxton Bragg Comer's governorship favorably. Allen Going's frequently cited 1940 master's thesis expounds upon Governor Comer's successful efforts to regulate and reduce the fees charged by railroads in the state. Going concludes that Comer "aroused the people from a feeling of lethargy and self-satisfaction and made them face squarely the issues and needs of a rapidly expanding commonwealth."¹ A 1970 dissertation by Owen Hunter Draper portrays Braxton Bragg, popularly known as B. B., as Alabama's "education governor."² Land-

1 Allen Johnston Going, "The Governorship of B. B. Comer" (master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1940), 123.

2 Owen Hunter Draper, "Contributions of Governor Braxton Bragg Comer to Public Education in Alabama, 1907-1911" (PhD diss., University of Alabama, 1970).

marks memorialize Comer's tenure as Alabama's governor: the Department of Modern Languages at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa is housed in B. B. Comer Hall; the School of Agriculture's lab at Auburn University resides in the Braxton Bragg Comer Hall; children in Sylacauga attend school first at the B. B. Comer Elementary School and then at the B. B. Comer High School; and drivers on Route 35 in Scottsboro cross the Tennessee River on the B. B. Comer Bridge.³

Recent scholarship, however, tends to cast a more critical portrayal of Comer's four years as Alabama's leader. The former governor's embrace of convict leasing and his less than enthusiastic adoption of laws regulating child labor have subjected Comer's administration to heightened criticism. As to convict leasing, a historian harshly concludes that "in several ways the convicts' plight was worse under Comer than during the 1890's."⁴ On child labor, one critic opines: "No issue shows Comer as the reluctant reformer so clearly as the continuing fight for effective child-labor legislation."⁵ Another critic concludes that Comer's "lukewarm approach to child labor was not laudable."⁶ In order to assess accurately Comer's policies as the governor of Alabama, it is necessary to understand his background.

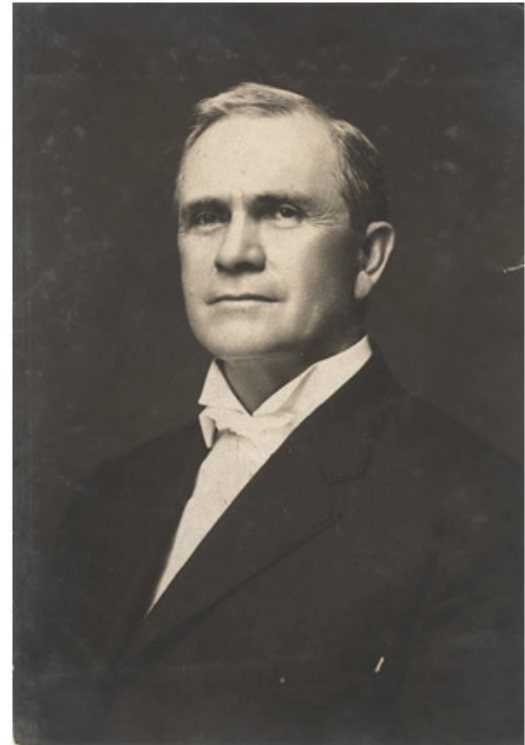
Interestingly, Comer's entrance into the cotton textile business occurred when he was nearly fifty years old; he spent the first half of his life in more rural pursuits.

3 Interestingly, the B. B. Comer Bridge has a Facebook page.

4 David Alan Harris, "Racists and Reformers: A Study of Progressivism in Alabama, 1896 - 1911" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 1960), 378.

5 William Warren Rogers, Robert Duvall Ward, Leah Rawls Atkins, and Wayne Flint, *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 362.

6 David Alan Harris, "Braxton Bragg Comer, 1907-1911," in *Alabama Governors: A Political History of the State*, ed. Samuel L. Webb and Margaret E. Armbrister (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 156.



Governor Braxton Bragg Comer. Courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

Braxton Bragg Comer was born at Spring Hill in Barbour County, Alabama, on November 7, 1848, the fourth of six sons born to John Fletcher Comer and Catherine Drewry Comer.⁷ Young B. B. grew up on a large cotton plantation. His father died at the age of 47, "leaving his widow to manage a large plantation and to care for six sons - the youngest a babe in arms."⁸ B. B. Comer studied under Professor

7 Ibid., 151.

8 Donald Comer, "Braxton Bragg Comer (1848-1927): An Alabamian Whose Avondale Mills Opened New Paths for Southern Progress," Newcomen Address, 1947 Alabama Dinner, Birmingham, AL, October 29, 1947 (Birmingham, AL: Birmingham Publishing Co., 1947), 9.

E. N. Brown of Macon County, a renowned scholar in the pre-Civil War days. Comer entered the University of Alabama at the age of sixteen, too young to fight in the Civil War. Less than one year into his tenure at the university, on April 4, 1865, Comer found himself in the midst of the burning of the college under General Croxton of the Union Army. Comer and his fellow cadets marched with their instructors from the burning university to Marion, Alabama. Once in Marion, the cadets' instructors sent them home. With no transportation available, Comer walked most of the way across the state from Marion to his home in Barbour County, following in the wake of Federal troops.⁹

After obtaining bachelor's and master's degrees from Emory and Henry College in Virginia, Comer returned to Spring Hill and worked on his family's plantation for a few years. In 1872, he married Eva J. Harris and subsequently built his own family plantation in Comer, located a few miles from Spring Hill. Over the course of the ensuing thirteen years, he fathered seven children (two girls and five boys), built the largest gristmill in east Alabama, and became the largest producer of cotton in the state, accumulating more than 30,000 acres of land.¹⁰

Despite his success as a planter and merchant, Comer chose to leave the rural plantation life he had built to seek other opportunities in central Alabama. In 1885, at the age of 36, Comer moved his family to Anniston, where he and his wife welcomed their last three children, one of whom died in infancy. While in Anniston, Comer became a wholesale merchant, miller, and cotton factor.¹¹ His experience gained and business connections made while a cotton factor contributed to Comer's later success as a cotton mill owner.¹² Not content to settle in the smaller city

of Anniston, Comer again uprooted his family, moving twenty miles west to Birmingham. There, he continued his work in the gristmill business and also purchased the City National Bank, serving as its president.¹³

Comer embarked on the second phase of his life in 1897, with the opening of Avondale Mills. Northern investors approached Comer with a proposal for building a new cotton mill in Birmingham. According to Donald Comer, B. B. Comer's son, the mill "was first started as a civic enterprise at the request of the Chamber of Commerce to help give employment to those badly in need of it in the young and struggling city of Birmingham."¹⁴

Dixie - The Land of Cotton. . . Mills

Broadus Mitchell, author of the seminal book *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*, places 1880 as the year in which cotton mills began to ascend in the South.¹⁵ Although cotton prices rose at the conclusion of the Civil War, by 1880, the price of the staple declined steeply.¹⁶ With prices low, Southern businessmen concluded that rather than shipping cotton to New England for spinning and weaving into cloth, they could erect mills in the South and manufacture the cotton into cloth for sale at a much higher price. The Cotton Exposition hosted by Atlanta in 1881 promoted the idea of building this form of manufacturing in the South.¹⁷

ral...that many cotton factors should head mill enterprises. They had some money, business connections and a knowledge of the staple that was important." Broadus Mitchell, *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 105.

13 Comer, "Braxton Bragg Comer," 15.

14 Ibid., 15-16.

15 Mitchell, *The Rise of Cotton Mills*, 63.

16 Ibid., 62.

17 Ibid., 71-72.

9 Ibid., 9-10.

10 Ibid., 11-12.

11 Ibid., 12-15.

12 As stated by Broadus Mitchell in his classic book: "It was natu-

The cotton textile industry first flourished in South Carolina, embraced as a community project to bring manufacturing to an area in desperate need of jobs. In 1880, the *News and Courier* of Charleston promoted what was to become known as the Cotton Mill Campaign, declaring that “the remedy of sure fortune in the South was to *bring the mills to the cotton*.”¹⁸ Answering the call, residents created the Charleston Manufacturing Company and sold subscriptions for building capital. Through their efforts, a mill eventually came to fruition. The Cotton Mill Campaign spread throughout the South, encouraged primarily by southern newspapers.¹⁹

But the capital invested in building southern cotton mills originated north of the Mason-Dixon Line, too. Northern investors recognized that exceptionally low labor costs in the South meant a better bottom line. New England’s labor costs, historically higher than the South’s, left northern mills at a disadvantage. To make matters worse for investors, New England lacked readily available child labor; the northern states had already addressed the child labor issues descending on the South along with the building of the mills.

A Package Deal - Yarn and Youngsters

The use of child labor in cotton mills was not distinct to the southern states. The idea that employing poor children discouraged them from becoming vagrants and robbers emigrated from England along with her subjects.²⁰ Indeed, the sons and daughters of poor parents assisted in

the production of textiles from the inception of cloth making, while production still took place in the homes of the poor, prior to the use of factories.²¹ In the period leading up to the American Revolution, “spinners” would obtain raw material from a manufactory, spin the raw material into cloth at home, and then return the cloth to the manufactory for payment. George Washington marveled over the evolution of the cloth industry from home to factory after visiting a Boston duck manufactory: “They have 28 looms at work and 14 girls spinning with both hands (the flax being tied to their waist). Children (girls) turn the wheels for them, and with this assistance each spinner can turn out 14 lbs. of thread per day when they stick to it.”²²

In New England, negative views toward employing child labor in factories arose not out of concern for children’s health, but rather a community desire to educate children in public schools. Not until the mid- to late-nineteenth century was child labor viewed negatively out of concern for the health of children; even then, the primary goal was to reduce the number of women and children working in the industry in an effort to raise the working wage for men.²³ As child labor legislation spread across New England in the mid-nineteenth century, the subjects generally addressed were (1) the minimum age required; (2) the number of hours worked per week; (3) the number of hours worked per day; and (4) whether children under a certain age should work at night and, if so, (5) how many hours of night work were permitted.²⁴ In 1870, approximately 5,753 children under the age of sixteen worked in the textile industry in Massachusetts. In 1880, that number had increased to 7,570, but then fell to 5,586 in 1905,

18 Ibid., 58, 82 (emphasis added).

19 Ibid., 112.

20 U. S. Congress, *Report on the Condition of Women and Child Wage-Earners in the United States*, Volume VI: “The Beginnings of Child Labor Legislation in Certain States; A Comparative Study,” 61st Congress, 2d sess (Washington, D. C., 1910), 10.

21 Ibid., see generally Chapter I, “The Employment of Children in the Colonies.”

22 Ibid., 36, 46.

23 Ibid., 30, 38.

24 Ibid., see generally Chapter IV, “Child Labor Legislation Prior to 1860.”

after the introduction of child labor legislation in the state. In contrast to the national figures, the number of Alabama children employed in textile mills increased during the same period approximately 284 children under the age of sixteen worked in Alabama mills as of 1870; that number had increased to 3,094 by 1905.²⁵ The spike in child employment arose out of sharp increase in the number of mills built in Alabama and the mill owner's corresponding power to curb the regulation of child labor.

Alabama was the first Southern state to enact child labor legislation following the Civil War. Passed in 1887, prior to the Cotton Mill Campaign reaching the state, the law imposed a fine of up to fifty dollars on factories and workplaces that required children under the age of eighteen to work more than eight hours a day or allowed children under the age of fourteen to work more than eight hours a day. The law also forbade the employment of children under the age of fifteen. At the time, very few textile mills were located in Alabama, so the new law met with little resistance.²⁶

It did not take long, however, for the few Alabama cotton manufacturers in existence to begin chipping away at the law through amendments proposed by their state representatives.

In the legislative session following enactment of the law, a bill passed which excluded Elmore and Autauga Counties (the venues of two cotton mills) from the 1887 child labor law. In 1894, with an increasing number of cotton mills operating in Alabama, the legislature repealed the

entire child labor law, leaving Alabama without legislation restricting the hours or age of child laborers. Several bills introduced throughout the 1890s seeking to restrict the employment of women and children in cotton mills failed to be enacted.²⁷

By 1900, the U. S. census counted forty-five cotton mills operating in Alabama. The mills employed 9,049 operatives, 2,747 of whom were children between the ages of ten and fifteen.²⁸ That same year, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) began urging Alabama labor leaders to push for state legislation regulating the employment of children. Samuel Gompers, the President of the AFL, sent a representative to meet with Alabama leaders concerned about child labor. The AFL representative, Miss Irene Ashby, found an ally in Reverend Edgar Gardner Murphy, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery. Together Miss Ashby and Reverend Gardner worked to persuade the Alabama legislature to enact a child labor law during the 1901 session. Miss Ashby toured Alabama mills, observing children at work and speaking with the mill owners. During her visit, the mill owners explained their opposition to child labor laws; the southern businessmen claimed that northern mills, at a disadvantage with higher labor costs arising out of their states' labor laws, were driving the effort to regulate southern labor in effort to level the playing field. The southern mill men also claimed their industry provided much-needed income to widows and children who otherwise would suffer for lack of opportunity. These two arguments formed the thrust of the southern mill owners' objections to child labor laws.

“ NOT UNTIL THE MID-
TO LATE-NINETEENTH
CENTURY WAS CHILD
LABOR VIEWED NEGATIVELY
OUT OF CONCERN FOR THE
HEALTH OF CHILDREN

²⁵ Ibid., 46.

²⁶ Elizabeth H. Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation in Southern Textile States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939), 18-19.

²⁷ Ibid., 20-23.

²⁸ Ibid., 28.

The push to enact a law in the 1901 legislature failed. However, the effort resulted in the formation of the Alabama Child Labor Committee, a group headed by Reverend Gardner with the participation of like-minded clergymen and other prominent leaders.²⁹ The Alabama Child Labor Committee undertook a relentless campaign to educate the public about the health problems associated with children working in mills. Through newspapers such as the *Montgomery Advertiser* and published pamphlets authored by Reverend Gardner, the Committee forced Alabama mill owners to the negotiating table prior to the next legislative session in 1903. One of the mill owners with a seat at the table was B. B. Comer who, five years earlier, heeded the Cotton Mill Campaign's call to bring industry to the South.

Avondale: Bringing the Mill to the Cotton

The Trainer family of Chester, Pennsylvania first conceived the idea of locating a textile mill in the outskirts of Birmingham. A family with a long history in the New England textile business, the Trainers agreed with other northern investors of the time that building a textile mill in the South could be a profitable investment. They persuaded a number of eastern mill machinery companies to join the investment. With seed equity and technical management supplied by the Trainers, as well as the machinery supplied by eastern companies, the group sought a Birmingham businessman who could invest at least \$10,000 and act as president in the new business venture. The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce helped facilitate the search. The Trainers pitched the proposal to B. B. Comer, and he accepted their offer.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., 23-32.

³⁰ Joseph P. Buechler, "Avondale Mills: The First Fifty Years"

Comer sought additional building capital for the business throughout the community. Businesses such as Avondale Steam Laundry (\$200), Birmingham Paint and Glass (\$100) and Shea Penny Savings and Loan Corporation (\$100) bought stock in the company. Moreover, nearly three hundred individuals, mainly Birmingham residents, subscribed to the company's stock. Avondale Mills was chartered on April 1, 1897, and building progressed at the site on First Avenue North between 38th and 39th Streets.³¹ Avondale employed about four hundred people, many of whom migrated to the mill from neighboring farms in search of higher income.³²

Avondale was a "massive, four story dark grey brick building" with several smoke stacks. It housed a Weave Room, Spooler Room, Card Room, Spinning Room, Dye Room and Cloth Room. The mill operated in three shifts; a whistle blew to mark the beginning and end of each shift. According to former employees, the operatives worked without a break and ate their meals while operating the machines. In some of the rooms, the noise was "deafening" and "everyone had headaches." A cart the employees nicknamed "the Dope Wagon" circulated around the mill so employees could buy a B. C. Powder or a Stanback Tablet. Glass bottled cokes cost five cents. Coupon books replaced cash for Dope Cart purchases. The company deducted the amount spent with coupons from the employees' paychecks.³³

In addition to the mill, on the parallel street north of the site, the company built approximately one hundred and twenty houses for Avondale employees. Identical in design and structure, the houses boasted one and two bed-

(honors thesis, Auburn University, 1985), 15.

³¹ Ibid., 15-16.

³² Comer, "Braxton Bragg Comer," 17.

³³ Catherine Greene Browne, *History of Avondale* (Birmingham: A.H. Cather Publishing Company, 2007), 59-60.



Avondale Mills building at 1st Avenue, North and 39th Street, Birmingham, Alabama, c1935. Courtesy of Birmingham, Ala., Public Library Archives.

room designs. Although the houses initially lacked indoor plumbing and electricity, bathrooms and power were later added. Employees described the mill village as a “city within a city.” Avondale provided medical care for employees and their families. A library and a small white frame Baptist church sprang up in the community. Village students attended a Birmingham City School within walking distance of their houses.³⁴

In interviews, former employees and the descendants of Avondale employees recalled living in the mill village as a wonderful experience. Without exception, the former residents described an idealistic life in a close-knit community. One interviewer marveled: “Even thirty

years after the mill closed and was leveled and houses in the mill village were torn down, those who were associated with the Comers and Avondale Mills could only speak in glowing terms about the unique lives they lived so long ago.”³⁵ Despite the trappings of the village, however, the mill employed children, and Alabama labor leaders wanted to end the practice.

Mr. Comer Goes to Montgomery

Five years after Avondale opened, in January of 1903, a number of mill owners agreed to meet with the Alabama Child Labor Committee (ALCLC) in Montgomery. In anticipation of the meeting, the *Montgomery Advertiser* encouraged the manufacturers to compromise with the ALCLC. Noting that the legislature would not meet again until 1907, the *Advertiser* cautioned the mill owners that failure to reach an agreement meant “they have before them the alternative of four long years of aggressive and ever increasing agitation.”³⁶ Comer and two other representatives negotiated on behalf of the textile mills. Apparently the businessmen sought to avoid the agitation to which the *Advertiser* referred because the meeting successfully concluded with an agreement.

The terms of the compromise were incorporated into a bill, which passed in the legislative session of 1903 and was enacted into law on February 25, 1903.³⁷ The new law prohibited the employment of children under the age of twelve with the exception of children over ten who

³⁵ Ibid., 383.

³⁶ Ibid., 49.

³⁷ Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 31, 51.

³⁴ Ibid., 59.

were orphans or had dependent parents. The law barred children under thirteen from working between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Children under sixteen were restricted from working more than forty-eight hours in one week at night and no child under twelve could work more than 66 hours per week. Finally, the law barred manufacturers from employing a child until an affidavit signed by the child's parent or guardian certifying the child's age and date of birth was placed on file at the place of employment.³⁸

“ALABAMA WAS THE FIRST SOUTHERN STATE TO ENACT CHILD LABOR LEGISLATION FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR.

Criticism of the new law centered primarily on the absence of an enforcement mechanism. Failure to provide for a mill inspector to keep tabs on the industry and the omission of penalties for hiring underage children or for the filing of false affidavits by parents meant violations of the law went unpunished. In fact, it appears the law's impact was minimal. In 1900, the percentage of children employed in Alabama mills was 29.2 of the operatives. By 1905, the percentage barely decreased, down two points to 27 percent.³⁹ Reverend Gardner and the Alabama Child Labor Committee knew the 1903 compromise enabled misconduct by the manufacturers and parents, but concluded during negotiations that an imperfect law was better than none. With the legislature meeting every four years, the election of a new governor (and representatives) preceded any opportunity to strengthen the law.

Three years later, fed up with out of state railroad

companies charging Alabama companies and residents a higher fee than charged in other southern states, Comer decided to run in the gubernatorial election of 1906. Meanwhile, the Alabama Child Labor Committee continued to speak out for tougher restrictions on child labor. Likewise, the Montgomery *Advertiser*, which supported child labor legislation in the period leading to the 1903 compromise, renewed its call for more stringent child labor reform. Throughout the gubernatorial campaign, the *Advertiser* published a series of editorials arguing that Comer's position as a mill owner meant that he would be reluctant to make the reforms necessary to restrain the use of child labor.⁴⁰ In one such editorial, the *Advertiser* published a blistering letter written by Reverend Murphy. In the published letter, Murphy disclosed that Comer was the most recalcitrant mill owner with whom they negotiated during the 1903 meeting. According to Murphy, “Mr. Comer has seemed to me the most bitter opponent of child labor legislation I have ever know.”⁴¹ In another blow, an investigator for the Nation Child Labor Committee who examined Avondale Mills in 1906 wrote a letter about his investigation, claiming that Avondale Mills employed small children in contravention to the law and that Avondale Mills was the worst of the mills he had investigated. The *Advertiser* published the letter on the front page.⁴² Comer responded by publishing affidavits from employees denying that small children worked in the mill. Comer also published an affidavit by the mill physician stating that the sanitary conditions at the mill were very good and that children were provided a free school for nine months out of the year.⁴³

40 Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 216-218.

41 “Comer's Record on Child Labor: His Organ's Proof as to 1900 and Dr. Edgar Gardner Murphy's Statement as to 1903,” Montgomery *Advertiser*, June 29, 1906.

42 Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 216.

43 Ibid., 216-217.

38 Ibid., 49-50.

39 U. S. Congress, *Report on Conditions*, 188.

Despite the *Advertiser*'s criticisms, Comer secured the Democratic nomination and went on to win the governorship. Due in large part to the persistence of the Committee and the press's efforts to bring awareness to the subject, the Alabama Democratic Party of 1906 included child labor issues in its platform. Specifically, the Democratic platform stated that children of "tender years" should be prohibited from working, and those that were allowed to work should be required to attend school for some length of time during each school year.⁴⁴

William Jelks, the governor during the 1903 compromise, noted in his farewell address that the child labor law lacked effectiveness and should therefore be amended to provide strict enforcement. Although Comer focused primarily on railroad regulation in his campaign for the governorship, he claimed to support moderate laws related to child labor during the gubernatorial campaign. To that end, in his statement to the legislature at its opening in 1907, Comer proposed "a graduated limitation of age" and perhaps compulsory education requirements. However, he cautioned the legislature that strict limits could result in harming the very children they were seeking to help. Specifically, Comer warned:

[A] great many people have gone to the mills to work because they have found by experience that they can earn more money and do better there than they can elsewhere, and in large families they can better take care of themselves with their earning capacity there than elsewhere, and it is a very serious matter for the State to assume the guardianship as to how and when these people shall work and direct and dictate to them by methods of law as to whether they shall or shall not work where they think to

their best interest.

In the rural districts and in towns and cities there are many poor families, many poor families with children, and anyone familiar with the conditions of such things would know that many of them could do better in the mill than elsewhere.⁴⁵

This statement articulates Comer's thinking on child labor regulations. He believed lawmakers should refrain from imposing themselves between parents and their children. The decision as to whether a child could or should help provide for the family rested with the parents.

At the start of the regular session, dueling bills were introduced in the House. The bill with the support of the Alabama Child Labor Committee, introduced by Alexander D. Pitts of Dallas County, provided for a fourteen year limit for boys and sixteen for girls, with an exception that a child twelve and over could work if to support a widowed mother or a disabled father. The Pitts bill also provided restrictions on hours that a child could work, penalties for violations, and the hiring of an inspector. Representative A. D. Kirby of Madison County introduced a bill on behalf of the manufacturers. The primary difference between the bills related to the power of enforcement, but they also differed on the hours allowable for children to work. Neither bill was acted upon. Instead, the Senate amended a bill that added responsibility to the inspector of jails and almshouses. The House refused to pass the amended bill, but when the original bill reached Governor Comer, he amended it to include cotton mills. The House then agreed to the change. The law enacted directed the inspector of jails and almshouses to also inspect cotton

44 Ibid., 217.

45 Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 217.

mills.⁴⁶ Child labor reformers considered the maneuver by the governor and the legislature a setback in their cause. They believed that passage of the provision allowed legislators and the governor to avoid adopting more stringent reforms to the current child labor law, including raising the minimum age and adding enforcement provisions with penalties.⁴⁷

During the recess between the winter and summer terms of the legislature, Dr. Shirley Bragg, the inspector appointed by governor (pursuant to the new law), sent Comer reports detailing the findings of his inspection of thirteen mills. In a transmittal letter dated May 31, 1907, Dr. Bragg stated unequivocally: "I find many children evidently under age working in mills."⁴⁸ The reports addressed the condition of the mills (including sewage and ventilation); more importantly, Dr. Bragg reported that he observed children under the age limit of twelve working in the cotton mills. For example, in his report on Barker Cotton Mills, Dr. Bragg found that approximately two hundred operatives worked at the mill and of those, he estimated that between fifty and seventy-five children under the age of fifteen were working there. The mill village at Barker included a school that ran about eight months per year. Dr. Bragg concluded: "Quite a number of children below age are working here."⁴⁹ Interestingly, Dr. Bragg inspected Avondale Mill, concluding that the mill was in good shape other than the sewage, which would be addressed when the mill was connected to the city sewer line within the year. Dr. Bragg noted that the mill had a day nursery (which he "found scrupulously clean") and that the mill included a kindergarten with a "very fair attendance of pupils," as

well as grammar and primary schools.⁵⁰ The report omitted any indication of the number of children employed and whether he observed the presence of under-aged children in Comer's mill.⁵¹

Two months after Dr. Bragg sent Comer the reports, the legislature reconvened in Montgomery. Prior to the start of the session, the *Montgomery Advertiser* interviewed an unidentified member of the legislature who stated his belief that a more stringent child labor law would be enacted. He said, "The Legislature will not longer remain under the stigma that it is so much under the influence of a commercial interest that it will fail to do its duty to humanity."⁵² A July 24, 1907 *Advertiser* article observed that Dr. Bragg's reports "have lain in the Governor's office for several weeks until they were sent for by the Senate in the form of a resolution by Senator Thomas show that in the thirteen cotton mills of the State which has inspected, children are employed and they are apparently under age." The *Advertiser* article noted that the conditions of the mill Comer owned was "highly praised by Dr. Bragg."⁵³

Behind the scenes, Comer discussed the findings in Dr. Bragg's report with members of the Alabama Child Labor Committee. Neal L. Anderson, pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Montgomery and a member of the Committee, met with Comer on July 5th to discuss the enforcement of child labor regulations. Specifically, Reverend Anderson highlighted the need for an inspector who could ensure that the cotton mills comply with labor regulations.⁵⁴ Four days later, after Reverend Anderson met

46 U. S. Congress, *Report on Conditions*, 199.

47 Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 219.

48 Shirley Bragg to B. B. Comer, May 31, 1907, Governor Braxton B. Comer Administrative Files, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. Microfilm.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., enclosed report dated April 15, 1907. Microfilm.

51 Ibid.

52 *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 8, 1907, p. 2.

53 "Children in All the Mills: Reports by Dr. Bragg Sent to Senate," *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 24, 1907.

54 Neal L. Anderson to B. B. Comer, July 6, 1907, Braxton B. Comer Administrative Files, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. Microfilm.

with other members of the Committee, he sent a follow-up letter to Comer. In his July 10th correspondence, Anderson noted that Dr. Bragg's reports clearly demonstrated the failure by some cotton mills to comply with the law. Anderson argued that a loophole existed for parents and mill owners to avoid the law so long as parents could legally bring their children with them to work. He criticized the 1903 law: "The age limit, certainly for girls, is too low, there is no provision with reference to attendance on schools, and no protection against night work."⁵⁵ Finally, Anderson argued that inspection of the jails, almshouses, and cotton mills required more than one person due to the number of entities involved.

Comer's public response to Dr. Bragg's report was tempered. He wrote to the legislature on July 9th: "It is just and right that you should provide an effective method for enforcing the child labor law." He recommended adopting an enforcement provision which empowered the inspector to discharge any child the inspector deemed under the legal age or unfit to work and also penalizing a manufacturer for re-employing a discharged child without prior permission. Comer wrote to the legislature: "Will caution you that by an extreme provision of the law you can easily hurt the parties that we are trying to help. We have the poor with us always, and it is as much incumbent upon the business of the State to provide methods of



Workers in Avondale Mills, Birmingham, Alabama, 1910. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

work . . . than to provide ways how they should work; and we should be exceedingly careful along this line."⁵⁶ Thus, Comer cautioned the legislature to focus on creating jobs for Alabamians rather than placing restrictions on jobs already in existence.

As for the legislature, now that Dr. Bragg exposed the presence of underage children working in the mills, many believed that either the Pitts Bill or the Kirby Bill would pass with few amendments. The Pitts Bill had been recommitted to the Committee on Mining and Manufacturing on July 16, 1907, but it was delayed. The *Advertiser* kicked into full gear, accusing Comer of blocking the bill.

⁵⁵ Neal L. Anderson to B. B. Comer, July 10, 1907, Braxton B. Comer Administrative Files, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. Microfilm.

⁵⁶ *Journal of the Senate of the State of Alabama*, sess. 1907 (Montgomery: Brown Printing Co., 1907), 1571.

The *Advertiser* hinted that Comer warned the Speaker of the House that if the age limit in the bill were not lowered, the bill would not pass.⁵⁷ It appears the *Advertiser* was right. On July 23, the date the Pitts bill was up for consideration, instead of the original bill introduced by Pitts, a substitute bill appeared in its place. The *Advertiser* reported that although most legislators thought the Pitts bill would be passed, “[b]ut over night there had been a change. The governor had spoken his wishes on the matter and a substitute bill had been prepared.”

A Comer friend, Jefferson County Representative S. W. John, submitted the substitute bill. John’s bill lowered the age limit from fourteen (in the Pitts Bill) back to the current twelve-year age limit (but without exceptions). The new, substitute bill also required children between twelve and sixteen years old to attend eight weeks of school, instead of the twelve weeks required in the Pitts bill. The new bill limited the number of hours a week to sixty, instead of the fifty-six required in the Pitts bill, and reduced the age of the hour limit from sixteen (in the Pitts bill) to fourteen (in the new bill). The new bill retained the requirement that no child under sixteen should work between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and that no child under the age of eighteen could work more than eight hours at night. According to the new bill, affidavits for minors under eighteen must be filed with the employer and available for review by the inspector. The inspector was provided with one assistant and could prosecute the management for violations of the law, but the penalties provided were for those who “knowingly” violated the law. Reformers saw the “knowingly” language as a loophole for the manufacturers.⁵⁸

When the bill switch was made public, critics ac-

cused the committee of yielding to the powerful cotton mill lobby. One of the committee members defended the committee’s actions, claiming that the committee “had been insulted, threatened and bullied in a way that he never saw a committee treated before.” The member also admitted that the substitute bill was a compromise, and that the new bill had been submitted to Comer for approval. The child labor reformers believed that the governor had dictated the terms of the bill. Attempts to amend the substitute bill failed, including an effort to raise the minimum age of girls in the factories to fourteen. That proposed amendment was defeated when Dr. Bragg claimed that work in the mills was no more dangerous for girls than attending school. The new bill was passed by the House with 73 to 3.⁵⁹

A bill entered into the Senate in the middle of July was, in most respects, identical to that of the substitute House bill. Despite repeated attempts to amend the bill to add stricter provisions and higher age limits, the Senate bill passed with only one dissenting vote. Comer then suggested an amendment to the House and Senate bills, changing the effective date to January 1, 1908 instead of six months after passage. Both houses agreed, and the act was ratified on August 9, 1907.⁶⁰

Passage of the 1907 Child Labor Law dispirited the reformers. Years later a representative of the National Child Labor Committee claimed that Comer would have blocked any efforts to strengthen the 1903 law, but was persuaded to accept minimal changes by two members of the Alabama Child Labor Committee: Reverend Anderson and Dr. B. J. Baldwin, a prominent physician who assisted Comer in his efforts to eradicate tuberculosis.⁶¹

57 Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 221; citing the Montgomery *Advertiser*, July 24, 1907.

58 Ibid., 221 - 222.

59 Ibid., 222.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid., 223.

How Did the 1907 Law Compare?

How did the child labor law passed in the Comer administration compare to the child labor laws of other southern states? North Carolina and South Carolina, the two southern states with the largest concentration of cotton mills, passed legislation with a threshold for employment either the same or lower than Alabama's. North Carolina's age limit was thirteen, but a twelve year old could work if hired as an apprentice. South Carolina's age limit was twelve, but a younger child could assist a parent at work or could be legally employed if the child was an orphan, the child of a widow, or had disabled parents. Children younger than twelve could also work during the summer if school requirements were met and they could read and write. Signed statements by the parents attesting to the child's age were required for children under fourteen.

Georgia's entry into the textile mill industry was the most similar to Alabama's. Like Alabama, Georgia's industry was still relatively new in the early part of the twentieth century. In his speeches and writings addressing the railroad rate discrepancies about which he predominately campaigned, Comer most often compared the rate differences between Georgia and Alabama. Therefore, a comparison between the child labor law passed under the Comer administration in 1907 and the child labor law passed by Georgia in 1906 is worth exploring.

Georgia, like Alabama, had a twelve-year age limit. Alabama had no age limit exceptions, but Georgia allowed a child between the ages of ten and twelve to work if he or she was an orphan with no means of support, or if a wid-

“THE LAWS PERTAINING TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN IN ALABAMA ARE CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR AMBIGUITY, INEFFICIENCY, INEXPLICITNESS AND INADEQUACY.”

owed mother or an aged or disabled father was dependent on the child for support. A certificate attesting to these facts was required for children under twelve. No child under fourteen (sixteen for Alabama) was allowed to work from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The Georgia law also contained compulsory educational requirements. Working children should be able to read and write and they were required to attend school twelve weeks a year if under the age fourteen (for Alabama this was eight weeks a year for a child ages twelve to sixteen). Georgia's law provided for inspection by grand juries. Alabama's law was stricter in that it provided for an inspector for the mills.

The southern states with the lowest number of cotton mills set an age limit two years above Alabama's or the same as Alabama's. Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana and Arkansas had a fourteen-year age limit on children's employment. Arkansas allowed a child between twelve and fourteen to work if the child was an orphan or if the child had dependent parents. Virginia phased the age limit in at thirteen in 1909 and fourteen in 1910.⁶²

The 1907 law was the only child labor legislation passed during Comer's administration. The legislature did not meet in regular session again until 1911, when Comer's successor, Emmet O'Neal, took office. Although the legislature met in special session in 1907 and 1909, those meetings were specifically to address railroad regulation. The only other time child labor was addressed during Comer's administration was in 1909, when Comer submitted and the legislature passed a bill reconfirming the 1907 Child Labor law without change.

⁶² Ibid.

Comer appointed Dr. C. F. Bush as the first inspector of jails, almshouses, and factories under the 1907 law. Dr. Bush's first report was published in December 1909. Of the 14,606 employees working in the state's sixty-three cotton mills, one woolen mill, and seven knitting mills, he estimated that 31% were between the ages of twelve and eighteen, and that 17% were between the ages of twelve and sixteen. He concluded that parents of children were filing false affidavits for children under the age of twelve. Dr. Bush removed the children he believed to be too young, but was unable to prosecute the parents because he could not prove the children's real ages.⁶³

In 1910, Lewis W. Hine, an agent of the National Child Labor Committee investigated Alabama's cotton mills. He, like Dr. Bush, believed the age limit proscribed in the 1907 law was being ignored. Hine criticized mills in Huntsville and Anniston he investigated, certain they hired underage children. Importantly, he also inspected Avondale Mills and took pictures of underage children working in Comer's mill.⁶⁴ After Comer left office in 1911, the pictures were exhibited in Montgomery by the National Child Labor Committee in an effort to sway the new legislature toward a more stringent law. The *Montgomery Advertiser* published the pictures on the front page.⁶⁵

One of the pictures taken by Hine depicted a young boy with a hat set jauntily on his blonde crop of hair. His name was Lonnie Cole. Lonnie was born in Cullman County, Alabama, on March 7, 1899. In the 1910 census, his father, Frank Cole, is listed as a farmer. Even though the 1907 law prohibited children under twelve from employment, the "baby doffer," was eleven years old when

Hine photographed him. Hines reported that Lonnie answered "Twelve" when asked his age, to which another boy responded: "He can't work unless he's twelve." Dorothy Cheatham, the niece of Lonnie Cole, was interviewed in 2005. According to Cheatham, Lonnie failed to graduate from high school, but he could read and write. Lonnie worked "on and off" in the cotton mills. Cheatham said he was not able to work steadily due to poor health from a "lung problem." Lonnie never married, received support from the county, and often lived with relatives. Cheatham was not surprised that Lonnie was working in a mill at so young an age "because there were so many kids working in the mills back then." Lonnie died in Birmingham on his birthday, March 7, 1975, at the age of 76.⁶⁶

Post-Comer Administration

In 1911, Emmet O'Neal was sworn in as Alabama's governor. Only one piece of legislation related to child labor passed during the O'Neal administration. The law made it a misdemeanor knowingly to employ children in violation of the law or to refuse to give information to the inspector. This effort to ensure compliance with the 1907 law appears to have made little impact.

In his 1912 report, the Alabama factory inspector left little doubt about his view of the law, stating: "The laws pertaining to the employment of children in Alabama are conspicuous by their ambiguity, inefficiency, inexplicitness and inadequacy."⁶⁷ The inspector, W. H. Oates, took issue with allowing a twelve to fourteen year old to work

⁶³ Ibid., 224.

⁶⁴ Lewis Hine, *Photographs of Child Labor in the New South*, ed. John R. Kemp (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986), 15-16.

⁶⁵ Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation*, 226; citing the *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 15, 1911.

⁶⁶ Dorothy Cheatham, interview by Joe Manning, October 14, 2009, "Mornings on Maple Street," accessed October 15, 2015, <http://www.sevensteeples.com/lonniecole3.html>.

⁶⁷ W. H. Oates, *Annual Report of the Factory Inspector of the State of Alabama for the Year Ending December 31st, 1912* (Montgomery: Brown Printing Company, 1913), 5.

up to sixty hours per week. Oates noted that most employers worked the children eleven hours a day for five days a week and for five hours on Saturdays. He painted a picture of a young girl awaking in the dark, eating a poor breakfast and then heading to work in a factory for eleven straight hours, with the brief interruption of a thirty minute lunch break, only to arrive home in the dark after such an extended work day.⁶⁸

The Alabama legislature finally enacted a comprehensive and strict child labor law in 1915. Comer had run for governor again in 1914, but was not reelected. Charles Henderson, Comer's Democratic competitor in the 1906 election, was elected governor. In its first session of under Henderson's administration, the legislature passed a comprehensive and strict policy regarding child labor. The 1915 law phased a minimum age for employment; from September 1915 to September 1916 the age limit was set at thirteen, and thereafter rose to fourteen. No child under sixteen could be employed more than six days a week or eleven hours a day or between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. The presence of a child under sixteen in any mill or factory was to be regarded as *prima facie* evidence of his employment there.

Interviews indicate that the employees and their families were pleased with the mill village, but they also disclosed that children continued to work in the mill despite the prohibition in later child labor regulations. "Mrs. McGraw," who was interviewed in the mid-1970s, moved with her parents and six siblings to the mill in 1916. The company sent a truck to the family's home in Calera and moved the entire family to the mill village at no cost. Mrs. McGraw believed the mill wanted large families for the labor supply. She too claimed that the child labor law was disregarded at Avondale; parents sent their children

to work full time in the mill despite the requirement that children should go to school the full year. Mrs. McGraw went to work in the mill at the age of thirteen, but on a part-time basis; she worked after school from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and for a few hours on Saturday.⁶⁹ Others interviewed confirmed Mrs. McGraw's recollection, stating that many people began working at the mill as early as nine years of age and that children under the legal age continued to work at Avondale through the 1950s. They claimed the children would hide when a mill inspector came to inspect the mill.⁷⁰

Conclusion

Broadus Mitchell noted in *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*, that "at the outset the employment of children in the mills, if not absolutely necessary, was practically so, and never excited the least question." Further, he explained, "cotton manufacturing was hailed as a boon especially because it gave means of livelihood to women and children...The use of children was not avarice then, but philanthropy; not exploitation, but generosity and cooperation and social-mindedness."⁷¹ According to C. M. Stanley, editor of the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and later editor of the *Alabama Journal*, B. B. Comer deliberately built the many mills that would make up Avondale Mills in rural areas so farmers could supplement their income with wages earned at the mill. Thus, the farmers were able to keep their farms and continue living on their own land despite the irregular income earned from farming. "It was a happy

69 Interview of Mrs. McGraw (first name not given) by Elmer H. Goodwin, transcript, Archives, Mervyn H. Sterne Library, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

70 Interviews of Tedd Holland, Mary Lou Smith, E.E. Smith, and Pat McCullough, April 23, 2005, Browne, *Avondale*, 380-385.

71 Mitchell, *Rise of Cotton Mills*, 95.

68 Ibid., 5-6.

arrangement for all concerned and no one can estimate the additional value that has been given Alabama lands, and the added comfort and happiness that were spread through the farm regions contiguous to the mills through this practical integration of agriculture and industry.”⁷²

When viewed in the context of the southern states’ need for manufacturing jobs, the status of child labor legislation among Alabama’s neighboring states, and an analysis of his overall beliefs, it appears that Braxton Bragg Comer was not a progressive insofar as child labor is concerned. However, critics should refrain from stigmatizing Governor Comer with the label “child labor exploiter.” Although Comer resisted pushing Alabama to the forefront of child labor reform as governor, he eventually accepted stricter legislation and supported the mill inspector’s authority to enforce the law. However, inspections conducted by child labor advocates, and the recollections of former Avondale employees, indicate that Comer failed to comply fully with the law.



⁷² Comer, “Braxton Bragg Comer,” 20.

We Do Not Want Your Tired and Your Poor: Alabama's Immigration Policies (1870-1910)

by Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

Wide open and unguarded stand our gates,
And through them press a wild, motley throng ...
Flying the Old World's poverty and scorn;
These bring with them unknown gods and rites,
Those, trigger passions, here to stretch their claws.

- Thomas Bailey Aldrich, *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1892¹

IN 2011 Alabama adopted the Beason-Hammond Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, known as HB 56, the strictest anti-illegal immigration law in the country. Despite strong opposition from many farmers and businesses, who insisted that the state urgently needed immigrant labor to support and stimulate the economy, most Alabamians supported the law.² Looking back to Alabama's previous immigration wave at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, we can see a striking similarity in anti-immigration attitudes. Despite the urgent need to attract immigrants from abroad at that time - the American

Industrial Revolution and the end of the Civil War stimulated industrialization and change of agricultural practices in the South which called for increased labor supply - state officials, business interests, and planters were unable to overcome Alabamians' ethnocentrism and prejudice, as well as their own. It is interesting to note that, unlike its 21st century counterpart, the immigration wave of the late 19th and early 20th century came as a result of conscious efforts by Southern governments and business interests to attract immigrants and rebuild the region's economic and political fortunes after the devastation of the Civil War.

The South's extensive immigration promotion campaign from the late 19th and early 20th century attracted immediate scholarly attention due to its insignificant results. Why, asked researchers, were most Southern states (with the exception of Florida and Texas) unable to attract immigrants despite their extensive advertising and recruitment campaigns? Many claimed that misinformation, as well as the South's social and economic difficulties, kept immigrants away. Others thought that Southern immigration encouragement efforts lacked enthusiasm. Certainly a plethora of different factors contributed to the region's failure to attract immigration at a time when Northern states were flooded by the largest immigration wave the country had ever seen, but the biggest deterrent to immigration became the South's own nativism. The region sabotaged its own efforts through an immigration campaign calling for only "desirable" immigrants from Anglo-Saxon stock at a time when most immigrants came from the Mediterra-

1 Thomas Bailey Aldrich, "Unguarded Gates," *The Atlantic Monthly* (July 1892): 57, accessed November 10, 2015, <https://www.unz.org/Pub/AtlanticMonthly-1892jul-00057>.

2 An opinion poll conducted nine months after the law's adoption showed that 75% of Alabama's residents still supported HB 56. See Federation for American Immigration Reform, "Alabama Survey of 500 Likely Voters," March 6, 2012: 1, accessed November 10, 2015, http://fair.thinkrootshq.com/docs/AL_HB56_Poll_3-6-12.pdf.



Immigrants at Ellis Island, N. Y., 1907. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

nean, southern and eastern Europe.³ Several authors have pointed out this paradox, but have attributed it to the prevailing nativist feelings in the North at this time. Using

3 As result of the economic crisis in Europe and the American industrial revolution, more immigrants came to the United States between 1860 and 1930 than the entire American population in 1860. Unlike immigrants before 1880, who came from northwestern Europe, the majority of new immigrants were from southern and eastern Europe. See, Gladys Nadler Rips, *Coming to America: Immigrants From Southern Europe* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1981), viii.

Alabama's immigration policies as an example, the current paper claims that the South's paradoxical attitude on immigration derived from deeply seated regional cultural characteristics and did not spring from Northern nativism. The region's old suspicion of outsiders, prevailing racial attitudes, and the experience of Reconstruction offer a better explanation of the ebbs and flows, and the ultimate failure of Alabama's immigration policy, between 1860 and 1910.

What Problems and Culture?

Scholars agree with C. Vann Woodward's conclusion that the region failed to attract enough immigrants between 1860 and 1910 leaving it "almost untouched."⁴ They attributed this lack of success to the unfavorable image the region had in the eyes of prospective immigrants, as well as the region's "half-hearted" attempts to secure immigration. Scholars and officials writing during the early 20th century claimed that immigrants avoided the South because of misinformation as of its climate and agricultural opportunities, and because of immigrants' fear of black Southerners. In the words of Senator Benjamin Tillman of South Carolina, "the negro is there to act as a scarecrow to keep your white Dutchman, or Belgian, or Scotchman, or German away."⁵ In the same line of thought, Walter Fleming expressed his satisfaction with the improvement of the

4 C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South 1877-1913, A History of the South*, Volume IX, eds. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter ([Baton Rouge]: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 299.

5 Senator B. R. Tillman, Address: "*The Negro Problem and Immigration*," delivered before the South Carolina House of Representatives, on January 24, 1908 (Columbia, S. C.: Gonzales and Bryan State Printers, 1908), Birmingham Public Library Rare Books Collection, Pamphlet File: E184.A1 T55 1908, 16.

South's "unfavorable image." According to him, advertisements showed prospective immigrants that "the climate is better in the South than in the Northwest; that lands are cheap and rents are low; ... that those who do not like to live near negroes can find great stretches of country where there are only whites; that cotton, rice and tobacco are not the only crops that can be raised; and that there are openings for all kinds of new industries."⁶

Other contemporaries, and subsequent scholars, recognized that the South had more serious problems, which made it a less attractive immigrant destination than the North. John T. Milner, considered by some the father of industrialization in the Deep South, claimed that Alabama was doomed in the eyes of prospective immigrants by its high levels of illiteracy and poverty. He objected to the federal government's practice of publishing maps of the country ranking each state's economic and social indicators. According to him, "[t]his system of maps, as printed by our government, is circulated all over the civilized world; and naked and unexplained, ahem ruined and will continue to ruin our hopes of immigration of white people from any where."⁷ Henri Marshall Booker, on the other hand, saw the agricultural practices in the South, such as the renting and sharecropping system, and the attitude of Southern planters toward their farmhands, as uninviting to European immigrants.⁸ Most foreign laborers were not

content with the treatment they received from plantation owners who applied a slave-owner mentality in their interactions with free, European immigrants. The British consul at New Orleans reported in 1873 that to Southern planters "a labourer is a labourer; ... whether he be French or German, Italian or Norwegian, British or Chinese, he is to be housed, fed, and treated just as the black race used to be."⁹ Booker, however, saw an even more pressing problem. Immigrants did not come to the South, he claimed, because wages were lower than in the North. According to his calculations, between 1870 and 1900, Southern wages were at least 14-15% lower than in the North (after adjustments for living costs).¹⁰ Booker claimed that for people, who immigrated to the United States in search of better economic opportunities, this difference in wages played an important role in decisions of avoiding the South. While wage differences certainly played a role in immigrants' decisions to come south, it should also be taken into consideration that the ease of finding work in the region compensated for this drawback. For immigrants, who experienced significant difficulty in finding work and acceptable living conditions in overcrowded Northern cities, the growth and possibilities of Southern towns must have seemed very attractive.

Apart from economic and social problems, many authors pointed to the cautious efforts of the South in encouraging immigration as a reason for its failed policies. Many state governments never devoted sufficient resources

6 Walter L. Fleming, "Immigration to the Southern States," *Political Science Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (June 1905): 281-282.

7 John T. Milner, "*Alabama: As it Was, As it Is, and As it Will Be*" (Montgomery: Ala.: Barret&Brown, 1876: 120, accessed December 8, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=W00VAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&dq=John+T.+Milner+%22Alabama+as+it+was,+as+it+is+and+as+it+will+be%22&source=bl&ots=WDbdPh3tgy&sig=CheDb604x21gcL3ag1EBjx55zBM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiUvo6Zl7LJAhXCbiYKHJPA8AQ6AEILjAE#v=onepage&q=immigrant&f=false>).

8 Henry Marshall Booker, "Efforts of the South to Attract Immigrants, 1860-1900" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1965), 118.

9 Rowland T. Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes Towards Immigration, 1865-1914," *Journal of Southern History* 17, no. 3 (Aug. 1951): 331.

10 Booker, "Efforts of the South," 66. Albert Bushel Hart exposed the same opinion by offering the example of Belgian, Austrian, and Galician settlers recruited by the state of South Carolina who arrived with the steamer Wittekind in 1906. Most of them soon left the state dissatisfied with work and housing conditions. See, Albert Bushel Hart, *The Southern South* (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1910), 53.

and attention to the immigration encouragement campaign and many Southern immigration conventions became “virtually time wasting affairs” where esteemed gentlemen gave speeches and adopted resolutions that rarely included practical ideas.¹¹ The South, it seems, never really set its heart on attracting immigration. According to such claims, racial relations overshadowed all political decisions taken in the region. Southerners’ sensitivity to racial distinctions, and their “fear of upsetting the racially bifurcated society,” resulted in “half-hearted” immigration encouragement efforts.¹² Robert Ward explained in an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* that, even though, government and business officials believed that immigration will help solve the South’s problem of labor scarcity, they feared it would complicate racial problems in the future. “It [importation] would bring in its wake, in the future,” he claimed, “many vast and complex problems which the South has not yet had to face. It would soon add another race problem... .”¹³

11 Jason H. Silverman and Susan R. Silverman, *Immigration in the American South 1864-1895: A Documentary History of the Southern Immigration Conventions* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 7. Berthoff also points out that three years after its establishment, the Southern Immigration Association of America was hardly functioning. See, Berthoff, “Southern Attitudes,” 338. Several reports from Alabama’s Commissioners of Immigration also reveal that little state resources were limited and little could be done to encourage immigration. See, Commissioner of Industrial Resources, “*Alabama: a Few Remarks Upon her Resources, and the Advantages she Possesses as Inducements to Immigration*” (Montgomery, Ala.: Jno. G Strokes, State Print, 1869): 20-21 and Immigration Commissioner Lee Cowart, “*Report of the Immigration Commissioner with Some Suggestions and Recommendations*” (Montgomery, Ala.: Brown Printing Company, 1915): 3-4.

12 Nancy Faires Conklin and Nora Faires, “Colored and Catholic: The Lebanese Community in Birmingham, Alabama,” paper presented at the First Philip K. Hitti International Symposium on Near Eastern American Studies, “The Arabic-Speaking Immigration to North America to World War II.” (June 3-4, 1983): 9, Birmingham Public Library Archives, Folder 809.2.1.1.7.

13 Robert DeCourcy Ward, “Immigration and the South,” *The Atlantic* 96, no. 5 (November 1905), accessed December 8, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/politics/immigrat/wardf.htm>.

Several scholars reversed this argument and claimed that the South was not afraid of disturbing the racial balance or complicating racial relations. Just the opposite, according to such scholars the South saw immigration as the solution to its racial issue. The region encouraged immigration, they claimed, in the hope that immigrant labor will displace African Americans, from both farming and millwork, and encourage them to move north.¹⁴

A number of authors identified widespread Southern hostility to foreigners as the main stumbling block for regional immigration efforts. Albert Bushel Hart concisely pointed out that “the South does not like immigrants [of any kind], and ... the immigrants do not like the South.”¹⁵ Rowland Berthoff, on the other hand, claimed that not all Southerners were xenophobic.¹⁶ According to Berthoff, businessmen and planters transcended traditional Southern hostility towards outsiders, but could not fight the xenophobia of the average Southerner. According to him, “the economic interests which hoped to profit from immigrant laborers or land buyers never reconciled most of the Southern people to an influx of foreigners.”¹⁷ While both Hart’s and Berthoff’s observations were pertinent, there is a need for a more nuanced distinction. Hart was right that xenophobia permeated all levels of Southern society in different degrees. And Berthoff rightly pointed out that economic interest pitted big business versus laborer and small farmer. Both failed to identify, however, that the Southern

www.theatlantic.com/past/politics/immigrat/wardf.htm.

14 Fleming, “Immigration,” 284.

15 Hart, *The Southern South*, 54. Hart also points out the existence of different levels of xenophobia. According to him, most large planters and manufacturers were more positively predisposed to immigrants than small farmers and white laborers, 56.

16 Therese Beavers also claims that big business and planters wanted immigrants, unlike others. See, Theresa Aguglia Beavers, “The Italians of the Birmingham District” (Thesis, Samford University, 1969), 4.

17 Berthoff, “Southern Attitudes,” 343.

businessman's combination of xenophobia and self-interest led him to adopt and support a policy of "desirable immigration," while the xenophobia and economic interests of the laborer and small farmer solidified into an objection to any kind of immigration.

Like Hart and Berthoff, Bert Lowenberg also identified Southern xenophobia as a factor deterring immigration to the region. Noticing a change in Southern immigration policies from the 1880s, however, he claimed that Southern states started opposing a "certain type" of immigration only later in their campaign.¹⁸ He mentioned that this sudden reversion in immigration attitudes could be explained by "the renewal of ancient nativism" in the South. Interestingly, however, he rejected this possibility claiming that "[i]t cannot be demonstrated ... that this sentiment [nativism] did exist. In fact it is conspicuous by its absence [prior to 1880]... ." ¹⁹ Two decades later, building on Lowenberg's claim, Berthoff argued that the South's change in immigration policies in the 1880s was due to Northern nativist policies. According to him, the South borrowed nativist "arguments of northern opponents of immigration and became more solidly nativist than any other section of the nation."²⁰ While Berthoff was right that the South became more nativist than the North, he incorrectly represented Southern nativism as a reflection of Northern anti-immigration attitudes. Nativism and xenophobia had always been part of the Southern character due to the region's complicated racial and historical experience. Lowenberg and Berthoff failed to notice that the change in Southern immigration policies - a move from acceptance of all types of immigration towards a restric-

tion to only "desirable" immigration - came with the end of Reconstruction. Alabama's example shows that a tolerant state policy toward both African Americans, and all types of immigrants, continued until the mid-1870s when a sudden change in attitude appeared. Official publications altered their tone and, instead of toleration, started spreading racism and xenophobia. It seems that Reconstruction subdued traditional racist and xenophobic tendencies (at least in official documents), but its end allowed them to rear their heads again.

Did the South really exhibit more xenophobic attitudes than the rest of the country, and why? Most Southern scholars agree that the South always had a distinct cultural, social, and political heritage that transpires even today. Recently, J. Woodard even claimed that "[t]he South remains the most distinctive part of the nation because in so many ways life there has always been a contradiction of American values and ideals."²¹ While such statements might be too strong, researchers widely agree that the South's experience with slavery and the Civil War strongly affected its society and culture. The question of slavery united the region before the Civil War and left Southerners with a deeply ingrained suspicion towards outsiders. This feeling only increased after the war.²²

In his seminal work, *The Mind of the South*, W. J. Cash argued that the conflict with the North, as well as the South's solidification that came out of it, left the region with a "savage ideal," a determination of white Southern society to preserve its traditions, customs and routines of mind that had been honored throughout its development.²³ This concern and desire to preserve the ancient pattern

18 Bert James Lowenberg, "Efforts of the South to Encourage Immigration, 1865-1900," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (October 1934): 328.

19 Ibid., 384.

20 Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes," 350.

21 J. David Woodard, *The New Southern Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Ripener Publishers, 2006), 1. See also Bertram Wyatt-Brown, introduction to *The Mind of the South* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), xvii.

22 Fleming, "Immigration," 276.

23 Wyatt-Brown, *The Mind*, xvii.

strongly affected Southerners' views of outsiders. According to Cash, "[t]he very passion for "Americanism" in the South was at least in great part the passion that the South should remain fundamentally unchanged."²⁴

The South's greater ethnic homogeneity also intensified xenophobia and nativism. During its existence, the South had incorporated little new blood and unfamiliar culture and shared an intensifying feeling of supremacy.²⁵ In the words of W. J. Cash, Southerners thought:

[T]hat they represented a pure and superior race, not only as against the Negro but as against all other communities of white men as well. "Ninety-nine percent pure Anglo-Saxon" was not merely a part of the advertisements of cheap labor designed to lure Yankee capital South but also one of the proudest boasts for home consumption. Naturally, therefore, they were extraordinarily solicitous for its preservation, extraordinarily on the alert to ward off the possibility that at some future date it might be contaminated by the introduction of other blood-streams than those of the old original stock.²⁶

The South's deeply ingrained reverence for tradition, its suspicion and distrust of outsiders, and its feelings of supremacy combined in a potent mix of xenophobia and nativism that reappeared at the end of Reconstruction and led to the failure of Southern attempts to attract immigration.

Alabama's Immigration Policies

Alabama and other Southern states faced an immense problem at the end of the Civil War. They needed to rebuild the devastated region if they wanted to regain their political and economic fortunes. Rebuilding the region, however, would require a significant increase in labor supply due to changes in agricultural practices and industrialization. Instead of a rapid increase in labor supply, though, the region experienced a significant decrease in population. Not only did the Civil War take a heavy toll on the populace, but the war's conclusion led to an exodus of black and white Southerners. Tables 1 and 2 show this large outmigration from Alabama between 1870 and 1900.²⁷ It should also be noticed that, while many left the state in search of better economic and social conditions, immigration to Alabama was less than half the amount of outmigration (see Table 3).

This exodus left the state thinly populated at a time when a stronger labor force was urgently needed to revive the economy.²⁸ The solution to this dilemma, as seen by Alabama state officials, planters, and businessmen, became the encouragement of immigration both from within the United States and from abroad. Alabama's planters, pressed for farmhands, became the first ones to promote immigration to the state. Deprived of slave labor, they looked for an acceptable substitution, which they found in Chinese coolies [sic]. In 1865 and 1866, Southern planters organized several meetings to discuss the issue of importation of Chinese coolies [sic] for plantation work, but their

24 W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), 296.

25 Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes," 343.

26 Cash, *The Mind*, 297-298.

27 The peak of black Southerners' migration came later, between 1910 and 1920, when half a million African Americans left the South. This movement became known as the Great Migration. See Thomas C. Holt and Laurie B. Green, ed. *Race*, vol. 24, *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, rev. ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 21.

28 Fleming, "Immigration," 278.

Table 1: Net Migration of black Southerners in Alabama, 1870-1900
(in thousands of persons)

1870-1880	1880-1890	1890-1900
-36.1	-5.8	-1.8

Source: Booker, *Efforts of the South to Attract Immigrants*, 32.

Table 2: Net Total Migration Alabama 1870-1900
(in thousands of persons)

1870-1880	1880-1890	1890-1900
-60.7	-11.5	-40.4

Source: Booker, *Efforts of the South to Attract Immigrants*, 33.

Table 3: Immigration to Alabama 1870-1900
(in percent)

	1870	1880	1890	1900
Native population	74.6	80.4	83.8	86.3
Emigrated from other states	24.3	18.9	15.2	12.9
Foreign born	1	0.7	1	0.8
Total population	996,992	1,262,505	1,513,017	1,828,697

Source: Silveiman, *Immigration in the American South*, 481.

efforts did not succeed. Commissioner H. N. Congar from the Federal Bureau of Immigration saw their efforts as an attempt to introduce a new type of slavery and hindered their plans. When, in 1866, Alabamians H. F. Stickney and George A. Stewart contacted the Commissioner with a request to import Chinese immigrants for plantation work, Congar replied that he did not have “authority to grant special commissions or to give subsidies for the purpose of securing immigrant laborers from any country.”²⁹ Later, in his annual report, Cougar reiterated that the:

[I]ntroduction of new races bound to

29 Lucy M. Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without A History* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 49.

service and labor, under contracts similar to those in the West Indies, is contrary to the true interests, as it is to the laws, of the United States. ... if proper and profitable contracts cannot be made with the freedmen, who are used to the peculiar labor of the Southern States, there is no doubt but that a free, foreign immigration will supply all their necessities.³⁰

The state of Alabama started its own attempts to secure immigration when, in 1866, it chartered the Alabama Association with the goal of promoting immigration to the state.³¹ Two years later, in 1868, at the Immigration Convention in Jackson, Mississippi, state officials established the Freehold Land and Colonization Company of the states of Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi and tasked it with encouragement of immigration.³² These associations tried to attract both domestic and foreign immigrants by providing information about opportunities and conditions in the states, by offering lands for sale or lease, and by assisting with the purchase of passages to the South (sometimes prepaid by the employers).³³

In June 1869, Alabama organized an immigration convention in Montgomery where state officials issued a call to prospective settlers from both the United States and Europe. While publicizing the advantages of the state, the call declared the “welcoming” attitude of all Alabamians to domestic and foreign immigrants alike:

30 Chinese coolie labor was ultimately used in Alabama between 1869-1870. At that time, 500-600 Chinese coolies from California worked on the construction of the Alabama and Chattanooga railways. See, Cohen, 50.

31 Booker, “Efforts of the South,” 98.

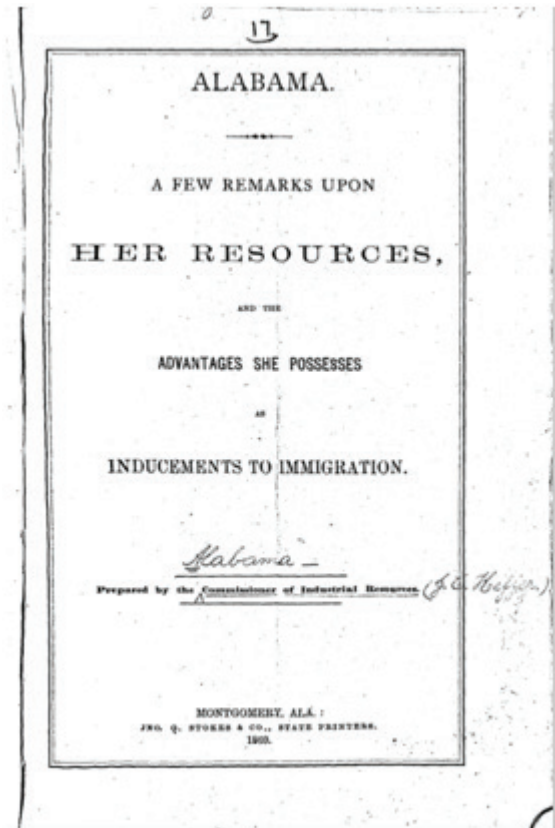
32 Ibid., 99.

33 Ibid., 102.

[A]ll new population, from whatever country or section, coming among us to aid in the recuperation and development of our material interests, is heartily and honestly welcome ... all latitude of opinion, thought, and expression, will be found to obtain among us; and that neither nationality, sect, not political views, will be found to injure any men in his business interests, or subject him to social annoyance in any degree... that any and all immigrants ... not only meet encouragement, but hearty welcome, and every facility we can offer.³⁴

There were two notable issues in this call. First, it welcomed “all” immigrants, regardless of their ethnic and cultural background; second, it included a “too eager” and detailed explanation of Alabamians’ tolerance. The need for such a strong reassurance of Alabama’s toleration could have been an attempt to counter perceptions of the state population’s bigotry.

In the same year, 1869, Alabama’s Commissioner of Industrial Resources, John Keffer, published an immigration promotion brochure exposing the government’s tolerant attitude to both immigrants and African Americans. The main part of the brochure, “*Alabama: A Few Remarks upon Her Resources and the Advantages She Possesses as Inducements to Immigration*,” presented a detailed description of the natural resources and advantages of the state and its suitability for agriculture and industry. Interesting is the absence of any specifications as of “type” of immigrants the state hoped to attract. “[Alabama] is alike fitted for the foreigner from the old world just landed on our shores,” Keffer wrote, “and for the citi-



The Cover of Commissioner Keffer’s Brochure, 1869. Courtesy of Birmingham Public Library Rare Book Collection.

zen of the Northern States, who for any reason desires to change his residence. It is alike the place for the workman and the capitalist.”³⁵ The brochure was also notable for its very tolerant description of black Southerners. While later publications adopted a more racist tone and start pointing out segregation as an inducement to white immigrants, as well as to refer to African Americans as “lazy and inefficient,” Keffer’s brochure was refreshingly tolerant:

34 The American Annual Cyclopedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1869, vol. IX (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1870), 10, accessed December 8, 2015), <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015022039666;view=1up;seq=11;size=150>.

35 Alabama Commissioner, *Alabama: a Few Remarks*, 3.

[Education] is free for all; no one can be excluded on account of race or color, and everyone partakes of its benefits... . The operations of the last two years have shown that the colored laborers will do better work as freedmen than they did as slaves, and that the planter who treats them kindly and pays them honestly the wage they have fairly earned, will ... have as many hands as he desires, and be most faithfully served...³⁶

Such toleration toward immigrants and African Americans disappeared in publications after the end of Reconstruction.³⁷

In 1871, Alabama's next Commissioner of Industrial Resources, Col. James L. Tait, presented an immigration report to the governor which exhibited the same tolerant attitude. Tait underlined the considerable economic benefits that immigration would bring to the state and deplored that of the 380,000 immigrants, who had arrived in the United States during the previous year, only one hundred had come to Alabama. According to him, the most important question for the state of Alabama was the encouragement of immigration. "Without increased population," he lamented, "what are railroads or steamboats, or any system of internal improvement?"³⁸ He called for the

establishment of an Immigration Bureau, and at least two agencies abroad, tasked with supplying information and inducing immigration to the state.³⁹

Following Tait's recommendations, Governor Robert B. Lindsay asked Alabama's General Assembly, on November 21, 1871, to consider carefully the question of immigration encouragement and the establishment of a Bureau of Immigration. He reckoned that bringing new energy and intelligence through "vigorous, hardy, law abiding population from other climes and countries" would improve the state's economic and social fortunes.⁴⁰

The end of Alabama's Reconstruction period, in 1874, brought a visible change in immigration rhetoric. Xenophobic and nativist feelings resurfaced, prompting government officials, industrialists, and planters to redefine the state's immigration policy. Despite continuous shortage of labor, officials started encouraging only "desirable" immigrants (defined as ethnically and culturally closer to white Southerners). Because most white Southerners were of Celtic, Scotch-Irish, and German heritage, this became the immigrant stock Alabama wanted to attract.⁴¹ The *Washington Post* summarized the rationale behind the policy of "desired" immigration as follows:

Englishmen, Scotchmen, Swedes,

36 Ibid., 21-22.

37 It has to be noted that Keffer was a leading carpetbagger and member of the Union League who enjoyed wide electoral support from Montgomery's black population. See, Michael W. Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South: Politics and Agricultural Change During Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1989), 84, accessed December 8, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=9es8ZKqQuA0C&pg=PA84&lpg=PA84&dq=keffer+alabama+commissioner+of+industrial+resources&source=bl&ots=hhJgMi8qBc&sig=XT_5PQajQV9iA7oYEAdA5zPJnJQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiq-POcuMvJAhUDOD-4KH7C7CckQ6AEIMjAF#v=onepage&q=keffer%20alabama%20commissioner%20of%20industrial%20resources&f=false.

38 Report of Col. James L. Tait, Commissioner of Industrial

Resources of the State of Alabama, to the Governor (Montgomery, Ala.: W. W. Screws, State Printer, 1871), 22, accessed December 8, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=moVBAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA15&lpg=PA15&dq=Report+of+James+L.+Tait&source=bl&ots=j_nyrvvEQZ&sig=b-ZEYk9sgN2tNeBCOLfl-z-RvAY&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiIndTsiLLJAhVJNT4KHUwkD-gQ6AEILjAE#v=onepage&q=immigration&f=false.

39 Ibid., 23.

40 Governor Robert B. Lindsay, "Message to the General Assembly," Nov. 21, 1871 (Montgomery, Ala.: W. W. Screws, State Printer, 1871), 6.

41 Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, ed., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 401.

and Norwegians - the sturdy yeomanry of the Anglo-Saxon race - are what is wanted. Bands of migratory Slavs, Poles, or Latins are of no value to American communities. They are never assimilated. They never understand or respect our institutions. They never become good citizens in the sense in which we employ the term. The Southern states will be much better off without them

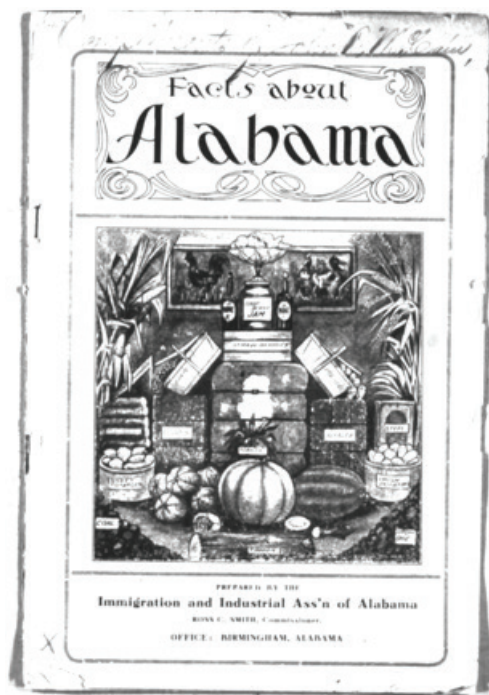
...⁴²

Alabama's new immigration policy, however, suffered from one major drawback - the flow of immigrants from northwestern Europe had receded, and most immigrants arriving to the United States came from the Mediterranean and southern and eastern Europe, regions falling in the category of "undesirable" immigrants. Consequentially, Alabama failed to attract any significant number of immigrants. Between 1870 and 1900, the state's foreign-born population barely reached one percent (see Table 3 on page 10). In an article from November 2, 1902, the *Birmingham Age Herald* drew attention to the fact that out of 42,543 immigrants who came to New York in September 1902, only 61 came to Alabama while 141 went to "Indian territory" in the West. "Twice as many, in other words, preferred Indian Territory to Alabama," the newspaper bitterly

concluded.⁴³

One early example of Alabama's changed immigration policy was John T. Milner's report "*Alabama: As It Was, As It Is, And As It Will Be.*" Prepared with the encouragement of the South and North Alabama Railways, the report aimed at attracting capital and labor to build up the coal and iron region around Birmingham. Milner stated that the only hope for the development of the state

was immigration of "laboring white people from abroad." He, however, called for a particular kind of white immigrant, the German. "Purchase ten thousand acres of land ...," he continued, "and place upon it two hundred German immigrants, such as now live at Cullman, in this State, as a start, and in less than ten years, this region of Alabama would again vie with Illinois. ... If the negro was not here, there would be an immigration of white people to this rich region of Alabama, equating that going to Texas."⁴⁴ Milner offered a considerably different rhetoric to previous immigration encouragement reports. He not only stated a preference for Anglo-Saxon immigrants, but also used racist explanations to justify the dwindling numbers of immigrants coming to the state. "[W]here the negro was," Milner concluded, "the foreign immigrant would not and did not go."⁴⁵



A Promotional booklet prepared by the Immigration and Industrial Association of Alabama, 1905. Courtesy of Samford University Library, Special Collection and University Archives.

⁴³ Beavers, "The Italians," 8.

⁴⁴ Milner, "Alabama: As it Was," 144.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 119.

⁴² Silverman, *Immigration*, 8.

Most strikingly, business interests, best positioned to benefit from increased labor supply, were among the most ardent proponents of the policy of “desirable” immigration. The *Manufacturers’ Record*, leading proponent of Southern industrial expansion and mouthpiece of the Southern business community, wrote in an 1888 article addressed to the Southern Immigration Association of America (SIAA):

The South has happily escaped the evils attendant upon the employment of foreign laborers in the North. It will lend no aid to any who wish to bring that element into its borders... The South is [not] the place for ... the hordes who are coming by thousands weekly from European ports. If the [immigration conventions] will announce that their efforts will be directed solely to promoting the immigration of English speaking people, they will receive all the moral and material support they desire. If, on the other hand, they ... attempt to pour into the South the same class of immigrants that have been landing in New York and Canada ... they will be opposed by nine-tenths of the Southern people.⁴⁶

Instead of seeing southern and eastern European immigrants as assets for the region’s economic development, the *Manufacturer’s Record* rejected them as unwanted, pointing out that “nine-tenths of the Southern people” shared in this sentiment. While spurning “undesirable” immigrants as “human sewage” (in the words of the journal’s editor), the *Manufacturer’s Record*, applying nativist rhetoric, ardently encouraged “desirable,” Anglo-Saxon immigrants:

...the South needs the sturdy yeomanry of Great Britain; the cool, slow moving, but always energetic Hollander; the sturdy hardworking, God fearing, self-respecting people of Denmark, Norway and Sweden; the best middle class folk and peasantry of the many provinces of the German Empire, and the mercurial but industrial sons and daughters of France. The South can welcome all these gladly, for most of these European stocks were represented in the early settlement of these States, and their blood, commingled in their descendants, has made our best Southern manhood and womanhood.⁴⁷

Among business interests in Alabama, railway companies became one of the most active promoters of immigration to the state. In order to profit, they needed more settlers and industrial growth that would translate to capital. And the South, at that time, was among the least populated regions in the country. In 1900, Alabama had only 35 persons per square mile compared to Ohio’s 102, Pennsylvania’s 140, and Massachusetts’s 349.⁴⁸ Each railroad owned hundreds of thousands of acres of land along its lines and looked for prospective buyers.⁴⁹ To induce immigration, railroads preferred to establish whole colonies and employed hundreds of immigration agents in the United States and abroad to look for groups of families willing to relocate to the South.⁵⁰ Despite their urgent need to at-

⁴⁶ Silverman, *Immigration*, 8-9.

⁴⁷ Booker, “Efforts of the South,” 41-42.

⁴⁸ Fleming, “Immigration,” 278.

⁴⁹ Despite its size of only 149 miles, the Alabama and Vicksburg Railroad had 110,189 acres of unsold land in 1895. In 1899, The Mobile and Ohio had over 600,000 acres for sale in Mississippi, Alabama, and Kentucky. See, Loewenberg, 379.

⁵⁰ Some of the more well known colonies established in Alabama were Fairhope (settled by immigrants from Iowa), Cullman and adjoining colonies (settled by German immigrants), Thorsby (settled by

tract settlers, railway companies also supported the policy of “desirable” immigration. In 1904, immigration agents of the Southern railways met in Birmingham to reject the immigration encouragement plan offered to them by the Federal Commissioner General on Immigration. The Commissioner offered to establish an information bureau at Ellis Island that would advise arriving immigrants about the opportunities offered by every state. Railway agents, however, feared that the federal government would use the bureau as center for redistribution of immigrants from crowded northern cities to the South. In Fleming’s words, railway officials refused to make the South a government “dumping-ground for undesirable immigrants.”⁵¹

While state officials, businessmen, and planters “refined” their immigration policies, the average Alabamian kept his/her traditional attitude of hostility to any type of immigration. As already mentioned, Montgomery’s immigration convention found it necessary to strongly challenge such attitudes in 1869, but it seems that they continued unabated. In a March 1, 1884, letter to SIAA’s President, the German immigrant and Land Commissioner of Alabama, John G. Cullman, suggested that SIAA show “Southern people the advantages of immigration, and prompt ... them to overcome their prejudice to immigration.”⁵² Xenophobic attitudes in Alabama must

have been very prominent to prompt Cullman to raise the issue with SIAA’s president and encourage him to target it. Anti-immigration attitudes among the general public in the state originated not only from fear of losing traditions and culture, but also, and maybe most importantly, from economic anxiety. Southern workers, both white and black, worried that an increase in labor supply would keep wages down. Small farmers, on the other hand, worried about competition from immigrant farmers and laborers on big plantations. “There is still some sentiment in the South itself,” Fleming wrote in 1905, “that deters immigration. Some fear cheap labor in the mills, others fear that behind the immigration movement are the foreign manufacturing interests desiring to keep down the price of cotton.”⁵³

At the turn of the twentieth century, state officials continued to follow the policy of “desirable” immigration and nativist rhetoric became more visible. In a 1905 *Atlantic* article, Robert Ward revealed that xenophobia was widespread among Southern governmental officials. Analyzing personal correspondence with the governors of all Southern states, their Commissioners of Agriculture, Labor, and Immigration, and other public officials, Ward revealed that when it came to immigration:

100 per cent prefer native Americans and northern Europeans who are skilled workmen with money, and who come with their families, intending permanent settlement. Between 90 per cent and 100 per cent of the Southern state officials protest against the immigration of Asiatics, of illiterates, and of aliens who desire to settle in cities; 84 per cent do not wish any immigrants from southern and eastern Europe...⁵⁴

Scandinavians), and Lauderdale (settled by German immigrants).

51 Fleming, “Immigration,” 290.

52 Southern Immigration Association of America, Proceedings of the First Annual Session of the Southern Immigration Association of America (Nashville, TN: R. H. Howell & Co., Stationers and Printers, 1884), 333-334. The SIAA was an association established and supported by all former Confederate states with the goal of securing and promoting cooperation “in sustaining an enterprise for the mutual development of their [southern states] latent resources; ... to encourage immigration to said States; to gather, publish and distribute statistics, maps and other literature ... of the South; to make contracts for transportation and settlement of immigrants within said States” In Southern Immigration Association of America, 4.

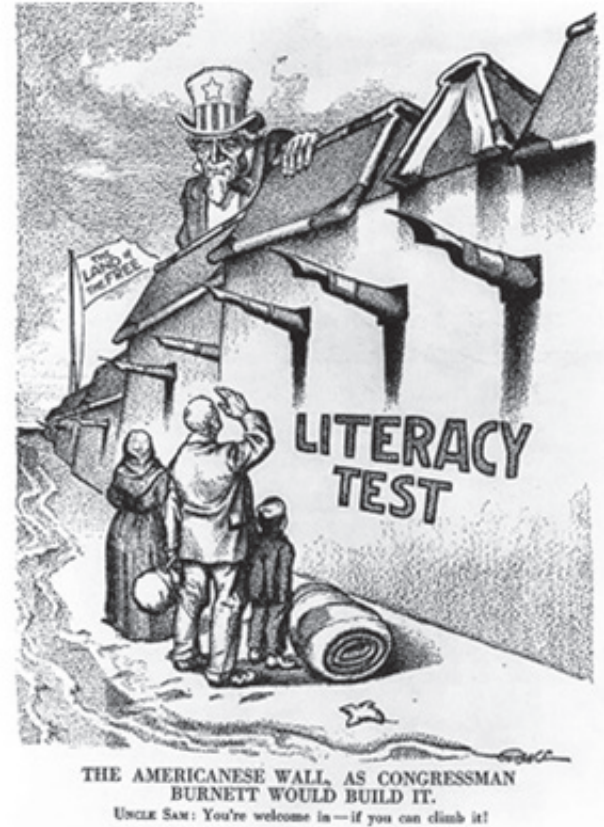
53 Fleming, “Immigration,” 296-297.

54 Ward, “Immigration,” 611-617.

Such strong opinions translated in state policies. When in 1907 Alabama finally established a Board of Immigration, proposed by Tait over fifteen years earlier, it included a provision not envisioned by the former Commissioner for Industrial Resources. With article 834, the Code of Alabama stipulated that “[i]mmigrants shall be sought from desirable white citizens of the United States first, and then citizens of English speaking and Germanic countries, France, and the Scandinavian countries, and Belgium, as prospective citizens of this state, and conformable with the laws of the United States.”⁵⁵

Alabama’s nativist movement reached its peak with the rhetoric and actions of Representatives John L. Burnett and Oscar W. Underwood. Both lawmakers spearheaded the South’s effort to oppose immigration to the United States and played an important role in the adoption of the 1921 Emergency Quota Law and the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Act.⁵⁶ As a member of the United States Immigration Commission (also known as the Gillingham Commission), between 1907-1910, Burnett actively worked for the restriction of immigration from southern and eastern Europe. After becoming the Chairmen of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, he introduced the Burnett Immigration Bill in 1912, which called for the adoption of a literacy test as part of the admission process for incoming immigrants. After numerous vetoes by both President William Taft and Woodrow Wilson, Burnett’s Immigration Bill finally passed in 1917 with congressional override of the President’s veto.

Burnett and Underwood were avid followers of



The Americanese wall – as Congressman [John Lawson] Burnett would build it, 1916. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

racial theories of Aryan supremacy. In a 1906 speech in the House of Representatives, Burnett appealed to Southern representatives to support immigration literacy requirements as the only way to preserve the South “free from contamination, to keep it spotless as a godly heritage for [our] children.”⁵⁷ He thought that “undesirable” immi-

⁵⁵ The Code of Alabama, 1907, vol. 1 (Nashville Tennessee: Marshall & Bruce Company, 1907), 475.

⁵⁶ The 1921 Emergency Quota Law established temporary limits to the number of immigrants coming to the United States based on country of birth. These limits became permanent with the 1924 Immigration Act.

⁵⁷ John L. Burnett, “The Immigration Bill,” speech of Hon. J. L. Burnett of Alabama in the House of Representatives, June 25, 1906. Birmingham Public Library Rare Books Collection, Pamphlet File: KF4819.B87 1906, 2.

grants, “Italians, Syrians, Austrians, Hungarians, and others from that part of Europe,” prevented the “splendid and desirable” immigration from northwestern Europe.⁵⁸ With traditional nativist rhetoric, Burnett described his fear that “undesirable” immigrants’ different culture and traditions would destroy America’s life and system of government. Most strikingly, Burnett insinuated that he was willing to sacrifice the South’s economic development in order to keep it “pure and uncontaminated”:

I would not put one single obstacle in the progress of legitimate commercial development and prosperity ... There is no city in the state except Birmingham which is making such rapid strides, and I would be the last man to stay its onward march. Yet I would rather see it forever nestling amid sylvan oaks, only known as the pretty village beside the Coosa, rather than see it built up on the ruins of the civilization of our fathers. [Loud applause.]⁵⁹

Representative Oscar Underwood supported similar extreme racial theories. He saw racial distinctions as divinely ordained. According to him, God had “created the great Celtic and Teutonic races to carry forward the banners of our civilization and the principles of Christianity, and when we contaminate our blood with an inferior race we will not be carrying out the object of our creation, but will be tearing down the old-time American standards.”⁶⁰ In his 1905 Congressional speech, “*Protection of American Labor*,” Underwood, similarly to Burnett, professed a willingness to accept delays in the South’s economic development in the name of protecting its “pure blood and traditions”:

I know in my district that we could use a good many more men in the furnaces, the mines, and the factories than we have got,” he stated, “and I would be glad to have them if we can get the right people, if we can get the kind of people that made the North and Northwest great - people of the Teutonic blood; but we do not want in the South any inferior race. We have one inferior race to contend with, and we do not want another that will give us a great deal more trouble.”⁶¹

The Tired and The Poor

Despite Alabama’s unwelcoming policy, a number of “undesirable” immigrants arrived to the state. Birmingham’s industrialization started attracting increasing numbers of Italians, Greeks, Lebanese, and eastern Europeans. While Alabama’s official immigration promotion policies did not target such type of immigration, “undesirable immigrants” followed the laws of labor demand and supply and informal immigration promotion channels, such as recommendations of friends and family.

While Anglo-Saxons continued to be the preferred labor force, the owners of the mines and mills around Birmingham needed to compensate for labor shortages by hiring white immigrants of non-Aryan heritage. A report of the congressional Immigration Commission confirmed the existence of strong nativist perceptions among Birmingham’s employers and their preference for hiring workers

58 Ibid., 3.

59 Ibid., 8.

60 Berthoff, “Southern Attitudes,” 114.

61 Oscar W. Underwood, “Protection of American Labor,” Speech of Hon. Oscar W. Underwood, of Alabama in the House of Representatives, Dec 18, 1905. Birmingham Public Library Rare Book Collection, Pamphlet File JV6483.U53 1905, 11.

Average Annual Earnings for Iron and Steel Workers in Birmingham by Race

Race	Average Earning
Foreign-born, Scotch	\$ 661
Foreign-born, English	\$ 543
Native-born, white	\$ 521
Native-born, black	\$ 486
Foreign-born, French	\$ 450
Foreign-born, Polish	\$ 377
Foreign-born, Slovak	\$ 355
Foreign-born, Italian (North)	\$ 309
Foreign-born, Italian (South)	\$ 304

Source: Congressional Immigration Commission Report "Immigrants in Industries," 1911.

according to race. The report's findings showed that English, Scotch, Welsh, French, and Irish were classed with native whites as employers' first choice workers. Germans and African Americans came second, followed by Slovaks, Macedonians, Bulgarians, Poles, and Greeks. The last-named race were the Italians "only accepted in any occasion or capacity as a last resort."⁶² These racial preferences were also reflected in wages (see Table 4).

Among "undesirable" immigrants, however, the Italians were the first to arrive in Alabama and the most numerous. While in 1890 Jefferson County had only 130 Italians, by 1920 their number had increased to 2,160.⁶³

By 1908, immigrants working in the mills of Birmingham, mostly Southern Italians and Greeks, numbered more than 5,000.⁶⁴

Unlike Birmingham's industrialists, many plantation owners saw Italian immigrants as an acceptable solution to labor shortages.⁶⁵ Italian farmers were often compared to African Americans and seen as a preferable alternative for plantation owners whose views were clouded by racial stereotypes. Italians usually came as farm laborers and later bought land and became small-scale landowners.

⁶⁴ Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes," 336.

⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that Southerners were not very prejudiced against Italians from the North. According to Oscar Underwood, North Italians were of Arian blood while South Italians had mixed blood and fell in the group of Iberian heritage. See, Underwood, Protection of American Labor.

⁶² 61st Congress, 2nd Session Senate, Document No. 633, Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries, part 2, vol. II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 205.

⁶³ Holt, New Encyclopedia, 172.

It seems that despite deeply ingrained prejudice, employers were often more accepting of “undesirable” immigrants than the average Southerner. Mob violence and lynching, usually used against African Americans, was extended to include Italians whom most Southerners considered an inferior race.⁶⁶ Throughout Alabama, prejudice against “undesirable” immigrants was widespread. In one report, the congressional Immigration Commission described that the Italian colony in Daphne, Alabama, established by Alessandro Mastro-Valerio in 1890, had encountered many difficulties due to local prejudice toward Italians.⁶⁷ “[T]here is a lot of racial aloofness manifested in many subtle ways,” the report continued, “that makes it practically certain that the Italian will never gain a very strong foothold in the community, nor stand on the same level with the native.”⁶⁸

The darker skin color of Italians, Greeks, and Lebanese, as well as their different religion and traditions, triggered most of the discrimination they faced. “[B]ack in those days,” a Birmingham Lebanese recalled, “aliens were nil ... they were persecuted ... I think in the Northern cities there was not that much discrimination ... See, people here were even afraid to say they were Catholic at one time.”⁶⁹ A Birmingham area Greek recalled that, due to their small numbers, immigrants were more isolated and harassed in the South: “In the South, there weren’t too many ethnic groups. The only - Italians, Greeks, very few Greeks, very few Italians, and the Jewish people. And we were looked down upon, in fact they called us ‘dagos’ in those days. ... And they looked on them [Greeks] more

or less in the same classification as blacks.”⁷⁰ Due to discrimination, “undesired” immigrants could not hope to get a good job and their only option was the hard work in the mines and mills of Birmingham. Because of this, once they had saved enough money, many Greeks and Italians started family businesses, usually stores and restaurants. “My father came to Alabama looking for work,” an Italian lady from Birmingham recalled, “and even though he had an education he didn’t get a good job. He worked in the coal mines and for U.S. Steel. Back then, if you were Italian or Catholic ... you didn’t get a good job. You got the worst jobs.”⁷¹ Even the children of immigrants, born and raised in the South, could not escape discrimination. “If you were a Catholic you had a black mark against you,” the daughter of Italian immigrants recalled, “and if you were Italian you had a black mark against you. We were called names because we were foreigners. ... As long as you had Italian parents they still claimed that you were a foreigner.”⁷² In an interview with the *Birmingham Age Herald* in 1906, the Italian consul in New Orleans explained that Italians avoided the South because they “did not like to be called ‘dago’ and were looked down upon as undesirable and socially unfit.”⁷³ Discrimination was also reflected in company housing arrangements where Italians, not regarded as socially equal with whites, lived separately. In Thomas, for example, there was a street for whites, one for Italians, and one for African Americans.⁷⁴ Often, white Southerners were prejudiced towards “undesirable” foreign immigrants due to their occasional associations with African

66 Berthoff, “Southern Attitudes,” 344.

67 61st Congress, 2nd Session, Senate, document No. 633, Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries, Part 24. Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 298.

68 Ibid., 301.

69 Faires, “Colored and Catholic,” 21.

70 Ibid.

71 Interview with Argentina Morganti, April 2, 1981, Birmingham Library Archives, Folder 809.2.3.1.6.8, 1.

72 Interview with Miss Rose Maenza, March 25, 1981, interviewed by Karen Rolen, Birmingham Library Archives, Folder 809.2.3.1.6.9, 4.

73 Beavers, “The Italians,” 9.

74 Ibid., 18.

Americans. Many Italian store-owners, who traded with black Southerners, were discriminated against because of such associations.

Conclusion

There were many factors that negatively affected Alabama's immigration policy between 1870 and 1910, but the region's hostility and prejudice toward immigrants, especially those who differed ethnically and culturally from white Southerners, significantly contributed to Alabama's failure to attract sufficient immigration. Alabama's leaders, and the public at large, operating under the restrictions of a Southern cultural framework that bestowed on white Southern society a sense of superiority, distrust for outsiders, and desire for continuity of traditions, sabotaged their own economic development by restricting immigration to the state. The end of Reconstruction saw the re-emergence of nativism and the adoption of a policy encouraging only "desirable," Aryan immigration. While this decision did not challenge white Alabamians' level of comfort, it failed to attract the necessary labor supply. There were not many white Americans in the West and North willing to come to Alabama, and northwestern European immigration had by the end of the 19th century decreased to a trickle. The immigrants arriving in America at this time came from the Mediterranean and eastern and southern Europe, the "undesirable" sort of immigrants. While state and private organizations continued to struggle to attract "desirable" immigrants through official channels, an "undesirable" class of immigrants, attracted by the laws of labor supply and demand, started appearing in small numbers in industrial centers, such as Birmingham, and in some plantations where labor was urgently needed.

Nativism had such a strong hold on Southern cul-

ture that people in the state were willing to slow down, or even stop their economic development, rather than accept "undesirable" immigrants in their midst. Surprisingly, despite their need for labor, even businessmen and plantation owners supported Alabama's restrictive immigration policies. In comparison to the average Alabamian, manufacturers and plantation owners were slightly more tolerant toward immigrants, even "undesirable" ones, due to their economic interests.

It is interesting to note that, despite claims by such distinguished scholars of Southern politics as V. O. Key and C. Vann Woodward, that the South would change and its distinct politics and culture will disappear, contemporary immigration policies in Alabama prove that Southern cultural specifics live on.⁷⁵ HB 56 would not have been possible if Alabamians' nativism, dating from before the Civil War, did not still hold sway over them.

75 In *The Burden of Southern History*, Woodward claimed that most identifiers of Southern distinctiveness were either destroyed or on their way out thanks to, what he called, "the Bulldozer Revolution." The bulldozer, working at the border between city and country, was for Woodward "the advance agent of the metropolis [that] encroache[d] upon rural life to expand urban life ... [and] demolishe[d] the old to make way for the new." C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1993), p. 6, accessed November 14, 2015, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.fetch.mhsl.uab.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzQ0MjM5X19BTg2?sid=f23a5d79-b0e3-4e99-bfd2-f75fb0f42d8f@sessionmgr4001&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

Tried and Blue: The Unionist Origins of Alabama's Blue Spot

by David Henslee

IN LOOKS and scenery, the Logan Community epitomizes the small towns of North Alabama. The drive to it is scenic and pastoral, with rolling hills and pine and oak woods. The name “Logan” itself would scarcely raise an eyebrow. An old and abandoned restaurant located on the only crossroad advertises “rabbit hutch,” divulging the former main entrée. The roadside provides the sightseer with intermittent flags representing both the Confederate and the United States standard, with both flags displayed in equal enthusiasm. A few miles past the crossroads one can find Shady Grove Church. This small white Methodist Church dates from the years immediately following the Civil War, replacing an earlier brush arbor religious meeting site. Thus far described, the vista characterizes a typical small southern district. If you are fortunate or lucky enough to find Shady Grove Hill, and if you venture to step out of the vehicle and explore, your historically aware mind will begin to question itself. The historic marker, located beside the cemetery, mentions the names of two of the churchyard's occupants. Once found – and they are within fifteen feet of the marker - the graves of Richard McCain and George Kilgo will challenge any who still entertain the notion of the “Solid South.” The markers designate Civil War era Union soldiers and in shape and distinction are no different than those at Arlington National Cemetery. Both Kilgo and McCain apparently rose to the esteemed rank of Private First-Class. The designation of “Private” implies that these men engaged in frontline combat against Confederate soldiers. Identical markers dot cemeteries throughout the area. The presence of these headstones are



Shady Grove Methodist Church in Logan, Alabama. Photo by author.

no surprise to those familiar with the political and social diversity which existed within the Confederacy.

Logan Community was established by veteran soldiers from the Civil War – Union soldiers as well as Confederate. Call the Union veterans traitors if you wish, but remember that they thought of their secessionist neighbors in the same manner. Wounded both physically and emotionally, these men fought in, witnessed, and survived America's most lethal conflict. This article will retrace the history and origin of the First Alabama Union Cavalry from before the War Between the States or the Civil War (of which there is no such thing as a war which is civil, and for that matter wars do not care what you call them) to the establishment of Logan community and the final resting place of the First Alabama soldiers at Shady Grove Cemetery. Logan, Alabama symbolizes, in microcosm, the larger aspect of “unionist” or “loyalist” senti-



George W. Kilgo. Courtesy of Cherie Kilgo.

ment which existed in the Confederacy. The families described in this article characterize, again in microcosm, the many southerners who refused to align with a country at war with “Old Glory.” Many of the families cited are representative of Alabama’s original white settlers – men who first fought under the command of Andrew Jackson in the Creek Indian War before moving their families to the newly acquired “Alabama Territory.”

Even as the Civil War began many North Alabamians felt disconnected or even ignored by the state government in Montgomery. Some state representatives in North Alabama briefly toyed with the possibility of secession from the state and, with unionist East Tennessee, the formation of a new state called “Nickajack.” The name

itself was borrowed from the Chickamauga Cherokee.¹ These North Alabama delegates did not necessarily favor the Lincoln - led Republican Government. Rather, they wished to separate from Alabama and correspond with the North for a gradual and peaceful redress of grievances. These representatives resented Montgomery’s demand for the immediate separation from the union and the strong-hand tactics of hardline secessionists. Instead of a secession convention, these representatives desired a state-wide referendum.² William Lowndes Yancey, arguably Alabama’s strongest proponent of immediate secession, denounced the plan as a stalling tactic. Nicholas Davis of Madison County and Robert Jemison of Tuscaloosa argued that Yancey’s remarks essentially ignored the desires of all North Alabama. In the end, the secession convention proceeded under Yancey’s directive. The Ordinance of Secession passed on 11 January 1861 by a vote of sixty-one to thirty-nine. Alabama, no longer a member of the United States, joined other seceded states in forming the Confederate States of America.³

Most of the families residing in the hill counties of North Alabama, and particularly those south of the Tennessee River, were distinct from the wealthier slave owning families of the cotton belt. The hilly land and soil in this region did not produce as much cotton as did that of South Alabama. Families residing in this northern zone of Alabama, in the main, owned fewer slaves and the largest and most luxurious plantations were farther south. Many in this region represented yeoman farmers who scratched out a subsistence-style living, albeit some affluence and economic diversity existed. Poorer than their South Alabama counterparts, a large number of families from the

1 Elbert Watson, “The Story of Nickajack,” *Alabama Review*, vol. 20 (January 1967): 17.

2 Ibid., 18.

3 Ibid., 18–19.

hills found their way to the region by shadowing their family or ancestor's service in General Andrew Jackson's Army of 1813. Jackson's soldiers headed south from Tennessee and invaded the land of the Muscogee Creek Confederacy. One Native American tribe in this Confederacy, thought by some to rank among the most ancient and fierce of the member tribes, was the Alabama or Alibamu. As Jackson's Army - one of three armies of invasion and the only successful one - marched south with their allied Cherokee soldiers his men appreciated, and coveted, the landscape. After the American victory at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend many of Jackson's men, retaining their appreciation of the land, moved their families onto the perimeter of Creek territory.

One such family (future relations to the Richard McCain interred at Shady Grove Cemetery in Logan) demonstrates the divisiveness caused by the outbreak of the Civil War. The Roden family, like many other families of this region, made their way to Alabama following the Creek Indian War. Their descendants included at least one member of the First Alabama Union Cavalry named Vincent S. Roden.⁴ Long before the birth of Vincent, Patriarch Jeremiah Roden enlisted in the Continental Army in



Richard McCain, Private, First Alabama Cavalry. Courtesy of Patricia Farmer and www.1stalabamacavalryusv.com.

South Carolina during the American Revolution. He participated in the southern campaigns of the Revolutionary War and educated his sons on the self-sacrifice endured while fighting the British. Jeremiah enlisted for a six-month stint but remained with the Continental Army until the war's conclusion. His widow finally won her case for a U. S. pension for her husband's service at the advanced age of ninety-eight but passed before she received a cent.⁵ The government's negligence in awarding her pension apparently did not dampen her son's sense of patriotism. John B. Roden, born in South Carolina and Jeremiah's first son, moved his family - including his elderly father - to Tennessee and participated in General Jackson's invasion of Alabama.⁶

John Roden lived with his family on the border of the Cherokee Nation. He joined General Andrew Jackson's Army during the Creek In-

dian War. John served under Major William Russell, for whom Russellville, Alabama was named, in a "mounted spy company", a contemporary term for a ranger company.⁷ Jackson's rangers were chosen from back-wood frontiersmen and sometimes of "mixed blood." Along with their allied Cherokee scouts these rangers, according to David Crockett, rose before morning and painted their faces before striking the war-post - an act signifying the

4 Leslie R. Waltman Jr., *Roden Roots: Six Generations of the Descendents of Jeremiah Roden and Susannah Kirkland of DeKalb County, Alabama* (Gadsden, AL: Northeast Alabama Genealogical Society, 1979), 5-17, 22.

5 Ibid., 5.

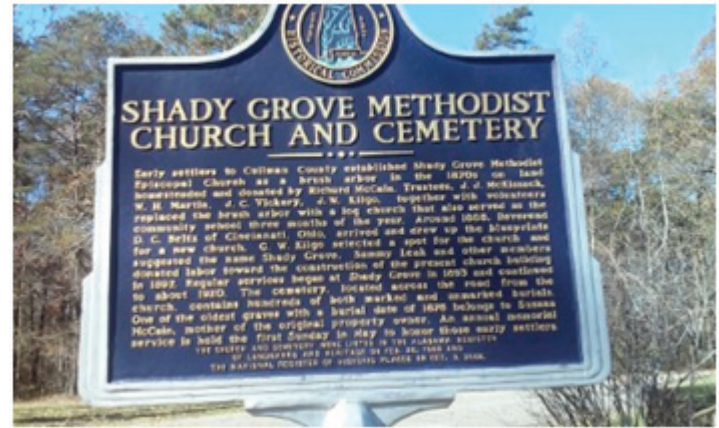
6 Ibid., 9.

7 Ibid.

warrior's willingness to hunt the enemy that day. John caught "Alabama fever" during his travels with Jackson's army and following the termination of hostilities moved his family to Alabama, then referred to as "Alabama Territory."

The Roden family, like many families of North-Central Alabama, contributed to both the Confederate and the Union cause during the Civil War. Whether Vincent Roden listened to his grandfather's stories of fighting in the Revolutionary War or his father's tales of fighting the "Redsticks" during the War of 1812 is unrecorded. Many fathers of the men of the First Alabama Union Cavalry, however, did hand down to their sons an attachment to the American flag or "Old Glory". At the same time, several members of the Roden family joined the ranks of the Confederate Army. Those of the family that lived within the contested Alabama regions surrounding Winston, Blount, and Walker County during the Civil War found no escape from the wartime hostilities. James Roden's nephew, James Monroe Roden, was killed on 27 December 1863 by Unionist guerrillas in what is remembered as the "Buck Island Massacre."⁸

As the Civil War loomed, resistance within particular northern Alabama counties revealed not all Alabamians advocated secession. At the opening of hostilities, President Lincoln called for volunteer troops to put down what the U. S. Government progressively perceived as widespread rebellion in the South. As the Civil War began, men from certain regions of the South began to question and then resist their respective state governments during the call for secession conventions. From the beginning, particular regions of Alabama – notably central counties south of the Tennessee River – expressed a disinclination to separate themselves from the Republic of the United



Historical Marker at Shady Grove Methodist Church in Logan, Alabama. Photo by author.

States. The people of Winston County, Alabama, where the Logan community and Shady Grove Church emerged, exhibited a decided reluctance to abandon the Federal Constitution during the Secession Crisis. In the selection of delegates to serve in the Secession Convention, Winston voters overwhelmingly voted for the outspoken critic of secession Christopher Sheets who easily won the district's nomination by a landslide - Sheets with five hundred and fifteen votes compared to his secessionist opponent's one hundred and twenty-eight. The votes in Fayette, Marion, Walker, and Blount counties marked a similar trend.⁹ Even from Montgomery one legislator despaired at the removal of the Stars and Stripes. This legislator wrote that from his window he could see "the nasty little thing flaunting in the breeze which has taken the place of that glorious banner."¹⁰

When secession became fact most Alabama unionists opted for neutrality. While many still held allegiance

9 Hugh C. Bailey, "Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama," *Journal of Southern History*, vol. 23, no. 4 (November 1957): 522.

10 Clarence Phillips Denman, *The Secession Movement in Alabama* (Norwood, Mass: Norwood Press, 1933), 151.

8 Ibid., 22.

to “Old Glory,” few wanted open warfare with their neighbors. Future First Alabama Union Cavalry member and Logan community resident John R. Phillips remembered “[i]t was firmly fixed in my mind that I would never go back on ‘Old Glory,’ I had heard too much from my old grandparents about the sufferings and privations they had to endure during the Revolutionary War...[I] talked but little and thought by giving them (the Confederacy) all they asked for and treating them kindly they would let me alone.”¹¹ During the initial phase of the Civil War, many unionists in Alabama – at least those who remained quiet – continued to reside peacefully with their secessionist neighbors. To their way of thinking, neutrality openly demonstrated southern unionists’ unwillingness to engage in hostilities against their neighbors. Approximately three thousand Winston County officials and citizens, representing both Union and Confederate sympathizers, gathered at the now-memorialized tavern of Bill Looney in Winston County to deliberate their options. The resulting written resolution declared that “we agree with [former President Andrew] Jackson that no state can legally” secede and included the caveat that if mistaken in their legal interpretation “then a county, any county, being part of the state, by the same process of reasoning, could cease to be a part of that state.”¹² Additionally, to make their intentions toward southern neighbors known, Winston County leaders passed another resolution asserting their neutral status.¹³ As the war progressed and the Confederacy found itself in need of more recruits, however, unionists found it increasingly difficult to remain neutral. The Confederate Conscription Act, passed on 16 April 1862, and the subsequent

enforcement of the legislation provided the catalyst that turned neutrality into open support for the Union.¹⁴

Northern counties consistently fell short of their draft quotas and a Confederate appeal to then Alabama Governor John Gill Shorter resulted in the organization of “Home Guards” and special militias to forcibly draft these holdouts.¹⁵ John Phillips remembered the day the Home Guard visited his home. Because he had not been outspoken in his unionism, the guard simply ordered him to mount and arm himself in order to arrest some of his neighbors whom they claimed were “Tories.” He recalled:

I tried to beg off from them in various ways, but they told me if I was not willing to go, then they would arrest me. They charged one house but found no one there but women, however they waylaid the house... (they) met some of our neighbors on the road and handcuffed them...arresting all they met. They got some liquor to drink and conscripted me and one of my neighbors...and said we could go back home and get ready to come on. The others were handcuffed and driven off like brutes. I then found keeping a still tongue had been some advantage.¹⁶

John then made his decision to make it to Federal lines and join the Union Army. As he mounted what he referred to as a “toe – headed” mule, his neighbor said, “The first battle you get in that mule will run off...[and] he will have you in the Yankee Army.”¹⁷ His heart may have skipped a

11 John R. Phillips, *The Story of My Life* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1923), 39.

12 Larry Stephens, *Mossbacks and Bushwhackers: Domestic Terrorism in Civil War Alabama*, (Three Rivers, Mass.: Van Volumes, 2001), 29.

13 Ibid., 29.

14 Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York: MacMillan, 1924), 12–14; Rick Hudson, “The First Regiment of Alabama Cavalry Volunteers, U. S. A.: A Regimental History,” (unpublished manuscript), 73.

15 Bailey, “Disloyalty in Early Confederate,” 2.

16 Phillips, *The Story*, 39–40.

17 Ibid., 40.

beat but John did not reply.

Unionism in North Alabama, even from the standpoint of the First Alabama Cavalry's initial biographer William Stanley Hoole, has been viewed more as a Confederate problem rather than a Federal asset. Although Hoole describes the progressive recruiting of Alabama

**“ THE CONFEDERACY’S ACTIVE ROLE
IN ARRESTING SUSPECTED UNIONISTS,
COMBINED WITH CONFEDERATE UNITS’
DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN FORCIBLY
COLLECTING RECRUITS, FASHIONED THE
SINGLE LARGEST FACTOR IN SWELLING
THE RANKS OF WHAT WOULD BECOME
THE FIRST ALABAMA UNION CAVALRY.**

men by the Federal Army and the resulting organization of the First Alabama Union Cavalry, he failed to stress the Confederacy's role in having forced the formation of the regiment. Additionally, while Richard Nelson Current in *Lincoln's Loyalists* discussed the influence of coercion upon Federal recruits from the South, he did not completely address conscription's influence in the particular case of North Alabama. The Confederacy's active role in arresting suspected unionists, combined with Confederate units' direct involvement in forcibly collecting recruits, fashioned the single largest factor in swelling the ranks of what would become the First Alabama Union Cavalry.

Certainly, these unionists had to wait for an opportunity to join the Federal armies, but most had adopted neutrality in belief as well as practice. That is, these men adopted neutrality up to the point of being forced to choose sides. The impetus providing this force came from the Confederacy itself in the form of the draft. In other words,

had Confederate authorities not attempted to enforce the draft in the hill counties of North Alabama, the First Alabama Union Cavalry might never have organized into a fighting unit. Following the enforcement of the draft, Winston County resident Andrew Ingle accurately predicted: “without this union (with the United States) the people of this state and the other (southern) states will undergo the unspeakable Calamities [sic] which discord faction turbulence [sic] war and blood – Shead [sic] have produced in other countries.”¹⁸ Two Ingle relatives joined the ranks of the First Alabama.¹⁹

While they preferred to remain true to the old flag and Constitution, most Alabama unionists originally did not consider themselves to be in revolt against Confederate authorities. Confederate depredations against their families altered this course. Early in the summer of 1861, unionists displayed the following notice: “All persons desiring to attach themselves to a union company to form a home guard for the protection of our familys [sic] and property is earnestly requested to meete [sic] us at A. I. Taylor's Store on the 14th Inst and Wm Dodds [sic] Store on the 15th. Come one come all patriotic men.”²⁰ Among the five signatures found on this document, two later joined the First Alabama regiment. From this point on, guerrilla warfare between unionists and secessionists escalated. Atrocities, committed by both sides, and the emotional scars which they imbued lasted long after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Judge John A. Campbell of the Confederate War Department reached the conclusion that “the condition of things in the mountain districts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama [menaced] the ex-

18 Hugh C. Bailey, “Disaffection in the Alabama Hill Country, 1861,” *Civil War History*, vol. 4 (June 1958): 187.

19 Enlistment roll of First Alabama recruits from Winston County in author's possession.

20 Hudson, “The First Regiment,” 7.

istence of the Confederacy as fatally as either of the armies of the United States.”²¹

With the fall of Forts Donelson and Henry, and the subsequent advance of General Don Carlos Buell’s Army of the Ohio into a portion of North Alabama, the opportunity to cross into Federal lines finally presented itself. In July, 1862 “some 80 to 90 citizens from [Madison] county [sic] about 25 miles south have come in to enlist in our army.”²² Federal authorities then understood that additional recruits, prevented from joining the Union Army by Confederate cavalry and guerrillas, anticipated assistance from northern troops. U. S. Army forces began to organize expeditions to reach these potential recruits. By mid-July enough Alabamians had enlisted to warrant their being organized into companies. As other Alabamians learned of the formation of a loyal Alabama outfit, the number of refugees seeking Union lines swelled. By the fall of 1862, the number had grown to a regimental size. On 1 October 1862, the First Alabama Cavalry, U. S. A. received official designation at Huntsville, Alabama.²³

Union officers noted how Alabama unionists sought their lines because of Confederate coercion and conscription. General Grenville M. Dodge, responsible for forming the First Alabama, reported that “the rebel conscription is driving into our lines a large number of Union men... and men who have always stood by us and keep out of the rebel army by taking to the mountains.”²⁴ Colonel Abel D. Streight, who received many Alabamians into his lines,

reported on the deplorable conditions of these unionists stating that, “[w]hile in command at Decatur there were several small parties of loyal Alabamians who came into our lines begging me to give them protection and a chance to defend the flag of our country. The tale of suffering and misery as told by each as they arrived was in itself a lamentable history.”²⁵ Subsequently, Streight conducted a raid south of the Tennessee River in order to bring back additional recruits. After observing the condition of unionists firsthand, Streight reported how Confederate harassment had forced these Alabama men to join Union ranks “[s]urrounded by a most relentless foe, mostly unarmed and destitute of ammunition, they are persecuted in every conceivable way, yet up to this time most of them have kept out of the way sufficiently to avoid being dragged off by the gangs that infest the country for the purpose of plunder and enforcing the provisions of the rebel conscription act.”²⁶

Determined to avoid military service for a country they did not recognize, men of the First Alabama initially chose to either stay out of the way or to resist the Confederacy by organizing their own units. Finding themselves surrounded by well-armed and equally determined Confederate Home Guard and militia units, however, these men realized that they could not safely remain in their home districts. In contrast to their Confederate adversaries – men supplied and assisted by the state and Confederate government - loyalists of North Alabama felt isolated from supportive Federal forces. Hence, many preferred enlisting in the Federal Army over their former fugitive lifestyles.

The First Alabama Union troopers’ struggle did not

21 Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 221.

22 William Stanley Hoole, *Alabama Tories: The First Alabama Cavalry, U.S.A., 1862–1865* (Tuscaloosa, AL.: Confederate Printing Company, 1960), 21.

23 Ibid., 25.

24 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 1, vol. 21, part 1 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 256.

25 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 1, vol. 16, part 1 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 785.

26 Ibid., 789.

end once they found their way to the Union lines. Even after filing into the blue ranks, these Alabamians labored both to prove their commitment to the nation they loved and to the destruction of the state, which they did not acknowledge. If captured, they risked bitter retribution at the hands of Confederate enemies.²⁷ Furthermore, they had to leave family members behind enemy lines. These relatives and loved ones, stigmatized by having a relation in the U. S. Army, had the onerous task of confronting resentful Confederate authorities and paramilitary units.²⁸

Most surprisingly, members of the First Alabama Union Cavalry at the outset faced Federal officers who hesitated in placing faith in them and who did not ensure their being properly employed and furnished. From the beginning, reports indicate that the regiment did not receive adequate equipment, mounts, and even provisions. Some officers originally dismissed the Alabamians as opportunists who wanted to avoid Confederate conscription. Having deprived the Confederate Army of these fighting men, some Federal officers at first seemed satisfied to keep them out of the way.

Regardless of whether the regiment's initial lack of supplies revealed northern prejudice against southern unionists or whether it pointed to army inefficiency, the deficiency meant that the regiment in the beginning entered combat ill-prepared. Requisitions to supply the new Alabama men with Springfield rifles developed and Adjutant General J. M. Wright entreated that the rifles and full accouterments be sent without delay. This application

was made on 8 August 1862 for the original companies organized from the Alabama recruits.²⁹ Although records do not indicate the models ordered at this time, later communications suggest standard three-band infantry models rather than the more efficient and smaller cavalry models. While the shorter and lighter two-band and carbine model Springfield were designed for mounted troopers, the heavier infantry models proved cumbersome and awkward, if not impossible, to load and fire from a mount. This discrepancy in field arms also reflects the First Alabama's Cavalry actual combat role and the confusion caused by the designation "cavalry."

Although named "cavalry," the First Alabama in function and design fought as a mounted infantry unit. Cavalry, trained to ride and fight in unison and formation from horseback, differed from mounted infantry in both tactics and deployment. Although Civil War combat may have resembled earlier Napoleonic methods in many regards, the latter war is considered one of the first industrialized wars. The Napoleonic era musket, which in most respects resembled the Civil War Rifle, possessed an effective range of less than one hundred yards. Civil War era rifles were quite deadly and accurate at over three hundred yards and the horrific casualty statistics of the American conflict typifies the gap between early and late nineteenth century practices in warfare. The First Alabama Cavalry did not fight on horseback or train with sabers. Instead, the unit

“ SHERMAN, WHO OFTEN HELD HIS CAVALRY COMMANDS IN CONTEMPT AND SELDOM SUGARCOATED HIS APPRAISAL OF THEM, EXPLICITLY PRAISED THE FIRST ALABAMA FOR THEIR ACTIONS DURING HIS MARCH.

27 Denman, *The Secession Movement*, 149–53.

28 Bailey, "Disaffection in the Alabama," 183–93.

29 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 3, vol. 2 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 141, 161, 288; Hudson, "The First Regiment," 11.

was used as a fast deployment infantry unit. The horses allowed for swift deployment but remained behind the lines as the regiment advanced and fought on foot. Every third man stayed behind the front line of combat and held the reigns of three horses.³⁰ Although designated cavalry, the First Alabama soldier experienced combat as an infantry soldier. The term “cavalry,” then, along with the dissimilar function of the First Alabama as infantry soldiers might explain the confusion in requisitioning. The three-band Springfield, nevertheless, proved inappropriate for all mounted troopers whether cavalry or mounted infantry.

At the conclusion of his 1863 campaign in North Alabama, Brigadier General Grenville Dodge reassuringly reported that his men had conducted themselves bravely. Of particular interest is the general’s account of his cavalry’s performance. In his official report, Dodge exhibited complete satisfaction in the role of his troopers and remarked that “the fighting of the cavalry was excellent. The First Alabama...did themselves credit; they invariably drove the enemy, no matter what their force.”³¹ The First Alabama’s regimental report of 19th April both complemented the regiment’s usefulness and complained about their lack of proper equipment. The regiment’s newly appointed commander, Colonel Moses M. Bane noted his Alabamians were “very efficient” but operated “improperly armed” with weapons “unfit for this branch of service.”³²

Dodge’s particular contentment in the First Alabama possibly encouraged his assistant Adjutant General, the future U. S. Senator George E.



Colonel George E. Spencer. Courtesy of Glenda Todd and www.1stalabamacavalryusv.com

Spencer, to seek command of the regiment. In July 1863, General Spencer officially requested command of the First Alabama Cavalry. Spencer became Colonel of the regiment on 11 September 1863. After Spencer’s appointment as Colonel, confidence in the regiment rose to the highest levels of command and communications indicate the First Alabama now possessed proper equipment. General Stephen A. Hurlbut informed General Ulysses S. Grant that the First Alabama could be depended on. The General commented that “Colonel Spencer’s regiment have been in several engagements and behaved well. They are thoroughly acquainted with the country, well mounted and armed.”³³ The First Alabama encountered both set-

30 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion*, vol. 2, pp. 288; Francis A. Lord’s *Civil War Collector’s Encyclopedia*, vols. 1 and 2 (Edison, NJ: Blue and Grey Press, 1995), 247.

31 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 1, XXIII, vol. 1 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 250.

32 Hoole, *Alabama Tories*, 28.

33 United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compi-*

backs and success before receiving the attention of Major General John Alexander Logan. General Logan reported that “they have shown themselves very useful men. . . They are the best scouts I ever saw, and know the country well clear to Montgomery.”³⁴ General Logan’s men referred to their commanding general as “Blackjack,” a nickname instigated by Logan’s dark eyes and hair. During the U. S. Army’s march through Georgia the First Alabama served in General Logan’s Army of the Tennessee under the combined command of General William Tecumseh Sherman.³⁵

Perhaps Logan’s appraisal of the First Alabama Union Cavalry first arrested Sherman’s attention, for during his March to the Sea Sherman chose a portion of the First Alabama as his personal escort and bodyguard. The men of the First Alabama, by the summer of 1864 at full strength and well-seasoned, confirmed their growing reputation as a fighting unit during



Major General John Alexander Logan. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Sherman’s campaign through Georgia and the Carolinas. Sherman, who often held his cavalry commands in contempt and seldom sugarcoated his appraisal of them, explicitly praised the First Alabama for their actions during his march. The commanding General recorded his pleasure and gratitude for the successful scouting operations of “Spencer’s First Alabama Cavalry,” which “could feel the country south of Rome” and “report the movements of the enemy.”³⁶ Sherman’s Alabamians assisted in protecting his supply line from Nashville to Atlanta. In referring to these protective units, the general gave an uncharacteristically grandiose tribute when he recorded: “I doubt whether the history of war can furnish more examples of skill and bravery than attended the defense of the

railroad from Nashville to Atlanta during the year 1864.”³⁷

Following the army’s crossing into North Carolina, the First Alabama received their greatest challenge of the war. At a location now remembered for “the Battle of Monroe’s Crossroads” the First Alabama, surprised and encamped, withstood a massive Confederate Cavalry assault. The sudden attack panicked Federal Cavalry Com-

lation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series 1, vol. 4 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 118–19.

³⁴ United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 1, vol. 1 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), 128.

³⁵ Hoole, *Alabama Tories*, 37.

³⁶ William Tecumseh Sherman, *Sherman: Memoirs of W. T. Sherman* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1990), 627–28.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 627.



General William Tecumseh Sherman with General Staff, General John “Blackjack” Logan is seated on the far left next to General Sherman. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

mander Judson Kilpatrick, for whom Sherman held little regard, and he swiftly left his mistress’s side. Kilpatrick, referred to as “Kill-cavalry” by those questioning his ability and tactics, hid in a swamp in his underwear until his self-possession returned. The General’s actions gave the battle another lesser-known moniker – “Kilpatrick’s Shirt-tail Skedaddle.” The planned attempt by Confederate troops to capture Kilpatrick failed when the General ran through and among mounted Confederates unable to recognize the commander without his insignia.

At Monroe’s Crossroads the First Alabama Regiment, outnumbered and attacked while sleeping in the early dawn, initially gave ground in the vicious struggle. Hand-to-hand fighting lasted for an extended period. Credited with turning the tide of the battle, First Alabama troopers finally received assistance from the 5th Kentucky

and the 5th Ohio regiments. Armed with repeating Spencer rifles, the Alabama soldiers established a defensive line and offered the first effective resistance to the Confederate strike. With the Confederate Cavalry at length driven off, a stunned but victorious First Alabama Cavalry began the process of tending to the wounded and the slow and tedious restoration of a demolished camp. Later, the outnumbered Alabamians realized the Confederate attack included three divisions of Confederate Cavalry.³⁸ The combined commands of General Joseph Wheeler and General Wade Hampton, in literally the concluding moments of the Civil War, elicited for many First Alabama Veterans a lifetime of nightmares and post-traumatic stress. This battle, the last large clash of cavalry during the Civil War, cemented the fighting reputation of the First Alabama. The Battle of Monroe’s Crossroad’s - a battle virtually unknown and unexplored in modern historical studies, even within the field of Civil War History – might inspire modern literature and cine-

ma just as other comparable battles had it taken place even a few weeks earlier. Within a month of the battle, the war ended. Lost in the celebration, grief, pain and liberation of the war’s end, Monroe’s Crossroads is memorialized today only by a simple statue and the nameless graves of the men who fell. First Alabama survivors never forgot it.

Members of the First Alabama Union Cavalry returned, after the war, to their native state to face feud-style hostilities which did not end with Appomattox. Familial and clannish clashes in the Hill Counties of Alabama – much of it taking place during the soldiers’ absence expressed both historical and hereditary structures. One’s partisanship, at least to a demonstrable degree, depended

38 Edward Gardner, *William H. and John Gardner: Civil War Service* (unpublished manuscript in the author’s possession).



Confederate Markers in Shady Grove Cemetery.
Photo by author.

on ancestral legacy.³⁹ North Alabama – like other politically and socially divided regions of the Confederacy – experienced an evolution of sentiment during the war. Pre – war Jacksonian political ideology espousing traditional American two–party politics collided with, or symbiotically existed with, sectional identification and Constitutional understanding according to lineage. North Alabamians’ political interpretation and understanding hardened during the war, hence First Alabama troopers banded together both for support and for protection in the years following the conflict. These variously named “loyalists,” “unionists,” or “tories” returned to the South which they loved, but which did not love them, to live lives within the republic they helped to preserve.

For the returning veterans of the Civil War the combat, at least, had ceased. Both sides, Confederate as well as Union veterans, put away rifles and retired warhorses in

order to take up the plow and harness the mule. Those who fought in the armies of the United States and those who fought in the armies of the Confederate States experienced a belly–full of violence in the most destructive conflict ever waged in North America. Those in blue returning to eastern Winston County in North Alabama lived alongside those who retired gray uniforms.

Many veterans of the First Alabama congregated in a sparsely settled region of eastern Winston County and proudly announced their wartime affiliation by eventually establishing a community named after their favorite general, John “Blackjack” Logan. The Speegles returned and when young this author purchased fishing gear from “Speegle’s Store.” The Guthries returned and the crossroads near Smith Lake is still named “Guthrie’s Crossroads.” The Nesmiths came home and would be ancestor to one of Cullman County’s mayors. The Gardners,



Marker, burial site of Richard McCain. Photo by author.

³⁹ Margaret Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 34–41, 162–63, 232–33.

and the Tidwells, whose descendants graduated from high school with this author all came home to resume civic life. For the soldiers, the fighting was mostly finished. The outnumbered Confederates had put up a “Hell-of-a-fight,” and both sides recognized it. In the new municipality of Logan, veterans of both sides cooperated in creating a community. First Alabama veteran Richard McCain donated a hilltop for the building of a Methodist Church. Church attendees included both Federal and Confederate veterans. The churchyard cemetery contains the remains of both blue and gray soldiers. Confederate and Federal veterans worked as neighbors and sat in the same pews at the newly constructed Shady Grove Church.

For those remaining on the home front, on the other hand, the bitterness was still sour. Feud-style retribution continued long after the war. Murders and atrocities continued as families, instilled with a desire for revenge, long remembered wartime sufferings. Perhaps the frontier proximity to the Native American idea of “crying blood” encouraged family members to take justice into their own hands. For the American Indian, clan retaliation had in the past been an assumed responsibility. The feud-like mentality of frontier yeoman was not the creation of Hollywood’s Jose Wales, the historic Hatfields and the McCoys, Jeremiah Johnson or Jesse James. Although differing from Native clan retaliation, which did not necessarily represent biological relation, feud mentality was a reality for many families in North Alabama and elsewhere in what was then the frontier. For the soldiers, at least, the extreme violence of battle was over.

Richard McCain’s company mate, George Kilgo, preached at the still standing Shady Grove Methodist Church. Both are men from Company I and each acted as personal escorts to General Sherman himself. They are buried atop Shady Grove Hill, very near one another and surrounded by loved ones. The hilltop church and cem-



Marker, burial site of George W. Kilgo. Photo by author.

etery is beautiful today and the building refurbished and preserved as an historic site. Immigrant Germans, led by “Colonel” John Cullman established a much larger town nearby and the residents of Logan – once Winston County – now reside in Cullman County. If you drive through, do not look for Speegle’s Tackle for it has long been closed. If you pass Guthrie’s crossroads, on the other hand, you can still visit the small Shady Grove Church.

Logan, a remnant of and a microcosmic study in Civil War-era unionism, became a center and gathering place for veterans of the First Alabama Union Cavalry. In September 1912, living veterans and their families gathered at Shady Grove Church and the grounds around it for a reunion of the First Alabama Cavalry. At the reunion, Richard McCain spoke of humorous incidents of camp and service life. A cornet band opened the festivities and veterans, blue and gray, stretched out for a dinner on the grounds of the Church. The acting and then still living First Alabama Commander W. A. Nesmith, who lived just

south of Logan at Livingston Chapel, attended.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ W. A. Nesmith and George Hoenig, “Logan Entertains Federal Soldiers.” *Cullman (Alabama) Tribune*, September 19, 1912.

Beyond The Whipping Post: The Judicial Sanctioning of Cruel and Unusual Punishment in Atmore Prison 1964-August 28, 1975

by John David Russell

Your Honor, the Defendants in this case, the Alabama Board of Corrections and several of its officers, rest their case at this time. They rest their case based upon the amended complaints filed and upon the overwhelming majority of the evidence, which shows that an Eighth Amendment violation (cruel and unusual punishment) has and is now occurring to inmates in the Alabama Prison System.

-Larry Yackle, *Reform and Regret*¹

THUS ENDED the state of Alabama's defense of its prison system before Federal District Judge Frank M. Johnson on August 28, 1975 in Montgomery, Alabama. With this brief declaration, spoken by attorney Robert S. Lamar, and at the direction of state Attorney General William (Bill) Baxley, the case of *Pugh v. Locke* brought the horrific conditions of Alabama's prison infrastructure, the people who ran it, and the state's elected representatives from darkness to light.²

Attorneys, such as Bobby Segall and Cumberland Law School Dean John Carroll, as well as journalists Bill Moyers, Frank Sikora, and Jack Bass have written articles and given interviews characterizing Judge Frank Johnson and Attorney General Bill Baxley as heroic and coura-

geous men for the manner in which they dealt with the state prison crisis in 1975-76. Their characterization of Johnson and Baxley created images of men, who, when made aware of the barbarism taking place in the Alabama prison system, swiftly put a stop to it while other officials turned a blind eye.³

A closer examination of facts, however, shows that Johnson's and Baxley's role in these events is mischaracterized. While both men claimed to have had no knowledge of just how horrifying prison conditions were until the testimony elicited in *Pugh v. Locke*, facts belie the assertion that neither Baxley nor Johnson knew the condition of Alabama's prisons. In spite of evidence to the contrary, they claimed to have been unaware of the degree of barbarism taking place inside Alabama's prisons. In fact, it is doubtful that any other individuals in Alabama had greater access to information about conditions within the Alabama prison system than did Baxley and Johnson. Furthermore, both of them failed to take action when initially confronted with the conditions of Alabama's prison system. Their unique actions and failures actually aggravated prison conditions. This is not to imply that they dictated policy to the

¹ Larry Yackle, *Reform and Regret* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 14.

² Ibid.

³ John Carroll was former Dean of Cumberland Law School. Bobby Segall is a practicing attorney with Copeland Franco in Montgomery, AL. Bill Moyers was press secretary for President Lyndon B. Johnson. Frank Sikora is the author of the book *The Judge: The Life and Opinions of Frank M. Johnson*. Jack Bass is the author of the book *Taming the Storm: the Life and Times of Frank Johnson*; Rick Harmon, "Prisons in Peril-Alabama Trial had Huge Impact," *The Montgomery Advertiser*, September 15, 2013.



Judge Frank Johnson, seated at his desk, 1966. Photo courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

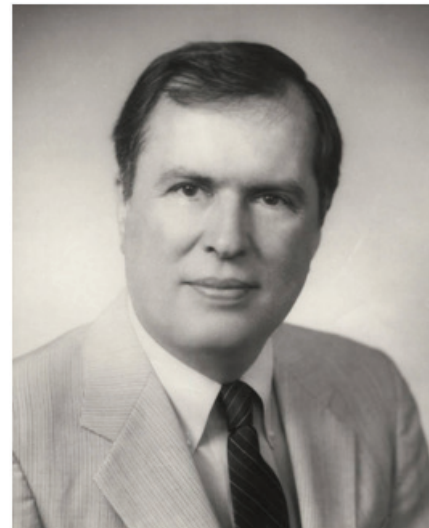
state Board of Corrections. This is to claim that there exists a record of actions (or inactions), prior to *Pugh v. Locke*, deliberately intended to establish a judicial and legal defensive perimeter around the Board of Corrections as to allow it to act without fear of restraint from the courts. With their intrinsic and unique knowledge of the prison system, Baxley and Johnson certainly knew that an unrestrained, underfunded, and overwhelmed Alabama Board of Corrections was tantamount to allowing anarchy within the prison's walls. Furthermore, Johnson and Baxley's actions gave judicial sanction to torture.

The I.F.A. Cries For Relief

As far back as 1969, five years before the *Pugh* case, a group of inmates - later known as the I.F.A. (Inmates for Action) - filed in Judge Johnson's court claims identical to those brought forth in the Jerry Lee Pugh case.

In each instance, Johnson either declined to hear I.F.A.'s complaints, dismissed them, or ruled against their claims. In one rare occurrence, Johnson partially ruled in I.F.A.'s favor. However, despite his favorable decision, Johnson expressed his dislike for the I.F.A. stating: "Most of the named plaintiffs in this suit are troublemakers..."⁴

Baxley could plausibly claim ignorance, and certainly no rational basis for responsibility, until 1971 when his term as Alabama's attorney general began. From January 1971 forward, it was Baxley's responsibility to represent the state against claims brought by the I.F.A. as well as any other prisoner. Logically, as attorney general, Baxley would have had knowledge of prison conditions if he were to mount an effective defense on behalf of the state. However, he was not content to be merely an informed attorney



Attorney General Bill Baxley, 1983. Photo courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

⁴ Judge Frank M. Johnson, "The Plaintiffs are Troublemakers," *Diamond v. Thompson*, U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama, 364 F. Supp., 659, July 30, 1973, 668.

general. As will be shown, Baxley went farther than previous attorney generals by personally prosecuting members of the I.F.A. Baxley, while state attorney general, personally stood before a jury and argued in favor of executing I.F.A. member Johnny Harris on March 1, 1975 in Bay Minette, Alabama.

Jerry Lee Pugh

While the I.F.A. received no relief and only scorn from the courts, Jerry Lee Pugh experienced a starkly different outcome. Pugh, a white ninth-grade dropout from Mattoon, Illinois, joined the U.S. Army in August 10, 1964, serving as a combat engineer. He received a dishonorable discharge in February 8, 1968, and moved to the Dothan area in Alabama where he bounced around to a dozen different jobs until incarcerated on a parole violation on May 30, 1973 (stemming from a 1969 case out of Houston County, Alabama).⁵

On July 20, 1973, Pugh arrived at Atmore Prison, and was assigned to dormitory number two, which housed over two hundred inmates though it was only designed for eighty. Pugh was one of only twenty-seven white inmates. After having been at Atmore for about three days, Pugh became aware of the tensions between white and black inmates. Bearing witness to the numerous and diverse weapons inmates held in their possession, Pugh requested, yet was denied, a transfer to a dormitory housing a higher percentage of white prisoners. The guards cited, among other reasons, a federal desegregation order as a reason for the denial.⁶

⁵ No mention is made of Pugh's underlying case. Jerry Lee Pugh, "Deposition," filed Dec. 19, 1974, *Pugh v. Locke*, accs. #021900016, vol. 5, box. 2, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

⁶ Ibid.

Less than a month later, on August 8, 1973, at approximately 7:30 p.m., a fight erupted within the dorm with the full involvement of all 200 prisoners. The fight was, regrettably, nothing out of the ordinary at Atmore. Prisoners used steel bars and knives, ranging from one to three feet long, as well as ax handles and tomahawks as weapons. Of the casualties requiring hospitalization, Jerry Lee Pugh was the last to leave because it took several hours to find him. Most prisoners thought he was already dead and had stuffed what they thought to be his corpse under a mattress for fear of indictment for his murder.

Pugh arrived at Mobile General Hospital in the early morning hours of August 9, 1973, suffering from a fractured skull, broken arm, a knife wound across his back, left arm, left clavicle, and skull. Doctors advised that Pugh undergo surgery in six to eight months to have a plate placed in his skull to fill the void left by the removal of skull fragments.

After release from the hospital, Pugh wrote several letters from prison attempting to enlist personal assistance as well as assure his safety. One of Pugh's letters arrived on the desk of Judge Frank M. Johnson. Judge Johnson appointed one of his former law clerks, attorney Bobby Segall, to represent Pugh. Segall, at Johnson's direction, filed in Johnson's court the case of *Pugh V. Locke* as a platform to advocate on behalf of all prisoners housed in the Alabama prison system. Segall's argument rested on the belief that the state of Alabama was not fulfilling its obligation to provide prisoner safety, medical care, food, clothing, and shelter.⁷

The conditions described in the case of inmate *Jerry*

⁷ There was also another case consolidated into the Pugh case, *Worley James v. Judson C. Locke*. James claim differed from Pugh's in that he claimed a duty from the state of Alabama to rehabilitate him while Pugh made no such claims. Laughlin McDonald, "A Decade of Litigation a Southern Devil's Island," *Southern Changes* 12, no.2 (1990): 18

Lee Pugh v. Commissioner Judson C. Locke should not have surprised anyone. As mentioned earlier, the I.F.A. had previously petitioned the clergy, the governor, the legislature, the courts, the press, and even the League of Women Voters, in an effort to improve conditions within prisons and jails.⁸ Based on information in the public domain alone, Johnson and Baxley should have known prison conditions were in clear and present violation of every incarcerated American citizen's right against cruel and unusual punishment. For Johnson and Baxley to know nothing, would mean that they had never watched local Montgomery television and had never picked up a copy of the *Montgomery Advertiser* newspaper. In 1973, no more than three weeks went by before a stabbing or a killing occurred inside of Alabama's prisons.

An Alabama Prisoner's Life 1964-1975: Intake

The humiliation, degradation, and abuse began at intake. Mt. Meigs, near Montgomery, was the infirmary and intake reception. New prisoners would enter the compound and move to the quarantine area. Prisoners would stand in a long line and strip naked as the guards yelled the rules while conducting body cavity searches. Prisoners then deposited their civilian clothes in an incinerator on the way to the shower. Before showering, guards sprayed



Plaintiff Jerry Lee Pugh speaks to his attorney Bobby Segall prior to his 1975 trial. Courtesy of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

the prisoners with a carcinogenic disinfectant called DDT.⁹ After the shower, prisoners received their new clothes and returned to quarantine for at least three weeks. Prisoners could not send or receive mail during quarantine. The only thing provided to the prisoners during this period was the inmate's handbook. The handbook cautioned against hanging out with troublemakers, but also strongly emphasized the perils of associating with "jailhouse lawyers".¹⁰ A prisoner giving legal assistance to another prisoner was subject to disciplinary write-up. A prisoner that filed a complaint, or raised a grievance, went into administrative segregation - otherwise known as solitary confinement - a

⁸ F. B. League, *Preliminary study by the Joint Committee of the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham and the American Civil Liberties Union Greater Birmingham on the Birmingham branch of the Jefferson County Jail and the Birmingham City Jail* (Birmingham, 1973), 1-32.

⁹ Clancy Lake, *Clancy Lake's 60 Days Inside Alabama's World Behind Bars* (Birmingham: Hanson, 1959), 12.

¹⁰ State of Alabama, *Inmate Handbook*, Jan. 1, 1964 *Lake v. Lee*, accs. #02175B705, boxes 90-92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

practice continued within Alabama's prison system until approximately 2013.¹¹

Permanent Housing

Following quarantine, prisoners received their permanent housing assignments. Atmore-Holman in Escambia County maintained a decades-old reputation as being the facility housing the toughest and roughest. Once prisoners rolled through the gates of Atmore-Holman, they settled into their assigned dormitory. Atmore's dormitories were designed to hold approximately eighty people, but by the late 1960's, and during the case of Jerry Lee Pugh, two hundred was the accepted norm. The dorms contained no air conditioning, and the only windows were mostly broken at the top of a high ceiling unreachable by prisoners. In the cold months, there was little in the way of heat. There were multiple toilets, but the plumbing was in such disrepair that, upon flushing the toilet, the dorm would frequently flood causing enormous agitation from those prisoners who, due to overcrowding, slept on the floor near the toilet. Prisoner testimony in *Pugh v. Locke* described rats the size of small cats. The rats no longer feared humans and walked through the dorm as if they were a household pet.¹²

Prisoners, guards, and administration cautioned newly arriving prisoners to be ready for physical attack and sexual assault. The warden's advice to new prisoners was to get a knife from another prisoner and learn to fight. Prisoners begged the guards for protection, but the guards

did not see it as their obligation to assure the safety of prisoners and recommended following the warden's advice to find a knife.¹³ At 6:00 p.m. every night, guards locked all prisoners inside their dorm and remained outside until 5:00 a.m. the next morning. A guard would stand outside the locked door, but he was under strict orders not to go inside the dorm. It was not safe to enter.

Alabama employed the "trusty system", the creation of Huey Long of Louisiana.¹⁴ In its most simple form,

“ BAXLEY AND JOHNSON CERTAINLY KNEW THAT AN UNRESTRAINED, UNDERFUNDED, AND OVERWHELMED ALABAMA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS WAS TANTAMOUNT TO ALLOWING ANARCHY WITHIN THE PRISON'S WALLS.

the "trusty system" consisted of armed prisoners guarding prisoners. If trouble occurred inside the dorms during the night, or any other time, it was the trusty's job to break up the fight. Inside the dorms, and on the field crew, the trusty assured order and discipline within the convict population. Trustees carried with them a pick handle and a knife. If a worker on a field crew was moving slow, the trusty would beat him on the guard's order. The trusty system reduced labor costs, since one guard could direct three trustees in the fields, and each trusty could control about twenty prisoners.

Statistics from Atmore-Holman, entered into evi-

¹¹ Mike Cason, "Alabama Prison Commissioner Releases Report on Problems, Improvement Steps at Tutwiler," accessed Nov. 4, 2015, http://blog.al.com/montgomery/2013/01/alabama_prison_commissioner_re.html.

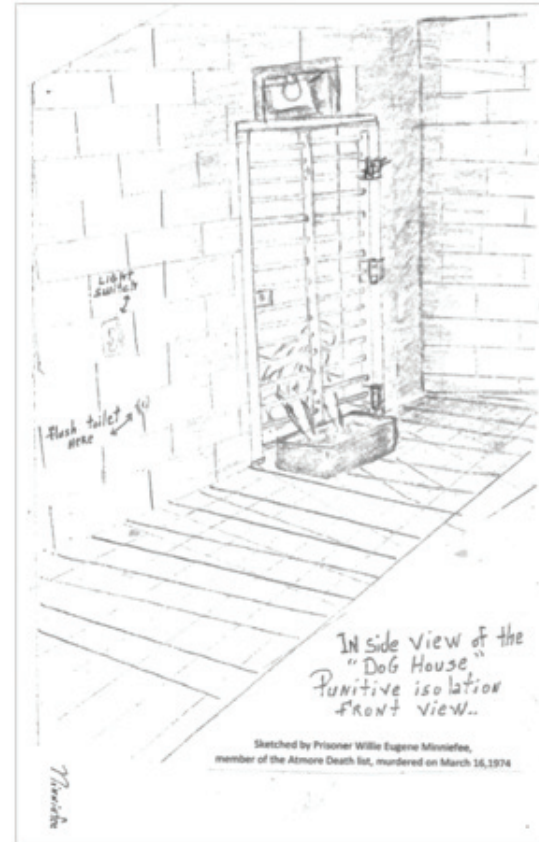
¹² Charles Sarder, Trial Testimony, Aug. 21, 1975., *Pugh v. Locke*, acs.#021900016, vol. 5, box. 2, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

¹³ Interview with inmate Roosevelt Youngblood Jr. and Pugh's attorney Alvin Bronstein, Stephanie Hoops, "Doin' Hard Time: State's Longest Serving Inmate has Witnessed Change, and Tragedy," *Tuscaloosa News*, May 12, 2002.

¹⁴ John Vodicka, "Prison Plantation," *Still Life* 6, no.4 (1978): 31.

dence during the *Pugh v. Locke* case, were staggering. Atmore-Holman housed about one thousand eight hundred inmates, though it was designed for less than one thousand. During a twelve month period, from 1971 to 1972, there were fourteen inmate-on-inmate killings: ten from stabbing, three violent deaths listed as unknown, and one from strangulation. Statistics showed that a prisoner sentenced to two years had as high a probability to being killed inside the prison, as a soldier fighting in Viet Nam.¹⁵

The prison doctor assigned to Atmore-Holman gave testimony at the *Pugh v. Locke* trial that he treated at least fifty sexual assault victims per week.¹⁶ Sexually transmitted diseases were so numerous that the infirmary was constantly in short supply of medication. One figure suggested that three out of four prisoners engaged in homosexual intercourse, by force or consent, on a consistent basis.¹⁷ Strangely enough, the prison psychologist found nothing worrisome in this practice, because once these prisoners went back to regular society, they would return to being heterosexual.¹⁸ The true number of sexual assaults was, likely, much higher, because many went unreported by prisoners who did not want to be ridiculed by fellow inmates and the administration.



Front View of the “doghouse.” Sketched by Prisoner Willie Eugene Minniefee, murdered March 16, 1974.
Courtesy of Atlanta Federal Records Center.

The “Doghouse” And The End Of The Whipping Post

Though the conditions for the general prison population were horrific, and apparently known to virtually everyone but Judge Frank Johnson and Attorney General Bill Baxley, the tales from punitive isolation provided the

most gruesome testimony in the case of *Pugh v. Locke*, even though Jerry Lee Pugh never spent a night in punitive isolation (also known as the prison “doghouse”). The “doghouse” had been around for years but was seldom used, because it was far less humane than lashes with the whip. Reform minded legislation, that took effect in the late 1940’s, however, banned the lash and whipping post, except in juvenile facilities. Reformers did not realize that the elimination of the whip actually caused more harm, because the “doghouse” became, by default, the means

15 <http://www.americanwarlibrary.com/vietnam/vwatl.htm>, accessed May, 10, 2016.

16 Hoops, “Doin’ Hard Time.”

17 Sandra Baxley, “Harsh Realities of Prison Life” *Mobile Press Register*, June 11, 1973.

18 Ibid..

to punish inmates. Prisoners often stated that the whip scarred the body whereas the “doghouse” scarred the soul. A “doghouse” prisoner’s sentence ranged anywhere from one to twenty one days at a time.

Between the late 1940’s and August 28, 1975, “doghouse” prisoners entered a room measuring approximately forty-eight square feet with cinder block walls and a concrete floor. In the middle of the cell, a hole served as a toilet with no way to flush from the inside of the cell. Years of poor sanitation had left the “doghouse” floor with a one-inch mixture of dirt, urine, and excrement. Prisoners were thrown into the “doghouse” either fully nude or, at the most, with a pair of boxer shorts.¹⁹ No blankets were allowed regardless of the season, even when the temperature dipped down below thirty-two degrees. Prisoner meals consisted of a small square of cornbread one time a day, five days per week, and three cups of water daily. Prisoners received one full meal on Mondays and Fridays, served on paper plates, but with no utensils with which to eat. When the solid steel door shut to the “doghouse,” it was pitch black. For twenty-one days, the only time a prisoner would see light was when he received his water and cornbread.

Prisoner complaints stated that as many as thirty people at a time occupied a cell, whereas the administration settled on a number of twenty at a time. From an analysis of Atmore-Holman records, it appears “doghouse” residents, with the exception of one or two, were all Negro. The prisoners were packed in so tight in the darkness, that they had to spend most of their twenty-one days in the “doghouse” either standing up, sitting down, or curled up in a fetal position, because of lack of space.

Administrative segregation, another type of punitive isolation, was less harsh and consisted of confinement

in a 9 x 5 cell for an indefinite time. Unlike “doghouse” prisoners, prisoners in administrative confinement did have a bunk to sleep on, along with one blanket. Most of the cells did not have a toilet, so a slop bucket had to suffice.²⁰ Unlike their counterparts in the “doghouse,” prisoners in administrative segregation did receive light. Guards were supposed to let them out of their cell once every eleven days, but this occurred only on rare occasions. They did receive three meals a day. There were no maximum occupancy rules, but they generally were two-man cells. As far as the term “indefinite” goes, ten years in administrative segregation was nothing out of the ordinary.

The Road Camp Era 1928-1964

The question arises: “How did things get so out of control?” Most research concerning the *Pugh v. Locke* litigation has focused on the horrific prison system being a function of two intertwined factors - overcrowding and profit. The idea that prisoners should be a profit for the state, not an expense to it, went all the way back to the convict lease system. When the era of the convict lease system ended in 1928, the era of the road camp began.²¹ While the termination of the convict lease system heralded the end of the prison system as a guaranteed profit center, the eighteen road camps scattered throughout Alabama assured citizens that the prison system had, at least, the potential to be self-sustaining and not a liability to the state. The lease of prisoners to the state’s Highway Department brought in an excess of one million dollars per year to the Board of Corrections.

The road camp design of eighty prisoners per

¹⁹ Willie Beard, “Deposition,” filed May 31, 1969, *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box. 90-92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Legislation to end convict leasing passed in 1924, but was not to take effect until 1928; Lake, *Clancy Lake’s 60*, 1-60.

camp, versus seven hundred at the maximum security “walled” prisons at Kilby, Atmore, and Draper, allowed for the implementation of policies and procedures, otherwise not allowed by the state of Alabama, that contributed to civility and safety.²² Most road camp captains allowed conjugal visits, reducing violence to almost nil. Additionally, the road camps recycled all the glass and aluminum found on the road and disbursed profits, in equal shares, back to the inmates. A testament to the safety and security within the road camp was the fact that young men newly hired by the state highway department frequently lived in a road camp to save money.²³ Because road camps offered conjugal visits, and a chance for prisoners to make a little money while incarcerated, they had a lower recidivism rate than walled prisons.

In spite of the cost efficiency and rehabilitative aspects of the road camp, it had two major liabilities. First, it was dependent on the willing partnership of the State Highway Department. As already mentioned, the State Highway Department was paying the Board of Corrections over one million dollars a year for prison labor. If the Highway Department decided to pull the plug, then the Board of Corrections could not exist without that money coming in.

The other liability was security. Road camps suffered numerous prisoner escapes. In order to address these two liabilities, beginning in the early 1960’s, the Board of Corrections devised a plan to bring prisoners behind the walls, thereby assigning Negro prisoners to the Atmore

prison farm and White prisoners to the Kilby and Draper manufacturing centers. The plan never materialized, because the Board of Corrections could not part with the million dollar of yearly revenue generated from the Highway Department’s lease, which accounted for about one-fourth of the department’s budget. Additionally, the manufacturing facilities at Kilby and Draper were obsolete, and there was no money to modernize the equipment.

The road camp’s ultimate demise came as a result of public outrage over prisoners’ escapes.

Two unrelated escapes at opposite ends of the state, in June 1964, amplified the public’s displeasure with the road camp model, causing an already bad situation to rapidly worsen. The first escape took place on June 15, 1964, when Johnny Beecher, serving a 10-year sentence for rape in Clarke County, escaped from a road crew in Stevenson, North Alabama. Beecher subsequently raped and strangled pregnant, newlywed Martha Jane Chisenall leaving her bound and lifeless body underneath a pile of leaves behind her house.²⁴

The second incident involved Ben T. Mathis serving a ten-year sentence, out of Montgomery County, for killing a Negro woman. He escaped from the Enterprise road camp in South Alabama five days after Beecher, on June 20, 1964. Mathis got drunk, broke into the house of senior couple Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Edward Morgan and killed both of them. Mathis stabbed Mr. Morgan one hundred eleven times.²⁵ These two events signaled the end of the road camp and the beginning of overcrowding and

“ THE WARDEN’S ADVICE TO NEW PRISONERS WAS TO GET A KNIFE FROM ANOTHER PRISONER AND LEARN TO FIGHT.

22 Wetumpka was referred to as “the walls;” Yackle, *Reform and Regret*, Preface.

23 Charles Walker, interviewe by author, Springville, AL, September 18, 2015.

24 *Beecher v. State*, 193 So. 2d 505, Court of Criminal Appeals of Alabama, 1966.

25 *Ben Mathis v. State*, 189 So 2d 564, Court of Criminal Appeals of Alabama, 1966.

budget shortfalls.

year sentence.²⁷

Richard E. Lake Jr. and the I.F.A. in 1969

As mentioned earlier, before *Pugh v. Locke*, Judge Johnson heard the case of *Richard E. Lake v. Prison Commissioner Frank Lee*. To Judge Johnson, Richard Lake Jr. embodied the meaning of the word “troublemaker” since they first had crossed paths in 1969. To prisoners within Alabama, past and present, Richard Lake Jr. is the founding member of the I.F.A. Born in 1940 to Richard Sr. and Alma Lake, Richard Jr. grew up near Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. His father worked downtown for Morris Sher selling clothes and furniture, primarily on layaway or in-house credit.²⁶

Richard Jr. was brilliant, fearless, and not afraid of the police. He caught the attention of the Birmingham Police in 1953 when he was arrested for robbery at age thirteen. A Birmingham Police index card listed him as being sixteen, thereby making him more likely to receive certification as an adult. Evidence suggests that he did a short stint at a juvenile hall in Mt. Meigs near Montgomery on a larceny charge at age thirteen.

In May of 1960, Clifton Waldrop from the Star Gas Station claimed that Lake robbed him. Lake refused the offer of a three-year plea and went to trial with Orzell Billings as his defense lawyer. Even though the prosecution presented only one witness, while Lake’s defense presented in excess of fifteen witnesses, Lake still lost the trial. Jefferson County Circuit Court Judge Alta King meted out a ten-year sentence that did ultimately turn into a thirteen-



Current Picture of Richard Lake.

Lake began his sentence at the Hamilton road camp, but within six months he was transferred to Decatur and, later, to the Cullman road camp. He escaped from the Cullman camp in April 1961, fleeing to Detroit, Michigan, where he remained free for twenty-one days. He was captured and brought back to road captain W.O. Dees. This misadventure, however, sent Lake to Atmore prison’s administrative segregation where he would remain for the next twelve-years, entering into general population for only brief periods every two to four years.

Lake, not being content with either his conviction or condition, chose to ignore the inmate handbook’s warning about the dangers for troublemakers and jailhouse

²⁶ “Trial testimony,” *Richard E. Lake Jr. v State*, 6 Div. 457, Appellate Opinion 1985, Alabama Department of Archives and History, R-207, Montgomery, AL.

²⁷ Birmingham Police Department Inter-Office Communication, June 27, 1960, File 1125.1.3, Birmingham Police Department Surveillance Files from 1955-1980, Birmingham Public Library Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Birmingham, AL.

lawyers. Lake wrote letters, and recruited other prisoners to write letters, to people in the outside world asking for help. Lake formed a small alliance of prisoners petitioning the Catholic Church, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), numerous Universities, and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Richard Lake studied Fredrick Neitzsche, Aristotle, and Thomas Paine. He also taught himself calculus in his cell. The administration resented the influx of books and, subsequently, confiscated all his books, paper, and pens citing a threat to the security of the institution. Security threats were defined according to the opinion of the warden and were subject to indefinite confinement without explanation.²⁸

As previously mentioned, Lake lobbied the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund to petition the courts to end the "doghouse," modify administrative segregation, and improve general population long before the *Pugh v. Locke* case. NAACP's Legal Defense Fund responded to his requests by hiring U. W. Clemmon to file a case in the Middle District of Alabama on May 31, 1969, before federal Judge Frank M. Johnson. The case was *Lake v. Lee* and sought certification, as a class, to end some practices and improve conditions in the Alabama prison system, just as *Pugh v. Locke* would do six years later. Right after filing in Judge Johnson's court, attorney general Macdonald Gallion was granted a change of venue from Judge Johnson's court in Montgomery to Judge Virgil Pittman's in Mobile. Judge Johnson never explained why he chose to punt the *Lake* case, yet chose to hold onto *Pugh v. Locke*. Had he held onto the *Lake* case, he could have issued the same order six years earlier and, most likely, saved well in excess of eighty lives.

Mobile Judge Virgil Pitman took jurisdiction of

the case *Lake v. Lee* from Judge Johnson. In spite of his being in administrative segregation, Lake worked tirelessly in preparation for the case. Lake and his fellow prisoners compiled the statements of over two hundred witnesses to testify to the charges in the complaint. Lake gathered and kept meticulous notes, in spite of the fact that the only thing he had to write with was a smuggled stub of a pencil and a few pieces of toilet paper. He accomplished all of this while never leaving his cell.²⁹

The case was doomed before it started when on June 1, 1970, Judge Pittman consolidated Lake's case into four other cases, because of what he believed were similarities between them.³⁰ Now, rather than having Judge Pittman's undivided attention with regard to matters pertaining to Richard E. Lake Jr.'s case, U. W. Clemmon would have to share the stage with several other attorneys. Because the consolidated case included three sub-cases, Judge Pittman limited the number of witnesses in the now consolidated case to ten, far fewer than the two hundred Lake had lined up to testify. According to Lake's writings, Clemmon believed Judge Pitman would rule against them, but he planned to preserve all items for appeal, and he assured Lake they would appeal.

On June 30, 1971, Judge Pitman gave his order in regards to the matters brought before him in the case of *Lake v. Lee*. The news was bad, but the worst part was that Lake did not find out about the order for almost a full month after it was released. And he did not hear it from his attorney, in spite of numerous requests and letters. Contrary to earlier statements, Clemmon did not to appeal and never consulted Lake about his decision. In a letter to his

28 "Books confiscated from Lake's cell," *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box. 92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

29 One folder in the 3rd box of the case file archives contains multiple pieces of toilet paper with notes scribbled on them, *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box. 92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

30 Judge Virgil Pittman, "Order," filed May 31, 1969, *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box. 90-92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

attorney, Richard Lake Jr. wrote: "The courts gave judicial sanction to barbarism and if you aren't hip to this then you are in the wrong profession."³¹

Judge Pittman ruled in the state's favor on every claim, except for matters related to the "doghouse" (punitive isolation). Pittman declared that Lake's demeanor and attitude in court, as well as on the witness stand, "shadowed the credibility of his testimony and any claims by Lake of beatings were either non-existent, greatly exaggerated or deserved." It was disturbing that a sitting federal judge would think that a prisoner could earn or deserve a physical beating. Pittman never tried to reconcile how Lake lost a finger, which Lake stated took place while receiving one of his many beatings. With regard to Lake's claims of forced homosexuality, as being the result of collaboration between trusty prisoners and administration, Pittman found, "no evidence of such and that it is more likely the result of inmates own initiative." In the matter of Lake's claims that inmates were marked for death by the administration, Pittman found that to be totally without merit. Pittman also failed to place limits on the number of "doghouse" sentences a prisoner could receive. One prisoner chalked up fifty one trips, and over one thousand days, in the "doghouse" over an eight-year period.³²

Richard E. Lake Jr counter-argued that Judge Pittman could not find evidence to prove his claims because he had not allowed more than ten witnesses in the whole case. In essence, this meant that Lake could only present himself and, at most, three other witnesses, because the other two plaintiffs were due their share of the ten-witness allotment. Even if all two hundred witnesses had been allowed to tes-

tify, however, it seems likely that Pittman would not have believed any of them, as they were all inmates at Atmore-Holman whose credibility, in the judge's eyes, was compromised. As Pittman stated: "Inmates would do or say whatever they felt necessary to obtain their release, and short of this, to have their way."

As mentioned earlier, Pittman did address and make changes to the "doghouse" as follows:

1. Inmates in punitive isolation be allowed to wash their hands prior to eating their meal.
2. Inmates in punitive isolation be furnished adequate toilet paper.
3. Drinking water will be furnished a minimum of 3 times a day.
4. Inmates in punitive isolation will be furnished shirt and pants and a pair of cloth slides for the feet.
5. Meals will be fed on paper plates with plastic spoons.
6. The number of persons per cell in isolation is not to exceed eight.
7. Medical attention will be available whenever needed and the doctor will visit the unit once every three days.
8. All inmates in isolation will be served one meal per day, except under extraordinary circumstances.
9. Each inmate will be given one blanket.
10. The lights will be left on a minimum of eight hours and a maximum of sixteen hours per day.
11. The punitive isolation cells will be adequately ventilated, appropriately heated, and maintained in a sanitary condition.

31 Richard E. Lake to U.W. Clemmon, Letter dated March 2, 1972, filed May 31, 1969, *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box. 90-92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

32 Willie Beard had in excess of 51 citations remanding him to the "doghouse," *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box 90-92, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

12. All toilets in punitive isolation will be flushed a minimum of three times a day.³³

This order represented Pittman's thoughts on punitive isolation and, ultimately, it made things worse for prisoners. Prior to Pittman's order, it was still questionable whether the "doghouse" was even legal, but with it this issue was resolved. Prisoners and their attorneys could no longer file claims before, perhaps, more sympathetic judges objecting to the "doghouse," because this order settled the question of law. It is frightening to think that a sitting federal judge could sanction cramming eight people into a forty-eight square foot room.

The only real change in "doghouse" policy was that prisoners won a spoon with which to eat, toilet paper, and eight hours of light per day. The remaining period was complete darkness. Even though ordered to do so, the inmates attest a doctor never visited the "doghouse." The rations did not change because the administration retained the right to determine an extraordinary circumstance, and they almost always decided every "doghouse" sentence was an extraordinary circumstance. To make things worse, the court order demanded that toilets be flushed three times a day. Pittman's order said nothing about the plumbing being in working order, so now guards would flush the toilets three times a day frequently covering the eight prisoners in each cell with waste. When prisoners complained, guards smiled and told them they were under federal court order and had to do it.³⁴

33 Previously unpublished agreement between parties in the Beard v. Lee case consolidated into the Lake case, Judge Virgil Pittman, "Order," January 24, 1969, *Lake v. Lee*, assc. #02175B705, box 91, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

34 Guards frequently liked to blame actions on federal court orders. Robert Segall, "Complaint," *Pugh v. Locke*, accs. #021900016, Vol. 5, box 2-3, National Archives, Morrow, GA.

The Inmates For Action and the First Prisoner Labor Union

Lake and his alliance of prisoners had followed the rule of law and petitioned the courts to address their grievances. The court, however, dismissed their claims based on who they were and how they had acted in court. The court frequently stated in Lake's cases that the Prison Administration Board enjoyed discretion on how to operate prisons without interference from the courts. This statute was based on the case of *Beto v. Novak*.³⁵ The *Beto* case was a higher court case originating out of Texas and served to place prisons virtually outside the jurisdiction of the courts.

To the prisoners, the United States Constitution had failed them. It was not possible that the United States Constitution allowed for eight American citizens to be crammed into a forty-eight square foot room for twenty-one days at a time only receiving a full meal twice a week.

Judge Johnson's punting of the case, and Judge Pittman's order of June 30, 1971, forced Lake and his fellow prisoners to realize that the court system was not the only place that could induce change to improve their condition. They used the next twelve months to become more than just an alliance of prisoners. They created the prisoner union I.F.A., an acronym for Inmates For Action. The original founders of the I.F.A. were Negro, but they were able to recruit a substantial number of white prisoners before the latter were threatened with their lives by non-union whites on behalf of prison administrators. Within the walls of the prison, in the court system, and throughout the press, the I.F.A. got attention.

35 The 5th circuit appeals case gave broad power to prisons to administer prisoners. "Courts are not equipped to administer state prisons," *Ronald Novak v. Dr. George J. Beto*, No. 31116, United States Circuit Court of Appeals, (5th Circuit), March 8, 1972.

The I.F.A. was formed in the Fall of 1971 on the yard of Atmore prison. Even though they were not ready to act in May 1972, the I.F.A. felt compelled to take action after guards savagely beat almost to death one of their members, Willie “Fly Red” Spencer. In protest, the I.F.A. held a rally on the prison yard and then launched a labor strike. The strikers’ demands were for the administration to recognize the union as the representative of all prisoners, to meet with union representatives, and to show good faith in implementing some reforms. The administration refused to recognize the union, but the strikers held firm. After four days, the administration closed the dining hall in an effort to break the strike by starving the prisoners. The strike continued to hold and after two more days the warden re-opened the dining hall. To show strength and solidarity, the strikers refused to enter the dining hall. After eight days, the administration met with I.F.A. union representatives, but the only result was the inmates’ return to work with prison administrators failing to honor their commitments.

This first strike, however, was only a dress rehearsal for the big strike that started on the afternoon of Thursday, October 11, 1972, at Atmore. The strike was five hundred prisoners strong. Richard E. Lake Jr. had carefully planned for the strike to take place during harvest time in October. If the prisoners did not return to the fields, the cash crops would rot in the fields. The Department of Corrections was in dire need of the revenue from those cash crops. Hoping to avoid the pitfalls of the last strike, the administration met with the prisoners the next day and agreed to some of the demands. The workers returned to the fields, but the administration again failed to honor the agreement, causing even more tension between inmates.

On a positive note, Richard E. Lake Jr. reached the end of his sentence on May 11, 1973, and remained a free man until June of 1983. But for the other members of

the I.F.A., things went from bad to worse between October 1972 until January 18, 1974, with individual stabbings and beatings serving to increase pressure within Atmore-Holman prison.

The I.F.A. continued to file suits in the Federal courts, and Johnson continued to express his dislike for the I.F.A. On the occasion of the 1973 case of I.F.A. member *Glenn Diamond v. Prison Commissioner L.B. Sullivan*, Johnson stated that “the named plaintiffs in this suit are troublemakers, knowledgeable in manipulating and maneuvering others to their advantage.” The *Diamond v. Sullivan* case represented another specific occasion in which Judge Johnson could have done something sooner to stop the existing brutality, but he did not.³⁶ The case of *Diamond v. Sullivan* sought, among other things, to challenge the conditions set forth in Judge Pittman’s previous order. Judge Johnson declared that those matters had been settled and refused to redress them. By this time, Bill Baxley was already attorney general and would have, or should have, known of the conditions in Alabama’s prison system set forth in this case. Baxley’s responsibility was to defend the state in the federal court system. A federal judge, or the attorney general, having no knowledge of the conditions in the state’s prison system would have been, in the words of Richard Lake, “blind, deaf, and dumb.” Especially taking in consideration that Lake and the I.F.A. employed every form of communication available in order to get their message out regarding the conditions in Alabama’s prison system.

Judge Johnson was still not done with his disdain, when he dismissed I.F.A. member Edward Ellis’s claim in November 1974 regarding the lack of heat in the tubercu-

³⁶ Lake filed multiple cases in addition to *Lake v. Lee*. One of his cases, *Lake v. Sullivan*, was consolidated into the *Diamond* case. *Diamond v. Sullivan*, 364 F. Supp. 659, July 30, 1973, United States District Court, M.D. Alabama, N.D.

losis ward at Mt. Meigs. Judge Johnson took a posture of non-interference citing the language of *Beto v. Novak* and stating the Prison Administration Board's discretion in operating Alabama prisons. He also claimed as a fact, without any evidence of such, that the heat in the tuberculosis ward had been just fine. Throughout his tenure, Johnson intentionally never entered a prison or state hospital.³⁷ To place this in proper perspective, Ellis filed a similar case in Judge Varner's court at approximately the same time, objecting to the lack of heat in the Mt. Meigs infirmary. Judge Varner refused to dismiss the case citing a desire for the truth to come out regarding the conditions within Alabama's prison system.³⁸

The Riot And The Revolution

The conditions within Atmore-Hollman reached their apex and exploded on January 18, 1974. On this date, a rebellion occurred in administrative segregation. The result of the rebellion was the death of guard Luell Barrow and prisoner George Dobbins from Anniston. The rebellion started when guards walked into the segregation unit at Atmore prison with bloody clothes and laughing about the beating they had just administered to Jesse Clanzy, a fellow I.F.A. member locked up on the Holman side of the Atmore-Holman complex. According to an I.F.A. member's testimony in *State v. Oscar Johnson*, the guards stated inside the segregation unit: "Let's go in these cells and kill these revolutionary niggers just like we did Clanzy."

While it may be disputed as to what the guards said,

there was agreement among the parties that two guards entered the administrative unit covered in Jesse Clanzy's blood. Inmates stated they thought they were next to be killed.³⁹ Johnny Harris and Oscar Johnson were in the hallway of the segregation unit picking up the food trays from the locked up prisoners when they grabbed both the guards. After grabbing the guards, they opened the cell doors of the fifty prisoners in administrative segregation. Of those fifty, only about twenty-five were I.F.A. members.

The surviving I. F. A. members later stated that their intent was to hold the guards hostage, so they could bring outside attention to their condition. They stated that the hostage taking was a last resort, because every other remedy had failed them. They had petitioned the courts on numerous occasions, but the courts consistently denied any sort of relief. They had sought a peaceful labor strike, but the administration had refused to honor its commitments. The I.F.A. believed that they had no other course of action than to take hostages.

The leader of the rebellion was I.F.A. member George Dobbins from Anniston, Alabama, who told the warden they would release the hostages upon satisfaction of their one and only demand. They requested to meet with the prison commissioner L.B. Sullivan, Catholic Sister Patricia Caraher, Tom Martin from the *Montgomery Advertiser*, and state legislator Fred Gray. Reports differ as to whether the prisoners said the warden had five minutes to get them there, or whether the warden said he was not getting anybody.⁴⁰

Within the next few minutes, the warden became aware that one of the hostages was already dead and the other hostage was injured. Warden Harding gave the order

37 Video: Bill Moyers Journal, "Judge: The Law and Frank Johnson," WNET/Thirteen, New York, PBS air date July 24, 1980.

38 Both Varner and Johnson sat in the Montgomery Federal building. Two virtually identical cases but two different rulings. "Prison Criticism Upheld," *Mobile Register*, 15 November 1974.

39 Trial testimony from Oscar Johnson, *Johnson v. State* 335 So. 2d 663 (1976) 3 Div. 340, Appellate Opinion May 18, 1976, Alabama Department of Archives. Montgomery, AL., 165.

40 Trial testimony of Marion B. Harding, *Ibid.*, 35.

for his “heavy team” of guards to enter the cellblock firing shotguns as they entered. When the carnage was over, there were fifty wounded prisoners, one dead guard, and a prisoner that would arrive dead at the hospital (George Dobbins).⁴¹

After the riot, Harding allegedly left the cellblock, while guards ordered the prisoners to strip naked and crawl in a line through the lobby of the cellblock while guards beat them with pick handles. As for where Harding was at this time, it is still in dispute. One witness testified under oath that Warden Harding was in a shower stall with George Dobbins beating him across the face with a pick handle. The original press release stated that Dobbins died of a gunshot wound, but the coroner’s report several days later stated that he died from numerous hits across the face with either a wooden club or steel rod. Harding maintained that he went outside the cellblock to check on the injured guard and did not kill George Dobbins.⁴²



Johnny Harris shortly before his death in 2012.

Of the fifty prisoners in administrative segregation on January 18, 1974, all 7 receiving indictments held I.F.A. membership. Between January 18, 1974, and the date of their trials in early 1975, multiple members of the I.F.A.’s senior leadership died under mysterious circumstances. According to grand jury testimony in Escambia County, Alabama, given on April 2, 1974, by reporter Sandra Baxley of the *Mobile Register*, she took possession on March 4, 1974, of a twenty-three person death list supposedly smuggled from the warden’s desk. Though it has never been confirmed if all the names on the death list were of I.F.A. members, most were. First on the list was George Dobbins, who had already died during the January 18, 1974, events. Sandra Baxley did not think much of the list until eight days later, on March 12, 1974, guards clubbed to death Tommy Dotson, the number two man on the list. Willie Eugene Minniefee, the third man on the list, died four days later on March 16, 1974. On April 25, 1974, I.F.A. member Frank Moore, also mentioned on the death list, was found to have committed suicide by hanging inside the Mobile County jail, according to an article in next day’s *Mobile Press*. Nothing ever became of this series of unfortunate events.

Five Atmore-Holman brothers went to trial for the January 18, 1974, death of guard Luell Barrow. Attorney General Bill Baxley asked for the death penalty for Johnny Harris:

A law from 1862 states, that if an inmate is serving a life sentence (as was Harris for rape and robbery) and is convicted of first-degree murder, the death penalty is automatic. This would get around the objection the U.S. Supreme Court found in Alabama’s (and other states) capital punishment laws....the discretion of the jury to give life or death. The other four

⁴¹ Trial testimony of Marion B. Harding, *Ibid.*, 38-44.

⁴² Trial testimony of Marion B. Harding, *Ibid.*, 48.

inmates charged in the guard's murder are facing Alabama's regular murder statute providing a life sentence. None of these inmates were serving a life sentence at the time of the riot.⁴³

The Supreme Court's 1972 ruling in *Furman v. Georgia* resulted in the de facto commutation of every death sentence in the country to life in prison.⁴⁴ A conviction for Harris would mean that he would have the sad distinction of being the founding member of Alabama's new death row. Attorney General Bill Baxley contributed to the high profile politically charged nature of the case by prosecuting Johnny Harris himself. Baxley would also personally prosecute Bob Chambliss a few years later for the 16th St. Baptist Church bombing. Over the past 40 years, Baxley's personal prosecution of Chambliss has been the subject of enormous positive press coverage, whereas history has largely swept under the rug his personal prosecution of Johnny Harris. The defense in the Harris case as well as in the other I.F.A. members' cases tried, repeatedly, to present evidence regarding the conditions of the prison being the catalyst for the events of January 18, 1974. Baxley and his prosecutors objected, and the judge sustained their objections every time a defense attorney, such as Harris' attorney Morris Dees, brought prison condition testimony into the courtroom. Judge Leigh Clark and Judge Douglas Webb, as well as every other judge that heard an I.F.A. case, repeatedly stated: "the defendant is on trial and not the Alabama prison system."⁴⁵



Johnny Harris and his attorney Morris Dees talk prior to his trial in February 1975. Courtesy of Michael Mauney/ Southern Poverty Law Center.

One can draw a reasonable conclusion that, because Baxley personally prosecuted Harris' case, he knew everything regarding conditions in the Alabama prison system. If any plausible deniability could still exist on behalf of Baxley, his closing statement to the jury on February 28, 1975, abolished it:

Your're not going to put Johnny Harris in the electric chair, you didn't put him in prison and the judge and jury didn't do it, he put himself. Finding Harris guilty would be the first step in providing the greatest possible protection for inmates. Prison is a horrifying jungle.⁴⁶

43 "Harris is Sentenced To Die," Poverty Law Center Report 3, no. 1, March, 1975.

44 A Supreme Court case declaring that any death penalty statute giving a jury, or a judge, a choice in punishment between death and some period of incarceration, was unconstitutional. Statutes giving no choice but death as punishment were still legal, *Furman v. Georgia* 408 US 238 (1972).

45 *Johnson vs. State*, 335 So. 2d 663 (Court of Criminal Appeals

of Alabama, 1976), 185-187.

46 Sandra Baxley, "Harris is Convicted," *Mobile Press*, March 1,



Attorney General Bill Baxley, Judge Frank M. Johnson, and former Governor Jim Folsom on Inauguration Day in Montgomery, Alabama, 1975.. Photo courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

In a bit of twisted logic, Baxley told the jury that it was their job to take the first step in improving prison conditions by sending Johnny Harris to the electric chair. Baxley's reasoning was that prisoners were to blame for prison conditions. Baxley's theory stood on the notion that if inmates had the constant threat of the electric chair hanging over their head in prison, then they would be much more likely to behave and, subsequently, conditions would improve. The jury bought Baxley's logic and found Johnny Harris guilty, making him the first Alabama prisoner to face the electric chair since 1965.

It should now appear obvious that both Frank Johnson and Bill Baxley knew long before August 28, 1975, the conditions in Alabama's prison system. Johnson was culpable because of his numerous orders and scornful

comments directed at Richard E. Lake and the I.F.A. Baxley was culpable because his office defended the state in most of those cases, but the additional step of personally prosecuting I.F.A. member Johnny Harris, placed Baxley in a separate and exclusive position from other Alabama Attorneys Generals.

Post *Pugh v. Locke* interviews, given by Baxley and others, attempt to convince the public that Baxley and Johnson were unaware of the conditions inside of Alabama's prisons prior to the case. The facts do not support such a conclusion. A legend descended upon the legacy of Frank M. Johnson and William Baxley. Baxley would be the man that put away the Klan with his personal prosecution of Robert "Bob" Chambliss. Johnson's legacy became that of the judge who enabled the Selma march, imprisoned Viola Liuzzo's killers, stood up to George Wallace, and took a litany of other decisions sympathetic to African Americans and the downtrodden.

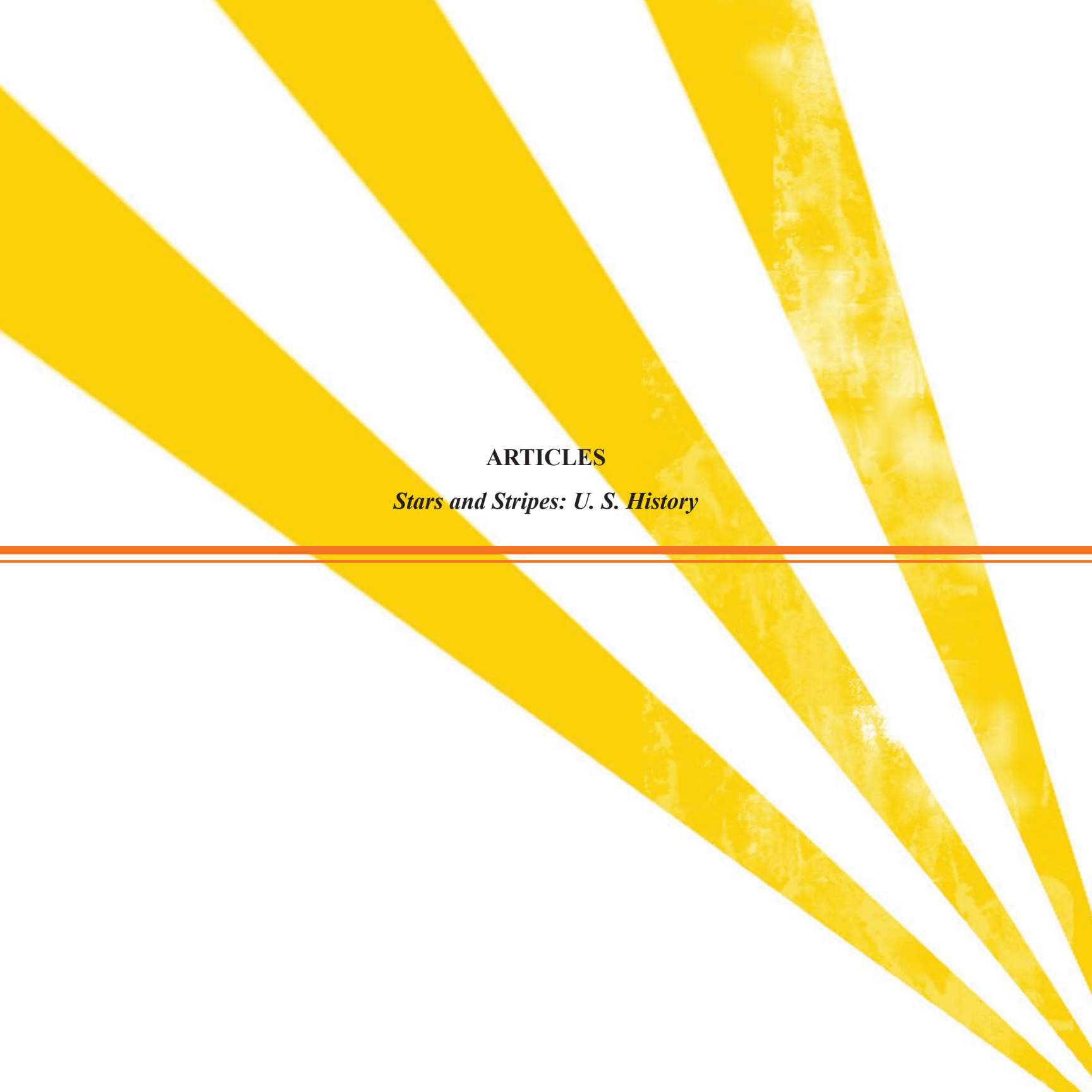
The Pugh case never became either man's highest profile case. In the rare event that the Pugh case received attention, its false conclusions merely served to supplement the largely positive legacy of these two men. The likely reason for this inaccurate history is the case's minor importance in each man's larger legacy. Little evidence exists that original scholars studied the case solely by itself. The original biographers of Frank Johnson paint both men in a positive light. Those scholars' works now serve as secondary sources for others and represent the foundation for future work. Those original authors, by trade professional journalists or legal scholars, by the nature of their work focused much attention on filings and proceedings within the courtroom. No evidence exists that any of the previously mentioned biographers of Frank Johnson ever interviewed a prisoner, or visited an Alabama prison, in contrast to their numerous interviews

with attorneys, politicians, and judges. Because of the limited scope of such early writings, accuracy has suffered to this day. How would the story differ if those writers had interviewed Richard Lake Jr. or other I.F.A. members?

Numerous archival documents exist on Richard Lake and the I.F.A., but very few secondary mainstream sources. Behind the walls of Alabama's prisons, most inmates have no idea who Bill Baxley and Frank Johnson were, however, virtually every prisoner in Alabama, who has the misfortune of a lengthy sentence, knows of the great organizer and relentless warrior Richard "Mafundi" Lake and the Inmates for Action (I.F.A.).⁴⁷



⁴⁷ Ray Melvin, *All for One and One for All* (Springville, AL.: Free Alabama Movement, 2014), 6.



ARTICLES

Stars and Stripes: U. S. History

The Seeds of Disfranchisement: How Booker T. Washington Influenced New South Ideals and Paved the Way for Jim Crow

by Tyler Malugani

IN THE midst of the Cotton States and International Exposition held in Atlanta, Georgia in 1895, Booker T. Washington gave a speech in front of a racially and regionally mixed crowd. Later known as the Atlanta Compromise Speech, it became the most well-known and influential aspect of the exposition by sparking debates about racial equality for decades to come. Washington defined and described the compromise as one between blacks and whites, especially in the South, in order to help relieve tensions between the races which many believed originated with the Emancipation Proclamation. This famous address, though, created its own tensions, particularly within the black community as other influential black leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois disagreed with Washington's ideas. Contrastingly, many within the white community found Washington's ideas refreshing and supported him as the leader of the black race.

While Washington's Atlanta Compromise Speech thrust him into the spotlight as the leader of the black race in the late nineteenth century, this address focused more on creating an environment in the South that would attract business and investors, particularly from the North. Likewise, the ideas on the relationship between blacks and whites presented in his speech became the foundation for race relations within the New South. Washington's speech finally gave New South promoters, such as Henry Grady, the answer they wanted and needed to the "Negro Problem." Also, this address eventually aided in the emer-

gence of Jim Crow laws in the South by opening up a door through which southern whites could push out blacks' civil and political rights. While Washington's Atlanta Compromise Speech in 1895 dealt with the relationship between whites and blacks in the South, its importance lies not with the betterment of the African American race, but instead as New South propaganda which laid a foundation on which southern whites built their castle of Jim Crow.

The Speech

According to C. Vann Woodward's famous book *Origins of the New South*, 1895 served as a watershed year as the title of leader of the black race shifted from Frederick Douglass to Booker T. Washington. Woodward asserts: "Washington's life mission was to find a pragmatic compromise that would resolve the antagonisms, suspicions, and aspirations of 'all three classes directly concerned—the Southern white man, the Northern white man, and the Negro.'"¹ Washington finally found his chance to proclaim his views to a larger audience at the Cotton States and International Exposition. From the beginning, the exposition leaders felt Washington's influence. He served as part of the delegation sent to Washington, D.C. to convince the

¹ C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South: 1877-1913. A History of the South*, Volume 9, eds. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1951), 357.



Interior of Negro Building, Atlanta Exposition, circa 1896. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

government to financially aid the event. His presentation consisted of an explanation of the positive effects the black race in the South as well as the North and West would receive from the exposition. He made his point by describing the Negro Building (an entire exhibit dedicated to showcasing African Americans and their achievements), which would become the first black exhibit held at a world's fair.²

When the exposition leaders approached Washington to give a speech during the exposition, he excitedly accepted. On September 18, 1895, he appeared before a racially and regionally mixed crowd to give his famous Atlanta Compromise Speech. From the beginning of the speech Washington discussed capitalist and in essence, New South ventures. He claimed that the South needed to work hand-in-hand with the large black population of the area in order for the region to become more profitable and

successful. He emphasized this idea by congratulating the Cotton States and International Exposition for embracing “the value and manhood of the American Negro” in a respectful and admirable way.³ In this way, Washington used Atlanta as a measuring stick to the rest of the South. Attempting to get the South to emulate Atlanta’s New South industrial spirit as well as Atlanta’s race relations⁴, Washington emphasized Atlanta’s positive qualities throughout the speech.

At this point Washington introduced the idea that the South stood on the verge of “a new era of industrial progress.” In order to achieve this goal, he spent the next

² Genevieve Pou, “Fair Helped World Discover Atlanta,” *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution Magazine*, September 20, 1970.

³ Booker T. Washington (speech, Cotton States and International Exposition, Atlanta GA, September 18, 1895), accessed November 16, 2015, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/39/>.

⁴ At this time Atlanta-based newspapers wrote several articles claiming little to no racism within the social or business aspects of the city. Using this technique, they attempted to entice outside investors (mainly Northerners who frowned upon open racism).

few moments speaking to both the blacks and whites of the South. To the blacks, he touched on an idea later expounded upon that they should begin their new lives from the bottom, not from the top. Washington then told an anecdote about a ship lost on the Amazon River desperately trying to get water from another passing ship, or they would die of thirst. In response, the passing ship calls out: "Cast down your bucket where you are." Washington used this phrase throughout his speech to shed light on the situation he saw in the South. This phrase held two meanings for Washington: one for blacks to stop relying on others to do what they could do themselves; and two for whites to use the workforce (blacks) already living in the area, for they would make the best and most faithful workers.⁵

At this point in his speech, Washington predicted a future that came close to fulfillment. He looked to the white man and told him that his success linked directly with the success of the black man. If the white man refused to aid the black man, then the black man would fight back and the success of all would falter. "Nearly sixteen millions of hands will aid you in pulling the load upward, or they will pull against you the load downward. We shall constitute one-third and more of the ignorance and crime of the South, or one-third [of] its intelligence and progress; we shall prove a veritable body of death, stagnating, depressing, retarding every effort to advance the body politic."⁶ In Washington's eyes he gave whites a straightforward option: help educate and employ blacks, or see firsthand the danger of ignorance.

He ended his speech by talking directly to the exposition leaders. Washington thanked them for the opportunity they gave blacks to show their progress and achievements to the world through the Negro Building. He reiterated the notion that blacks should first educate them-

selves through the help of whites in order to prepare themselves for full social equality. "It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house." He concluded by predicting that together, both whites and blacks could help "bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth."⁷ By finishing his speech on this note, he expertly tied the progress of the South with the progress of blacks and basically gave the ultimatum that if any white man wanted the South to progress economically; he in turn wanted blacks to progress economically by default.

Key Aspects

The first key aspect of this speech in regard to race relations stems from the focus on economic progress of blacks as opposed to civil and political progress. Washington described a willingness among the black race to give up certain civil and political rights in order to achieve equal educational and economical rights. In the Atlanta Compromise Speech, though, Washington wished this compromise in order for the South as a whole to progress and prosper, not just African Americans. As stated above, he ended his speech with the idea that both white and black "material prosperity...will bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth."⁸ He mentions the South as a region prospering and progressing much more often than he mentions the black race prospering and progressing.

The second key aspect of Washington's address relates to the compromise he presented mainly to Southern

⁵ Washington, speech "Cotton States."

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.



Booker T. Washington, circa 1910, Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

whites. The compromise of relinquishing civil and political rights in return for equal educational and economical rights became very important as the New South idealists sought to include white supremacy within the picture of their New South. Washington's compromise opened the door for discrimination based on race to not only continue in the South, but thrive in the new system put in place after the Civil War.

While Woodward claimed that the 1895 address marked the transition point between Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington as leader of the black race, he held reservations on what kind of leader he became. While newspapers and influential people at the time touted Washington as the new leader of the black race, Woodward argued that Washington "was also a leader of white opin-

ion with a national following..."⁹ Louis R. Harlan agrees with this notion: "Washington saw his own role as the axis between the races, the only leader who could negotiate and keep the peace by holding extremists on both sides in check."¹⁰ Undoubtedly Washington had an uncanny ability to gain acceptance by influential whites all over the country. This acceptance came with both positive and negative effects to his ideas and his personal image.

In the years after the Atlanta Compromise Speech, influential whites poured affection onto Washington and his ideas, something very unusual for a black man to receive at this time. Andrew Carnegie exclaimed:

Booker Washington is the combined Moses and Joshua of his people. Not only has he led them to the promised land, but still lives to teach them by example and precept how properly to enjoy it. He is one of these extraordinary men who rise at rare intervals and work miracles...he certainly is one of the most wonderful men living or who has ever lived. History is to tell of two Washingtons, the white and the black, one the father of his country, the other the leader of his race.¹¹

William Dean Howells also praised Washington after witnessing one of his speeches: "What strikes you first and last, in Mr. Washington is his constant common sense... Mr. Washington's way seems, at present, the only way for his race." He then makes a very bold claim at this time:

9 Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 356.

10 Raymond W. Smock, ed., *Booker T. Washington in Perspective*, Essays of Louis R. Harlan (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1988), 165.

11 Andrew Carnegie, *The Negro in America*, An Address Delivered Before the Philosophical Institute of Edinburgh (Inverness, 1907), in *Booker T. Washington*, ed. Emma Lou Thornbrough (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), 90.

“Booker T. Washington has made himself a public man, second to no other American in importance.”¹²

Walter H. Page gave similar sentiments toward Washington: “To win the support of Southern opinion and to shape it was a necessary part of the task; and in this he has so well succeeded that the South has a sincere and high regard for him...” And in the same way as Howells, Page declared: “I think that no man of our generation has

“ IN WASHINGTON’S EYES HE
GAVE WHITES A STRAIGHTFORWARD
OPTION: HELP EDUCATE AND EMPLOY
BLACKS, OR SEE FIRSTHAND THE
DANGER OF IGNORANCE.

a more noteworthy achievement to his credit than this...”¹³ Even southern newspapers printed articles praising Washington. One such article in the *Montgomery Advertiser* called Washington a “Safe Negro” in the title. This article also hits on a key reason why so many whites, especially southern whites, liked Washington: “There is nothing of the agitator about him.” It shows as well that even though the meat of the article praises Washington and his ideas, white supremacy would ultimately reign: “...the white people commend [colored teachers taught by Washington] for instilling correct notions into their pupils and for impressing upon them the fact that they cannot prosper un-

less their white neighbors prosper and unless a proper understanding exists between them.”¹⁴ This passage hints at the future disintegration of the compromise, as southern whites would ultimately refuse to allow equal educational and economic opportunities to blacks if they threatened to overtake whites in those areas. It also hints at Jim Crow with the “proper understanding” that existed between whites and blacks meaning that as long as blacks knew their place in the southern hierarchy, racial tensions in the South would not rise.

Racial Dichotomy

While a large amount of both northern and southern whites accepted Washington and his ideas, many blacks saw him as a traitor of some sort. William Monroe Trotter wrote in the *Guardian*, “If Mr. Booker Washington is in any sense the leader of the Colored American people he certainly has been chosen for that position by the white American race...Even Washington’s friends will admit that his start for leadership came after his Atlanta speech in 1895, and that speech certainly was not popular with the Colored race.”¹⁵ Again the Atlanta Compromise Speech stands as the catalyst in creating Washington’s national presence and influence. The ideas presented in this speech also sparked criticism from his fellow African Americans who saw his ideas as dangerous to the advancement of blacks. Trotter also wrote in the same article: “Mr. Washington...has always gone out of his way to say things that would suit prejudiced or race-proud white people, and

12 William Dean Howells, “An Exemplary Citizen,” *North American Review*, CLXXIII (August, 1901), in *Booker T. Washington*, Thornbrough, 91-93.

13 Walter H. Page, “Booker T. Washington: The Characteristics of the Colored Leader Who Has Shown the Way to Solve the Hardest Problem of Our National Life,” *Everybody’s Magazine*, April, 1902, in *Booker T. Washington*, Thornbrough, 96.

14 “Washington a ‘Safe Negro,’” *Montgomery Advertiser*, quoted in Max Bennet Thrasher, *Tuskegee: Its Story and Its Work* (Boston, 1900), in *Booker T. Washington*, Thornbrough, 98.

15 William Monroe Trotter, *Guardian* (Boston), January 9, 1904, in *Booker T. Washington*, Thornbrough, 118.

he has been perfectly reckless as to the favor of his own race.” He concludes the article with a strong declaration, and one that held a good amount of truth: “The insistence of the whites on Negroes accepting him as leader after this was remarkable, a palpable sign that they intended to master the Colored Race by means of Mr. Washington.”¹⁶ After the Atlanta Compromise Speech, some blacks saw the problems Washington’s ideas could create and feared for the future of their race.

“WHETHER DELIBERATE OR NOT, WASHINGTON AIDED IN THE YIELDING OF THE SOUTH TO THE “CLAMOR OF HER EXTREMISTS” BY ALLOWING THEM ROOM TO GROW THEIR JIM CROW IDEALS IN HIS SYSTEM THAT PLACED BLACKS BELOW WHITES IN BOTH THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LADDER.

The ideas presented by Washington in his Atlanta Compromise Speech, though, only reiterated what other black writers presented throughout the years leading up to 1895. The key difference between Washington and the other black writers stems from the reason *why* they sought equal educational and economic opportunities. Washington sought them because he believed it the correct approach toward the betterment of his race. The other black writers sought them because they gave up hope in their attempts to integrate into white society. James Bryce wrote that blacks “ask only for a separate society,” with “equal recognition of the worth of their manhood, and a discontinuation of the social humiliations they are now compelled to endure.”

¹⁶ Ibid., 118-119.

Even as early as 1891, according to Bryce, blacks wanted “first class railroad cars or restaurants for the company of their black peers, not for racial mixing.”¹⁷ Again, these ideas of separation of the races played into the hands of whites who wished for blacks to remain in the lower ranks of society.

It quickly became clear after his 1895 address that Washington held the ability to enter into white society with the support of many whites. At this time, though many intellectuals on both sides of the race coin supported cooperation on the subject of race relations, the meetings and organizations largely remained segregated. Both northern and southern whites who committed themselves to improving conditions for blacks refused to invite black reformers and intellectuals to their meetings and organizations. For the most part, Booker T. Washington became the exception. Whenever these white intellectuals and organizers wished to incorporate the ideas of a race leader into their meetings and events, they strongly preferred the presence of Booker T. Washington.¹⁸ One strong reason why Washington gained access into these predominantly white organizations came from his ideas on segregation and social and political subservience of blacks of which most white intellectuals and organizations held sympathies.

Educational opportunities quickly became a mainstay in Washington’s writings and speeches after his 1895 address. As he wrote in one of his books, *The Negro in the South*: “For you must always bear in mind that, prior to the establishment of such institutions as the Hampton Institute, there was practically no systematic industrial training given to either black or white people, either North or

¹⁷ W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ed., *Booker T. Washington and Black Progress: Up From Slavery: 100 Years Later* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 164-165.

¹⁸ Natalie J. Ring, *The Problem South: Region, Empire, and the New Liberal State, 1880-1930* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2012), 183.

South.” This kind of institute served as the basis for Washington’s educational thought. He then claimed that by that time the country paid more attention to industrial training for white children than black, and he saw this as unacceptable.¹⁹ More telling than that, though, comes from his ideas on how blacks view education and labor. He wrote: “...I said...that it was true that the race had been worked in slavery, but the great lesson which we wanted to learn in freedom was to work.”²⁰ While Washington wrote this in order to demonstrate that blacks could not remain idle in freedom, and that whites should offer employment opportunities to blacks because of their work ethic, whites could find it very easy to misinterpret these words into a willingness to become, once again, the subservient workforce.

Late in his career, Washington declared another unusual idea about educational opportunities for blacks while presenting at a welcoming conference at the all-white Southern University presidents in 1912: “We are trying to instill into the Negro mind that if education does not make the Negro humble, simple, and of service to the community, then it will not be encouraged.”²¹ This statement makes it seem as if Washington cared more about a stable and cooperative society than the advancement of blacks. This reinforces Washington’s earlier argument that as long as the community prospered and blacks became productive members of the community, then blacks would prosper alongside the community. This statement also strengthens the idea that Washington cared more about creating a New South than the advancement of his own race, an idea frequently seen within his Atlanta Compromise Speech.

19 Booker T. Washington and W. E. Burghardt DuBois, *The Negro in the South: His Economic Progress in Relation to His Moral and Religious Development* (Northbrook, Illinois: Metro Books, Inc., 1972), 47.

20 Ibid., 49.

21 C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 79.

Washington’s knack for education drew praise from all corners of the country, including the white population. Some declared that Washington-trained blacks received a better education than many southern whites. One man even said that he wanted a “white Booker T. Washington” and asked that someone would “do for the poor white boys of his section the effective work which has already been accomplished at Tuskegee.” Still others while praising Washington and his ideas spoke with a racist paternalism that ran rampant within New South rhetoric: “...we are bound, hand and foot, to the lowest stratum of society. If the negroes remain as co-occupants of the land and co-citizens of the States, and we do not life them up, they will drag us down to industrial bankruptcy, social degradation, and political corruption.”²²

Legacy

In the years following the Civil War, many southerners along with northerners created an idea to build a New South. This New South would focus on industry and economic progress instead of agriculture and tradition.²³ In order to attract northern and western capital and investors, southern cities (for they felt the New South movement strongest) needed to convince them that the South stood ready to move past overt racial ideologies. On the other side, though, most of the New South advocates wished to continue to set a precedent of white supremacy, but in a way that would not deter northern and western investments.

22 Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 104-105.

23 Many of the traditions of which New South advocates wished to distance themselves from involved race relations, in particular slavery and the ideas surrounding it.

The first order of business for these New South promoters, though, stemmed from the creation of an industrially advanced state similar to that of the North. Many believed that if the two races could unite to create such a state, tensions between the races would ease naturally over time. Likewise, many perceived racial tensions as the sole blame for the lack of industrial progress in the South. These New South ideas fit perfectly with Washington's ideas on race relations culminating in his belief that racial cooperation and harmony could in fact exist in the South through the building of educational and economic opportunities for blacks. Washington's ideas became the answer to the New South advocates' problem of how to at least present the idea of racial harmony to the North and West.²⁴ With Booker T. Washington by their side, convincing northern and western investors became much easier.

An interesting look into Washington's writings show that not only did he champion New South ideals, but he also somewhat embraced the Old South myth romanticizing slavery. Washington painted a picture of slavery which stressed the "loyalty of the slaves to their masters" based on love. He also claimed that blacks held no resentment toward former masters (something he spoke of again in the Atlanta Compromise Speech, but about Reconstruction instead of slavery) and told stories of how former slaves would aid their old masters when they fell on hard times after the Civil War.²⁵ Washington, just like his fellow New South advocates, wished to communicate that tensions between race relations had become largely nonexistent.

The quickness of Washington's rise in popularity after his Atlanta Compromise Speech also fit nicely within the mythology of the New South movement. The whole idea of the New South revolved around rebuilding from



Statue of Booker T. Washington "Lifting the Veil of Ignorance," by Charles Keck located at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

the rubble of the old in order to build the new, or rising from the bottom in order to get to the top. Washington not only preached this idea, he lived it as he once lived as a slave, became free, and went on to become (at least in the eyes of white America) the leader of his race. James Creelman wrote about Washington's 1895 address that nothing since Henry Grady's "immortal speech" had anything shown "so profoundly the spirit of the New South."²⁶ It did not take Washington long to cement himself within New South folklore.

Washington also epitomized the New South in ways outside of race relations. Many other of Washing-

²⁴ Ring, *The Problem South*, 26.

²⁵ Gaston, *The New South Creed*, 176.

²⁶ Ibid., 208.

ton's writings promote the New South way. In general, Washington minimized the importance of politics while emphasizing the importance of individual and regional economic advancement. He also held negative views on labor unions and remained a very religious, very conservative man until the day he died. He allied himself with prominent ideas and people of the time such as social Darwinism and Andrew Carnegie's gospel of wealth.²⁷ All in all, perhaps Henry Grady remains the only man considered more New South than Booker T. Washington.

Paul Gaston states these ideas best: "The figure of Washington on the podium at Atlanta poignantly evokes the essence of the myth which he helped to establish. He both creates it and is himself caught by it."²⁸ Washington solidified the New South ideals through his Atlanta Compromise Speech. He catered his speeches and his writings to what the desired audience wanted to hear. In the Atlanta Compromise Speech he told whites not to worry about a black uprising for they wished to remain in a subservient role in society. To blacks he promised economic and educational advancement, which would lead to eventual equality in the political and social arenas as well. To northerners he promised a lack of tension between the races and a ready and able workforce. To southerners he promised to keep certain traditions (when it comes to race relations) alive. Booker T. Washington both lived and created a myth of universal happiness within the New South.

Although Washington wrote his Atlanta Compromise Speech in order to set up a new system in which he believed blacks could prosper, he also wished to set up a new system in which the New South could prosper. In doing this, Washington unknowingly created the path toward total disenfranchisement for southern blacks. Even after this speech, as Jim Crow laws began to appear in full force,

Washington supported several clauses that southern whites used to disenfranchise blacks, such as the understanding and grandfather clauses stating: "the Negro does not object to an educational or property test," as long as both races have them.²⁹ This of course, did not become the case and even if it did, illiterate blacks (a large amount of the population at this time) would remain disenfranchised. Woodward states:

The historical stage was set for the entrance of this remarkable man. It was a time when the hope born of Reconstruction had all but died for the Negro, when disenfranchisement blocked his political advance and the caste system closed the door to integration in the white world, when the North had abandoned him to the South and the South was yielding to the clamor of her extremists.³⁰

Whether deliberate or not, Washington aided in the yielding of the South to the "clamor of her extremists" by allowing them room to grow their Jim Crow ideals in his system that placed blacks below whites in both the political and social ladder. He served as the last piece to the New South puzzle, the one that softened the heart of northern and western money while at the same time hardening the heart and vigor of white supremacists in the South. Washington dealt in New South propaganda and became so entrenched that his ideas eventually became the building block to the creation of the Jim Crow South.

27 Ibid., 209.

28 Ibid., 213.

29 Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 337.

30 Ibid., 356.

Drugs, Attempted Assassinations and Shock Therapy: The 1972 Presidential Election's Influence on the Modern Election Cycle

by Chris Perry

THE 1972 presidential election can be considered unique for a variety of reasons, but the preponderance of scandalous events remains its most striking characteristic. While not as notable or memorable as the Republican Nixon/Watergate legacy, distinctive controversies permeated the Democratic primaries leading up to the national convention. These events not only affected the outcome of the 1972 presidential election, but also served as the impetus for the continuing media scrutiny and the egregious election cycle improprieties that occur on a systematic basis today. More specifically, the focus will be placed on three key incidents that occurred during the process of electing a Democratic nominee to oppose Richard Nixon: the Edmund Muskie/Hunter S. Thompson ibogaine incident, the George Wallace candidacy and assassination attempt, and the choice of Thomas Eagleton as the running mate for George McGovern. As progenitor of the scandal-prone modern election cycle, the 1972 presidential election served as the line of demarcation between mere muckraking and the extensive media scrutiny that exists today.

The 1972 election enigma leaves those studying the contest with several questions. How did the incumbent president, Richard Nixon, win in a landslide? How did the Nixon campaign overcome the specter of Watergate and the unpopular war in Vietnam to defeat the Democrats de-



Richard M. Nixon. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

cisively with 60.7% of the vote?¹ The strengths of President Nixon included a strong foreign policy and a successful economy, yet the problems surrounding his presidency provided an opportune time for the Democratic Party to seize power. In fact, Nixon himself anticipated defeat, expecting that Ted Kennedy would pose a serious threat to his re-election campaign. However, the events that oc-

¹ CQ Press, ed., *Presidential Elections, 1789-2008*, 10th ed. (Thousand Oaks: CQ Press, 2009), 201.

curred in Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts in July 1969 effectively ended Kennedy's potential run for the White House.² Why did the Democrats fail? A series of unfortunate events derailed the hopes of those eager to seize the presidency. In 1972 the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution lowered the national voting age to 18 from 21, in large part to give a voice to the young men who fought in Vietnam. This caused a significant change in primary elections, which now lasted four months. While this initially seemed to benefit the Democratic Party, in the end this change adversely affected its success.³ According to Theodore White's chronicle of the campaign *The Making of the President 1972*, "at one time, no less than fifteen Democrats had announced their candidacies for the nomination of 1972, of whom at least twelve took themselves seriously."⁴ Eventually, the field narrowed and four true challengers participated in the race: Edmund Muskie of Maine, George McGovern of South Dakota, Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, and George Wallace of Alabama.⁵ Regrettably for the Democrats, the combination of a mostly popular incumbent president and controversy within their own party spelled doom. The lengthened primary season and the arduous competition to obtain the youth vote created numerous complications that could not be overcome, leaving the 1972 presidential campaign at best a missed opportunity and at worst a complete failure for the Democrats. This moment in time has been referred to as "The last true liberal moment" and "a watershed" that "marked a generational and class upheaval as well as an ideological crusade."⁶ Analysis of the 1972 presidential election indi-



Edmund Sixtus Muskie. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

cates that it will be remembered for controversy, scandal, and a dissatisfying conclusion that not only changed the course of history but all presidential elections to follow.

One of the more disturbing occurrences during the 1972 presidential campaign involved two men whose personalities positioned them as polar opposites. Hunter S. Thompson and Edmund Muskie both played a role in one of the most bizarre and outlandish incidents in the annals of presidential politics. The incident involved a drug, ibogaine, which Thompson described as "effective in combating sleep or fatigue and in maintaining alertness...however, an epileptic-like madness can be produced."⁷ The

2 Paul F. Boller, Jr., *Presidential Campaigns* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 333.

3 Theodore H. White, *The Making of The President 1972* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1973), 74.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Bruce Miroff, *The Liberals' Moment: The McGovern Insurgency*

and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 1.

7 Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail*

entire incident originated when Thompson accused Muskie of using the drug. This type of accusation appears to be a first in a presidential election. A journalist accusing a presidential candidate of using illegal drugs had never before occurred and the event caused controversy that deeply affected the presidential election of 1972.

Covering the 1972 campaign as an assignment for *Rolling Stone* magazine, Thompson wrote a series of articles that delineated the election. This resulted in the publication of *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*. Thompson practiced “Gonzo Journalism,”⁸ defined as a style of journalism written without claims of objectivity that often includes the reporter as part of the story via a first-person narrative. The word “gonzo” likely originated from Bill Cardozo who edited the *Boston Globe*’s Sunday magazine and accepted several writing projects from Thompson.⁹ An example of Thompson’s gonzo style is apparent in the following passage from *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*:

The phone is ringing again and I can hear Crouse downstairs trying to put them off... Only a lunatic would do this kind of work: twenty-three primaries in five months; stone drunk from dawn till dusk and huge speed-blisters all over my head...Crouse is yelling again. They want more copy. He has sent them all of his stuff on the Wallace shooting, and now they want mine. Those halfwit sons of bitches should subscribe to a wire service; get one of those big AP tickers that spits out fifty words a minute, twenty-

four hours a day....So much for all that. The noise-level downstairs tells me Crouse will not be able to put them off much longer. So now we will start getting serious: First Columbus, Ohio, and then Omaha. But mainly Columbus, only because this thing began- in my head, at least- as a fairly straight and serious account of the Ohio primary.¹⁰

Critics have scathingly referred to Thompson’s work as a “form of fiction”¹¹ and referred to Thompson himself as “a professionally unreliable witness.”¹² While it remains possible to find a pragmatic historical saliency regarding the work of Thompson, it can be treacherous when applied incorrectly. As covered in later sections of this paper, Thompson’s accusation that Muskie used ibogaine exemplifies this perfectly. Disillusioned with politics, Thompson believed that the last hope of a truly utopian culture in the United States had died with Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. He could not hide his disdain for a number of politicians, including Muskie.¹³ Thompson’s caustic style not only victimized Muskie, but also extended to poking fun at Richard Nixon and criticizing Hubert Humphrey’s win in Ohio by saying, “If McGovern had been able to win Ohio with his last-minute, half-organized blitz it would have snapped the psychic spine of the Humphrey campaign...because Hubert had been formidably strong in Ohio, squatting tall in the pocket behind his now-familiar screen of Organized Labor and Old Blacks.”¹⁴ Thompson behaved as the proverbial oil in

⁷72 (New York: Straight Arrow Books, 1972), 133.

⁸ *Gonzo: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson*, directed by Alex Gibney (Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2008), DVD (2008).

⁹ Philip Baruth, “Beyond Realism: William Kennedy on the Surreal and the Unconscious, the Religious, the Sublime, and the Gonzo,” *New England Review* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 116-26.

¹⁰ Thompson, *Fear and Loathing '72*, 186-87.

¹¹ Wayne Booth, “Loathing and Ignorance on the Campaign Trail: 1972,” *Columbia Journalism Review* 12, no. 4 (1973): 10.

¹² Jonathan Raban, “The New Mongrel,” *London Magazine* 13, no. 2 (1973): 100.

¹³ Gibney, *Gonzo*.

¹⁴ Thompson, *Fear and Loathing '72*, 189.

the water of the campaign.

Muskie had served as the vice presidential nominee in 1968 and many political insiders considered him the frontrunner to win the nomination for president heading into the 1972 campaign. In spite of his potential for success, Muskie remained notoriously dismissive of the press and its perceived shortfalls. He also “had a tenden-

“ THE 1972 PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION SERVED AS THE LINE
OF DEMARCATION BETWEEN MERE
MUCKRAKING AND THE EXTENSIVE
MEDIA SCRUTINY THAT EXISTS TODAY.

cy to emotional outburst; and an even graver disability- a lawyer-like, ponderous way of dealing with all issues.”¹⁵ Muskie possessed what could be considered archaic ideologies and morality, and once referred to a picketing group of gay liberationists as “a bunch of sodomites.”¹⁶ He refused to cater to them or anyone else for that matter, to be elected president. One can easily see that he provided the perfect foil for Thompson. Muskie, the son of Polish immigrants, left the Maine papermaking town of Rumford to rise all the way to the United States Senate.¹⁷ Though his accomplishments made him successful, he did not represent an imposing figure on the campaign trail. In his monograph of the campaign, *The Liberals’ Moment: The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party*, Bruce Miroff states, “Had there been a formidable regular Democrat in the race- if Muskie, for

instance, had been as impressive a figure in the flesh as the pundits dubbed him before the primaries commenced- the reformed rules would have made little difference in the outcome.”¹⁸ The weakness of Muskie as a candidate left him open for a series of jabs and insults sent in his direction by Thompson. In addition, Muskie had co-authored a 1965 senate committee report concerning the conflict in Vietnam, and reached the conclusion that “unrelenting pressure in a carefully measured response of the enemy” would be a successful strategy.¹⁹ Such support to continue the conflict in Southeast Asia only fueled Thompson’s negative rhetoric. However, this criticism of Muskie led to Thompson becoming “permanently barred” from attending any Muskie campaign events.²⁰ This restriction served as the impetus for the infamous ibogaine incident.

The headline read, “Big Ed Exposed as Ibogaine Addict” and insinuated that Muskie had become addicted to the psychedelic drug, which he obtained from a mysterious Brazilian doctor.²¹ Thompson based the allegations in this article on a series of incidents in which Muskie behaved erratically. The most famous of these incidents has been termed the “Crying Speech.”²² Muskie made the speech in response to a charge by the conservative publisher of the *Manchester Union Leader* newspaper, William Loeb. Loeb said that Muskie had used ethnic slurs against French-Americans and implied that his wife “took an unladylike pleasure in drinking and telling jokes.”²³ This re-

15 White, *The Making of the President 1972*, 80.

16 Ibid.

17 Theo Lippman Jr. and Donald C. Hansen, *Muskie* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), 32.

18 Miroff, *The Liberals’ Moment*, 23.

19 Edmund Muskie and M. Mansfield, *The Vietnam Conflict: The substance and the shadow- report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate* (College Park: University of Maryland, 1966), 122.

20 Thompson, *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail ’72*, 145.

21 Ibid., 143.

22 Elisabeth Goodridge, “Front Runner Ed Muskie’s Tears (or Melted Snow?) Hurt his Presidential Bid,” *U.S. News and World Report*, January 17, 2008: 11.

23 Ibid.

sulted in an incident where Muskie reportedly broke down in tears while attempting to defend himself and his wife during a speech. Though very subjective and likely more folklore than truth, the press seized the crying incident and used it to reinforce Thompson's drug use claims. Thompson's article shows in great detail how Muskie's declining campaign and erratic behavior shared similarities to what might result from the abuse of the drug ibogaine. While the article and incident seemed completely surreal, Thompson attempted to make it clear that no one should take any of it seriously and stated, "We can only speculate on this" and "we were never able to confirm this."²⁴ Unfortunately for Muskie, the press did nothing to investigate the drug use rumor and the accusation hung over the campaign like the grim reaper. Eventually the combination of innuendo and Muskie's odd behavior brought his once promising campaign to an end. George McGovern's campaign manager, Gary Hart, summed up the Muskie campaign extremely well with the following passage from his chronicle of the McGovern campaign *Right from the Start*:

If one should major in political irony, then the Muskie campaign must be looked to as a classic study. Post-Chappaquidick, he was the odds-on favorite for the

Democratic nomination for more than two and a half years. For months, his nomination, and possible election, had been accepted by many of the media and political wise men as practically foregone. Networks and newsmagazines, watched, read, and respected by millions, had only weeks before projected his convention delegate total in excess of 1,000 delegates.

And yet, dating from the first real test of popular strength, the actual life of his campaign could be placed at only 50 days.²⁵

In the end, Muskie did not appear presidential enough to win the nomination, but Thompson's rumors and innuendo about drug use definitely contributed to his quick exit from the 1972 presidential campaign.

The Muskie/Thompson ibogaine incident represented a true first in the history of presidential elections in the United States. Never before had fictional statements made by a journalist played such a huge role in determining a nomination. Furthermore, this event can be looked upon as the impetus for much of the sensational journalism and media reporting that occurs in every presidential election cycle today. Thompson helped derail the campaign of Muskie, the anointed frontrunner in 1972, with every stroke of his typewriter keys. The change from honest fact-based reporting to its more scandalous counterpart had begun, shifting forever the landscape of presidential politics.

George Wallace, the governor of Alabama, became one of the most polarizing figures in the 1972 presidential election. Wallace, an infamous segregationist, seized every opportunity to further the racial dichotomy that existed in the United States. However, he also campaigned directly against intellectuals and liberal reformers with his own brand of conservative populism. Wallace led the populist movement that had previously carried five states and won almost 14% of the popular vote in the 1968 presidential election. Additionally, he gained a large share of the white working class vote during the Democratic primaries in 1972.²⁶ An example of Wallace's rhetoric can be seen

24 Thompson, *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*, 143-44.

25 Gary Hart, *Right from the Start: A Chronicle of the McGovern Campaign* (New York: Quadrangle/The New York Times, 1973), 161.

26 CQ Press, *Presidential Elections*, 201.

in a *New York Times* interview in March of 1972 when he stated:

The American people are fed up with the interference of government. They want to be left alone. Once the Democratic party reflected true expressions of the rank and file citizens. They were its heart, the bulk of its strength and vitality. Long ago it became the party of the so-called intelligentsia. Where once it was the party of the people, along the way it lost contact with the working man and the businessman. It has been transformed into a party controlled by intellectual snobs.²⁷

The presence of Wallace in the 1972 presidential election provided an unpredictability that only added to the unique character of this epoch in the United States. Furthermore, the attempt on his life facilitated the unique character and controversial aspects of the 1972 election.

The surprising success of George Wallace in national campaigns fascinated many. A shrewd politician, Wallace knew very well that those who had supported Barry Goldwater and his strategy to “woo disgruntled whites in the old Confederacy” would likely support his campaign.²⁸ Wallace appealed to the middle class white working vote more effectively than his competition; with a favorable voter turnout, he could have a significant influence on the election. Wallace attempted to refine his image by 1971, prior to running for president once again. According to Dan T. Carter, he told the National Press Club “that he had always been a moderate and no longer

believed segregation was desirable. The nation, ought to have non-discrimination in public schools as well as public accommodations open to all.”²⁹ Nevertheless, Wallace still regularly used racial slurs in conversations with his closest advisors. While his public rhetoric had softened he remained affixed to racist ideologies. Most observers, however, believed that Wallace had distanced himself from



Former Governor George Wallace of Alabama at a press conference announcing his presidential candidacy. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

his previous “hard-line segregationist views” that had almost cost him an election in his home state of Alabama in 1970.³⁰ This new and improved George Wallace appeared ready to run for the presidency again in 1972.

²⁷ White, *The Making of a President 1972*, 97.

²⁸ Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, The Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 326.

²⁹ Ibid., 417.

³⁰ Ibid.

Arthur Bremer, an often-unemployed introverted anti-social product of a dysfunctional family in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, carried out a plot to assassinate George Wallace.³¹ This resulted from his initial intention, stated as follows in his diary, “It is my personal plan to assassinate by pistol either Richard Nixon or George Wallace. I intend to shoot one or the other while he attends a campaign rally for the Wisconsin Primary.”³² Bremer made a statement that would move him to the center of attention, “to do something bold and dramatic, forceful and dynamic, a statement of my manhood for the world to see.”³³ Bremer made the dramatic statement above in Maryland on May 15, 1972. Dressed in dark glasses and patriotic red, white, and blue, he sported a “Wallace in ‘72” campaign button while he showed support through applause even though others in the crowd reacted negatively. Bremer then followed Wallace to a second campaign stop at the Laurel Shopping Center in Laurel, Maryland.³⁴ Dan T. Carter described the scene that followed splendidly in *Politics of Rage: George Wallace, The Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*:

Secret Service agent Nick Zarvos stayed a step ahead as the candidate reached across the rope barricade to touch the hands of smiling followers; Alabama State police captain E.C. Dothard walked a step behind. When they reached the end of the rope barricade and began moving back toward the cars, Arthur Bremer- partially shielded by a middle-aged couple in the front row-

shouted: “Hey, George, let me shake hands with you!” Wallace turned in the direction of the voice and extended his hand. Less than three feet away, Bremer began firing. One bullet ripped through Wallace’s forearm and shoulder; another entered his right abdomen and stomach, while a third bullet pierced his right rib cage and lodged in his spine.³⁵

According to Carter, pandemonium reigned and “The next twenty seconds, recorded by an alert television cameraman, were a chaotic replay of a scene familiar to Americans in the 1960s: the assassin wrestled to the ground, the shouts of the bystanders, the screams, first of fear and then of outrage.”³⁶ Bremer had accomplished what he set out to do, and the presidential campaign of 1972 once again moved to the forefront of the minds of the American public for reasons other than politics. The Wallace campaign regained the attention of the people, but this time at the expense of the candidate himself. Wallace ended up paralyzed from the waist down for the rest of his life; police quickly arrested Bremer and he remained imprisoned until his release on November 9, 2007.³⁷

The aftermath of the assassination attempt of Wallace revealed just how successful his Southern Conservative Populist rhetoric had been. Theodore H. White recorded, “On May 15th, addressing an outdoor rally at Laurel, Maryland, George Wallace was shot by a madman, and thereby eliminated from the campaign. And with that elimination, the re-election of the President was finally, irrevocably, assured.”³⁸ The Wallace campaign had risen

31 Ibid., 419-20.

32 Arthur Bremer, *An Assassin’s Diary* (New York: Pocket Books, 1973), 118.

33 Ibid., 118.

34 Aaron Kraut, “George Wallace’s assassination attempt: FBI agent reflects, 40 years later,” *The Washington Post*, May 9, 2012, accessed on November 1, 2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com>.

35 Carter, *Politics of Rage*, 437.

36 Carter, *Politics of Rage*, 437.

37 Ben Nuckols, “Wallace shooter to be released,” *USA Today*, August 23, 2007, accessed on November 1, 2015, <http://www.usatoday.com>.

38 White, *The Making of the President 1972*, 251.

in the polls and provided a true threat to other Democrats and to President Nixon. The primary election results following the assassination attempt provide evidence of this. Wallace claimed victory in both Maryland and Michigan immediately following the attempt on his life, and no one had anticipated the stunning margin of his victory. In fact, in Michigan Wallace “swept suburban as well as white working-class precincts and racked up a fifty-one percent majority, handily outdistancing George McGovern, who drew only a quarter of the state’s Democratic voters.”³⁹ The crossover vote appears to have been key to Wallace’s success. Many Republicans now voted for Wallace, which became a significant concern for all other candidates – both Republican and Democrat.⁴⁰ When writing about Wallace, Gary Hart stated, “A number of students of modern American politics believe that any chance a Democrat had to defeat Richard Nixon was lost on May 15th. That theory is based on the presumption that the votes Wallace received in 1968, and might have received in 1972, were votes that otherwise would have gone to Nixon.”⁴¹ The veracity of these theories remained less important than the impact that the Wallace campaign and the assassination attempt had not only on the 1972 presidential election, but also on subsequent political campaigns.

Wallace had a significant influence on politics and his assassination attempt left a remarkable impact on the presidential election landscape. The fact that a candidate like Wallace could have such a substantial effect on the 1972 presidential campaign indicates the importance of this particular election cycle. Additionally, the way in

which the attempt on his life played out on television for the world to see offers enormous insight into the presidential politics of today. Unlike the current populace, which stays somewhat detached and disconnected from events like an assassination attempt because of familiarity, an occurrence such as this would have heavily impacted the 1972 populace. This public event significantly influenced the election in 1972 and every election cycle to follow. The fact that news of a politician being accosted in some manner does not shock to our sensibilities today began, at least in part, with Wallace and the 1972 presidential election.

McGovern ascended to the top of the Democratic Party and accepted the party’s nomination for president of the United States in 1972. He had benefitted directly from the failure of other campaigns and won support from the liberal faction of the Democratic Party for his anti-war and progressive ideologies. McGovern believed, “The President of the United States can restore respect for the truth. He can renew this country’s commitment to justice, and he can find the compassion and decency that also live in each American. And that is the search I want to make.”⁴² This generated support from many, and supporters welcomed the campaign as a satisfying and desired change in the presidential politics of the era. McGovern now had to choose his running mate for the campaign for the White House. In his acceptance speech on July 14, 1972 in Miami, he stated, “I crossed the wide Missouri to recommend a running mate of wide vision and deep compassion- Tom Eagleton.”⁴³ Eagleton served as

“ THE EAGLETON AFFAIR
CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE
“GREATEST CAMPAIGN FIASCO
OF MODERN TIMES.”

39 Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 445.

40 Ibid.

41 Hart, *Right from the Start*, 176.

42 Shirley MacLaine, *McGovern: The Man and His Beliefs* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 13.

43 Aaron Singer, *Campaign Speeches of American Presidential Candidates, 1928-1972* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing,

a United States Senator from the state of Missouri. The choice of Eagleton as the vice presidential nominee caused the demise of the McGovern bid for president. In fact, it could be argued that the choice of Eagleton proved to be one of the largest blunders in the history of presidential elections in the United States. The vetting process failed in the McGovern campaign, costing the candidate dearly in the general election. Media outlets from coast to coast broadcast the personal life and medical problems of the nominee for vice president of the Democratic Party. Never before had a nomination process been so scrutinized as in the 1972 presidential election. The Eagleton affair came to be known as the “greatest campaign fiasco of modern times.”⁴⁴ According to James N. Giglio, “The Eagleton affair has all the elements of a Greek tragedy- it inflicted pain on two decent men and altered their political careers in ways that circumscribed their goals and ambitions. Both George McGovern and Tom Eagleton revealed human frailties because of mistakes in judgement- McGovern by acting impulsively, indecisively, and carelessly and Eagleton by placing ambition ahead of openness and good judgement.”⁴⁵

The process of choosing a running mate in a presidential election requires time and thoroughness, and one misstep can lead to an irreversible setback. Precisely this occurred in the McGovern campaign. Gary Hart acted as campaign manager for McGovern and described Eagleton as “a last minute entry put on primarily because he was Catholic, urban, and an unknown from a border state.”⁴⁶ The campaign considered several high profile candidates, including Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Walter Mondale,

Mayor Kevin White of Boston, Senator Abraham Ribicoff, and Sargent Shriver. Hart describes the nomination process in the following passage:

From the complete list of 36 or 37, formal nominations were required with justification. The person responsible for raising each name was asked to support it or drop it. Twenty-two names were nominated. Justification arguments were made and countered. Action around the large circular table was quick, concise, blunt, but fair. Sides shifted. Some people thought of arguments in favor of nominees they had previously criticized. Original supporters became critics.

Fairly obvious traditional standards were used; who would bring strength and balance to the ticket? Urban background, labor connections, ethnic or religious factors, ties to the party regulars, ties to the South; standing with minority groups.

Despite the absence of real vetoing blocks in the modern party, who would be alienated by each choice? Personal characteristics: Family, reputation, habits, business dealings, background, peer evaluation. But, most importantly, each candidate was thoroughly scrutinized regarding his ability to govern, to become President.⁴⁷

Hart admitted that his top candidates included Kennedy, Mondale, and White, and when Kennedy and Mondale removed themselves from contention he considered

1976), 408.

44 Miroff, *The Liberals' Moment*, 1.

45 James N. Giglio, “The Eagleton Affair: Thomas Eagleton, George McGovern, and the 1972 Vice Presidential Nomination,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (December 2009): 647-676.

46 Hart, *Right from the Start*, 240.

47 Hart, *Right from the Start*, 239.

White the obvious choice. However, Kennedy appeared less than enthusiastic about White and urged them to consider other names. Hart recalls, "The fact that Kennedy had raised other names, plus whatever else Kennedy had to say, led McGovern to conclude that Kennedy was less than enthusiastic about the White nomination."⁴⁸ McGovern appeared to hold out hope that Kennedy might reconsider his own decision to reject the nomination, but this did not happen. Instead, the field of vice presidential candidates narrowed. They eliminated White. Then Ribicoff declined. A close senatorial friend of McGovern, Gaylord Nelson, also declined. Hart stated, "I could scarcely believe what was happening. I recalled reading accounts of deliberations like this- particularly the confusion surrounding John Kennedy's selection of Lyndon Johnson- and thinking to myself: if I ever get into a situation like that I am going to make sure that the deliberations are careful, thoughtful, and calm. That's no way to make such important decisions. But here it was happening and I was right in the middle of it."⁴⁹ The decision regarding Eagleton hinged on rumors of previous mental illness issues and a potential drinking problem. However, McGovern campaign leadership mistakenly contacted the wrong reporter, which appeared to clear the Senator from Missouri causing him to gain traction in the nomination process. Then, according to Hart, the unlikely and unthinkable happened: "McGovern said: I think I'll go with Tom. The call was placed. And the time-bomb destined to destroy the infant McGovern Presidential candidacy started ticking."⁵⁰ McGovern offered the vice presidency to Eagleton and he eagerly accepted. The decision surprised many, including McGovern's wife Eleanor. In her memoirs *Uphill: A Personal Story*, she stated: "George and I fantasized about what

might have happened if we had been able to sit down together and quietly, privately, lengthily analyze, as we have done for so many years, some of the campaign's crucial decisions- such as the choice of a Vice-Presidential candidate. It was reported that I was openly, out-front opposed when I walked into the suite and George told me that it was going to be a McGovern-Eagleton ticket...I was merely surprised because I had never heard George mention the Missouri Senator as a possibility."⁵¹ This account speaks volumes concerning disbelief surrounding the Eagleton nomination, and the eventual disappointment when considering what might have been. The promise of the all-inclusive "new liberalism"⁵² dominated by intellectuals, people of all races and economic backgrounds, the youth of America, progressives, and feminists began a rapid descent that left many of the supporters of the McGovern campaign wondering what had happened.

Eagleton appeared to be on the fast track politically at the time of the nomination for vice president. He had graduated from Harvard Law and became the youngest circuit attorney, state attorney general, and lieutenant governor in the state of Missouri. Eagleton had developed a strong reputation and distinguished himself through his captivating campaigns. He also presented himself as a proponent of politics similar to those associated with Robert F. Kennedy, Eugene McCarthy, and George McGovern. However, he did not support McGovern initially, and many knew that his comfort resided with Muskie.⁵³ In the rather limited vetting process concerning his potential nomination for vice president, Eagleton later claimed that they only asked him one question, "Was there any skel-

48 Ibid., 241.

49 Ibid., 243.

50 Hart, *Right from the Start*, 243.

51 Eleanor McGovern, *Uphill: A Personal Story* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), 186-87.

52 Giglio, "The Eagleton Affair," 648.

53 Giglio, "The Eagleton Affair," 650-51.

etons rattling in your closet that we should know about?”⁵⁴ Eagleton answered no, because he felt that his prior health issues had no bearing on the McGovern campaign. He assumed that their question referred to something, “illegal or immoral, something dirty or filthy, something shameful.”⁵⁵ In 1972, Theodore H. White described some of Eagleton’s medical history and how it affected his service:

Tom Eagleton had, in the past, concealed three serious rounds of mental illness; had, indeed, through his staff, deceived the press of Missouri when he ran for office there. He had been hospitalized three times: once in 1960, after running for Attorney General of Missouri and winning; once during the Christmas holidays of 1964; once more in 1966, out of total nervous exhaustion. He had on two occasions been given electro-shock treatment at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis and the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, but the press had been told he was hospitalized for stomach trouble. The need for concealment was, however, by 1972 long past. Eagleton had learned the limits of the strain he could absorb, had learned, as he said later, “to pace himself,” and he had tucked away the memory of mental illness as completely as the memory of a broken leg. He had performed with distinction in all the offices he had won, and in the Senate, where he had arrived in 1969, he was recognized as a winner. He knew he was capable of action, was healed, full of zest for life.⁵⁶

Or, did the McGovern campaign fail miserably in the investigation of Eagleton’s background? Historians and political scientists have asked these questions for decades. While the probable answer to both is “yes,” most agree that the combination resulted in a colossal failure. The campaign began to realize this when “an anonymous caller had left messages that Eagleton had been hospitalized three times for mental illness and that his treatment had involved electric-shock therapy. The caller also indicated that he had passed the same message to the Knight-Riddler newspapers.”⁵⁷ The identity of the caller to the McGovern campaign headquarters has never been determined, but some claimed that a McGovern supporter tried to warn the candidate of a significant scandal. However, many McGovernites have claimed that Nixon operatives performed the deed.⁵⁸ In light of what occurred later when the Watergate scandal broke and it became known that “the Watergate conspirators hoped to bug Senator George McGovern’s Washington campaign headquarters,” this certainly seems plausible.⁵⁹ Those activities, coupled with the Committee to Re-Elect the President and its intelligence-gathering program, also seem believable.⁶⁰ However, no concrete proof links the Nixon campaign with the anonymous Eagleton phone call – only conjecture. Regardless, the McGovern campaign felt it necessary to distance itself from Eagleton as quickly as possible. These events fascinate those interested because the ensuing controversy and scandal took place within a three-week time frame following the Democratic convention, yet they had a devastating impact on the McGovern campaign. This type of event

Did Eagleton mislead the McGovern campaign?

54 Ibid., 653.

55 Ibid.

56 White, *The Making of The President 1972*, 209.

57 Miroff, *The Liberals’ Moment*, 90.

58 Ibid., 90-91.

59 United States Senate, *The Final Report of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities*, Select Committee (Washington, D.C, 1974), 27.

60 Ibid., 17.

had never before been witnessed in presidential politics.⁶¹

The aftermath and fallout from the Eagleton affair began at an unorthodox press conference. This moment can be considered the catalyst for the negative views and rapid failure related to the McGovern campaign. McGovern's positive reputation began to plummet following the Eagleton affair and the press conference announcing that he was stepping down as the vice presidential nominee. Bruce Miroff described McGovern as producing "a disastrous new image...both cold blooded opportunist and hapless bungler" following the events involving Eagleton's failed nomination.⁶² Following the election, McGovern told Dick Cavett that the Eagleton affair had been "the saddest part of the campaign."⁶³ "Sad" aptly described



Thomas Francis Eagleton. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

the unprecedented press conference. Never before had a nominee for vice president resigned under such odd circumstances after only three weeks. The press conference began with McGovern making short remarks and then introducing Eagleton to make a statement. Eagleton approached the microphone and the surreal event began. He revealed his medical history, including the hospitalization for exhaustion and depression. During the event his hands shook noticeably and he perspired so significantly that his hair and face appeared soaked with water. The uncomfortable nature of the event became etched into the memory of the 1972 voter, and McGovern's approval declined while Eagleton emerged as a sympathetic figure.⁶⁴ The press conference became infamous because of the bizarre nature of this incident, and effectively ended any chance that McGovern had to win the 1972 presidential election. Sargent Shriver replaced Eagleton as the vice presidential nominee for the Democratic Party.

McGovern introduced Eagleton in his acceptance speech for the democratic nomination for President of the United States in Miami, but he had a much different message in his August 5, 1972 speech in Washington D.C. McGovern stated, "Last week, as most of you know, Senator Thomas Eagleton withdrew as the Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee. When I learned of his treatment for mental distress, I hoped that his past afflictions would not be allowed to obscure and dominate the public dialogue."⁶⁵ Unfortunately, the maladies suffered by Eagleton did enter the mainstream media and destroyed any chance the Democrats had of winning in 1972. This moment became the first of many public displays of sorrow and regret by politicians, whether self-inflicted or otherwise. Never again would the personal lives, past indiscretions, legal history, or even medical histories of a politician be considered

61 Miroff, *The Liberals' Moment*, 89.

62 Miroff, *The Liberals' Moment*, 89.

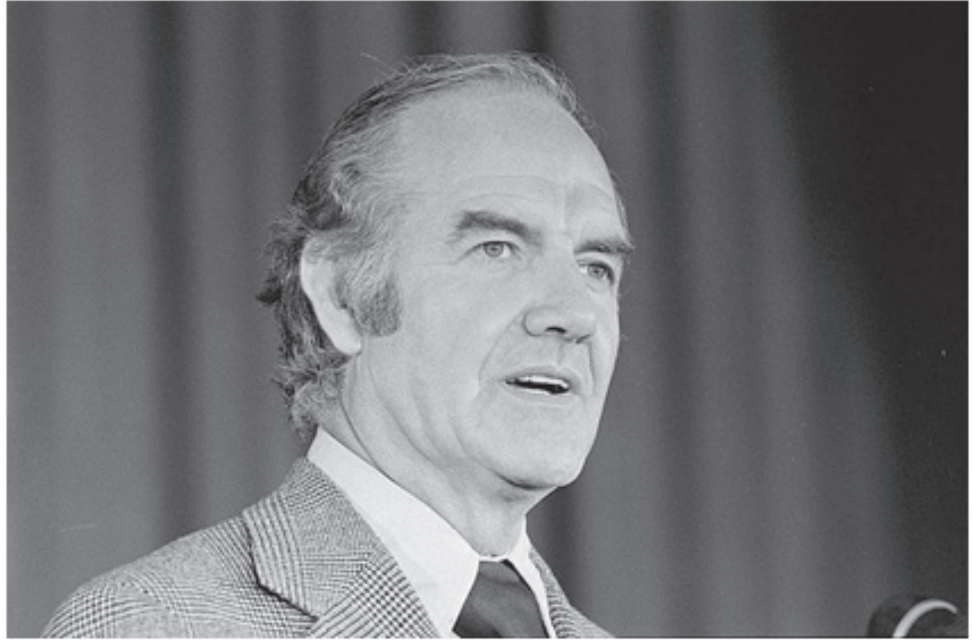
63 Ibid., 89-90.

64 Giglio, "The Eagleton Affair," 662-63.

65 Singer, *Campaign Speeches*, 413.

off-limits. The long-term effects of the Eagleton affair have been felt in many subsequent election cycles, and the selection of a running mate has not been the same since.

The 1972 presidential election served as the catalyst for the current scandal prone election cycle, and it provides a fascinating study of the interaction between politics and the media. As previously stated, the 1972 election served as both the progenitor of modern election improprieties and controversies, and as the line of demarcation between mere muckraking and the extensive media scrutiny that exists today. Muckraking has been associated with “yellow journalism, narrow partisanship, and sensationalism, or pandering to human instincts...it has been characterized as a splenetic distortion of reality, intended to convey falsehoods...and the phenomenon is specific to the journalism of the United States.”⁶⁶ The evolution of this phenomenon reached a crescendo during the election of 1972. The journalism, while sensational, inserted a dose of reality. The all too real lives of candidates, including their faults and weaknesses, became fodder for reporting to the masses. Controversies, scandal, and violence appeared regularly on the broadcast media and in print journalism. Voters could no longer ignore the comings and goings of candidates in national elections. Instead, they received continuous reports of the outcomes of media scru-



Senator George McGovern, June 30, 1972. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

tiny and egregious election cycle improprieties recounted with impunity. The examination of three key incidents that occurred during the 1972 presidential election makes this especially clear: the Edmund Muskie/Hunter S. Thompson ibogaine incident, the George Wallace candidacy and assassination attempt, and the choice of Thomas Eagleton as the running mate for George McGovern. The election cycle changed significantly after 1972, as did politics in general.

The exceptional nature of the Hunter S. Thomson/Edmund Muskie ibogaine incident demonstrates the power of the media, because never before had a pseudo-journalist accused a U.S. Senator running for president of using an exotic drug. Though ridiculous and without merit, the accusation that Muskie used ibogaine spread quickly via media across the nation. This allegation alone sufficient-

66 John M. Harrison and Harry H. Stein, *Muckraking: Past, Present, and Future* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), 12-13.

ly derailed the Muskie campaign. Hunter S. Thompson effectively ended Muskie's campaign by creating what amounted to a sensational version of journalism referred to as "gonzo" journalism. This "first" in presidential politics reinforces the importance of the 1972 presidential election as the line of demarcation between the differing eras of media involvement in presidential elections and politics in general.

The influence of George Wallace and his brand of populist conservatism remains with us today. The surprising support generated by Wallace in 1972 speaks to the unique nature of the campaign, and the attempt on his life substantiates that presidential politics have become a dangerous business. An attempted assassin in search of fame seeking to take the life of a candidate still occurs today. The popularity of Wallace, his effect on the campaign, and the impact that the assassination attempt had on the outcome of the election demonstrates the distinctiveness of the 1972 political events. The Wallace assassination attempt marks one of the first events of its kind recorded and broadcast live to the world.

The choice of running mate remains extremely important. Generations ago a candidate could safely choose a potential nominee without thoroughly investigating his background, a marked contrast from today. Specifically, George McGovern's selection of Thomas Eagleton led to the downfall of the campaign and dashed the hopes of the Democratic Party. This continues to be salient to all campaigns post-1972. The Eagleton affair had an immeasurable effect on presidential politics. McGovern became the first of many politicians who faced controversies that derailed a campaign and an entire movement.

Prior to 1972, the 1968 presidential election remains the only election in the 20th century that came close to the 1972 presidential election in terms of controversy and legacy. In 1968 many factors produced a similar

changing of the election norms. The election began with the incumbent president, Lyndon Johnson, deciding not to accept the nomination of the Democratic Party. The re-emergence of Richard Nixon onto the political scene after his previous failed campaigns provided a shift in the landscape. The 1968 presidential election also occurred during a year of violence that included the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., subsequent race riots, and the assassination of the former Democratic frontrunner Robert F. Kennedy. Racial unrest prevailed throughout the country and a familiar face mounted a third party campaign. George Wallace ran extremely well in 1968 as that candidate and carried the Deep South. Wallace vocally advocated for racial segregation, and in the racially charged atmosphere of 1968 he provided a controversial and divisive element to the campaign. The widespread opposition to the conflict in Vietnam provided yet another example of controversy, and anti-war protestors attended the 1968 Democratic National Convention. When examining both elections side by side, striking similarities emerge. Though the 1972 election comprised significantly more controversy and led directly to the modern scandal-prone election, it could be argued that the two elections combined formed one defining moment in history. The close proximity in time and the participation of similar players demonstrates that 1968 saw the initiation of change, but 1972 provided the blueprint for what would come later.

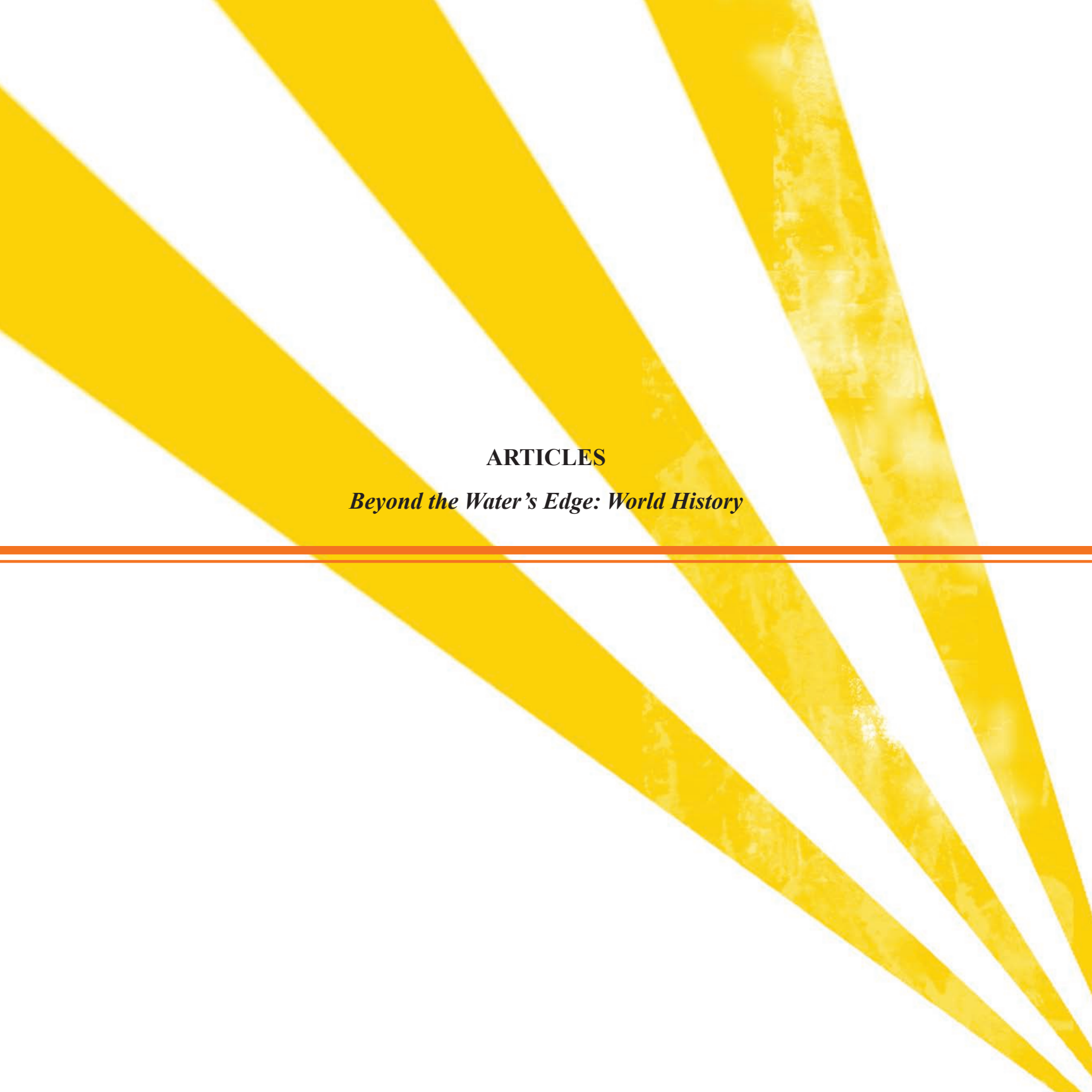
The legacy of the 1972 presidential election clearly persists. The preponderance of scandalous events that year changed the landscape of presidential politics, as evidenced by the constant media involvement in politics and the ever-increasing sensational stories that arise from the modern election cycle. The landslide victory by Richard Nixon resulted partially from the controversies generated

by the Democratic Party, and the election provided the impetus for what would come later. One needs to look no further than the players involved. Gary Hart served as the campaign manager for George McGovern and later failed in his own bid for president in 1984 and 1988. During the 1988 campaign, Hart faced a scandal of his own creation – an extramarital affair and accusations of womanizing⁶⁷ – which ended his hopes for the democratic presidential nomination. In addition, a young boyfriend and girlfriend team (Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham) assisted with the McGovern campaign in Texas. In fact, according to Bruce Miroff, “The roots of Bill Clinton’s political network- and of many other politicians, issue advocates, and campaign specialists who continue to shape Democratic and liberal politics in the first decade of the twenty-first century- can be found in the insurgency of 1972. Liberal politics since 1972 cannot be understood apart from the repercussions of the McGovern campaign. It is a key to the enduring identity crisis of Democratic leaders and activists.”⁶⁸ On the other side of the aisle, many historians believe that Ronald Reagan successfully utilized the conservative populist ideology of George Wallace in the 1980s. Reagan became the “spiritual godfather” of the conservative movement, effectively picking up where Wallace left off.⁶⁹ The repercussions and aftermath of 1972 have directly influenced elections that followed and have provided a blueprint for politicians and the media. The importance of the 1972 presidential election and its significance in history cannot be underestimated.

67 Paul Taylor, *See How They Run: Electing the President in an Age of Mediaocracy* (New York: Knopf, 1990), 100-110.

68 Miroff, *The Liberals’ Moment*, 3.

69 Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 466.



ARTICLES

Beyond the Water's Edge: World History

Survivors to Nation Builders: The Story of the “New Jew”

by Zoe Zaslawsky

AFTER THE Holocaust, thousands of Europe’s Jews were left homeless with no possessions, family, or work. They lived in overcrowded displaced persons (DP) camps, still freshly stained with the horrors endured in the ghettos, work camps and death camps during World War II. As they struggled to find purpose in life, survivors knew their future in Europe would be dismal, and soon Eretz Yisrael (present day Israel) became their pre-eminent beacon of hope—a symbol of personal peace and happiness for Europe’s Jews.

Many Jewish survivors began their new lives in Eretz Yisrael on the kibbutz: a community with a simple way of life but an underlying complex social structure. The personal experience of surviving the Holocaust, combined with the Zionist, egalitarian and socialist principles inherent in the kibbutz, created a unique mixture of communal ideals and personal anguish that left survivors with a sense of disappointment and betrayal toward the kibbutz. This survivor generation, however, changed Jewish identity. The once overtly religious, victimized, and divided “Diaspora Jew” became the secular, rugged and united “New Jew.”¹ Ultimately, the Holocaust survivors’ motives and expectations for immigrating to the Israeli kibbutz, as well as their lives there, galvanized an entirely different



A demonstration in support of unrestricted entry to Eretz Israel, Feldafing displaced persons camp, Germany, after May 1945. Courtesy of Yad Vashem, archival signature 170CO1.

Jewish identity never seen before. Without the “New Jew,” Israel could not have been defended and could not have prospered into the thriving nation it is today.

At the end of World War II, there were millions of displaced people in Europe. This included not only the 250,000 Jews in DP camps, but also thousands of prisoners of war and Europeans whose homes were destroyed during the war.² These DP camps were established at the sites

¹ Aziza Khazoom, *The Kibbutz in Immigration Narratives of Bourgeois Iraqi and Polish Jews Who Immigrated to Israel in the 1950s* (Indiana University Press, Summer 2014), 74.

² American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprises, “Displaced Persons,” Jewish Virtual Library, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0005_0_05258.html; Even the homes of Nazi collaborators were destroyed.

of former concentration and extermination camps, as well as prisoner of war camps in Germany, Austria and Italy. Germany housed the majority of these camps, which were situated within the American, British, and French zones of the country.³ Even though the war was over, Jews had no other choice but to continue living in Nazi designed torture centers - still fenced in with barbed wire.⁴

Displaced persons' living conditions were evocative of their imprisonment during the Holocaust. Since centers designed for 3,000 people were housing 10,000 - food, clothing and shelter were scarce. The biggest struggle for Jewish survivors, however, was cohabitating in cramped quarters with Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians and other Eastern Europeans who had enthusiastically assisted the Nazis during the war.⁵ This problem was belatedly addressed when Jews were given their own, separate camps. David Ben-Gurion, then chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, and later Israel's first president, played a dominant role in helping Jews establish safer, isolated camps headed by Jewish leadership⁶. Even with Jewish oversight in the camps, however, it was difficult to secure basic supplies.

Despite such enormous difficulties, life was not all bad. Fela Warschau, who was liberated at Bergen-Belsen in 1945 and lived in an American DP camp, remembered happy times:

[What] Americans also did, is organize art schools. They brought in films. They brought in, organized our people, the survivors that were musicians and also

traveling from other camps. They were giving concerts... our own police force... They kept us busy. But the problem was, there was no future in being there. Where do we go from there?⁷

The Jewish resilience was apparent in the DP camps. Jews still practiced their arts, studied, and even married during those years. Yet, this flourishing of Jewish culture in the camps could not keep survivors from fearing for their future. They were without money, homeless and, often times, without family. There was no definite plan from any government on how long Europe's Jews would remain in DP camps or where they would be resettled. This uncertainty created widespread anxiety among Jews, as expressed by Warschau in the testimony above,

After news of the poorly maintained camps reached the United States, President Harry S Truman sent a personal envoy, Earl G. Harrison, to report on the conditions. As Harrison discovered, "We appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them, except that we do not exterminate them."⁸ Even though the Red Cross and the Jewish community within the camps (and at large) worked to improve camp conditions, this was certainly not the life survivors had anticipated after leaving Hitler's notorious death-camps. Being in the presence of liberators, however, was undeniably the happiest and safest Holocaust survivors felt since Hitler's rise to power. The Holocaust survivors felt simultaneously homeless, but liberated; safe, but in danger; relieved, but anxious for the future. This strange combination of contradictory emotions was best expressed in the words of survivor Shosh Bechar who was

3 In 1945, about 150,000 Jews lived in the American zone, 15,000 in the British, and 2,000 in the French. See Dan Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and Its Aftermath* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015), 140.

4 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprises, "Displaced Persons."

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Displaced Persons: Oral History," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, accessed November 5, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_oi.php?ModuleId=10005462&MediaId=3283.

8 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprises, "Displaced Persons."

liberated from Auschwitz in April 1945. When she entered a DP camp, she described the confusing emotional state of many survivors: “We were liberated but we did not find a safe place that felt like home. Problems and difficulties still faced us [but] We received good, tasty food. Once again we became human beings.”⁹

DP camps were not an inevitable evil, but the result of a poorly planned and poorly funded solution to the refugee problem that lasted much longer than expected.¹⁰ The hopes of liberation and freedom, alive within the Jews during the war, came in striking juxtaposition with the reality of post-war Europe - their standard of living would remain virtually the same for several years. After analyzing for five weeks the most famous DP camp of Bergen-Belsen, Maurice Eigen wrote in an August 31, 1945 report to the American Joint Distribution Committee: “It is difficult for them to understand why they must remain in the camp under military regulation four months after their so-called liberation.”¹¹ He also emphasized that Eastern European Jews (rather than German Jews) experienced a more intense frustration since “they know that new havens must be found for

“ THE ONCE OVERTLY
RELIGIOUS, VICTIMIZED, AND
DIVIDED “DIASPORA JEW” BECAME
THE SECULAR, RUGGED AND
UNITED “NEW JEW.”

them.”¹² As one Buchenwald concentration camp inmate wrote in her diary after liberation: “[W]here will we go, me and thousands like me? Will we return to Poland? ... And more, what ties me to Poland? For some reason, I do not think that anything will lure me there. I would like to live a different kind of life than I once did...”¹³

Holocaust survivors collectively felt betrayed by the “liberation.” Even though they knew that it was necessary and inevitable for them to leave the camps, they did not yet know where they would go (or who would welcome them). The climate of post-war Europe (the escalating Cold War), along with the uncertainty of relocation, were the two most important factors in galvanizing emigration from DP camps, but they also serve as an explanation for why it

took such a prolonged amount of time for Jews to leave. Jews leaving from Hungary, Yugoslavia and other satellite states were unsure of their countries’ future, or if their persecution would continue behind the Iron Curtain, keeping them grounded in the DP camps. Along with them, Jews with no means of travel, or family to follow, meant the DP camp was their only option.

Ultimately, the Jews became “the victims of international politics.”¹⁴ There were few options for survivors to escape DP camps. For one, after the war every nation had stringent immigration quotas for refugees. The United States, the most suitable and popular destination besides Eretz Yisrael, limited its refugees, with the Truman Direc-

9 Shosh Bechar, “Women & The Holocaust—Personal Reflections,” *Holocaust Testimonies*, accessed December 1, 2015, <http://www.theverylongview.com/WATH/personal/potok.htm>.

10 Dan Stone, *The Liberation*, 140.

11 Maurice Eigen, “Letter from Maurice Eigen to Paris Office, August 8, 1946, National Jewish Welfare Board, 1946,” *Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee NY Offices of the years 1945 – 1954*, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives, NY, accessed October 18, 2015, http://search.archives.jdc.org/multimedia/Documents/NY_AR_45-54/NY_AR45-54_Orgs/NY_AR45-54_00168/NY_AR45-54_00168_00390.pdf#search=maurice%20eigen.

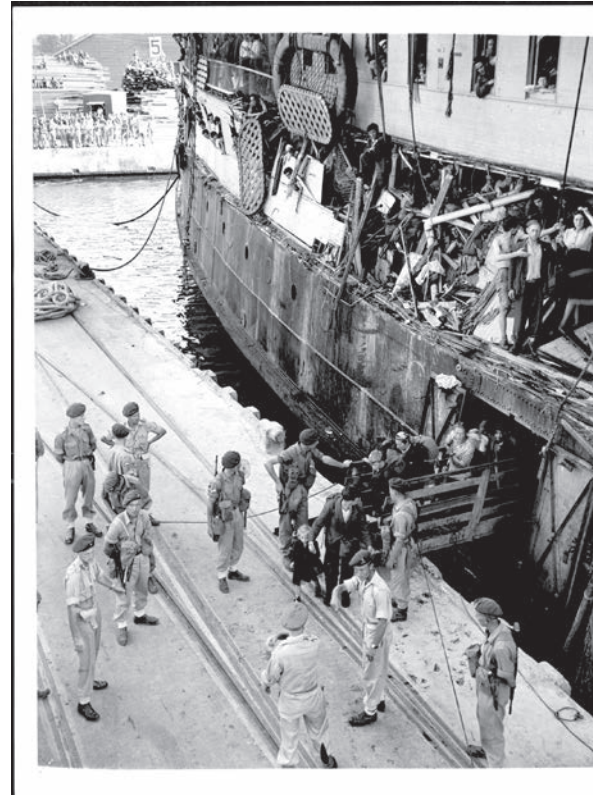
12 Ibid.

13 Françoise Ouzan, “Rebuilding Jewish Identities in Displaced Persons Camps in Germany 1945-1956,” *Bulletin du Centre de recherche français à Jerusalem* no. 14 (2004), accessed May 6, 2016 <https://bcrfj.revues.org/269>.

14 Dan Stone, *The Liberation*, 140.

tive of 1945, to 16,000 displaced persons.¹⁵ At the same time, British control of Palestine did not allow any refugees in Eretz Yisrael. In fact, the British attacked Jewish refugee ships before they could reach Palestine.

To retaliate against Britain's strict immigration quota, a secret Jewish military organization called Hagana, acquired an old American war ship with the goal of illegally transporting Holocaust survivors from their DP camps into Eretz Yisrael. Named *Exodus*, the ship carried 4,500 Jewish men, women, and children. En route, British destroyers surrounded *Exodus* and what ensued, including the British ramming of the refugee ship and active gunfire, left two passengers dead while "dozens suffered bullet wounds and other injuries."¹⁶ The British then detained the passengers, forced them to board British ships and took them to France, where they were ordered to evacuate the vessel. When passengers refused to leave, France declined to use force to compel them to do so. French authorities decided to wait hoping that, with time, passengers would exit. Instead, the Jewish refugees on board began a hunger strike in protest. The British responded by sending the ship to Hamburg, Germany, where the passengers were forced to leave the ship and return to DP camps.¹⁷ The *Exodus* episode helped show the world the necessity for a Jewish state; a notion already accepted by Europe's Jews. After enduring the Holocaust, and being homeless in the DP camps, Jews were attacked in a military setting for attempting resettlement in British Palestine. Not only was public opinion in an outrage over Britain's extreme force, but it brought the question to the world's stage: Where were the Jews going to live?



British soldiers supervising refugees from the *Exodus* in the Port of Haifa, 1947. Courtesy of ACME Photo/Yad Vashem, Gimelson, archival signature 1458/33.

The state of Israel was not created until May 1948, but this did not keep displaced Jews from illegally emigrating, en masse. The *Exodus* was only one example of attempted illegal resettlement, and it was not the only ship detained by British authorities. One Holocaust survivor, Shosh Bechar, described her illegal journey to Eretz Yisrael: "In a difficult and dangerous journey... Packed like sardines, we drifted for six days in a boat called "Hagana". When we were close to Haifa we were moved into four different detention boats. We were in jail in the heart of the sea for four weeks... After six weeks in Atlit we were fi-

¹⁵ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Refugees."

¹⁶ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Exodus 1947," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, accessed October 15, 2015, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005419>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

nally set free.”¹⁸ It was not until 1952 that all the Holocaust survivors left the DP camps; 80,000 refugees immigrated to the United States, 20,000 to other countries and 136,000 to Eretz Yisrael (the Homeland).¹⁹

If Jews made it into the quota, they were still subject to further tests before immigrating to a new home country. As one female Polish refugee explained, she chose to immigrate to the Israeli kibbutz simply because she was ill and feared rejection from other countries due to her failing health. The British, for example, mandated a medical evaluation with an X-ray before immigration, but the kibbutz did not have such stringent medical requirements.²⁰ The Jewish Agency did provide medical exams to those “destined for Israel,” and conducted follow-up exams once they had immigrated, but this was not a requirement for immigration.²¹ It was an attempt to determine the strength Jewish immigrants would bring to the Homeland. This is reflected in the *giyus*’ (Jewish movement to mobilize fighters in Israel) rejection rate of immigrants being only 10%²².

However, illness was not widespread in the camps. Displaced Jews had to have been able bodied, and relatively young, to be able to survive the horrors of the Holocaust. As Eigen found in his 1945 report, “there are no Jews over the age of forty or forty-five year in [the] Belsen [camp].”²³

18 Shosh Bechar, *Women & The Holocaust*.

19 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Displaced Persons.”

20 Khazzoom, “The Kibbutz,” 86.

21 William Haber, “Letter from William Haber to World Jewish Congress, December 20, 1948, Germany, Displaced Persons, X-XII, 1948,” *Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee NY Offices of the years 1945 – 1954*, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives, NY accessed November 13, 2015, http://search.archives.jdc.org/multimedia/Documents/NY_AR_45-54/NY_AR45-54_Count/NY_AR45-54_00029/NY_AR45-54_00029_00662.pdf.

22 Ibid.

23 Eigen, “Letter from Maurice.”

Another report noted that the population inside the camps seemed comprised, of averagely healthy people and not of the emaciated Holocaust survivors one would expect to see.²⁴ This youthful vigor was essential for the future kibbutz. In fact, the Jewish Agency specifically sought out the healthy with the intention to transform them into Israeli soldiers that were needed for the escalating Jewish-Arab conflict in Eretz Yisrael.

Not surprisingly, anti-Semitism continued to flourish after the war. Though Jews were no longer being systematically murdered, Europe’s anti-Semitic feelings were still prominent. Kurt Grossman, who held the office of German and Austrian Questions at the Jewish Agency in New York at the end of WWII, reported on developments in Germany in 1948 noting that, while it was obvious those within the camps did not want to remain there, Jews living in Germany, outside of DP camps, were “anxious to leave.”²⁵ Even those with decent lives knew it to be too dangerous to remain in Europe. According to Grossman, there were four causes for the increase of anti-Semitism in Germany: the Jews were seen as scapegoats for the war; they were seen as having “special privileges” within DP camps; they were accused of running the black market; and there were “allegation[s] that Jewish DPs failed to work and are merely leaches on Germany’s economy.”²⁶ Of course, these accusations held little validity, but, certainly, the atmosphere was toxic for Jews. With Europe destroyed, and its people entering a Cold War where new

24 Haber, “Letter from William.”

25 Kurt R. Grossman, “Report on Germany by Kurt R. Grossman, August 10, 1948, Germany, Displaced Persons, VII-IX, 1948,” *Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee NY Offices of the years 1945 – 1954*, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives, NY, accessed November 13, 2015, http://search.archives.jdc.org/multimedia/Documents/NY_AR_45-54/NY_AR45-54_Count/NY_AR45-54_00029/NY_AR45-54_00029_00793.pdf.

26 Ibid.

countries were being drawn, power reorganized and economies failing, the world surrounding DP camps was chaotic and threatening for the stateless Jews. William Haber, adviser on Jewish Affairs to the Commander-in-chief of United States forces in Germany and Austria, gave the following professional opinion to the world's Jewry in 1948:

Were we convinced that there is a practical possibility for Jewish displaced persons to establish for themselves a dignified social, cultural and economic existence in Germany, I would urge that we defend their right to remain and protect them in every way. Since I am convinced that this is not possible for this particular group, sound policy seems to encourage their emigration at the earliest possible time.²⁷

Strict displaced persons' immigration laws were always rumored to, eventually, become more lenient, which kept the hope of relocating to the United States alive. The potential to immigrate to the United States also kept many from leaving DP camps - the thought of becoming an American citizen was enticing. Most displaced Jews saw the United States as a more attractive option than Eretz Yisrael, especially before the state of Israel was created and had proven that it could defend itself against hostile Arab nations. Many survivors also had American relatives who offered a new home in a victorious Allied Nation that seemed safer than a nation not yet officially established.

Even when Israel became a state, displaced Jews were hesitant to immediately immigrate. William Haber reported to various Jewish organizations about "a brief period of uncertainty in which the DPs wondered whether the Arab challenge to Israel would succeed"²⁸. The

most important factor for survivors was stability in their new homes. It was not until after Israel demonstrated its strength in the Israeli War of Independence (1948 Arab-Israeli War), that Jews were resolved to immigrate immediately. As Haber said, the formation of Israel "helped to crystalize the thinking of these people as to where they had to go."²⁹ They knew if they did not relocate to Israel, they would forever be homeless people at the will of the world.

Jews specifically sought out the kibbutz life in Israel because they were following the ideology of Zionism. The Jewish Virtual Library defines Zionism as "the national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel."³⁰ However, Zionism "was not merely defined by its end goal."³¹ In fact, Zionism took on a more eclectic definition to survivors. For them, it was defined by the community of the kibbutz, a hopeful destination from Europe that offered the promise of education, strengthening of Jews, and opportunity for work. As Jewish identity became an "existential issue," Zionism became the answer.³²

Even before the war, Zionism was a heavily youth based movement. Historian Avinom J. Patt, the Philip D. Feltman Chair in Modern Jewish History at the Univer-

mittee, and The American Jewish Conference; Haber, "Letter from William."

29 Ibid.

30 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, "Zionism: A Definition of Zionism," *Jewish Virtual Library*, accessed November 4, 2015, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/zionism.html>.

31 Avinoam Patt, interviewed by Peter Ephross, August 11, 2009, "Dreams of the Displaced," *Forward*, accessed October 28, 2015, <http://forward.com/culture/111936/dreams-of-the-displaced/#ixzz3qUbdee2D>.

32 Yad Vashem, "The Return to Life in the Displaced Persons Camps, 1945-1956," The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, accessed December 1, 2015, http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp_camps/index.asp.

27 Haber, "Letter from William."

28 The World Jewish Congress, American Joint Distribution Committee, The Jewish Agency for Palestine, American Jewish Com-

sity of Hartford, investigated the role of Zionism after the Holocaust and explained the emergence of Zionism in the Jewish youth as a shift “to the broader Jewish public...[the Zionist youth] realize[d] that they have to stand up and take this leadership role—both because a lot of the Jewish leadership either leaves Poland or is executed very quickly at the beginning of the war, [and because] those people are focused to participate on Jewish councils.”³³ The Zionist youth became a symbol of a new Jew; a fighting and heroic force of resistance to the Holocaust in the wake of the absence of the old leadership.

The first armed Jewish resistance formed in the Vilna Ghetto in 1942. In their manifesto, they called to all of the ghetto’s Jews to take up arms in defense. They instructed the public: “Support the revolt!... For our ancestors! For our murdered children!... Long live liberty! Long live armed resistance! Death to the assassins!”³⁴ The Zionist Youth did not focus on the Jew as a victim but as a powerful agent; this translated well to life in the kibbutz. The same ghetto fighters and partisan groups met again in the kibbutz not as grief stricken survivors but as heroes of the war. Membership in the kibbutz, for resistance leaders as well as for all other survivors, meant a “collective heroic identity”³⁵. The Kibbutz and Zionism became interchange-

able for the ideas they represented.

The kibbutz was a utopia and a new life; it was socialist Zionism on the ground “committed to... rationalist, anti-clerical ideology.”³⁶ However, the kibbutz was not an establishment created for, or by, Holocaust survivors. In fact, the first kibbutzniks settled in Eretz Yisrael in 1910.³⁷ One earlier kibbutznik emigrated from Hungary to Eretz Yisrael in 1939.³⁸ Her name was Hannah Senesh, and the kibbutz transformed her into the premier example of the “New Jew.”

Feeling the hostilities of anti-Semitism in Hungary, Hannah joined a Zionist movement and immigrated to Israel at age eighteen, leaving her brother and mother behind. After living four years in Eretz Yisrael, she enlisted in the British Army in 1943 and volunteered to parachute behind enemy lines to rescue Jews - also with the hope of rescuing her mother.³⁹ She landed in Yugoslavia in March 1944, but as she crossed the border into Hungary a few months later, the Hungarian police detained her. Hannah was severely tortured for several months and her mother’s life was threatened, but she would not speak about her mission. She was sentenced to death by firing squad and refused to be blindfolded, “staring squarely at her executors and



Hannah Senesh dressing up in costume as a Hungarian soldier. Copyright American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise - Reprinted with permission (www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org).

33 Patt, interviewed by Peter Ephross.

34 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Resistance in the Ghettos,” *Resistance in the Holocaust*, 17, accessed October 1, 2015, <http://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20000831-resistance-bklt.pdf>.

35 Patt, interviewed by Peter Ephross.

36 Pierre L. Van der Berghe, “Huttenites and Kibbutzniks: A Tale of Nepotistic Communism,” *Man New Series* 23, no. 3 (Sep. 1988): 525.

37 Ibid., 525.

38 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprises, “Hannah Senesh,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, accessed November 7, 2015, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/biography/szenes.html>.

39 Ibid.

her fate.”⁴⁰ The twenty-three year old martyr is a national hero of Israel. Though her life was tragically cut short, her time spent in Eretz Yisrael was documented in her now published diary and revealed much about why Zionist Jews felt a call to the kibbutz and how it changed their Jewish identity.

“ THE ZIONIST YOUTH BECAME A
SYMBOL OF A NEW JEW; A FIGHTING
AND HEROIC FORCE OF RESISTANCE TO
THE HOLOCAUST IN THE WAKE OF THE
ABSENCE OF THE OLD LEADERSHIP.

Once in Eretz Yisrael, Hannah explored various kibbutzim. She was a firm believer in the kibbutz. “Zionism and socialism were instinctive with me,” she explained, “even before I was aware of them. The foundation was a part of my very being, and my consciousness merely reinforced my instinctive beliefs before I knew their designations or had the means of expressing them.”⁴¹ She was fully committed to the kibbutz even though she bashfully admitted some frustrations with her life there: she felt alone, somewhat lost, and incredibly guilty for abandoning her family. In the midst of her unhappiness, Hannah made an important distinction between her and the other members who were also unhappy with the kibbutz, she was ideologically connected to the kibbutz and they were not. As she explained: “Their ties consist of a love for the place, personal friendships, or simply the fact that they like it here - all factors that are, at times, more apt to bind one

to a settlement than any ideology.” In this entry, she identified two different types of kibbutzniks: one trying to establish a new life for him/herself, and the other one trying to establish a new life for Jews. Hannah recognized herself as the latter. Welcoming self-sacrifice, she knew her new life must have a bigger purpose: the same thought propelling the “New Jew” to the kibbutz.

When Hannah decided to return to Europe to aid the war effort, she left a letter for her brother in which she wrote: “I wonder will you understand...will you believe that it is more than a childish wish for adventure, more than youthful romanticism that attracted me...there are times which one’s life becomes unimportant...when one is commanded to do something even at the price of one’s life.”⁴² While in Eretz Yisrael, Hannah had an epiphany; no one would rescue the Jews, the Jews must rescue themselves. Though it is difficult to imagine such a young girl contemplating such decisions, it was this thought within the youth that helped create the first generation of the “New Jew.” To the Holocaust survivor youth, life was still viewed as fragile, but they certainly had witnessed enough death and destruction to find a cause to die for and to feel they were fully capable of making that decision. Hannah serves as a preeminent example of this new Jewish identity - one that embraced sacrificing personal happiness, and even life, to secure a Jewish state by way of the kibbutz life. Without the kibbutz, Hannah would not have realized her purpose: to secure a Jewish state.

Some kibbutzniks, like Hannah Senesh, hoped to, eventually, live on a kibbutz even before the war (fueled by the Zionist Youth Movement), while others were recruited from DP camps. The biggest handicap for Jews was that they did not represent a centralized community, because they were scattered across Europe and shared dif-

40 Ibid.

41 Hannah Senesh, Marge Piercy, and Roberta Grossman, *Hannah Senesh: Her Life and Diary, the First Complete Edition* (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007), 162.

42 Ibid., 164.

ferent identities depending on their home country. German Jews and Polish Jews, for example, were disparate. They did not share the same language, culture, political ideas, or living standards, which made it impossible to unite them. Because Jewish disunity was a monumental handicap for resistance during World War II, Zionism sought to end it. After the war, the longer the Jewish population of Eretz Yisrael remained low, the less likely Jews were to be able to obtain and defend their own state. A kibbutz population was vital to secure, since it would be living within the future borders of Israel.⁴³ Unity had to be established; the kibbutzim began to recruit.

Kibbutz movement leaders came to DP camps offering food, room and board, and stories of kibbutz life. They were looking for the youth, especially young couples, who would help bring a larger Jewish presence to the area.⁴⁴ They even began establishing kibbutzim in Europe to prepare the immigrants for their relocation to Eretz Yisrael.

The kibbutz was promising a unique destiny to survivors. They would not return to their lives before the war; they would be building their own nation - a state where their countrymen could not persecute them, as they had continuously done throughout history, because their countrymen would now all be Jews. In fact, the kibbutz was integral in changing the Jewish story; it created the "New Jew."⁴⁵ The "dependent, religious Diaspora Jew"⁴⁶ was transformed into the secular, rigid, hard working, and united Jew of the kibbutz. As Chaim Hoffman, the head of the Palestinian Mission, poignantly explained:

They took... young people out of the soul-destroying atmosphere of the camps,

43 Khazzoom, "*The Kibbutz*," 74.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 72.

46 Ibid.

brought them together with other youth, put them in touch with nature and physical labor.... a new kind of person came into being very different from the general run of camp inhabitants and much closer to the kind of people found in Palestine.⁴⁷

To recruit, the movement made promises of education - a priority in Judaism. One Polish woman in a DPC camp refused to join the kibbutz until they promised she would have allotted time to complete her education.⁴⁸ In reality, the kibbutz was interested in specifically teaching Hebrew.⁴⁹ More than 90% of immigrants were Ashkenazi Jews, meaning they were of Eastern European heritage.⁵⁰ Of those, virtually none knew Hebrew and were often fluent only in their home country's language. A common language was necessary to form a cohesive national identity, which made learning Hebrew a requirement to live on the kibbutz. Those in search of a university education felt deceived by what was offered. As one Polish woman refugee, who immigrated to the kibbutz, remembered: "We started to criticize... it wasn't what they promised us, lots of years of education - education was very important to us, there was almost no one who didn't study... They gave us Hebrew, hardly even Israeli history, and called that learning."⁵¹

Hannah Senesh also lamented the lack of education within the kibbutz. As she wrote in her diary: "I'm ashamed of myself for complaining, but I can't rid myself of the belief that precious years are being wasted, years that should be devoted to study and self-improvement."⁵²

47 Ouzan, "Rebuilding Jewish Identities."

48 Khazzoom, "*The Kibbutz*," 82.

49 Ouzan, "Rebuilding Jewish Identities."

50 Van der Berghe, "Huttenites and Kibbutzniks," 526.

51 Khazzoom, "*The Kibbutz*," 83.

52 Senesh, *Hannah Senesh*, 155.



Kids and their parents in kibbutz Ruhama, between 1940-1950. Courtesy of the Israel Internet Association/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

Engaging in study was considered an important first step in becoming a learned professional, which meant financial stability. Money did not mean assured protection for the Jews, but their history of persecution had taught them it was better to be as self-reliant as possible when living in a Christian world. Senesh contemplated if her work in the kibbutz, instead of investing in her education, was her purpose in life, uneasiness she shared with “tens of thousands of young Jews”⁵³. She continued to suggest that, although she felt a lack of direction, personal sacrifice was integral for kibbutz life.⁵⁴

In addition to the betrayal they felt from the unfulfilled promises of education and community in the kibbutz, Holocaust survivors were not always enthusiastically wel-

comed to their new home. Those who were already living on the kibbutz were somewhat elitist. It was considered an exclusive organization, and permanent members made it obvious that it was not a way of life for all.⁵⁵ Permanent members were most commonly criticized for valuing the immigrants’ worth based solely on their ability to work.⁵⁶ Work consumed every day of the immigrants’ lives just as it had years before in the work camps; Auschwitz’s own gates read “Arbeit Macht Frei” or “Work will make you free.” Technically, that was the same thought of work in the kibbutz: it would make one free - free of victim status. Of course, labor was being done under two vastly different conditions, the kibbutz being the only consenting work. Permanent kibbutz members bellowed, in Hebrew, at confused survivors to work more efficiently, just as, years before, the Schutzstaffel (SS) had shouted at them to continue working or die. One Polish immigrant, designated as R205 in a study, reflected on

her disdain of the work-obsessed kibbutzniks explaining that they “couldn’t understand that these were children that went through so much. They themselves had children the same age, and they had built houses ... These days someone has an experience, they immediately give them a psychologist...not a soul understood me, they thought I just didn’t want to work...”⁵⁷

Another Polish survivor added that “...there was no caring, they simply did not understand us... they didn’t know what our lives were like in the concentration camps.”⁵⁸ R205 further explained that she assumed the

⁵³ Ibid., 144.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 141.

⁵⁵ Marlilyn Garber, review of *The Kibbutz: Awakening From Utopia*, by Daniel Gavron in *Utopian Studies* 12, no. 1 (2001), 85.

⁵⁶ Khazzoom, “The Kibbutz,” 83.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 88.

leader of the kibbutz, who recruited her from her DP camp in Poland, would be representative of the rest of the kibbutz's members in Israel. She described him as warm and welcoming and assumed kibbutz life would be evocative of his spirit - a kibbutz community enthusiastic to receive her. She felt a strong sense of belonging, community, and family within the recruiting group, but "all that ended when I got to the kibbutz."⁵⁹ A great number of Holocaust survivors had the same optimistic expectations before being faced with the harsh reality in the kibbutz.

Jewish survivors did not seek psychiatric care during their time in the DP camps and after moving to Israel. Instead, the kibbutz gave them an outlet for their haunting visions from the Holocaust - not in the form of a venue to discuss their memories and feelings -but by arming them and making them soldiers. A sociological study of 25 families of Holocaust survivors living in a kibbutz found that the strong, militaristic, and work-centered environment of the kibbutz helped some cope with the trauma they had previously endured. One interviewee recalled how Germans murdered children by throwing them against a wall. Though he felt entirely helpless at the time, he compared how he felt in that moment to how he felt as a fighter in Israel's War of Independence: "When I fought for the first time with a gun in my hands during the war, I thought - what a pity I did not have a gun then."⁶⁰ Many others echoed this new sense of empowerment through military involvement.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 87.

⁶⁰ Louis Miller, ed., *Mental Health in Rapid Social Change* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1973), 303.

The kibbutz was a haven to the emotionally repressed survivors in many different ways. One survivor, Ruth, felt safer within the kibbutz community's security system,⁶¹ while others found refuge by simply being able to once again provide for their families through work on the kibbutz. In the kibbutz, in other words, Holocaust survivors found alternative forms of therapy.

Within the same study, researchers investigated the implications of the kibbutz's communally run homes for raising children: the children's house. Encompassing the ideas of socialism and egalitarianism, the kibbutz translated these philosophies into a communal home for raising children for the first six months of their lives. It was also common for the children to sleep in these houses, away from their parents, until they became teenagers. The chil-

dren's house was monitored by members of the kibbutz in shifts (both men and women) and operated with an intercom to tend to the infants' needs. This was mainly due to the somewhat equal status of men and women: both were working on the kibbutz all day and neither had time to care for a newborn. It was also deemed necessary because the kibbutz put more emphasis on the importance of the community as a whole rather than the nuclear family, and certainly not the individual.

Sociologists had interesting insights into the parent-child relationship within the kibbutz. They found that, although there was separation anxieties felt by the children, mothers felt an ease that they were not responsible for rearing their children. It was common for parents to

“ULTIMATELY, THE HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS WERE TRANSFORMED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF THE KIBBUTZ; THEY ABANDONED THEIR IDENTITY AS VICTIM AND SUCCESSFULLY ARMED THEMSELVES AS NATION BUILDERS.

⁶¹ Ibid., 307.



Jews dancing in Hasenecke, Germany, after the UN decision for the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Israel, Nov. 1947. Courtesy of Yad Vashem/תלמוד תלמוד תלמוד Munich, archival signature 1486/302.

recount some of their stories of survival to their children at this time, which the children interpreted as heroic adventures and helped solidify each child's connection to Israel, and especially to the kibbutz which had saved their parents. While Holocaust survivors had spent most of their adolescence as prisoners seeing unimaginable horrors, their children's adolescence was marked by "intense activity, burgeoning responsibility and increasing independence. This ideology makes it possible for the children to compensate for their parents' bypassed adolescence."⁶² In turn, Holocaust survivors felt indebted to the kibbutz as a haven for their children - for shielding their family from the horrors they endured.

Noam Shpancer, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor,, was raised in the children's house and recounted

her time growing up on the kibbutz: "We would visit our parents every afternoon between 4pm and 8pm...Our Jewish mothers never cooked us a meal, never washed our clothes or sang us a lullaby. The kibbutz system sought to limit private intimacies in case they diverted members' energy from the communal project."⁶³ She also revealed that the kibbutz prohibited individuality and competition, and strictly suppressed emotional expression in children. According to her, because of her time on the kibbutz, she had been unable to cry since age ten. Children were socialized "to be strong and sunny, simple and similar."⁶⁴ This socialization was the direct result of kibbutz ideology and the Holocaust survivors' experience. The kibbutz was breed-

⁶³ Noam Shpancer, "Child of the Collective," *The Guardian*, February 18, 2011, accessed October 13, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2011/feb/19/kibbutz-child-noam-shpancer>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 310

ing soldiers and had to neglect the individual, especially the individual's emotional state, to do so.

Although survivors' expectations were not met, Historian Avinom J. Patt has argued against suggestions of a deceitful Zionist agenda. According to him, Eretz Yisrael was not exploiting the state of the survivors when recruiters convinced them to immigrate. Though they were described as "hopeless and apathetic and weak," Patt believed that survivors were "a resilient, energetic and active group" and dismissed the claim that later immigration of Jews from Israel to the United States had been a failure of Zionism.⁶⁵ Patt was correct, Zionism did not fail, and even though Jews were not told the full extent of what their lives would be like on the kibbutz, these recruitment lies ultimately solidified a thriving Jewish state. Jewish survivors were guided to a life that would be the only solution for the definite preservation of all Jews. Getting the Jews to Israel was necessary, and it was not solely the result of kibbutz recruiters' lies or the survivors' supposed hopeless state that accounted for the massive 136,000 immigrants. The majority of survivors did not have to be "convinced" that Israel was their only destination. No countries allowed their immigration before, or during, WWII and as a consequence of being trapped in Europe, 67% of their population was extinguished.⁶⁶ Even after the war, no countries were eager to accept them as refugees. If Jews were going to be attacked in the future, regardless of the continent, they were going to have a country for shelter, a government to protect them, and countrymen working together to preserve the Jewish nation.

It is obvious that kibbutz life was not designed for the Holocaust survivors; it was designed to protect the world's Jewry from ever having to endure the horrors of the Holocaust again. William Haber said it best when he

explained the attitude toward Israel within the DP camps: "...all the DPs, whether they are personally interested in emigration to Israel or not recognize that they have a stake in the fate of that country and that their present status and their future are affected...by what happens to the Jewish community in Israel."⁶⁷

In conclusion, Holocaust survivors hoped the kibbutz life to be similar, or better, than the life they had led before the Holocaust, but the communal experience did not leave room for the individual to prosper. Searching for closure and an escape from the DP camps, survivors were welcomed to the kibbutz with little enthusiasm. Though many felt betrayed by the kibbutz life, it served the larger purpose of redefining Jewish identity. The disunited Jews of Europe found community and structure in the kibbutz; they were received as wartime heroes, not victims. This did not bode well with many. Expecting a consolable family from the kibbutz, the survivors instead felt marginalized and unable to properly grieve the Holocaust. The move to the kibbutz, however, did create the "New Jew" which was "manifested in everything from the rural nature of the work, to the shepherd sandals, direct, unadorned speech, wild, uncovered (i.e., nonreligious) hair, and women who worked in the fields rather than being burdened by traditional roles."⁶⁸ The kibbutz helped redefine the Jewish people into Israelis. They could never be vulnerable again; they needed a unified Jewish community, and the kibbutz was the seedling for that community. Ultimately, the Holocaust survivors were transformed by the experience of the kibbutz; they abandoned their identity as victim and successfully armed themselves as nation builders.

⁶⁵ Patt, interviewed by Peter Ephross.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Haber, "Letter from William Haber."

⁶⁸ Khazzoom, "*The Kibbutz*," 74.

A Virgin Population Epidemic

by Katherine Dover

And people had a love for one another in this country... And if somebody died, it wouldn't make any difference how busy you was or how far behind you was you laid everything down, part of them went and set up with the corpse, part of them went and made coffer [coffin?], part of them went and dug a grave. And everything was free, gratis... And when the Spanish flu went through here, in 1918, along there. They even took the ceiling out of their houses and give them to one another to make caskets out of.

-Unidentified 77-Year -Old White Male¹

IN THE spring of 1918, a deadly invisible force began to spread across the already war-torn globe. It claimed more lives than World War I and was indiscriminate in how it chose its victims. It was the first wave of what would become known as the Spanish Influenza Pandemic.² The pathogen that caused the 1918-1919 influenza epidemic behaved quite differently than doctors expected it to, leaving even the most experienced medical professionals baffled. Even the doctors of today have continued to use modern technology to examine how and why the epi-

demical spread to the extent it did. Answers may be found by looking back to how historians and medical professionals have explained the similar devastation caused by various diseases during the Columbian Exchange.

For centuries humans have tried to understand and explain the nature and cause of mass illness, with explanations ranging from the supernatural, to poor hygiene, and even to the idea of simply having bad genetics. In most cases, epidemic diseases were spread from a group of individuals who were already mostly immune to the diseases to another group who had never faced exposure or those who had successfully developed immunity to the disease. This process boomed during the Columbian Exchange as the European thirst for exploration drove nation after nation to send men to what were the farthest corners of the earth at the time. As the explorers discovered new lands and began to open new trade routes, they carried what Alan Kraut referred to as "silent travelers." These silent and unseen stowaways posed little danger to the European crews they used as hosts; however, they would become a devastating force as they reached the previously untouched shores of the New World.³ The epidemics sparked by these diseases became known as virgin soil epidemics.⁴

Scholar Alfred Crosby defined virgin soil epidemics as "...those in which the populations at risk have had no previous contact with the diseases that strike them and

1 Unidentified 77 Year Old White Male, interviewed by Donna Christian and Walt Wolfram, 1983, interview M37 B(5), transcript, Center for Applied Linguistics Collection, Library of Congress, Washington DC.

2 Milorad Radusin, "The Spanish Flu Part I: The First Wave," *Vojnosnitetki Pregled: Military Medical and Pharmaceutical Journal of Serbia and Montenegro* 69 (June 2012): 812.

3 Alan Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the "Immigrant Menace,"* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 13-30.

4 David S. Jones, "Virgin Soils Revisited," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60 (October 2003): 703.



Soldiers from Fort Riley, Kansas, ill with Spanish influenza, 1918. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

are therefore immunologically almost defenseless.”⁵ In essence, virgin soil epidemics caused such widespread devastation simply because the infected populations lacked the necessary immunity due to lack of exposure to the epidemic-causing pathogen. What this meant for most of the Native American population during the time of the Columbian Exchange was almost guaranteed sickness, and most likely death from diseases they had never before experienced which their traditional healing techniques could not cure. As trade fueled rapid and continuous exploration and conquest, wave after wave of deadly virgin soil epidemics spread like wildfires through the indigenous population, ultimately, along with other environmental forces, causing the rapid decline of the Native American population

5 Alfred W. Crosby, “Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation of America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 33 (April 1976): 289.

that the time of the Columbian Exchange has become known for.⁶ Just as the indigenous populations of North and South America suffered about five centuries before, the world suffered as the Spanish Influenza Pandemic swept across the globe at the dawn of the twentieth century.

By the spring of 1918, America had been an active participant of World War I for almost a year, and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles was less than a year away.⁷ Spring 1918 also marked another important milestone in global history; it marked the beginning of the first wave of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic.⁸ In fall of 1918, the second much deadlier wave hit, and by the spring of 1919, the third and final wave of the influenza virus hit.⁹ Many physicians of the nineteen-tens witnessed traditional seasonal waves of influenza and found that the typical treatments used for most respiratory illnesses worked quite well.¹⁰ However, the waves of the Spanish Influenza were not caused by the same influenza strain

that caused seasonal influenza outbreaks. The particular strain of influenza that was responsible for the 1918-1919 epidemic was an avian strain of the virus, much like the one known as bird flu that hit in the early 2000s. Because the Spanish Influenza was caused by a different strain of the influenza virus, it impacted the population much differently than a seasonal strain of the influenza virus normally would. The Spanish Influenza virus claimed the lives of

6 Ibid., 293-294.

7 Martin Gilbert, *The First World War: A Complete History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 394.

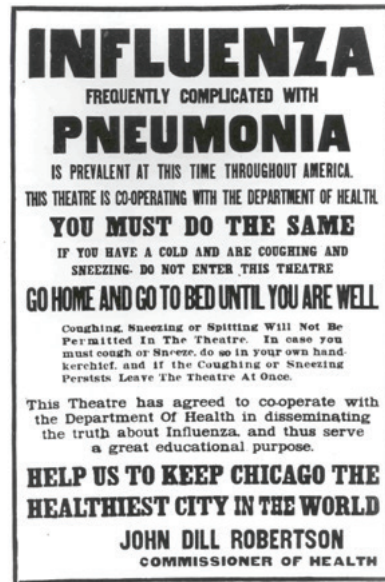
8 Radusin, “The Spanish Flu Part I: The First Wave,” 812.

9 Milorad Radusin, “The Spanish Flu Part II: The Second and Third Wave,” *Vojnosnitetki Pregled: Military Medical and Pharmaceutical Journal of Serbia and Montenegro* 69 (June 2012): 917-920.

10 J. M. Winter, *The Experience of World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 195.

between 20 and 50 million people world-wide within approximately a year and a half.¹¹

The Spanish Influenza was known by many other names including La Grippe, the Spanish Lady, and the Purple Death. The reason the name “Spanish Influenza” was so predominant was due to the fact that during the time frame of the epidemic, many people believed the epidemic began in Spain; however, historians found that the virus first presented itself in Germany.¹² The first wave of the epidemic claimed significantly less lives than the second and third waves and presented symptoms such as high fever, body aches, and headaches.¹³ The symptoms of the first wave of the virus only lasted around a week with a second week of recovery of what many referred to as a hangover.¹⁴ Most people who fell ill recovered well in response to treatments still used today, rest and fluids.¹⁵ The second and third waves, however, behaved in a much more violent manner with symptoms such as high fever, headache, joint pain, nausea, lined tongue, and an inflamed throat. If the patient was treated properly and as soon after these symptoms were noted, the prognosis was usually favorable; however, if late stage symptoms



Anti-influenza ad for a Chicago movie theatre, 1918. Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine.

began to include fever around 103 -105 degrees Fahrenheit and bronchial and lung tissue inflammation, the prognosis was typically death within two to three days. The symptoms of the later stage of the virus were due to the development of viral pneumonia, which progressed quickly causing severe inflammation of the lungs and filled patients' lungs with their own blood, causing asphyxiation. Patients often became cyanotic, meaning that oxygen no longer made its way throughout the body, leaving people with ghostly white and even bluish-purple complexions and red spots across their faces known as petechial hemorrhaging. Essentially, once patients reached the point of developing viral pneumonia alongside influenza, they declined quickly, either suffocating due to inflammation and/or by drowning in their own blood.¹⁶

Unlike the victims of the first waves, the victims of the second and third waves were young, relatively healthy people between the ages of 15 to 34 years old.¹⁷

The second wave of the influenza epidemic caused death tolls to skyrocket. According to a 1920 health report published by the Treasury Department of the United States Public Health Service, from September 1, 1918 to December 31, 1918, 4,353 individuals died from influenza in the state of Indiana alone. The largest number of deaths occurred in people between the ages of 15 and 34 with 1,961 deaths, compared to 1,186 deaths for ages 0 to 14,

11 Terrence M. Tumpey *et. al.*, “Characterization of the Reconstructed 1918 Spanish Influenza Pandemic Virus,” *Science* 310 (October 2006): 77-79.

12 Radusin, “The Spanish Flu Part I: The First Wave,” 812-814.

13 Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 81.

14 Radusin, “The Spanish Flu Part I: The First Wave,” 814-815.

15 Seasonal Flu, accessed November 29, 2013, http://www.flu.gov/about_the_flu/seasonal/index.html.

16 Radusin, “The Spanish Flu Part II: The Second and Third Waves,” 917-920.

17 Tumpey, “Characterization of the Reconstructed,” 77.

and 1,206 deaths for ages 35 to 65+.¹⁸ A picture of the St. Louis Red Cross Motor Corps from October 1918 showed a half a dozen masked nurses holding empty stretchers while standing near empty ambulances waiting on duty for their next call.¹⁹ Death tolls rose so quickly in Pettigrew, Arkansas that people resorted to donating the wood from the ceilings in their homes to build caskets so that the dead could be buried properly.²⁰ The fear of virus kept many confined to their own homes. Rosie Hutchinson Ashley of Booneville, North Carolina remembered, “We was one o’ [of] ther [the] fust [first] families hereabouts ter [about to] have hit an’ ever boddy [body] was so afraid o’ hit [of it] they would not come in ther [the] house but would call outin [out in] ther [the] yard an’ [and] put food on ther [the] porch fer [for] us.”²¹ Even the demand for war supplies was not enough to encourage people to gather in crowded places such as factories. The fear became so prevalent that the “American Protective League,” an organization set up by the Justice Department during the first wave of the epidemic to monitor the situation, had over 200,000 members in 1,000 cities by the time the second wave hit.²² Because

the influenza virus spread so easily from person to person through the air and primarily targeted younger, more socially active people, no one class, race, or gender was safe. Even if a wealthier family was able to maintain steady care from a doctor, which there was a severe shortage of due to the war, medical attention did not guarantee survival as the treatments recommended by doctors did little to stop the virus, and in some cases even allowed the virus to thrive.²³

“ THE SPANISH INFLUENZA VIRUS CLAIMED THE LIVES OF BETWEEN 20 AND 50 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE WITHIN APPROXIMATELY A YEAR AND A HALF.

Unlike most diseases of the early twentieth century such as tuberculosis, typhoid, and cholera, the Spanish Influenza virus targeted almost all healthy, young individuals and could not be simply blamed on immigrants or those viewed as genetically weak.²⁴ This lack of widely publicized blame may have been due to the rapid and unrelenting nature of the way the virus spread accompanied by the stresses created by wartime demand. Though the 1918-1919 influenza epidemic virus was named after Spain, most people seemed too busy with handling its impact and too concerned with the war effort to start a raging anti-Spaniard campaign like they had with Italians, Irishmen, Jews, and many other groups considered to be non-white

18 Treasury Department of the United States Public Health Service. *Difficulties in Computing Civil Death Rates for 1918 with Especial Reference to Epidemic Influenza*, Prepared by Edgar Sydenstricker and Mary L. King, United States Public Health Service (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920).

19 Library of Congress, St. Louis Red Cross Motor Corps on duty Oct. 1918 Influenza epidemic, accessed July 23, 2015, <http://www.loc.gov/item/2011661525/>.

20 Unidentified 77 Year Old White Male, interview.

21 Rosie Hutchins Ashley, interviewed by Clalee Dunnagan, August 30, 1939, interview [Roxie Owens], transcript, U.S. Work Project Administration, Federal Writer's Project, Library of Congress, Washington DC.

22 Work Shop, *The Deadly Virus: The Influenza Epidemic of 1918*, accessed November 29, 2013, <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/ingluenza-epidemic/records/list.html>. Most factories had a 45% to 60% drop in their workforce because of the terror caused by the influenza virus, showing that a disease did not necessarily have to take life to drag life to a halt. This drop in workforce impacted companies'

ability to get wartime necessities to the warfront.

23 Winter, *The Experience*, 152-153; South Beach Patient Book, *The Deadly Virus: The Influenza Epidemic of 1918*, accessed November 29, 2013, <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/ingluenza-epidemic/records/list.html>.

24 Kraut, *Silent Travelers*, 1-9. During the early 1900s most illnesses were blamed on immigrants who many nativists believed were genetically and racially inferior to native born white Americans.



U. S. Army Hospital Number 45, Aix-les-Bain, France, 1919. Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine.

at the time.

The behavior of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic was in part very similar to the virgin soil epidemics that devastated the indigenous populations of the New World during the Columbian Exchange. Both the influenza epidemic and the many virgin soil epidemics hit quickly and caused elevated death rates in populations that had never been exposed to such pathogens. However, the virgin soil epidemic theory does not necessarily fit the events of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic perfectly because the means of introduction of the virus were quite different. In the case of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic, the virus was introduced not by an already immune group of people and simply spread to a non-immune group of people, but rather it was introduced by a different non-human host and spread to the human population as a whole. Therefore, the entire globe would have been considered virgin soil, which simply did not fit the traditional concept of what a virgin soil

pandemic was. Rather than being a virgin soil epidemic, the Spanish Influenza Pandemic represented a new wave of epidemics that to some degree mimicked the behavior of Columbian era virgin soil epidemics. These new wave epidemics may have suitably been called virgin *population* epidemics instead, in which the impacted population was introduced to a pathogen not typically carried or contracted by humans with a resulting worldwide epidemic that impacted all nations, races, classes, and genders equally because no one group possessed immunity.

As modern medicine advanced enough to allow medical professionals and scientists to understand the root causes of such illnesses, and in turn such epidemics, new questions and threats emerged. Even as recently as July 22, 2015, newspaper headlines read, “USDA: Bird Flu Vaccine Works on Chickens; Testing on Turkeys.” In this case, the outbreak of avian influenza or bird flu of the early 2000s reminded everyone of the possible threat of a mass casualty through a globally spread epidemic emerging seemingly without warning even in the modern era.²⁵

The advancements that have allowed researchers to understand that the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic was caused by a non-human host marked a new era of epidemic diseases. Because of the nature of these new types of epidemics and because of the way global networking developed, the human race became increasingly susceptible to such powerful epidemics in which the entire global population, regardless of nationality, class, race, or gender, was at risk. While epidemics like the Spanish Influenza Pandemic may not have been considered virgin soil epidemics, the epidemics still attacked a virgin population and resulted in mass casualties, just on a much larger scale. Perhaps

25 “USDA: Bird Flu Vaccine Works on Chickens; Testing on Turkeys,” *New York Times*, July 22, 2015, accessed July 30, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/22/us/ap-us-bird-flu-vaccine.html?_r=0.

the phrase *virgin population epidemic* would have better suited for the 1918-1919 influenza epidemic, and even future epidemics in which non-human strains of viruses and possibly even man-made antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria known as super bugs, pose a threat not just to those in the most remote, untouched corners of the world, but to the global society as a whole.

Uneasy Lies the Head: Richard II, Henry IV, and the Struggle for Legitimacy

by Timothy Granger

Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then happy low, lie down!
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

- William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2 Act 3, scene 1, 26–31*

Introduction

THEORETICALLY, KINGSHIP in Medieval England had its basis in hereditary right. From 1216 until 1399, either the eldest son or the son of the eldest son succeeded to the throne. Although the nobility may have disagreed with the actions of certain monarchs, they never questioned who sat on the throne. Richard II changed that. Deemed tyrannical and unworthy of his title, Parliament chose his cousin, the exiled Henry of Bolingbroke, as the most likely successor. As the grandson of Edward III, Henry held strong lineage, but what about Richard? The famed proclamation “The king is dead. Long live the king.” implies that the throne could never be vacant, but to avoid looking like an usurper, Henry had to insist that it was. He needed to legitimize his kingship while at the same time

tarnishing the legitimacy of his predecessor. Henry IV sought to legitimize his reign through a combination of legal acts and propaganda that emphasized not only his royal claim, but his acceptance by the people of the kingdom.

Long before William the Conqueror and his fellow Normans set foot on the country’s soil in 1066, English monarchs knew that to become king their claim had to be backed by two things: proper lineage and the support of the kingdom’s great men. Once they attained the crown, kings had to be good rulers, which meant a respect for the law. To be successful, it was imperative that a king be wary of his subjects, the so-called “ruled.” Being the creators of the English monarchy, they would not accept a king who did not respect the law. Although Richard’s actions as king cemented his own downfall and caused him to lose the respect of the kingdom’s lords, Henry Bolingbroke would discover the difficulties of replacing a king. In order to be crowned, Henry not only had to convince parliament that Richard had failed in his duties as sovereign, but he also had to position himself as an ideal and legitimate successor to the throne.

This paper has two goals: to trace the reign of Richard II from its inception to its climatic ending as well as to study the measures that Henry took to legitimize his claim. This will be done by analyzing contemporary chronicles that give us crucial insight into the reigns of both monarchs as well as the methods Henry and his supporters took to strengthen Lancastrian legitimacy.

What Came Before: The Monarchy Richard II Inherited, The Importance of the Peasant's Revolt, and the Road to His Downfall

Before delving into the usurpation of 1399, one should first look at the reign that Henry IV usurped. To give further insight into the nature of legitimacy and how Henry used it to authenticate his own claim, a discussion of how Richard II lost favor aids in understanding the lengths that Henry and Parliament went to making it illegitimate.

We begin not with Richard, but with his grandfather. In 1327, after the deposition of Edward II, Edward III (his son), inherited the throne. Unlike his father Edward II—maligned for his use of untrustworthy favorites and limited use of patronage—the people of England greatly admired Edward III, and the early decades of his reign generally received fanfare and celebration. England celebrated for good reason. By the first half of his rule, “Good King Edward” had not only reestablished the authority of the monarchy after the disasters of his deposed father, but also attained fame for his military pursuits in the intermittent battles against the French in the Hundred Years War. The early years of the conflict culminated in great English victories: Crecy in 1346, Calais in 1347 and Poitiers in 1356.¹ Disputably, the most successful military force in all of Western Europe during this period, her armies not only achieved major victories in France, but Scotland as well.²

Although first attributed to the king, England's military leaders (of which the country had produced sev-

eral of high quality during the mid-fourteenth century) garnered praise for these military successes. Edward of Woodstock, or the Black Prince as he has come to be known, the eldest son of Edward III, was the era's most renown knight and the father of the future King Richard. Both Edwards so embodied the chivalric virtues valued by all levels of English society that the French chronicler Jean Froissart (who met both of them) described King Edward as both “gallant and noble... [a man whose] like had not been seen since the days of King Arthur” and his son the “flower of English Knighthood,” as “the most gallant man and chivalrous prince.”³ But, as Nigel Saul demonstrates, Richard, the future king of England, differed from his father and his grandfather: “The prince was a soldier through and through; his son was of a less warlike disposition. The prince was a man of vaguely puritanical religion; his son became almost ostentatiously orthodox....the prince, of course, was essentially a man in the mold of his father and great-grandfather.”⁴

The latter half of Edward's reign lost much of the luster of its early years. The jubilations that came from victories over France vanished. Except for the hold that England kept over the town of Calais and the Garcon coastal strip, the symbolic achievements that England attained through its military efforts no longer persisted. Additionally, seeing King Edward, the once great administrator, at court became a rare occurrence due to his declining into dementia, making the political situation in England as precarious as its war efforts. With Edward seemingly out of the picture by 1369, widespread corruption blossomed at home. The king's senility as well as the now bedridden

1 Above all, the model of a great leader was that of the Warrior King, a king who boldly led his armies into battle. War was a major business for Medieval England. Though there were indeed pursuits for glory and wealth, it also kept the nobles, certainly capable of being a thorn in the king's side, content and saved the kingdom from the dangerous outcomes of their boredom.

2 Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven: Yale, 1997), 6.

3 John Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. Thomas Johnes (New York: 1961) in John Gillingham and Ralph A. Griffiths, *Medieval Britain: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 90.

4 Saul, *Richard II*, 9.

Prince Edward allowed his mistress, Alice Perrers and his next oldest son, John of Gaunt to gain major influence and control over England's government. No one wanted to see Gaunt ruling on behalf of the king. Greatly disliked, John of Gaunt represented a problem for England's other nobles. Even before Edward III grew ill, Gaunt held nearly unchecked authority as the country's leading magnate and the richest of their ranks. His interests ranged widely over not only England and Wales, but also Ireland, Aquitaine, Normandy and Castile.⁵ Ultimately, the members of the ground-breaking "Good Parliament" of 1376 removed Perrers from court and decreased Gaunt's influence with the impeachment of some of his followers.⁶ But John of Gaunt would not be so easily stifled. Excessively greedy with an insatiable thirst for power, Gaunt benefitted from the docile nature of the future King Richard. He also held some responsibility for "tyrannical" man Richard became, with he and other nobles like him holding much power over the king in his young state. Coincidentally, John's son Henry, the Duke of Derby (his title



King Edward III by unknown artist, 1597-1618. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

advanced to the Duke of Lancaster after John's death) in the end essentially profited from these conditions.

The influence of John of Gaunt brings up a matter that should be addressed before going farther: that being a definition of these "great men," the nobility. Broadly, their ranks made up the leaders of the ruling class. Their order consisted of such powerful men as Roger Mortimer, who revolted against Edward II, and, indeed, Henry Bolingbroke, himself the son of John of Gaunt. The most influential of them were always extremely wealthy and owners of extensive amounts of land—and in some cases more than the king. Some gained their title by inheritance, raised well aware of the lofty positions that await-

ed them in adulthood. Their lessers presented them deference, obedience, and power.⁷ Their titles, more often than not, made them inseparable from combat, with the greatest number of them belonging to the knighthood. Only a minority of them held such untapped power. Unlike the king, they did not have to be born into the nobility. Lineage was not a requirement for their success, such as in the case of William Marshal, 1st Earl of Pembroke who rose from humble beginnings to have the ear of the king. Great men could be made. In Parliament, they sat in the House

⁵ Miri Rubin, *The Hollow Crown: A History of Britain in the Late Middle Ages* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 120.

⁶ May McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century: 1307-1399* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 390-392. Impeachment had not yet been established as we think of it today.

⁷ Michael Hicks, *English Political Culture In the Fifteenth Century* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), 51.

of Lords while lower lords (though still of the same order) sat in the House of Commons.⁸ As far as this project is concerned, we will be dealing with those few men who ran medieval England's political sphere. As already expressed, they could be either a major thorn in the monarch's side or his greatest advocates. They had their own agendas and oftentimes squabbled amongst themselves on conflicting issues. Needless to say, they were both influential and dangerous. More specifically, they were the force Richard II slighted, and many of their ranks accepted Henry of Bolingbroke, allowing him to become King of England.

When the Black Prince succumbed to his illnesses in 1376, the country's nobles immediately began efforts to have Richard elevated to the status of his deceased father: crowned as heir apparent, given his father's titles, and recognized as the new Prince of Wales. The presence of John of Gaunt loomed over them. Richard was a very young heir-apparent, and no one wanted to be caught in the middle of a monarchical struggle. Nigel Saul argues that their fears were unjustified. He has a point. Technically, the succession to the crown in England had its dominance in the senior male line. Although John of Gaunt was King Edward III's oldest surviving son, the Black Prince had still been the *oldest* son, and Richard was born before he died. This left Richard as the rightful heir. Still, those members of the court who opposed the despotic nature of Gaunt believed he had an eye for the throne.⁹ The petition in favor of Richard received great popularity. The Archbishop of Canterbury summed up these feelings when he exclaimed:

[Y]et it was as though he [The Black Prince] was present and not absent, by leaving behind him so noble and so handsome a son who was his very image and true likeness...the same Richard should be the true heir apparent to the kingdom in the same way as his noble father the prince had been, and should be held by them and by all the king's other subjects in great honor and reverence.¹⁰

Richard received his father's titles on November 20th of 1376. The influence and popularity of Prince Edward at his death made for a peaceful transition. Edward III died less than a year later.

With the death of Edward III in 1377, the Kingdom of England faced substantial ambivalence. Its people wondered whether their great land stood on its last legs or if Richard's coronation represented some sort of golden age.¹¹ King Edward had ruled for 52 years, an extremely long reign for a medieval king, and many of his subjects would not have remembered a time when he had not sat on the throne.¹² Because the England that Richard II inherited failed to live up to the successes of King Edward III, some historians have been inclined to assert that Richard's rein did not stand a chance, being doomed from the start. On the contrary, Richard actually came to the throne with some advantages. As stated, his grandfather Edward III's effective administration practices reestablished the authority of the English crown, "raising it to command new levels of respect both at home and throughout Christendom,"

8 Originally, Parliament only consisted of one house. It was divided into two during the reign of Edward III. Whereas the clergy and nobility sat in the House of Lords, the House of Commons was filled with knights and burgesses. During this era, besides the intrepidity shown in the Good Parliament, they remained secondary to the Crown and the Lords.

9 Saul, *Richard II*, 17.

10 The Parliament Rolls of Richard II: 1376 in A.K. McHardy, trans. *The Reign of Richard II: from Minority to Tyranny 1377-1397* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University press, 2012), 17.

11 McHardy, *The Reign of Richard II*, 1.

12 With his reign of over fifty years, Edward III was the second-longest reigning monarch of any of England's Medieval Kings, the longest being Henry III who ruled from 1216-1272.

additionally, dying early assured that the Black Prince, unlike his father, left a great legacy of goodwill toward his infant son. This allowed Richard to secede without the threat of being supplanted by his older uncles.

With the death of Prince Edward in 1376, Richard, only ten years old at the time, inherited the throne as only the second underage king since the conquest. Until a young king reached maturity, he remained dangerously susceptible to the control of the Kingdom's nobles and, if necessary, he was easier to eliminate. An underage king always relied on a Regent, chosen by the Lord's themselves to aid the king in all matters of government. The presence of the untrustworthy John of Gaunt made this particularly troubling. Thus, his fellow nobles never awarded him the title of Regent—at least not technically. Truth be told, John did not have to ask. He exerted this power anyway.

Whether he had his eyes on the crown or not, John of Gaunt, along with the late King Edward's mistress, regained control over Parliament after just three months. Their first move? Arresting the Speaker of the House of Commons.¹³ Once again in charge of all aspects of English Government, he reversed the sentences of his impeached supporters, and forced Parliament to grant a large poll tax (the first in English history) to aid in the declining fortunes of the crown—mainly to continue supporting its fledgling wars against France. Whereas traditional lay subsidies had fallen more on the wealthy, Parliament levied taxes on all of the kingdom's population. The poll tax obligated every man and woman over the age of fifteen to pay a standard levy of one shilling, quite a burden for the poor. By the third levy of these taxes in 1381, the people's irritation

reached a boiling point, culminating in, as George Holmes writes, "the first social revolution in English history" and one of the most calamitous events in Richard's reign.¹⁴

“ RICHARD NEVER FORGAVE THOSE WHO DARED STRIP POWER AWAY FROM HIM. HIS “DEVOUT BELIEF IN HIS OWN AUTHORITY” LEFT HIM A VOLATILE MIXTURE OF HUMILIATION AND, WITH THE REMOVAL OF HIS CLOSE FRIENDS AND ADVISORS, DEVASTATION.

To combat the tax strikes that rose up in coordination with the revolt, the crown sent out special commissioners to accept payment. In some instances, towns rose up against the tax, such as in Fobbing where the villagers attacked commissioners and at Brentwood and Savoy where rioters mobbed John of Gaunt's manor (though they stole nothing). But London was the major center of unrest, where rebel bands from Essex united with crowds from Kent to form a force of at least 10,000.¹⁵ For two extremely chaotic days, the rebellious Londoners moved throughout the city viciously burning buildings, pillaging property, and executing their enemies. Although the poll tax inspired these rebellions, the rioters clearly wanted more. To England's common citizens, the levied taxes represented an out of touch government unconcerned with the

13 The office of Speaker is an older title and had been originally been referred by titles such as “parlour” and “prolocutor,” The Speaker of the House of Commons as we know it dates from 1376 during the “Good Parliament.” It was created as an intermediary body on behalf of the House of Commons to the King, who could voice complaints against the House of Lords.

14 George Holmes, *The Later Middle Ages: 1271-1485* (New York: the Norton Library, 1962), 143.

15 Elizabeth Hallam, *The Wars of the Roses: From Richard II to the Fall of Richard III At Bosworth Field-Seen Through the Eyes of Their Contemporaries* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), 35. The population of London around this time was around 40,000, so this was clearly a force to be reckoned with.

plight of its people. They fought against bad rule—mainly symbolized through John of Gaunt and the other members of the king’s council—and for their own personal freedom. Much has been written about the Peasant’s Revolt of 1381, but, for the purpose of this project, its importance lies in what it tells us about the kingship of a young Richard and the significance of the “ruled.” Fancying themselves as the “true commons,” the rioters opposed the House Commons, which though titled in a manner that implies that it ruled on behalf of the people, mainly included knights and wealthy legislators. Many members of the mob owed their debt to men that sat in the Commons. The rioters’ actions also seemed deliberate. Though they attacked some random houses, they mainly went after headquarters near the center of political events, especially if they housed important records. The rioters burned and ripped high court rolls and documents, the vehicles of their suppression.¹⁶

The crown suppressed the revolts everywhere by June of 1381. It also withdrew the concessions granted and promises to buy the rioters off. The “peasants” gained essentially nothing. Richard, however, emerged from the ordeal as something of a hero, celebrated for his bravery and quick wit. After the murder of the mob’s great leader, Wat Tyler, King Richard, no older than twelve, reportedly galloped into the midst of the crowd, waved his arms for attention, and exclaimed, “You shall have no captain but me. Just follow me to the fields without, and then you can have what you want.”¹⁷ Though a liar, he magnanimously led the crowd out of London. The people followed their king. At so young an age, Richard demonstrated his capacity for political savvy and great leadership. Still, the people’s frustration remained. The Peasant’s Revolt demonstrated that the people might revolt if pushed to extremes, but the uprising ended as quickly as it arose. The people’s ire did

not truly affect the king. The lost support of the “common” people in 1381 did not jeopardize his throne. This would not until the late 1390s when he slighted the true controllers of power, the nobility.

Besides his marriage to Anne of Bohemia in 1381, the chronicles mention very little of Richard immediately after the events of the Peasant’s Revolt. During those integral years, Richard came of age and probably concentrated on molding himself while learning the duties of kingship. In the early years of his rule, power rested with a group of noblemen known as the “continual council.” They aided in all affairs “touching the estate, honor and advantage” of the kingdom and lordships.¹⁸ In all actuality, they had the freedom to make decisions and judgments that affected the entire kingdom as they saw fit. Perhaps in part because the nobility had so greatly enjoyed this power (barons liked nothing more than a weak king), the last few years of Richard’s reign—culminating in his downfall—revolved around the king gaining his majority and enacting his revenge. Historians refer to this brief period as “Richard’s Tyranny.”

In the “Merciless Parliament” of 1388, a group of nobleman known as the Lords Appellant became angry with the favoritism of Richard’s council and removed the king’s favorites in an attempt to stifle his influence. Richard never forgave those who dared strip power away from him. His “devout belief in his own authority” left him a volatile mixture of humiliation and, with the removal of his close friends and advisors, devastation.¹⁹ Richard regained control a year later by relying on the popular argument that his poor leadership came from bad counsel. Throughout the history of the English monarchy, those who critiqued

¹⁸ Carl Stephenson and Frederick Marcham, *Sources of English Constitutional History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972). 242.

¹⁹ Nicole Watkins, “Richard II’s Royal Tragedy,” *The Vulcan Historical Review* 15 (2011): 222.

¹⁶ Rubin, *The Hollow Crown*, 126.

¹⁷ Froissart in Saul, *Richard II*, 77.

the King usually blamed his council rather than the king himself, God's chosen. In 1397, with the help of his powerful uncle John of Gaunt, Richard II regained power and secured his place on the throne; he took his revenge on the main lords that took power away from him years earlier by taking it away from them through a mixture of exile and execution.



The Westminster Portrait of Richard II. Painter unknown. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

The growth of Richard's unpopularity does not have one sole cause. Most of the information we hear about it comes from chronicles written after he had already been deposed. After 1389, the negative opinions of the king from members of Parliament strengthened. Quali-

ties they attributed to him included being a boy who never grew up, being disrespectful of nobility and historic duty, and plotting secretly to sell the French (bitter rivals of the English) the port town of Calais, an extremely important foothold for the English.²⁰ Around this time, an unknown painter produced a grand portrait of Richard II, the first of any English King. The following passage seems to reference the massive work: "After this on solemn festivals when by custom [Richard II] performed kingly rituals, he would order a throne to be prepared for him in his chamber on which he liked to sit ostentatiously from after dinner until vespers, talking to no one but watching everyone; and when his eye fell on anyone, regardless of rank, that person had to bend his knee towards the king..."²¹ His fellow nobles found this weird and a cause for alarm. And then came the death of John of Gaunt, the beginning of the end for Richard.

The son of John of Gaunt, Henry Bolingbroke, had been a member of those Lords Appellant who attempted—and for a time succeeded—in taking power away from the 'tyrannical' rule of the king and his favorites. Like many of his accomplices, Henry had been exiled with a sentence of ten years. When John of Gaunt died in 1399, Richard II not only extended Henry's exile from ten years to life, but had him disinherited as well.²² At this time, the Lancaster's (John of Gaunt and his descendants), ranked amongst the richest nobles of the realm (with a wealth that much outweighed that of the crown). England's populace also saw Henry Bolingbroke as quite the hero. Throughout Europe, his feats of athleticism during tournaments and jousts brought him great celebrity, a stark contrast to Richard's

20 Rubin, *The Hollow Crown*, 171.

21 *The Continuatio Eulogii*, 371-9 in Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 68.

22 Saul, *Richard II*, 403.

reputation of lacking in masculine qualities and being rather feminine. Angry at being refused his birthright by a king that he already greatly disliked, Henry Bolingbroke sailed from his exile in Paris to England. Originally, the sources say that Henry and his men only marched through England to regain the lands of his dead father. However, when the ambitious nobleman returned home, he found the king absent from the throne. How unlucky for Richard II, to be away and invading Ireland.²³ As we will see, Henry was careful in his steps, eventually deciding that he would not settle for the position of Protector that the lords of the realm offered him. As he made his way through England (practically unopposed), Henry's support grew. The element of surprise worked in his favor. Richard returned home after hearing about his cousin's march too late to provide any sort of challenge to him. On August 12th, he held negotiations with the Earl of Northumberland (a supporter of Henry) in Wales.²⁴ He surrendered to Henry's forces soon after. They removed Richard, the "tyrant," to the infamous Tower of London. No one outside of Henry's group ever saw Richard again.²⁵ So ends the story of Richard II as practicing monarch.

Before turning to the next section, Henry IV's quest for legitimacy, allow the writer a moment to speak on the fascinating (though morbid) topic of killing kings. Richard's elimination placed him in an exclusive club. In fact, the English were famous (or notorious) for killing their kings. Consider William II, described in the *Anglo-*

23 For centuries, Ireland had been a thorn in the crown's side. Ireland had been considered under the authority of the crown since its conquest by Henry II in the 12th century. By the time of Richard II, his authority in Ireland had greatly dwindled and many of those English who commanded control over the country were absentee landlords. Richard had landed there with what Elizabeth Hallam suggests as that "largest military force yet to land on Ireland."

24 Saul, *Richard II*, 412-413.

25 Hallam, *The Wars of the Roses*, 90.

Saxon Chronicle as "hated by almost all his people and abhorrent to God" who fell to an arrow to his chest during a hunting accident that still remains unclear.²⁶ Or the en-



White Tower, a central tower of the Tower of London. Richard II was confined here by the forces of Henry Bolingbroke in 1399. Courtesy of Bernard Gagnon/ Wikimedia Commons/ CC-BY-SA-3.0.

dearingly remembered "Bad King John" who lost the great Angevin territories of his family's dynasty to the French crown, and whose controversial administrative policies culminated in the drafting of the *Magna Carta* in 1215. Ultimately unsuccessful, the treaty continues to be remembered—mythological or otherwise—as one of the greatest political documents ever created. On the other hand, one would be hard-pressed to find any sources bemoaning the death of John, who died a little over a year later (probably

26 George Norman Garmonsway, trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, Dent, and New York: Dutton, 1953), 235.

of dysentery), his crown embroiled in a civil war.²⁷ The last to fall before Richard, Edward II's divisive relationship with his favorite, Piers Gaveston, and his inability to suppress his own bout of discontent within the nobility led to the betrayal of his wife, Isabella of France, and his own deposition in 1327.²⁸

There is a clear trend in the fates of these monarchs who found themselves on the wrong side of scorned nobles: death. In each case, the nobility could accuse William, John, Edward, and Richard of ruling on the behalf of their own interests and not on behalf of the people: the very definition of tyranny. This rarely ended well.²⁹ As Michael Hicks writes, "Kings were part of the same culture as anyone else. They were subject to the same standards, values, expectations and culture as their subjects."³⁰

Legitimacy Lost and Legitimacy Gained

What subject can give sentence on his king?
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?

—William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, Act 4, scene 1,
112-116.

27 It was recorded that John's body was carried south by a band of mercenaries that he recruited to aid him in his failed cause to dispel the barons. How glorious a procession for a king!

28 In 1325 Isabella was sent on a diplomatic mission to France where she met and became the mistress of Roger Mortimer, an enemy of Edward II. It became apparent that Isabella was more comfortable there. When she returned to England with her new lover in 1326, they faced little opposition in their move against Edward's crown.

29 This is not to say that a powerful king could not live to die of natural causes. They just had to be strong enough to back up such actions. Notable examples include the pre-Conquest ruler, Cnut the Viking King of England, as well as William the Conqueror. They ruled with immense power, but they were also powerful enough to keep the nobles at bay.

30 Hicks, *English Political Culture*, 37.

Henry started receiving petitions, issuing his own letters, and essentially assuming the manners of kingship days after confining Richard to the Tower of London.³¹ Henry sought nothing less than the crown by this point. Chronicler Sir John Froissart, normally defined as pro-Ricardian in his writings, attests to this. He says that even before Richard's removal Henry "engaged to undertake the government on condition that the crown was settled on him and his heirs forever."³² Of course, the condition of making sure that his sons succeeded him shows his true desire for Lancastrian kingship. A less cynical view of this could be the matter of safety. He needed the security of knowing that he and his line would be intact, essentially to make sure that others did not do to him what he did to Richard. For now, the title of king still belonged to Richard. For appearances sake, Henry simply ruled on his behalf. Henry's supporters included Thomas Arundel, Archbishop Canterbury, a political enemy of Richard, as well as the prudent Henry Percy, 1st Earl of Northumberland and Ralph Neville, 1st Earl Westmorland. On the 19th of September, this party sent out writs in Richard's name for a parliament to be held at Westminster on the 30th of September.³³ Their goal? The removal of Richard as King of England.

Henry and his supporters had around a month before Parliament met to plan.³⁴ The odds were in his favor, and he had already done two great things to his advantage: he conquered England and captured Richard. Even

31 John Lavan Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (Harlow: The Anchor Press, Ltd, 1970), 60.

32 Froissart, *Chronicles*, 609. Maintaining Lancastrian succession along with dealing with those nobles who still had ties to King Richard after he was usurped were the immediate circumstances that Henry would deal with through acts of Parliament once he attained the crown in 1399.

33 Calendar of Close Rolls in Michael Bennet, *Richard II and the Revolution of 1399* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1999), 170.

34 Kirby, *Henry IV*, 64.

with those advantages, a fair part of England's nobility remained reluctant to see him sitting on the throne. Moreover, what about Richard, God's anointed? Henry had his work cut out for him: "For no one doubted that Richard, whatever his failings, was the rightful King, the son of Edward the Black Prince and the grandson of Edward the King."³⁵ The most recent case to look to for a deposition happened seventy years in the past with the deposition of Edward II. In that case, the nobility simply replaced Edward with his son, Edward III. Henry's claim was not so direct.³⁶ Ultimately, Henry utilized a combination of abdication and deposition to cement his claim.

Even before Parliament met, "stories" of Richard's capture circulated throughout the kingdom. The propaganda that Henry used, in contrast to the battle and brutality with which he made his way through England, stressed a peaceful transition. The writings of Adam of Usk and Thomas of Walsingham as well and *The Record and Process* demonstrate this. Adam of Usk, often associated with the Lancastrian side of the rebellion, sat on the committee (which he reports included "doctors, bishops, and others") appointed to discuss how they planned to go about "settings aside" King Richard and replacing him with Henry, the Duke of Lancaster.³⁷ As stated, this process required careful consideration. Firstly, they discussed the routes Henry could *not* count on to aid him in this task.

³⁵ Ibid., 63.

³⁶ Originally, Henry swore to the nobles that supported him that he had no ambitions to be King. He would take on the role that once belonged to his father, John of Gaunt, as chief counselor. But, now that he was already acting in certain ways as a king, he was probably no longer satisfied. Additionally, how safe would he be in such a position? All of the aristocracy was aware of Richard's inclination for vengeance. It was highly doubtful that, if Richard were to recover his authority, Henry or any of his supporters would be safe.

³⁷ Adam of Usk, *Chronicon Adae de Usk*, ed. and trans. Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, K.C.B. (London: Henry Frowde, 1904), 181-182.

It was impossible to claim the throne by direct succession because Henry was not Richard's nearest male heir. Unfortunately for the Lancastrians, that position belonged to Edmund, Earl of March, who descended in the female line from Edward III's second son. Henry descended from the third.³⁸ To surpass this issue, Adam of Usk mentions the committee investigated the 'Crouchback Legend.' This legend goes back over a hundred years in the history of the English Monarchy to the reign of Edward I.³⁹ According to the legend, Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, was not the younger brother of Edward I, but the *older* brother. Supposedly, the crown skipped him because of either mental illness or deformity.⁴⁰ If proven authentic (and it never has been), the legend would have major consequences. If true, it meant that all of the English kings since Edward I were illegitimate and that the line of succeeding earls and dukes of Lancaster had been the rightful kings to the throne all along. This implied that by taking the throne, Henry claimed nothing more than his birthright, not unlike his father John of Gaunt's lands. The committee firmly rejected this method. Additionally, Chronicler Thomas Walsingham states that Henry made a serious consideration in claiming the throne through the right of conquest, taking it essentially through force. Apparently, Sir William Thyrning, chief justice of the King's Bench and his chief legal advisor, dissuaded him from this idea. Using the right of conquest set a dangerous precedent. By claiming the kingdom in such a manner, the people might infer that he had the power to disinherit anyone at any time, as well as to

³⁸ Saul, *Richard II*, 419. After Henry became king in 1399, Edmund's claim to the throne would be the basis of rebellions and plots against not only Henry IV's kingship, but his son Henry V's. These would not be the only cause for rebellion, King Henry would soon find out.

³⁹ Edward I, also popularly known as Edward Longshanks, reigned from 1272 to 1307.

⁴⁰ Usk, *Chronicon Adae*, 182-184.

change laws, establish new ones, and revoke old ones.⁴¹ This was absolutely reason enough for Henry to decide against that idea—though we will see that he kind of did it anyway. Remember, Richard’s stripping away of noble lands led to much antagonism. The noble’s would never allow their property to be taken, and Henry surely did not want to attain their ire, especially not before he sat on the throne.

So, then, the committee decided that Richard must abdicate. The Richard of Adam of Usk’s tale (and all of the pro-Lancastrian narratives) does not struggle or show any resistance to stepping down. On the contrary, Adam records Richard as “ready...to yield up the crown.”⁴² But the committee disapproved of so hasty a resignation. Instead, Adam writes that it is more appropriate (or pragmatic) for the people and the clergy to depose Richard instead, for which parliament had been summoned. The piece implies that, though Richard was ready to give up the crown then and there, the Lancastrian side thought better of it, and determined that Henry should first garner the support of the people. Once again, Henry stresses a calm and democratic exchange of power. Adam’s record of witnessing Richard in the tower is of further interest because he writes of the sad state in which he found the king. Adam writes of a desperate king in the midst of a mental breakdown: “My God!, a wonderful land is this, and a fickle; which hath exiled, slain, destroyed, or ruined so many kings, rulers, and great men, and is ever tainted and toiled with stride and variance and envy.”⁴³ There Richard stood before him, alone and without any of his own men to serve him, surrounded by strangers and spies. Adam, Lancastrian through and through, leaves the tower deeply affected by the state of his king.

Adam’s narrative conflicts with other Lancastrian records of events. His document clearly states that Richard, be it after some sort of reflection or the product of mental breakdown, decided to abdicate under force or even fear. A resignation from the throne by force did not look particularly good for the Henry—it made him look like a usurper—which is why the other stories emphasize that Richard came to the decision civilly during those meetings in Wales before his imprisonment. One can most certainly agree with J.L. Kirby who wrote that, as far as sticking to a uniform Lancastrian story goes, Adam tended to reveal too much. The *Record and Process*, the “official” piece on what happened at the Tower of London and *Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham* feature a voluntary resignation.⁴⁴ Walsingham says that during those meetings in Wales the king told Lord Thomas of Arundel and the powerful Earl of Northumberland that he would “... give up the kingdom, if he was given a livelihood suitable to his position and the sure promise of safety of life for eight persons whom he wishes to name.”⁴⁵ Indeed, the *Record and Process* supports this by stating that Richard informed the same Earl of Northumberland and archbishop of his intention “...to yield up and renounce his crowns of England and France and his royal majesty, on account of his own inability and insufficiency, which he himself admitted there.”⁴⁶ So, then, these Lancastrian pieces—definitely

44 Although listed within the Rolls of Parliament, the *Record and Process* was not really a parliamentary document. It is more so a report of what happened at the tower and what the leading figures in the realm decided to do in the crown’s interlude of Richard being locked away and the nobles of the realm deciding what to do about him and Henry, who was increasingly becoming more and more popular.

45 Thomas Walsingham, *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham, 1376-1422*, trans. David Preest, (New York: Boydell Press, 2005), 308.

46 *The Record of Process of the Renunciation and Deposition of Richard II* in Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, 170.

41 Given-Wilson, 1 *Chronicles*, 86-187; Saul, *Richard II*, 419.

42 Usk, *Chronicon Adae*, 181.

43 Ibid..

propaganda—are not subtle in their effort to express that Richard abdicated of sound mind and body, aware of his decision and knowledgeable of his incapacity to rule. Whereas Adam of Usk's chronicle shows us a Richard who seems to be near his breaking point, observers mentioned in the *Record and Process* appear to be stupefied at a Richard who "conversed with a cheerful expression....that he was ready to perform the Cession and Renunciation which he had promised."⁴⁷

Along with Usk's work, other narratives, such as the 'Manner of Richard's Renunciation', contradict depictions of a cheerful and comfortable imprisoned Richard. The documents translator, G.O. Sayles, believed it to be a Lancastrian narrative written by one of Henry's supporters.⁴⁸ The most interesting aspect of this piece—and probable proof of it not being completely pro-Lancastrian—is that Richard does not at first, either of his own volition or even at fear of death, agree to resign in it. It shows the Richard of popular conception, a spoiled and unreasonable ruler blind to the disasters in which his realm has led the kingdom. When Henry's supporters visit King Richard at the tower of London in order to draft proof of his abdication of "all right that he had to the crown of England...as he had previously promised to them that he would," he offers nothing but defiance.⁴⁹ After the council hands him a bill, because Richard first wanted to see the written resignation with his own eyes, he refuses, but then changes his mind a day later, saying "Bring my dear cousin of Lancaster here, for I am willing, upon certain conditions which I shall explain to him, to make my resignation to him."⁵⁰ In 'The

Manner of Richard's Renunciation,' Richard at first decrees that he would not sign the piece until he and his captors agreed "upon certain conditions" (possibly a reference to those he supposedly made at Conwy Castle in Wales). The lords present tell him that this cannot be done, and that he must resign simply, which he does but hardly in a way in which Henry would want it to be recorded in the annals of history—especially when one considers the heavily biased picture presented in the *Record and Process*.⁵¹

Richard does eventually agree to resign. The Parliament Rolls state that Richard signed official ledgers forbidding him forever from challenging the crown. Probably in an attempt to stress the importance of the measure, the resignation makes use of holy language:

I confess, acknowledge recognize, and from my own certain knowledge truly admit that I have been and am entirely inadequate and unequal to the task of ruling and governing the aforesaid kingdoms and dominions and all that pertains to them, and that, on account of my notorious insufficiencies, I deserve to be deposed from them. And I swear upon these Holy Gospels, physically held here by me in person, that I shall never contravene the aforesaid Renunciation, Resignation, Demission an Cession, nor in any way, by word or deed, on my own behalf or, so far as I am able, through any other person, either openly or secretly challenge them, or allow them to be challenged...⁵²

Unsurprisingly, Richard also chooses a familiar successor: Henry, Duke of Lancaster. Richard's abdication helped the cause, but it did not cement Henry's claim. Ac-

47 Ibid.

48 Chris Given-Wilson, "The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation: A 'Lancastrian Narrative'?" *The English Historical Review* 108, no. 427. (1993), 365.

49 'The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation' in Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1399*, 163.

50 Ibid.

51 We will probably never know exactly what happened in the Tower between Henry and Richard, but Richard probably did end up resigning at least under fear of death.

52 *Record and Process*, 171.

cording to Nigel Saul, a resignation could not be counted on as an ultimate method for settling the problem of the transferring of the throne and that it “was an act that could be withdrawn...”⁵³ Henry still needed more.

When Parliament met on September 30 there had been a breakdown in the administration of the king. Only a king could call Parliament, and Richard did not call it. Some sources even state that it had actually been withdrawn.⁵⁴ Whether this is true or not, we know that that meeting took place. So they came to Westminster, “all of the lords spiritual and temporal, and of the commons who had come thither by virtue of their summons to parliament, and of many other gentleman and commoners,” theoretically representing all levels of the people of England.⁵⁵ Henry ever sought to demonstrate that, unlike Richard, he cared about England in its entirety.

The second half of the Record and Process features what happened at Westminster. When Parliament gathered, they extensively debated over the matter of the English throne. The members of Parliament did not unanimously see Henry as an appropriate successor, and a few in attendance still supported Richard. What Henry and his supporters did to combat this reluctance showcases their aptitude for clever maneuvers. Henry already held record of Richard’s abdication, one in which the king freely stepped down from the throne. He presented Parliament with a *fait accompli*. When the men of the realm gathered in Westminster Hall on September 30, 1399 they learned that *King* Richard no longer existed—he had already resigned! The

empty throne that stood before them, reportedly covered in golden cloth, was symbolically empty. With Richard now abdicated, the presence of this empty throne is used to argue that the throne of England during that precious time could not be usurped because no one sat on it. A member of Henry’s committee read the Renunciation aloud in Westminster Abbey in Latin and English.⁵⁶ After the reading, the records state that those within Parliament announced for the sake of being “expedient and advantageous” they should draft a set of articles

that demonstrated all of Richard’s misdeeds as king. The Lancastrians were well ahead of them and, as part of their mission, debated just that. Adam of Usk’s work accuses Richard of the usual actions seen as tyrannical: perjuries, sacrileges, unnatural crimes, exactions from his subjections, reduction of his people to slavery, cowardice and weakness, and that they were reason enough of “setting him aside.”⁵⁷ It is important to remember that the only record we have of what happened at Parliament that day is what the Lancastrians left us, and it is remembered as the Lancastrians wanted it to be. Written in a matter-of-fact style, they offer just the facts—well, Lancastrian “facts.” They drafted no less than thirty-three articles within that meeting to showcase the tyrannical nature in which Richard had ruled England. These articles trace the history of his reign, and run the gamut of disorderly kingship, which include giving power to those unworthy of it, forsaking the rights of the people, and a misuse of Parliament.⁵⁸ In her

“ WITH HIS DEFEAT OF RICHARD,
HENRY SET A DANGEROUS EXAMPLE THAT
A USURPER COULD BE USURPED.

53 Saul, *Richard II*, 418.

54 Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 52.

55 The Parliament Rolls of Henry IV: 1399, Stephenson and Frederick Marcham, *Sources of English*, 251.

56 Ibid.

57 Usk, *Chronicon*, 181.

58 Some historians disagree whether all of the articles presented in that meeting were drafted there or if some of them were added to the record after the event. Considering the nature of the document, it is not only possible, but highly probable.

study of the rhetoric used to depose Richard, Jenni Nuttall writes that the deposition showcases the cunning style of the Lancastrians in that the articles are written in a manner to give as limited as possible a view of both Richard as well as his style of kingship. “The compilers selected particular types of action and motivation which accorded with the pejorative view they wished to promote.” The drafters do not explicitly note Richard as tyrannous in the record, but they do effectively use the negative associations of tyranny to construct a horrible stereotype of Richard as a king whose heinous actions justified his deposition.⁵⁹ Thusly, and with all men in agreement, King Richard, now known simply as Richard of Bordeaux, officially ceased to be.⁶⁰

The records from Parliament state that immediately after the deposition, Henry Duke of Lancaster, rose from his place and made himself look as regal as possible by “standing so erect that he could be well seen by all the people, humbly signing himself on the brow and breast with the symbol of the Cross and first invoking Christ by name” and laying claim to the crown and all that it entailed.⁶¹ And he did so in his mother tongue of English:

In the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
I, Henry of Lancaster challenge this realm
of England and the crown with all the
members and the appurtenances, as I that
am descended by right line of the blood
coming from the good Lord Henry third,
and through the right that God of his grace

59 Jenni Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language, and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 12.

60 Froissart, *Chronicles*, 615. Rumors were always important. Froissart, for instance, records that in his meeting with Richard, Henry—rather offhandedly—mentions a rumor in which he refers to Richard’s mother, the Princess of Wales, as unfaithful to her husband and that Richard was a bastard, though he pledges to protect him once he becomes king.

61 Parliament Rolls of Henry IV, 253.

hath sent me with help of my kin and of my
friends to recover it, the which realm was in
point to be undone for defeat of governance
and undoing of the good laws.⁶²

His use of the word “challenge” deserves attention. Henry of Lancaster, who originally swore that he had set foot back on England after being exiled only to regain the lands of his deceased father and with no desire for the crown, now sought, in effect, to throw his hat in the ring, making himself a candidate for the monarchy. The records state that Parliament responded to the challenge with unanimous agreement. Ever complex, the passage is vague at best. He does not technically say that he is being elected by Parliament, but that he claims the throne by right of blood. Definitely aware of the fact that a closer heir exists with Edmund Mortimer, he might be referring to the Crouchback Legend. Of course, he could also simply be speaking of that fact that his blood belongs to the royal rank. Thirdly, he claims the throne by the right of God, fully in belief that he has been sent by the highest of authorities to redeem an ailing kingdom—though technically he emphasized that right through force. None of these are particularly strong, but Henry utilizes them in his “campaign.” The narrative then proceeds to say that the Archbishop, his friend Arundel, took the now *King* Henry, after a short prayer, to the royal throne where he then took a royal sit to much applause and jubilation. Although Lancastrian propaganda makes Henry seem greater than he probably was, there is cause to believe that he was supported in formidable numbers by his fellow aristocrats, even if he had to struggle to prove his legitimacy. As with many political leaders, undoubtedly, Henry’s popularity before seeking the throne gave him an advantage. His athletic campaigns across Western Europe gave him the reputation of a chivalric warrior, a celebrity

62 Ibid, 254.

of his time. Antony Tuck writes of Henry's prosperity: "He had been fortunate to enjoy, in his years of greatest vigour [sic], the freedom to acquire fame in theaters of war overseas. As long as his father lived [John of Gaunt], he had no responsibility for a great inheritance, and he played only a marginal part in affairs of state in England."⁶³

After a sermon is given on behalf of Henry and England, the new King once again addresses the people before him. Although he explicitly states that he did not usurp the crown from Richard, he oddly mentions his actions up until now as a conquest. Once again in English:

Sirs I thank God and you spiritual and temporal and all the estates of the land; and do you to wite it is not my will that no man think that by way of conquest I would disinherit any man of his heritage, and franchise or other rights that him ought to have, nor put him out of that he has and has had by the good laws and customs of the realm except those persons that has been against the good purpose and the common profit of the realm.⁶⁴

He acquires the title by conquest, but he promises not to strip people's property away from them, unless they threaten his authority, of course. Combined, all of these methods in which Henry claimed the throne are rather weak, with none of them having preference over the other, but England needed a man—a better man than Richard—to govern over it. For better or worse, Henry proved himself to be that man.



King Henry IV by unknown artist, 1597-1618. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Conclusion

Although Richard II's reign ended tragically in 1399, he was by no means blameless. His obstinacy, desire for vengeance, and unpopular ideas about royal government made him enemies (such as the Lord's Apellant). Still, every kingship had its dissenters. Those elements of his personality were a factor, but, ultimately, his prevention of Henry receiving his inheritance cemented his downfall. England's elites would not readily accept the king seizing their lands, and this turned out to be the last straw and set the events that led Henry Bolingbroke to become Henry IV in motion.

In the same manner that the nobility in Parliament

63 Antony Tuck, "Henry IV and Chivalry," in *Henry IV: the Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs, (Suffolk: York Medieval Press, 2003), 68.

64 Ibid.

took a legal means to charge Richard with perverting his legitimacy and to cast their support for a new king, Henry utilized the law to validate his authority. He also used historical texts to strengthen his legitimacy. Of the few chronicles we have that depict the rebellion of 1399, at least three of them are pro-Lancastrian in both tone and their depiction of events. Like the acts in Parliament, they prove both the necessity of Richard's deposition as well as Henry's aptitude for being a better king—which mainly consisted of avoiding the tyrannical decisions that Richard had made.

Henry's struggle for the crown did not end with his coronation on October 13. In spite of the continued campaigns to paint Henry as the rightful ruler of England, which heavily relied on the use of prophecy, no one forgot the brutality with which he grasped the crown.⁶⁵ Once king, the defining trait of his reign became the struggle to maintain it against recurring rebellions and assassination attempts. In Medieval England, only an unwise king ignored the aristocracy. Although not mutually exclusive of each other, to remain in power, a king had two options in dealing with his nobles: keep them content or be powerful enough to keep them at bay. With his defeat of Richard, Henry set a dangerous example that a usurper could be usurped.



⁶⁵ Adam of Usk and others believed that Henry was destined to become England's hero. They referred to the legends of old. One particular myth was the Prophecy of Merlin. It spoke of a hero returning by sea (as Henry did) to confront and defeat an evil ruler (Richard). With Henry now King and Richard eliminated as sovereign, Lancastrians felt that recent events made their telling of the legend unchallengeable.

The Horrible Life of Gladiators: Revisionist History and the Violence of Roman Gladiatorial Games

by George Evans

WESTERN SOCIETY is obsessed with gladiators. From the numerous on-screen adaptations of gladiatorial games, to a gladiator amusement park that may be opening in Italy¹, people cannot seem to get enough of these semi-nude ancestral war machines. In most depictions, fights between gladiators are portrayed as chaotic, merciless, and dehumanizing, always culminating in the death of one of the two participants. However, several scholars have recently challenged this consensus, claiming instead that gladiators “were like modern-day athletes: highly trained, overpaid, well-fed sex symbols who were not expected to die.”² In a phrase, “They were celebrities,”³ not slaves. These scholars cite archeological evidence to support the idea that gladiatorial games were heavily structured sports in which contestants honored gentlemanly rules of conduct. While gladiators may have followed “strict rules of combat,”⁴ historians should never take the violence of the arena lightly. Gladi-



Gladiator Mosaic, 4th Century CE. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

atorial games were hyper violent events that satiated the bloodlust of Roman society and further degraded an abused underclass of human beings.

Tuck, Walters and Potter are among scholars that argue gladiators, “were celebrities”⁵ in non-lethal competitions of dignified athleticism. In defense of this assertion, Tuck states that, “Gladiatorial combat is seen as being related to killing and shedding blood... But I think that what we are seeing is an entertaining martial art that was

1 Patricia Treble, “A Gladiator Theme Park for Rome,” *Maclean's* 121, no. 35/36 (September 8, 2008): 38.

2 Zach Zorich, “Gladiators Get a Thumbs-Up,” *Discover* 26, no. 5 (May 2005): 18.

3 Ibid.

4 “Gladiators Played by the Rules, Skulls Suggest,” accessed December 6, 2014, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/03/0303_060303_gladiators.html.

5 Zorich, “Gladiators Get a Thumbs-Up,” 18.

spectator-oriented.”⁶ In his opinion, gladiatorial games were less about blood and carnage than they were about displaying true athleticism. Walters takes this argument a step further, positing that gladiators, “...were entertainers, sports stars...the privately owned, pampered Beckhams of their day.”⁷ He justifies this on the grounds of economics. In his view, “They did not go into the arena to die, because they cost far too much for that to happen on anything like a regular basis.”⁸ Not only were gladiators treated like celebrities, but according to Potter, they could become rich from their fame. “Gladiators, like modern professional athletes,” he says, “could become little corporations.” After all, in “a culture that was obsessed with superstars” gladiators must have been the purest symbol of this obsession.⁹

To further support their argument, these historians draw on archeological evidence recently unearthed by Fabian Kanz, and Karl Grosschmidt who both headed up a study of bones unearthed in a gladiator cemetery in Turkey.¹⁰ Using highly advanced techniques, the scholarly duo was able to differentiate between wounds that were lethal and non-lethal as well as discover how some gladiators died. When interviewed, Kanz stated, “Wounds that occur at or near the time of death are distinguished by lack of healing and [by] fracture margins characteristic of fresh bone breaks.”¹¹ Using this, and other similar techniques, they were able to analyze how the gladiators lived and died. According to their analysis, “injuries to the back of the head were rare” and “All but one of the gladiators

studied had only one wound associated with his death.”¹² In their opinion, these facts indicated that “gladiator fights had strict rules of combat,” as there were “...no sneaky blows from behind.” To Kanz and Grosschmidt, then, the majority of gladiators that were killed died according to the rules of a well-ordered martial art.¹³ Also, few gladiators died in any given match. According to Kanz, “The audience and the organizer of the games decided whether gladiators would live or die, but if two brave gladiators put up a good fight, they often both got out alive.”¹⁴ It is perhaps because of this, that we find “Ancient fight records” showing “that around 90 percent of trained gladiators survived their fights.”¹⁵ While he was not associated with the study, Stephen Tuck cites all of this evidence to support his views. In his opinion gladiators “...were not just beating each other into the ground,”¹⁶ but rather, living celebrity lifestyles as pampered professional athletes like those in any other organized sport.

While scholars like Tuck bring up some very interesting points, certain elements of their interpretation fall apart upon close analysis. For starters, Kanz and Grosschmidt’s study does not directly support their argument. It is true that Kanz and Grosschmidt agree that gladiators followed specific rules, had a high chance of survival, and refrained from mutilating their enemies, but these things do not change the fact that gladiators lived dangerous and violent lives full of human tragedy. A ten percent fatality rate is still horrendous. This means that, in any given round of fighting, one in every ten gladiators would end up lying in a pool of their own blood before the day was done. Also, while the gladius (a small Roman sword) and trident

6 “Gladiators Fought for Thrills, Not Kills - Life - 19 January 2005 - New Scientist.”

7 “Gladiators- More Showbusiness than Slaughter,” accessed December 5, 2014. <http://www.scotsman.com/news/sci-tech/gladiators-more-showbusiness-than-slaughter-1-672063#>.

8 Ibid.

9 Zorich, “Gladiators Get a Thumbs-Up,” 18.

10 “Gladiators Played by the Rules, Skulls Suggest.”

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

may have caused injuries that were “non-fatal” on some occasions, they definitely still mutilated those unfortunate enough to get in their way. Some of the bones analyzed in the study showed evidence of “sharp, slice-like wounds, which the scientists think were caused by the dagger-like gladius.” Gladiators struck by this weapon may have survived. They may have even “received excellent medical care.”¹⁷ But this medical care might have been administered because gladiators, like other slaves, were worth money as “a...legitimate branch of commerce.”¹⁸ It must be remembered that these men were slaves forced to fight and occasionally die in dehumanizing conditions, all for the sake of entertainment. This dehumanization was perhaps most aptly demonstrated by the way in which many of the gladiators were executed. Kanz and Grosschmidt found that “Ten of the gladiators had square holes in the sides of their skulls, validating the theory that very badly wounded gladiators were killed by a hammer-wielding executioner who waited in the wings.”¹⁹ Kanz and Grosschmidt do not hide from the fact that, “outcomes [of fights] may have been brutal...” they simply wish to put forth the idea that gladiatorial violence, was, if nothing else, ordered.²⁰ Clearly, Tuck oversteps what can be reasonably inferred from the survey. Rather than use the survey data to vindicate the character of gladiators, he makes excuses for the practice of gladiatorial fights.

Furthermore, Tuck’s assertion that The Colosseum

“WHILE GLADIATORS MAY HAVE FOLLOWED ‘STRICT RULES OF COMBAT,’ HISTORIANS SHOULD NEVER TAKE THE VIOLENCE OF THE ARENA LIGHTLY.”

was a place obsessed with gore clashes strongly with the reality of the execution of prisoners and the “animal hunts” (*venations*) that went on there.²¹ Unlike the gladiator fights that concluded each day’s gory festivity, these events always culminated in death and gratuitous bloodshed. The execution of prisoners took place before the main event of the gladiatorial games, but it was just as bloody. A group consisting of prisoners and criminals would be paraded into the arena to be butchered as punishment for their crimes. Those that refused “were driven into the arena with whips and red-hot irons.”²² The arena was also the place where thousands of animals were butchered for

the entertainment of the crowds. These games were called *Venationes*. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “The popularity of *Venationes* became such that the world was searched for lions, bears, bulls, hippopotamuses, panthers, and crocodiles to be...slaughtered.”²³ During the reign of Trajan “As many as 11,000 animals were exhibited and killed on a single occasion.”²⁴ Contrary to Tuck and Walter’s opinion, the coliseum was a place dedicated to the love of carnage.

Perhaps Tuck’s most egregious error is the way he over-emphasizes his main source. Though he has analyzed a gargantuan amount of gladiator imagery from ancient Rome, Tuck’s main discovery came from comparing this imagery to Renaissance martial arts manuals. In his

17 Ibid.

18 “Gladiator (Roman Sports) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia,” accessed December 5, 2014. <http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/234706/gladiator>.

19 “Gladiators Played by the Rules, Skulls Suggest.”

20 Ibid.

21 “Venationes (Roman Spectacle) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia,” accessed December 5, 2014. <http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/625043/venationes?anchor=ref280477>.

22 “Gladiator (Roman Sports) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia.”

23 “Venationes (Roman Spectacle) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia.”

24 Ibid.



Jean-Leon Gerome, Pollice Verso, 1872. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0.

words, these manuals “...are incredibly important because they show sequences of moves and have accompanying descriptions.” Tuck points out that, “there were often three critical moments in such fights. The first was initial contact, with both opponents fully armed...The second was when one gladiator was wounded and sought to distance himself from his opponent [and] In the third, both gladiators dropped their shields before grappling with each other.” This third step is vitally important to Tuck’s analysis. In his opinion, the “very act of throwing down shields and weapons to grapple was a common way to conclude a fight, without [inflicting fatal wounds].”²⁵ As interesting as this analysis may be, a group of Renaissance fighting manuals tell us nothing about the Roman culture of nearly

25 “Gladiators- More Showbusiness than Slaughter.”

a thousand years prior. One contributor sums this complaint up quite adequately, saying, “The late medieval fighting manuals are great...long-neglected resources, but there is no justification for presuming that their conventions of combat were at all applicable over a thousand years before”²⁶

The argument of Tuck and Walters also clashes with what some Roman sources tell us about the gory life of gladiators. We see frequent evidence that gladiators were not purely celebrities, but rather dehumanized slaves. According to Seneca, a stoic philosopher who wrote during the time of the Roman Empire, one gladiator was so scared of fighting in the ring that he took “a stick with sponge on the end of it used for wiping away...feces”²⁷ and shoved it down his own throat, suffocating himself. Clearly this gladiator was not enamored with the glory he could receive in the arena; rather, he was scared out of his wits, and desperate for escape.

Another source that Tuck must contend with is the *Satyricon* written by Titus Petronius Niger during the time of the emperor Nero. While Niger’s work is a “comic, picaresque novel”²⁸ and therefore not serious history, it still tells us a great deal about the presuppositions of Romans during the time. In the novel, Niger’s narrator says that, “We pledged our bodies and souls to our master most solemnly, like regular gladiators.”²⁹ Niger’s charac-

26 “Cronaca: Gladiators: The Professional Wrestlers of Antiquity?” accessed December 5, 2014. <http://www.cronaca.com/archives/003196.html>.

27 Brendan D. Nagle, *The Roman World: Sources and Interpretation*. 1 edition, Pearson, 2004.

28 “Gaius Petronius Arbiter (Roman Author) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia,” accessed December 6, 2014, <http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/454501/Gaius-Petronius-Arbiter>.

29 Petronius Arbiter, Michael Heseltine, and William Henry Denham Rouse, *Petronius. Apocolocyntosis*. W. Heinemann, 1922.

ters, and therefore the Romans that read about them, understood gladiators to be regular slaves. This clashes quite discordantly with Tuck's idea that they were pampered celebrities. Famous, they may have been, but it seems that few Romans envied their lives. After all, to "be the head of a school...of gladiators was a well-known but disgraceful occupation."³⁰

Seneca also uses the death of gladiators in an analogy, clearly inferring that gladiators would have commonly faced death. In his *Epistles*, he writes, "For death, when it stands near us, gives even to inexperienced men the courage not to seek to avoid the inevitable. So the gladiator, who throughout the fight has been no matter how fainthearted, offers his throat to his opponent and directs the wavering blade to the vital spot."³¹ While Seneca is speaking figuratively, he is drawing on common cultural information that his audience would have understood. If Roman audiences were familiar with the death of gladiators, then these deaths must have been common enough to make the life of a gladiator an ongoing game of Russian roulette.

Marcus Tullius Cicero also speaks on the topic. While he thinks that no punishment is too severe for criminals and slaves, he bemoans that the death of free citizens in the arena as a tragedy. In his *Tusculan Disputations* he writes, "A gladiatorial show is apt to seem cruel and brutal to some eyes, and I incline to think that it is, as now conducted."³² ³³ He sees these 'free-will' fights as tragic, while lauding fights that feature condemned criminals and slaves. He even nostalgically admired the games of old, in which, "it was criminals who crossed swords in the

death struggle."³⁴ In Cicero's opinion, there "...could be no better schooling against pain and death"³⁵ than to see condemned gladiators cut each other to ribbons. While we cannot infer from Cicero's comment that gladiators died in the majority of games, they were common enough to be used as examples in intellectual writing.

Clearly gladiators were not the "pampered Beckhams of their day."³⁶ They were a brutalized under-class of human being, forced to fight and kill one another for the entertainment of a "pampered" crowd. While Tuck and Walters' main assertion that gladiators were overpaid sports stars lacks serious supporting evidence, they do accomplish a good thing by drawing people's attention to the study performed by Kanz, and Grossschmidt. Unlike Tuck and Walters these two scholars perform thorough work that should revolutionize the way we see the gladiators. In their view, gladiators may have been popular, even infamous, they may have "fought like gentlemen"³⁷ in an orderly game, but this does not change the fact that their line of work relied on mutilating other human beings³⁸ for the entertainment of warmongering spectators.

30 "Gladiator (Roman Sports) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia."

31 "Seneca Epistles Book 1" accessed December 6, 2014, http://www.stoics.com/seneca_epistles_book_1.html.

32 Ibid.

33 Thomas Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

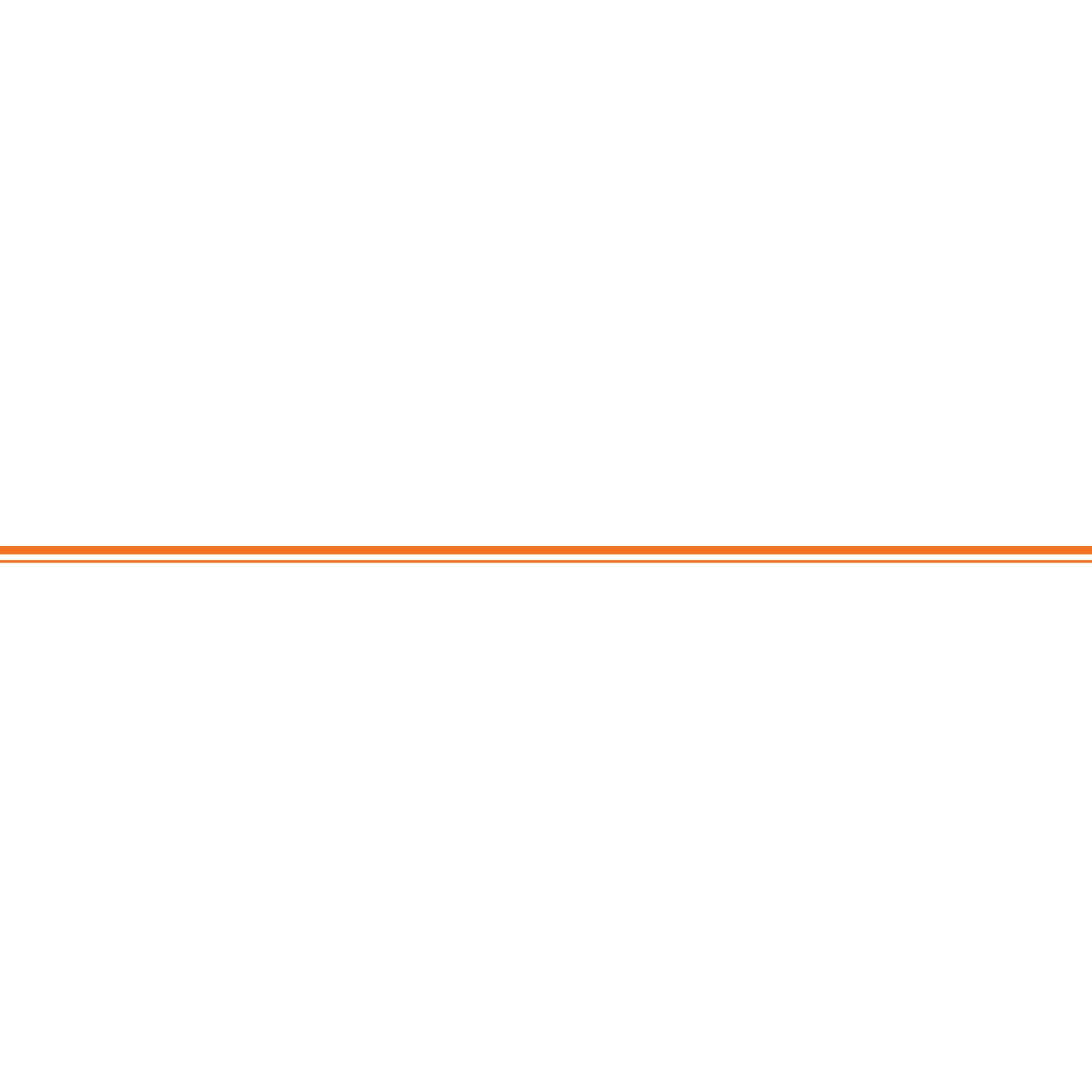
34 Ibid.

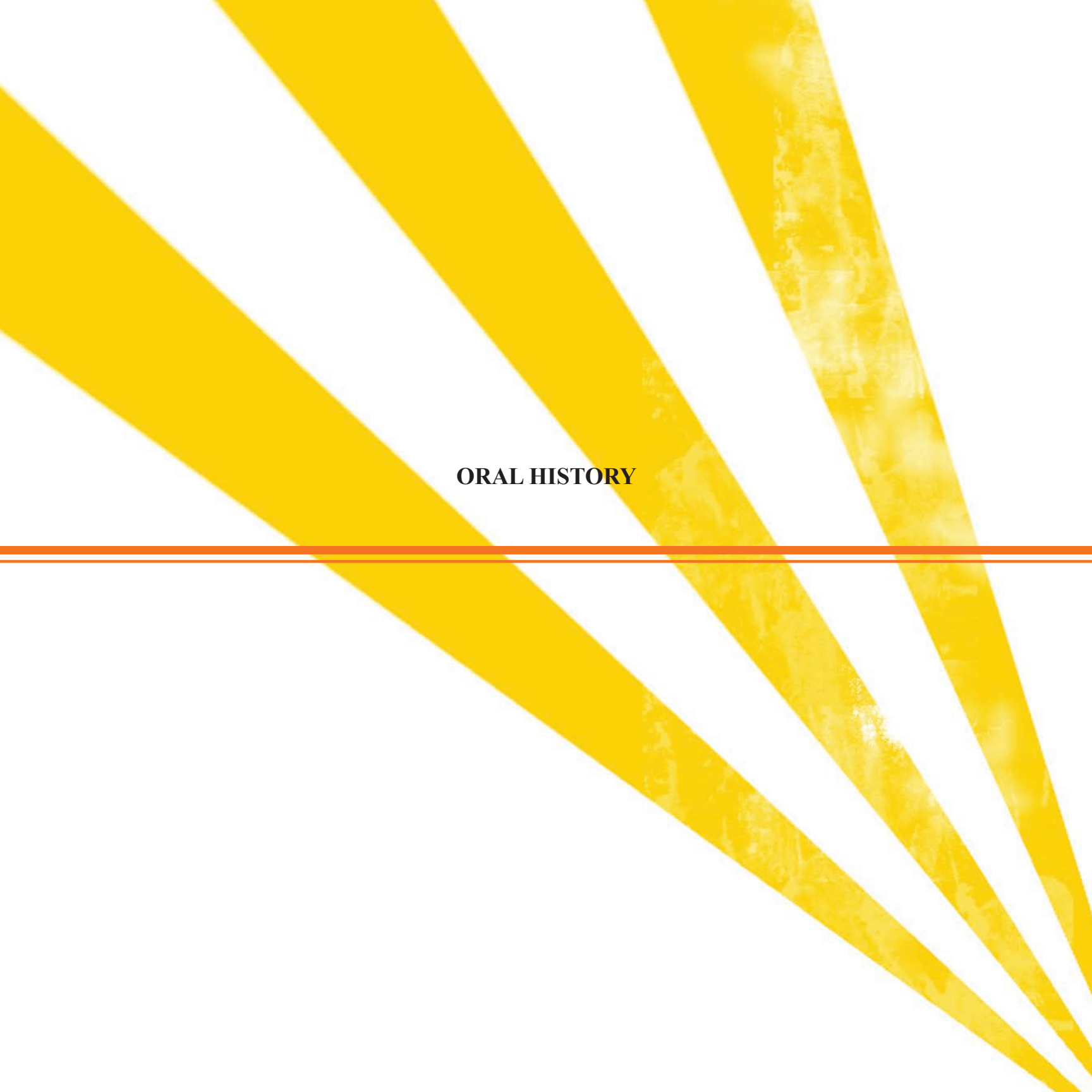
35 Ibid.

36 "Gladiators- More Showbusiness than Slaughter."

37 "Gladiators Played by the Rules, Skulls Suggest."

38 Ibid.





ORAL HISTORY

The Assassination of John F. Kennedy

The following narratives were created from oral histories collected by Samford University students in 2013 for a project commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination. They are part of Samford University's oral history project STORI (Samford Traditions & Oral History Recording Initiative). The narratives trace each interviewee's unique journey through the days of the assassination and proceeding aftermath as well as the specific impact these events had on their lives. The interviewees are from varying backgrounds and age groups, each one offering a perfectly unique perspective of the story of President Kennedy's untimely death.

On November 22, 1963, a shot was fired that would bring the nation to a standstill. That was the moment when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated while campaigning for a second term as president. The following narratives give insight to the reactions of everyday Americans, as they heard the news and watched the story unfold.

John Mayfield, Professor of History, Samford University

Interviewed by Katie Dover, October 29, 2013.

My family was very conservative. They didn't like him. I liked him. I liked his style. I liked his politics. I liked his sense of humor. Very commanding presence, and I was young at the time, and he was a refreshing change from the Eisenhower years. Eisenhower was a good man, but he was kind of dull. Kennedy brought in style. Plus I liked his awareness of civil rights, and it seemed to me that that was a time that that needed to be recognized and acted upon at the presidential level. Kennedy brought visibility to it and presence to it. But mostly I liked his sense of humor; he was just really good at press conferences, and responding to the give and take. He was a very accessible president. People like that attract you.

I had just turned eighteen. It came over the loud

speaker, and we were in the middle of physics class, and I guess it ran from 11:30 to 12:30, or something like that, but shortly after noon, 12:20 whenever it was, the speaker came on and he [the principal] had an important message that the president had been shot in Dallas and that we wouldn't have any other kinds of information, so we went from there to homeroom. Everybody was in homeroom, and we were going to have ten minutes in homeroom, and go to a pep-rally, cause this was on a Friday, and on the very next day there was a key game between Monterey High School and Louvack High School and this is in Texas, and we were going to have a pep-rally, but they asked us to stay in and have a moment of prayer for the President, who at that moment was assumed to still be alive, and we were in homeroom and I could hear the assistant coach on the telephone in the office next to homeroom, and he was saying "Oh, I see, I see, I see, I see," and the moment of prayer stopped and the loudspeaker came on

and said, “Okay, the moment of prayer is stopped,” and as that came on the assistant coach walked out and said, just walked past us and said “President Kennedy’s dead.” He had had a friend at Parkland Hospital, and when they brought the body in it was pretty clear that he was, he was dead. So we went on to the pep-rally, nobody else knew this, and we went on to the pep-rally, and I was just dragging along, you know starting to cry, and we assembled and there was a sort of lack-luster applause, and then five minutes into the pep-rally Principal Floyd Honey came out and said, “Sorry John F. Kennedy’s died. Let’s go back to our homeroom and do what we do.” I remember two incidents is was still permissible to be a good Democratic leader from Texas at that time, and my high school was fairly liberal and two girls just broke down, I mean just came apart. I remember that very well, and I remember these two good-ole-boys couldn’t absorb the news, they knew they had just witnessed history but couldn’t absorb it. One of them said, “That just ruined our pep-rally,” and I didn’t hate him for it, because you could tell they were trying to process the enormity of this thing. And so that was Friday and the game was a disaster you know, it was just, why they even played the thing was beyond me. And then they buried him on Monday. And I just remember sitting in my room watching the TV and that little salute that JFK Jr. gave as the case rolled past.

Oh yeah, I was glued to it [the television as President Kennedy’s funeral was broadcasted], absolutely glued to it. That was a pivotal moment, you know, it was one of the worst days, the worst weeks of my life, it was just awful. And, then that was on a Friday, and on Sunday we hauled off to church which wasn’t very cheery either, and we were coming back, and this big white Pontiac, and Walter Cronkite with CBS News came on the radio, and said that Lee Harvey Oswald had been shot. And where does this end? First you have the President shot, then you

have the prime suspect shot. And I went home and turned on the TV and saw the replay of it, of Oswald’s shooting, and I couldn’t believe it. They took this guy [Oswald] out of the car across from a parking garage with nobody in front of him, and a crowd milling about, and even at the ripe old age of eighteen I realized that was in technical terms, stupid.

You have to remember that at that time the daily news was all about fifteen or twenty minutes at night, and we watched Walter Cronkite and we’d flip on and watch Huntley Brinkley and things like that. We grew up and we could put our hands on a copy of *Time* magazine, and then of course it just absorbed the TV they went on full 24 hours, well not 24 hours so much as full coverage of the assassination [Kennedy], the second assassination [Oswald], and the funeral, and finally kind of ran out gas I guess after the funeral. One little moment for your poignant scenes, of course the famous was when the case was rolling on with the horses being led with the boots turned in backwards, you know you get all of this ritual stuff that you never hear about and the little scene of JFK Jr., who was what three at the time, saluting.

Well play it on through to the very end where they have “Taps”, when they have the Army or Navy guy playing, I guess it would have been Navy, playing “Taps” and he hits a sour note. “Taps” is the easiest thing to play on the trumpet you can possibly think of, and he hit the sour note, and I thought at the time that’s just so fitting.

Lowell Vann, Chair of the Department of Art, Samford University

Interviewed by Ben Woodall, November 4, 2013.

I was born in southern TN in Lincoln County about two miles across the state line. Stayed there till I was five years old and then moved to Birmingham for a very brief time. Moved back to TN, back to Cullman, Alabama in 1942 where I grew up—high school, grade school and all of that. Left there to come to school. Went back to my hometown and stayed there till I left in 64. We moved around from school to school. Ended up here in 1970.

Being conservative, we were a little wary of electing a Roman Catholic as president of the U.S. for the first time. But evidently he did a rather good job. Some of the things were a little controversial at that time: Cuban Missile Crisis and some of that.

My dad was one of the very Republicans in the county of Cullman, AL. It was run by a Democratic political machine really. There were about six of us in high school who were Republican and everyone else was Democrat. We thought that was a little strange, but we bucked the trend and campaigned for political parties in high school as political activists I guess you could say. Well, we let people know that we were Republican and didn't go along with the machine that was running the county. Not anything drastic, not anything drastic as far as that. We just held our views and believed that conservative views were better than some of the things that were going on at that time especially in the county government at that time.

I was educational director of a Baptist church: First Baptist Church of Cullman, AL at that time. Assistant to the Pastor, Pastor of education, living in a house on the east side of town. I remember hearing the news [of President Kennedy's assassination] and went home and watched

it on TV. Listened to all the news course at that time we probably didn't get but three channels off the TV. We got the three channels out of Birmingham, I think CBS, ABC, and NBC was all the news we had at that time. Course it was on radio, but radio was all local at that time. We watched it on TV, all the events through the funeral procession. It was just a real traumatic event.

I was really shocked about an assassination attempt on the president of the United States. I found that despicable at that time. For someone as well liked as he was, and not someone to deserve that sort of thing. When that news came through it was just really disturbing from the standpoint of 'Where do we go from here?' and 'What's this going to do to the nation?' especially.

I was intrigued by the assassination and I'm one of those that's not really sure that we've got all the answers to all the questions about the whole assassination yet. Because there was such conflicting reports the day or so after the assassination and the Warren Commission was to delve into that and they didn't find any subversion or plots or twists that were out of the ordinary they said. I remember some of the reports of that day and I don't know how erroneous they were or where they started from. They were talking about a second gunshot coming from a knoll nearby. That was reported on national TV and they were looking into that.

I still could not believe that the police department could let Ruby to come into the police station carrying a weapon and assassinating Oswald in view of several of the people there surrounding him when the gunshot was fired and he killed him. That always left it up to some skepticism as to why and what his connection was, was he just a citizen and taking it into his own right as a vigilante to do something about it. And if so, why? Why was he so upset? Why would he risk everything that he had to go into a police station to shoot a person under suspicion of assas-

sinating the president? I just couldn't believe they let him in there and how that played out.

I know that the whole nation was just devastated by the fact that the president had just been killed. The trauma of that and watching it unfold, the events. Watching all of the pictures with his wife Jackie, and the plane back to Washington, and the drama of the event and the swearing in of the president on board the plane was just really moving. Moving to the standpoint of being decimating, I think to the populous. I think we were all shell-shocked or stunned by such a tragic event that had occurred.

I think he [Lee Harvey Oswald] left the scene of the proposed place where they shot him from that book depository; went to a movie and they found him in the theater and arrested him, or right after that. It was not very long before they had him in custody. They worked very fast to do that. It was a chain of events that happened very, very fast and everybody was sort of, you know, 'They got him!' Then after he was assassinated of course it left it kind of wide open as far as where did he come from? Why did he do it? Where was he trained? Why was he in Russia? All of the questionable things about his life and why he would take it upon himself to take that sort of attempt on the president's life and what motivated him to do that? What was in it for him? What was he trying to prove? What was he trying to gain by that? That was always up for questioning for why he was the agent to do that.

I've always wondered about that because he [Oswald] could have been because if he had something in his own personality quirk that led him to the point of wanting to do something about it that drastically I'm always concerned about the paramilitary groups we've got in the country that are sometimes hate groups, sometimes very patriotic, sometimes a mixture of all of that. And why they think they have the right to circumvent the law to take things into their own hands. I just can't figure why that

particular person did all of that and that has been some of the mystery. I just wish he had not been killed because we could have gotten some better answers to that. But for him to have been in Russia, and that he was a Russian agent, and he had been paid to do all that—I don't know where all that come from and I don't think the Warren Commission settled in the minds of the American people for good even though they went back and said they had it thoroughly investigated and everything else. Like many things today, the things that are brought up, create more questions than they find answers. I think that was the situation with that because are they covering up something? What do they know? Is this report really just trying to appease people? Is it trying to save world peace? All those questions are sidelined questions and it was just sort of left hanging and nothing really concrete nailed down as far as what was going on and why Oswald was the one who did that and what was his reason for doing that. That could have been known. I think if he had been kept alive and been put on trial maybe those things would have come out, but it just sort of closed the door and you didn't know what was on the other side of that door.

Why? What was your motivation? What caused you to do this? Why did you take the law into your own hands and try to assassinate the leader of the free world? What was in it for you? What did you think it would do for the world? What was the affect you were trying to create by doing that?

I would have liked to see his [John F. Kennedy] presidency go through the full term and just what things would come from his leadership and things like that. He had a particular charisma he carried with him that really enticed a lot of American people to vote for him.

Hugh Floyd, Professor of Sociology, Samford University

Interviewed by Ben Woodall, November 4, 2013.

My views were positive. I viewed him [President Kennedy] as a progressive that was a reasonable progressive. His public persona was familistic. At the time it was very positive. Didn't have any kind of reservations about his religious affiliations. I felt like that was a positive thing in terms of reflecting where I was comfortable with the country going or being located.

I was a student at Ouachita Baptist University, and I was walking on the quad past the mascot for the institution, and someone came up and told me. I don't remember where I was going, but I remember where I was. It was really profoundly troubling to me.

First of all, just the idea of a nation leader being subject to this kind of a hostile act. Of course that wasn't the first president assassinated, but it reflected to me the civil rights issues that were kind of around me. We weren't all on the same consensus. There had been a lot of hostility towards him, verbalized by religious affiliation. I had more of a national level of identity than a regional one.

I was troubled by it, but I was not viewing this as calamitous as far as the nation being subject to disintegration. There was all kinds of speculation of why it happened. Stories after the case, some of them constructed. The swearing in of the vice president... to me it remained more of a tragedy. Here was a person, the leader of the country, had the country's interest at heart. The father of two children, one of them very young. I looked at it in sort of a microcosm there. I wasn't concerned so much about where things were going. I knew a little bit about Johnson and he resonated with me politically too. I was ok.

I thought it was very interesting, because the media portrayed him [Lee Harvey Oswald] as kind of conspirato-

rially related to Kennedy's hostility towards communism and capital links of the US. Whether it was the Cosanostra kinds of relations or in Cuba. I didn't think there was an argument convincing enough for me to take a position. The idea of a multiple shooters was difficult for me to believe. Even though they had the ballistics stuff and forensics I didn't see how—those were speculative ideas to me.

The guy that killed him was portrayed as having some collusionary connections with other elements that wanted Kennedy dead. That made the conspiracy theory much more viable for sure. At the time, ya know. I met people who knew Lee Harvey Oswald and some of the other guys who were in the mix. Not that they had personal interactions with them, but it was more incidental. Worked somewhere and somebody who knew somebody that I know and introduced these guys to them. So this guy that I know has his own theory. He was from New Orleans so some of the stuff I'm trying to recall—the conversations I had with him after 1970 and then what I lived through in the early 60s. I do remember watching the reports on TV and stuff like that. I was more curious and found it interesting. I was not politically wired up for one position or another. I was more concerned about the death of a father and a national leader. I felt like we had leadership in place, that we could continue.

It would seem that Harvey Oswald was the trigger and he was handing out communist tracks in New Orleans and to be a proponent of communism and to shoot someone who was adamant about being opposed to communist expansionism in the Eastern Hemisphere. That would make sense. Another sense making, would be the conspiratorial effort of people who saw Kennedy as a threat to their entrepreneurial and corporate interests. That would make sense. I haven't done a lot of reading subsequently. It's not been a burning question—who killed him. My thinking was: he was dead, two kids didn't have a dad, and we

didn't have a president.

I never did think of him in an idealist—sort of at Camelot king. I don't think of presidents that way. They get up and put their pants on one leg at a time, shave their face. They're in a position a lot of times for power. I thought it was bad that he died because he had two kids. I didn't have him idolized as the kind of icon. What I found about him later, I found out about a lot of politicians. I just put him in the category of humanist. Makes bad judgment about personal life, so what's new? Presidents are just folks. Again, two kids—you don't want to have anybody taken out like that. Then secondly, he was the president. I think he had some other stuff coming down the pipe. He had a new vision, and we needed a new vision.

Larry Davenport, Professor of Biology, Samford University

Interviewed by Holly Howell, October 16, 2013.

Well I was living in Seattle, I was born in Seattle in 1952. I was eleven when the assassination happened. I remember some things about that election. I remember that Nixon was involved to some extent. I remember Eisenhower the war hero. I remember some controversy when Kennedy was elected because, after all, he was a Catholic. That was a first, and very unusual. I was aware of what was going on despite my age. It was the first significant election that I remember, in fact. So that's where I was. I was in my sixth grade class. We had this portable classroom, which, at that time, was not an insult. It was just part of the deal. It was Emerson Elementary School, the same school that my parents had matriculated from.

I remember it vividly. It is one of those things you won't forget. Being in this portable classroom and being seated, oh, about half way back in the middle on the right, and I remember class was interrupted by a fellow sixth grader. Not somebody from my class, but a student who worked in the office. That day she was acting as a runner, and she was taking this information to the different classes and I remember two things about that moment: I remember the shocked look, the upset look on my teacher's face, and I remember this sixth grade messenger girl, standing there awkwardly, weirdly smiling. We found out what she had told my teacher shortly afterwards, and I was shocked that she was smiling. I guess it was nerves or something, but I do remember the look on her face. She stood there while the teacher told us. She told us in kind of a shocked, faltering way. So, yeah, I remember that moment.

There weren't in depth news programs, no all-day, all-night kinds of programs that proliferate today. You got whatever they told you on the six o'clock news or the ten o'clock news. We weren't a family that sat around watching the news. We didn't watch TV during meals. I believe it was later that evening, though, that we watched a special news broadcast about the details of what happened in Dallas, the book depository and all that.

My world didn't change. I did feel a tremendous loss, something unthinkable had happened, in broad daylight, to someone who had become a hero for that generation. He was becoming a hero of mine. Everything about him was positive. Of course, we had that whole early 1960s kind of happiness about us. I think that whole generation was happy to be free of World War II and the Korean War. Of course, the Vietnam War was about to hit, but they were happy times and they were prosperous times, and our president was leading us through that. I mean, I didn't know expressions like, what did they call his regime? Camelot? I didn't know that. But, that was the feeling, was that we

were kind of reborn as a nation. So I did feel that change.

Well Jack Ruby became a hero, I remember that. Oswald was depicted as this Communist troublemaker. I remember, and, of course, this was a time of constant Communist, what would you call it? Conspiracy theories. We were all, as kids, junior G-men, looking for Commies under every rock and, so, we didn't have any doubt that Oswald did it. We didn't have any doubt that he was connected to the U.S.S.R. and the only downside of Jack Ruby killing him is that we would never know the connection.

Again, if he was working for the Rooskies, that would make sense, but, I don't know, it was a time of assassinations. The next one to go was Martin Luther King. Right? In April of '68. And then his [President Kennedy] brother Bobby in June of '68. It was crazy, all of those within five years, and all done by folks with little motivation. I think the King murder was a hate crime. The Bobby Kennedy thing may have just been a cry for publicity, I don't know. But, talk about lack of security. Bobby Kennedy was walking through the kitchen of his hotel when he was murdered. I remember that one too. I remember that very well, I was on my way to school when that came over the radio.

I remember when Johnson became president that we all wondered out loud who he was. My family was not that political. A politician from Texas did not mean that much to us. We knew the local people, the state senators and all that, but not someone like that. You have to remember that in the Pacific Northwest in the '60s, we were not a part of regular society. There were no television programs meant for us, there were no sports on television meant for us. Everything was New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles. We were in the Hinterlands, so the politics of the rest of the country were not of interest to us.

I guess what I miss about that [the Kennedy] administration was the positive start it had. In fact, I'm re-

mindful of the first years of the Obama administration. It also started out very positive. It was like, "Okay! We're going to try some new things and be more inclusive." Rather than, ya know, everyone in a pigeon hole, stay in your place. I'm sorry that didn't continue. Maybe it couldn't have. Just like Obama. It just reaches a limit after a few years. Everybody turned on him. Maybe that would have happened to Kennedy too. Maybe the best thing that could have happened is that he was taken out before bad things happened. The bad stuff always overtakes you. Johnson, I tied Johnson directly with Vietnam. I know Kennedy was there in the beginning, but Johnson was the one who pushed it. That was the defining stuff of my generation.

***William Nunnelley, Director of Public Relations,
Samford University***

Interviewed by Sara Curley, November 6, 2013.

I remember that day very well, even though it's been almost fifty years. I was a young coast guard recruit in boot camp at Cape May, New Jersey, which is not that far from Washington maybe a hundred and fifty miles or so. They wanted to have representatives of all the branches of service to march in the funeral procession in Washington. And so the coast guard is a small branch that doesn't have a huge number of people concentrated in any one area, because they have coast guard stations that are on the coast obviously and rivers. And so the boot camp is where recruits are trained and that's where they have the largest number of coastguardsmen. So we were in about our ninth week in boot camp and we had gotten to the point where we could march pretty good, stay in step not bounce

up and down, you know, and because of its proximity to Washington. For that reason they took a hundred of us over to march in the funeral procession on Monday, after Kennedy was shot on Friday. And so that's the thing I remember most about that was that experience.

He was the president and so you know the president is revered in most cases, in many cases, not always. And so I remember that I may have been surprised when he won in 1960. I don't really remember, but I probably did watch the Nixon and Kennedy debates on television, which was, I think, a turning point. As I say, he was the president so naturally, I figure that people would look up to him I think. Very popular I think, you know, young, vibrant, always exercising and such, which was a bit of a contrast to the presidents that had been before him. Ike Eisenhower, was older and of course FDR and Truman, Harry Truman, was a fascinating individual that was president. And so Kennedy was different, he was younger and quite athletic

Well this was Friday, as you know I'm sure, and I was in boot camp at Cape May, New Jersey, Coast Guard receiving center. And not long after lunch we had some free time, they didn't give us much free time, it's a military regiment, and we heard that, and when I first heard that something had happen, we were in our barracks, and we heard that there had been some shooting in Dallas near the President. That's all we knew. And so later on in the afternoon we went to get our weekly haircut. The Coast Guard and all branches of the Service are very big on keeping your head shaved. And so we lined up and you would go into the barber shop on the base there, and it didn't take them long to shave you. And I was standing out in the line and one of the recruits that had been in line in front of me came out. I remember his name, I don't know why, I wasn't particularly close to him, although he was okay. A guy name Al, from Syracuse, New York I think. And he

said, he came out and looked and he said, "The President is dead." And that's how we found out about it. Late Friday afternoon, of 1963, November 22nd.

Well we were just sort of shocked, obviously. Stunned. You don't think that that will happen. Presidents had been shot, obviously. Not many, but it had been a long time since there had been any sort of violence like that related to the President, I believe. So it was just a very shocking moment. It was just hard to believe, that somebody would shoot the President.

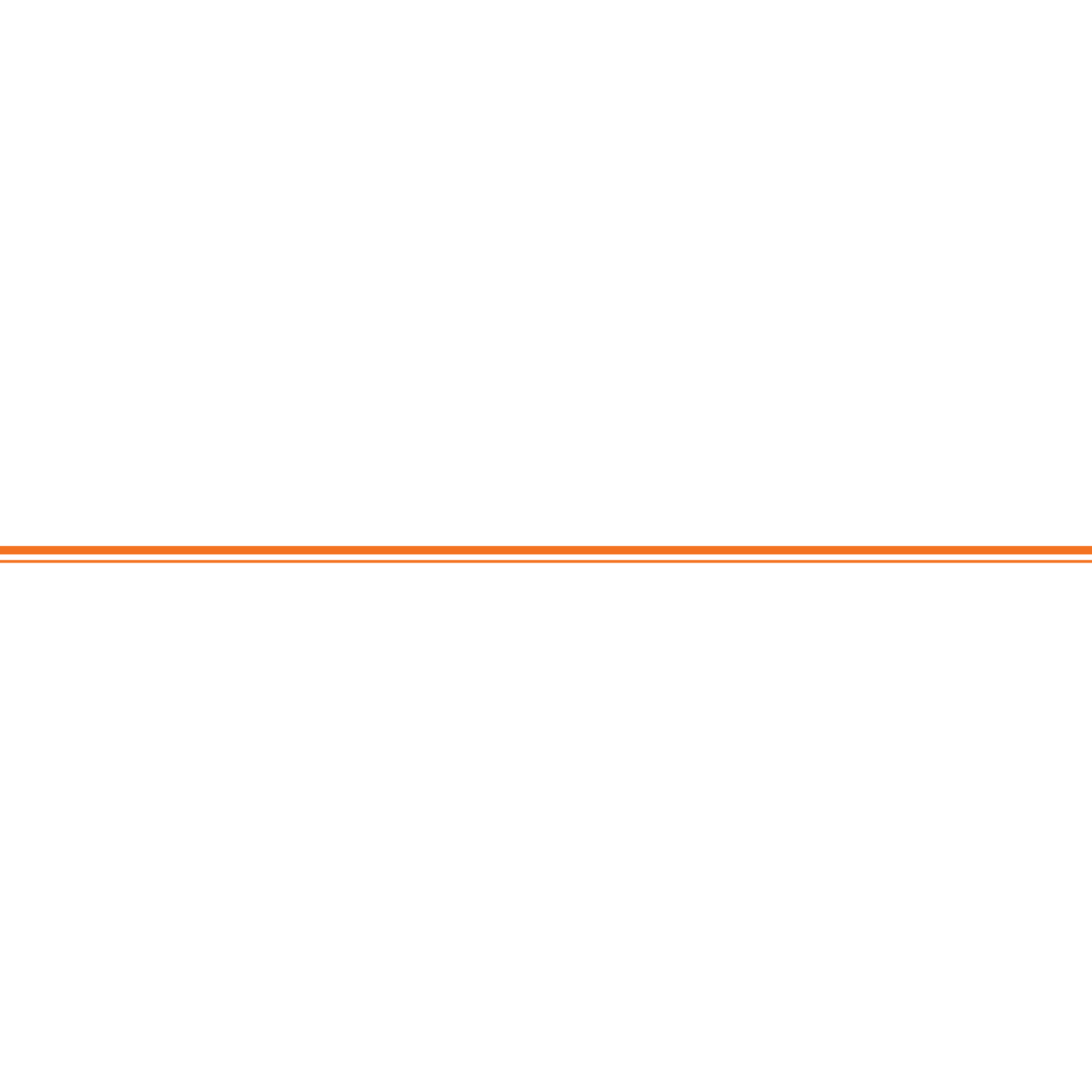
We didn't have much access to news, but the next morning we understood that they were going to take a group of us down to Washington. And so the next morning they put us on buses and took us, this would be on Saturday, the next day, to the Baltimore Coast Guard station. And we stayed there. On Sunday they bused us over to Washington, and split us up into small groups. Running errands, I was with a regular, an older, enlisted man, who was driving around and taking things, rifles for marching purposes and so forth, from whatever the source was, and I can't remember, to the Capitol. And I remember driving up the back of the Capitol and he would take all the stuff in. And so when we were on the bus going to that assignment, or maybe it was when we were going back up to Baltimore for the night, because that's where we stayed, it's not that far, we heard, somebody in the front of the bus said, "They've shot another one." Well that was when Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas Police Station which was on Sunday afternoon. And so Monday, we put on our dress blues and we all went and we lined up on the North side of the Capitol for the funeral procession and that began.

My reaction was, "Who is this? Why would he do this? Why would this be done?" Well I don't think anybody knew then. I didn't have any feelings or questions about that. I just, you know, was aware that the President

had been shot. And he [Oswald] apparently was the one that had done it. At least he was the one that they had arrested for that.

It [the assassination of President Kennedy] was a shock too, but for me personally, in a quieter sort of way. And it may be simply because I was up there marching in that funeral procession after Kennedy was shot and seeing those hundreds of thousands of people lining the streets. We marched from the Capitol, down to the White House and then over to the Church where the funeral procession was held and that's afterwards when his son John Jr. did his famous salute. And then we marched from there over pass the Lincoln Memorial and across Arlington Bridge to Arlington Cemetery. We didn't go into the cemetery, but we were on a road, a little wall about this high, right outside and we could hear the funeral being conducted and the guy that blew taps made a mistake on one of his notes which was an unfortunate thing. Air Force One flew over and then all the dignitaries were there. De Gaulle was there and various other national leaders. And so we saw these limousines afterwards, coming down the road by, and we wondered who we had seen, we weren't sure who we had seen. And then they loaded us on the bus and we went back to reality, back to boot camp. But it was because of that momentous weekend, I think, that it probably made more, all of those events made an impression on me, how could they not, but that probably personally made more of an impression on me.







BOOK REVIEWS

Credit, Fashion, Sex: Economies of Regard in Old Regime France

By Clare Haru Crowston. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013. Pp. xiii, 424. \$ 27.95. ISBN: 978-0-8223-5528-1.)

Reviewed by Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

WITH *CREDIT, Fashion, Sex: Economies of Regard in Old Regime France*, Crowston makes two central claims: that credit was the most important concept in Old Regime France, and that understanding its use and the discussions it engendered will improve our understanding of France during this period. The concept of credit was well understood and widely applied by contemporaries in Old Regime France and permeated all fields of life (court, family, intellectual world, economy, religion). While nowadays we understand the term ‘credit’ as having only material connotations, as access to financial resources, Crowston reveals that in Old Regime France the term had both material meaning (such as bills of exchange, promissory notes, etc), but more importantly, it had a myriad of nonmaterial connotations signifying influence, power, respect, and esteem. These different understandings of credit coexisted, intertwined, and were in a constant conversion among political, social, cultural, and economic manifestations. This understanding of credit’s metamorphosis in between the domains of the political, economic, social, and cultural, Crowston claims, affected the way in which people during Old Regime France perceived these domains. While today we see them as separate spheres, as economy, policy, society, and culture, the French society of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries saw them as overlapping and inseparable domains. According to Crowston, “our own perceptions of distinct

realms of human existence is a historic construct born of the disavowal of the credit regime ... and thus foreign to the early modern period” (3).

The lack of distinction between the above-mentioned realms of human existence, Crowston asserts, influenced the way people in Old Regime France saw value. Value could be expressed not only in money, but also in nonmaterial ways. Borrowing Avner Offer’s thesis of gift economies as “economies of regard”, where value is not necessarily measured in financial terms, Crowston asserts that in Old Regime France, people relied on such ‘economies of regard’ much more often than on the financial one. “Multiple, intersecting economies of regard operated in Old Regime France. They included political economies of power in court patronage and royal administration, economies of trust and affection within families, economies of prestige and renown within intellectual life, economies of desire in sexual relations, economies of money in the myriad form of stipends, pensions, commerce, and public finance, and economies of information and publicity” (316). While, as Pierre Bourdieu, Crowston accepts that there are different forms of capital, she distances herself from his thesis that other forms of capital derive from the economic one. “At stake in exchanges of credit,” Crowston argues, “was not merely the acquisition of economic capital but gaining advantage in the struggle over access to limited resources ... I mean resources writ large: status, reputa-

tion, honor, power, as well as wealth” (15). Crowston also adopts Gabriel Tarde’s definition that value arises from “collective and subjective judgements about the aptitude of objects to be more or less - and by a greater or lesser number of people - believed, desired, or enjoyed” (323). This definition accepts that beauty or honesty would be as important as utility in judging value. Crowston argues that such understanding of value was accepted in Old Regime France which explains the predominance of ‘economies of regard’ where money was one among many measuring systems.

Crowston’s research not only defines the credit system existing during the Old Regime, but also adds to our understanding of its workings by highlighting the role of women in dispensing and wielding credit, explaining how the concept of credit extended to non-elites, revealing the close relations between credit and fashion, and demonstrating how credit changed over time.

While women were legally subordinated to their husbands and usually unable to wield much power and influence during Old Regime France, Crowston reveals that the credit system helped them overcome such restrictions. Through credit obtained in the libidinal economy, women could gain unofficial power and authority. Crowston offers the examples of Madame de Maintenon (Louis XIV’s mistress) and Madame de Pompadour (Louis XV’s mistress) who, due to their closeness to the king, were able to convert sexual credit in political influence and wielded considerable power affairs of state. Women also enjoyed credit as producers and consumers. Crowston reveals the significant social, cultural, and economic credit female fashion merchants could obtain, such as Rose Bertin (fashion designer to queen Marie Antoinette), but also the significant financial credit that wealthy women enjoyed in the form of shop credit. Rose Bertin’s wealthy female clients, for example, owed her at the time of her death in 1813 a debt

at the amount of 1.5 million livre.

Crowston discusses not only the relation between credit and the underprivileged sex in Old Regime France, but also between credit and the underprivileged orders. She describes how authors from the period referred to non-elite leaders as possessing political and social credit among ordinary people, and offers the example of books targeted for the peasant class which used ‘credit’ in its nonmaterial meanings.

Because credit depended not only on rank and fortune, but to a large extent on performances, Crowston argues, fashion came to the forefront of credit relations. Material objects could endow their possessors with a positive image that could lead to the accumulation of credit. In Nicolas Faret’s words, “fine dress was potentially more important for success at court than birth or merit” (100). Being in fashion meant being popular and possessing cultural capital that could be turned into political or social capital. As Crowston explains, fashion and credit became “complementary systems for acquiring reputation and for circulating judgments on value” (318). Crowston looks at credit and fashion as ‘systems of information exchange’ in which advantage had the ones who possessed the most up-do-date information. Because both systems relied on collective and informal judgment of value, the ability to display one’s access to information was itself a distinction (13).

The system of credit was widely used and accepted by Old Regime society, but it was also the cause of wide criticism and calls for change. While during Louis XIV’s rule criticism centered on the conflict between artifice and reality (credit had to be bestowed on the basis of virtue, and be used in support of higher values, such as friendship, rather than in the pursuit of self-interest and material profit), from the late seventeenth century there was an increased perception of credit as having harmful effects on

politics and government. Critics saw as harmful the role of courtiers, especially women, and financiers on the nation and the public good. Crowston considers John Law's unsuccessful efforts to impose a new public finance system in France during this period as such type of criticism. She sees it as an attempt to wrestle control over France's finances out of the hands of financiers, whose credit was determined in the shady dealings at court, and put it in a national bank that derived its credit from public opinion and the people's faith in the system. Others, such as Montesquieu, Abbe de Saint-Pierre, and the Jansenist priest Jacques-Joseph Duguet, concentrated their criticism on the illegitimacy of women's informal power (through credit), their vanity and involvement in public affairs. During Louis XVI's rule, Charles Duclos, called for reforms to the court's credit regime that would rid it of hypocrisy and artifice, and reorient it towards the public good through its grounding in virtue and merit.

Criticism of credit was closely related to criticism of fashion and the ruinous expenses that the striving for luxury items generated at court. Both credit and fashion were attacked as showing the falsity of court life and bestowing fame and power on caprice. While some, like La Bruyere and Moliere, saw fashion as superficial display that was not connected to virtue, Mothe-Fenelon specifically targeted the connection between women and fashion and saw it as leading to ruinous expenses. The indulgence of noble women came to symbolize the corruption of the regime itself. According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the cultural decay that women of the Old Regime represented "was inextricably linked to social disorder and political legitimacy" (304). Crowston reveals that during the late eighteenth century criticism centered on one particular individual seen as the embodiment of all that was wrong with credit and fashion - Queen Marie Antoinette. She was seen as responsible for the colossal French debt (with her

expenses on fashion and gambling). Her close relation with Rose Bertin, a working class woman, was perceived as the collapse of traditional boundaries (between city and court, between commerce and nobility), and her influence over the king (as the only woman in his life) was scorned and detested.

While Crowston is careful to underline several times that neither the relations between Rose Bertin and Marie Antoinette, nor the credit regime in court (with its hypocrisy, low morals, and debt) brought the Revolution of 1789, she suggests that they contributed to the collapse of credibility in the regime and facilitated the 1789 upheaval. Crowston specifically singles out the scorn that Marie Antoinette attracted (her nickname was Madame Deficit), as putting public opinion against the monarchy and its wastefulness. The queen, and aristocracy in general, were perceived by many ordinary people as malicious and frivolous parasites, rather than the brave, honorable and virtuous statesman they were supposed to be.

Crowston's *Credit, Fashion, Sex* improves our understanding of Old Regime France and the undercurrents that might have affected the Revolution of 1789. While Crowston's research is based on a wide array of sources - both fiction and non-fiction, she heavily relies on fiction, novels and plays, as representing the concept of credit in Old Regime France. A representation of credit in seventeenth and eighteenth century literature, however, does not necessarily have to reflect the reality existing at the time. Crowston, while refuting Bourdieu's claim that at the base of credit was always the economic gain, is not very successful in proving it. Her claims of credit conversion between the cultural, social, and political do not refute the assertion that the ultimate goal of all credit machinations at court was financial gain.

The Great Melding: War, the Dixiecrat Rebellion, and the Southern Model for America's New Conservatism

By Glenn Feldman. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015. Pp. ix, 388. \$59.95. ISBN 978-0-8173-1866-6.)

Reviewed by Aaron Getman-Pickering

WILD ANIMALS have been known to chew off a paw, or even an entire leg, when stuck in a trap. The American South has done the same. Dr. Glenn Feldman calls this “sophistic pruning,” in his new book *The Great Melding*, a metaphor for the South’s habit of pruning the most egregious branches of white-supremacy in order to keep the more central, systematic parts alive and healthy. The statement on the other side of the colon — *War, the Dixiecrat Rebellion, and the Southern Model for America's New Conservatism* — gives nuance to the discussion, but at its base, Feldman’s message is unambiguous: southern politics is, and has always been, about race.

The book starts with a brief summary of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in which the South, still deeply wounded by their defeat in the Civil War and subsequent occupation, learned that “Yankee, Republican, and federal rule could be broken if whites put aside their economic differences to cooperate.” The great melding, then, stripped of its linguistic niceties, was a bargain: social conservatives voted against their economic interests while business conservatives accepted and even amplified the strong social conservatism and illiberalism pervasive in Southern culture.

This melding was not accidental. It occurred mainly as a backlash to the New Deal. And while the South did have its liberals — Graves, Ethridge, Couch, Blease,

Commer, DuBose, Black, Green and Byrnes to name a few — Feldman finds that they were never liberal in any novel way. That is to say, these politicians were never racially liberal. Black, Graves, and Green could, for example, be found in Alabama’s 1920’s K.K.K. klaverns. Lister Hill’s Senate run in 1944 against James Simpson is oft-cited as evidence of Alabama’s liberalism in the 1940’s. Feldman finds it the opposite; what should have been an easy victory for Hill turned into a prolonged and ugly campaign. Simpson used race “solidly interwound with the most hal-lowed dogmas of the free market,” to curry favor, and Hill, who had not planned to return to Alabama to campaign, was forced to race bait to win re-election (118).

By a concerted conservative effort, liberalism came to stand for everything that the South despised: the Federal government, Yankees, Jews (often one and the same), blacks, labor unions and Catholics. This proved difficult in the throes of the Great Depression when worries about federal encroachment were overridden by the immediacy of survival. It was only after the first New Deal, 1936 or so, when Roosevelt began enacting long-standing legislation such as a national minimum wage and the right to form a union, that Southerners began to fear that a bag was being pulled over their heads; “a deep fear and dislike of the federal government served as the common denominator between economic and social conservatives” (191). Time, money and political capital was also crucial to convince

average peoples that the government was their enemy — especially because the South had received more from the New Deal than anywhere else in the country. They said that business had saved the South from “FDR, the national Democrats, and their alliance with labor gangsters” (62).

One of Feldman’s many contributions in *The Great Melding* is the depth and breadth of his research. The quotations he uses are shocking in their candor. Take this one, for example: “the Jew CIO and Roosevelt are going to make niggers out of us all... The Jew carpetbagger and the nigger question of the Civil War days are here again... may God help our case” (154). These quotes, it is important to note, are not just jaundiced rambles of rural bigots. Feldman cites industrial businessmen, hill country and black belt farmers, Vanderbilt Agrarians, hill country farmers, writers, lawyers, journalists and politicians; big mules, populists, Bourbons and union men; carpetbaggers and scalawags, rich and poor. Their alliance was a matter of the survival of Southern civilization. Phrased as such, their cause was too big to fail.

Urban legend (not historical evidence, mind you) has it that when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act he said, “We have lost the South for a generation.” Feldman, on the other hand, argues that Democrats lost the South, not all at once, but slowly in the 1920’s and then faster in the 1930’s and 1940’s. The Dixiecrats or the States Rights Democratic Party was the summation of decades of withdrawal from the national Democratic Party. While local Southern Democrats were markedly conservative, the national party was becoming more and more racially assimilated. Southerners felt that the national party had betrayed them, but they could not yet join the ranks of Republicans — it was still the party of Lincoln. And so they did in 1948 what they had done in 1928 under the aegis of the Hoovercrats: they left. In the Democratic national convention before the 1948 elec-

tion, Southern representatives literally walked out when the body voted to make civil rights a part of their national platform. Truman, once a potential redeemer of the Democratic Party with his confederate roots, was a quisling and a failure.

Feldman stresses that the Dixiecrats were not, by the most liberal interpretation, different than other Southern politicians. He writes that “while the Dixiecrats labored long and hard to portray their movement as a spontaneous grassroots expression, it was neither” (284). Their views on race and economics were no different than their fellow statesmen. Principally, it was a power-grab by economic rightists [as popularized by Ayn Rand, Ludwig Von Mises, Milton Friedman, and F.A. Hayek] “who — given the opening by the national Democratic Party to seize the standard of white supremacy to further their class program — did exactly that” (284).

Scholars of suburban republicanism believe that there is more nuance to the story than a tale of racial conservatism, and while Feldman would agree partially, he argues that this view should not be used to “consign the study of history to the realm of infinite relativism” (279). Suburbanization, Feldman would remind his reader, was, after all, a backlash to desegregation and therefore completely racially motivated. Scholars of the New South have given this nuance more than its share. Feldman reminds us of the pervasiveness of white supremacy, and moreover, how the defenders of this Southern civilization labored to euphemize the terms of White Supremacy such that politicians would never again have to “scream nigger.” They could simply say “states rights” or “local control” or even “constitutionalism.” That claim of Orwell’s — that political language is “designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable” — may have found its greatest substantiation.

Conceptually simple, but stylistically incisive,

Feldman proves beyond a doubt the true cause for the South's abrupt departure from the Democratic Party. However, through Feldman's book, it becomes clear that the shifts and volatility did not represent a fundamental difference in political ends, but rather a difference in the means by which to accomplish those ends. The South did not so much become republican as the Republican Party became Southern — they were the only party to accept its toxic amalgam of racism and economic conservatism — and so the moniker the “Solid South” holds. Feldman's book is not an indictment of Southern politics, or Southern culture for that matter, but the carefully depicted truth of a brutal backlash to the Civil War and the New Deal. The same states that went Dixiecrat in 1948 went to George Wallace in 1968. More than a side note in Southern political history, the Dixiecrat revolt represents a culmination of decades of conservative backlash, which Feldman seems to imply has been with us ever since. Dixie has had quite a say in the way politics are done in this country, and for those looking to understand the root causes, look no further; Feldman's *The Great Melding* is just the book.

Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government

Edited by Glenn Feldman. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014. Pp. ix, 354. \$74.95. ISBN 0-8130-4987-8.)

Reviewed by Chris Perry

THE IDEA of Southern Exceptionalism remains a contentious subject for many historians of the Southern United States. Though important, the idea can be summarized simply: is the culture of the South truly distinctive from the rest of the country? Glenn Feldman makes his case in *Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government* by demonstrating, rather effectively, the South's unique and sometimes peculiar relationship with the federal government. Feldman compiles an impressive array of essays written by scholars in the areas of Southern history, political science, and economics in order to properly analyze the South's "sometimes tortured relationship with the federal government" (2). He divides the book into five sections presented in chronological order beginning with the early American republic and ending with current events, including the Tea party movement. Feldman provides a provocative and illuminating window into Southern Exceptionalism as it relates to the federal government. It bears similarity to Wilbur J. Cash's reference to a pseudo-Southern nationalism ideology in "The Mind of the South" (1929) in which Cash states that the South was "not quite a nation within a nation, but the next thing to it" (9).

The first section consists of Thomas F. Schaller's essay on the history of South Carolina's relationship with the federal government. Schaller portrays South Carolina as an antagonist in this relationship, a position that has been consistent since the days of the early Republic.

South Carolina seceded from the Union before any other Southern state prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, with the first shots fired on its soil at Fort Sumter. Later in the state's history, South Carolinians considered Harry Truman un-American; favored racial segregation; and embraced symbols such as John C. Calhoun, Strom Thurmond and the Confederate battle flag – emphasizing the uniqueness of South Carolina and the entire South as a whole. From Calhoun all the way to Thurmond, South Carolina distinguishes itself when compared to other states in the union. Feldman's inclusion of this essay provides a proving ground to the thesis, using South Carolina as the test case.

The second section, entitled "Race, War, and Culture," contains essays by Zachary C. Smith, Jason Morgan Ward, Rebecca Miller Davis, and Chris Danielson. Smith delineates the extreme rhetoric of populist Georgia Senator Tom Watson as straddling the line between sanity and "full blown psychosis" (69). However, Watson's influence on the Southern tradition of battling for economic and political independence from the federal government cannot be underestimated. Ward connects the opposition to state intervention into personal, social and economic affairs. He cites the rhetoric of Georgia governor Eugene Talmadge in his attempts to stigmatize Roosevelt's New Deal, anti-Lyndon Johnson and Great Society sentiment in the 1960s and 70s, and hostility toward President Obama today. Davis and Danielson both scrutinize the effect that shifting Democratic Party ideologies had on Mississippi's swing to

the Republican Party. However, Davis argues that the shift occurred gradually for twenty years before the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 by Lyndon Johnson, while Danielson contends that the process of building a Republican majority in Mississippi continued well into the 1980s. The essays contained in section two provide a blueprint for the idea of Southern Exceptionalism and how it relates to an anti-statist philosophy so entrenched in the South that it shepherded in an era in which the South embraced the party of Lincoln as its savior.

In section three, Fred Arthur Bailey pens a fascinating essay on the influence of Texas literary figure and political philosopher Melvin E. Bradford. He claims that Bradford “emerged as an influential scholar whose interpretations of American history would at century’s end help inspire a neo-Confederate resurgence” (181). The Bailey composition complements the additional essay in the section “The Evil Empire Within” by David R. Jansson. Jansson explores the growth of Southern Nationalism and why it directly resulted from the region’s experience of perceived betrayal and oppression in dealing with Washington and the federal government. As Jansson points out, the maltreatment of Southern African-Americans and Native Americans is all too real. The Southern White perception that leads to the idea of Southern nationalism remains another thing entirely. This connects the Bailey and Jansson essays and reinforces Feldman’s thesis. Bradford “longed for a South freed from oppressive forms of northern egalitarianism and bound once again by a glorious Anglo-Saxon order to the exclusion of all other races” (199). Likewise, “from the perspective of Southern nationalists, the white South constitutes a fundamentally different culture from the rest of the country, one that is true to the founding ideals of the United States” (223). Clearly, the specter of race inundates Southern Exceptionalism and the conflict between the South and the federal government.

An antithetical section four focuses on economic development and reform. Chapters by Martin T. Olliff, Matthew L. Downs, and Gregory L. Richard concisely demonstrate that the relationship between the South and the federal government, as it relates to economic issues, has proven beneficial, productive and benign. While seeming at odds with the general contention of the book, Feldman has strategically positioned this information to demonstrate that Southern Exceptionalism is not a myth (something also widely debated), but an empirical fact. The South and the federal government share a unique symbiotic relationship. Feldman writes that the South has a “basically dual personality when it comes to the federal government: one of persistent resistance, even antagonism, as well as one of reliance and even dependency. What follows is endlessly fascinating as well as often disquieting. It suggests that, perhaps, there is a psychological link (rather than a disconnect) between the magnitude of southern dependence on Washington and the region’s famed contempt for and fear of the federal government” (15). One of the most brilliant portions of the book, section four reinforces the thesis by providing an opposing viewpoint.

The final section of the book explores the Tea Party movement and its taxes with essays by Allan B. McBride and Natalie Motise Davis. McBride’s essay demonstrates the similarity of Tea Party support in both the North and South. It appears that data showing approval or disapproval of President Obama is quite similar across the country. This is salient because the most recent incarnation of the Tea Party was a direct result of discontent with the election and subsequent policies of Obama. What is to be made of McBride’s poll numbers that indicate the political beliefs of Southerners on key issues are not at all distinct from national numbers? In the introduction, Feldman responds by saying, “the South repeatedly registers more intense anti-Obama and anti-statist feelings than other parts of the

country. While the data set used here shows these differences to be small among Tea Partiers of various regions, the more important point may be the consistency of such regional differences” (14). Additionally, the data may be affected by race. According to Feldman, “because blacks are not factored out of what are discussed as southern data, southern numbers on matters of Obama, government regulation, and the free market may be unduly ‘liberalized’ compared to what they would be had the data polled only southern whites” (14). Davis’ essay, “Deal or no Deal,” examines the idea that federal dollars returned to states are typically not equal to the amount of tax dollars contributed by their respective taxpayers. An interesting conclusion develops, because according to Davis her data shows, “the states most likely to benefit the most from this redistribution are the original eleven states of the Confederacy” (327). However, most Alabamians do not believe that they are receiving their fair share. This seems to be the result of “right wing authoritarianism” that is present in Alabama and throughout the South (340). The final essay in this section, while interesting, could have been omitted. The information was thought-provoking, but it seemed a bit disjointed when considering the totality of this fine collection.

Glenn Feldman’s *Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government* is both provocative and informative. The synthesis of scholarship is extremely well done and Feldman clearly and concisely supports the thesis of Southern Exceptionalism as it relates to the relationship of the South and the federal government. A few critiques have been noted, but overall this work demonstrates outstanding scholarship. Furthermore, it could be criticized that the book contains political bias, however, the material provides a clear conclusion. Feld-

man only went where the evidence led him.¹

1 This review has been performed posthumously, as Glenn Feldman passed away in October of 2015. I have encountered many fine people in my time at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, but none finer than he. He was not only a professor, mentor and unmatched scholar, but he was also my friend. He deeply enriched my academic pursuits and my intellectual curiosity. The world will not be as bright without him in it, and he will be greatly missed. Rest in peace, my friend.

Nation Within A Nation: The American South and the Federal Government

Edited by Glenn Feldman. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014. Pp. ix, 354. \$74.95. ISBN 0-8130-4987-8.)

Reviewed by Paul Gentle

GLENN FELDMAN is recognized as one of the key contemporary scholars of historic and political racism, especially in the southern United States. He has authored and co-authored eleven books and over one hundred and fifty articles and book reviews in numerous journals.¹ His three most recent books offer an important historical analysis of the transformation of the Democratic and Republican parties, and how this transformation has changed the South since Reconstruction.

In *Nation within a Nation: The American South and the Federal Government*, Feldman serves as both editor and author of the first chapter, with twelve other scholars providing the subsequent chapters. The leading argument of this book is that, compared to other parts of the United States, the South shares distinctive perceptions and its people's political behavior differs. Many Americans, and some Southerners in particular, ask that the federal government leave them alone. In reality they selectively wish for help wanting only those federal programs that they see as valuable to them (2-3). Natalie Davis shows this when comparing the attitudes of Alabamians towards federal programs. The more educated Alabamians realize that many in their state, and in some other Southern states, lack the sufficient knowledge about how many people benefit from federal

programs.

Zachary Smith explains how the anti-war movement in rural Georgia, during World War I, stemmed from the naive idea that the state was not affected by the economy of the nation as a whole. The federal government, on the other hand, realized the interdependence between financial centers, such as New York, and America's cities and rural areas. Winning World War I was key for the financial markets of America and her allies, such as Great Britain and France (4-5; 67-106).

Jason Ward discusses how New Deal policies led to a greater egalitarian society by abating some of the worse factors of poverty among the elderly. One example was the implementation of the Social Security System. Such funds were originally designed as help for families taking care of elderly people. Although Social Security did not eliminate the financial gap that existed between such families, it improved the situation and led to greater equality. Yet, any steps in this direction, even if beneficial to white people, were steps resented by some whites since the New Deal lifted the black race to a state closer to equality in civil rights. Because much of the South was impoverished, compared to the average economic level of the United States as a whole, Roosevelt considered the South the number one problem for the New Deal (5-6; 102-121).

Rebecca Davis maintains that politics in Mississippi continued with an especially racist tact. The electoral defeat of Thurmond's Dixiecrats and Goldwater's anti-federal government campaign were further evidence the

¹ "Memorial for Professor Glenn Feldman," <https://uab.edu/cas/news/announcements/item/5765-memorial-for-professor-glenn-feldman>.

South could not be a completely resistant island in terms of the progress that most of the nation wanted. Chris Danielson notes that the term of being progressive meant far less in Mississippi than it did in other states. Nonetheless, progressive whites accepted the reality of passage of the Voting Rights Act and reached out to some black voters (8; 149 – 178). Fred Bailey examines the amazing case of Melvin Bradford who praised an idyllic civilization that never existed. Bradford often spun yarns of how blacks were happiest being slaves and taken care of by greatly benevolent white owners. He wrote in the twentieth century and never lessened promulgating this myth. He was rejected by most scholars, but not by those Whites trying to justify their own personal racism (9; 181-204).

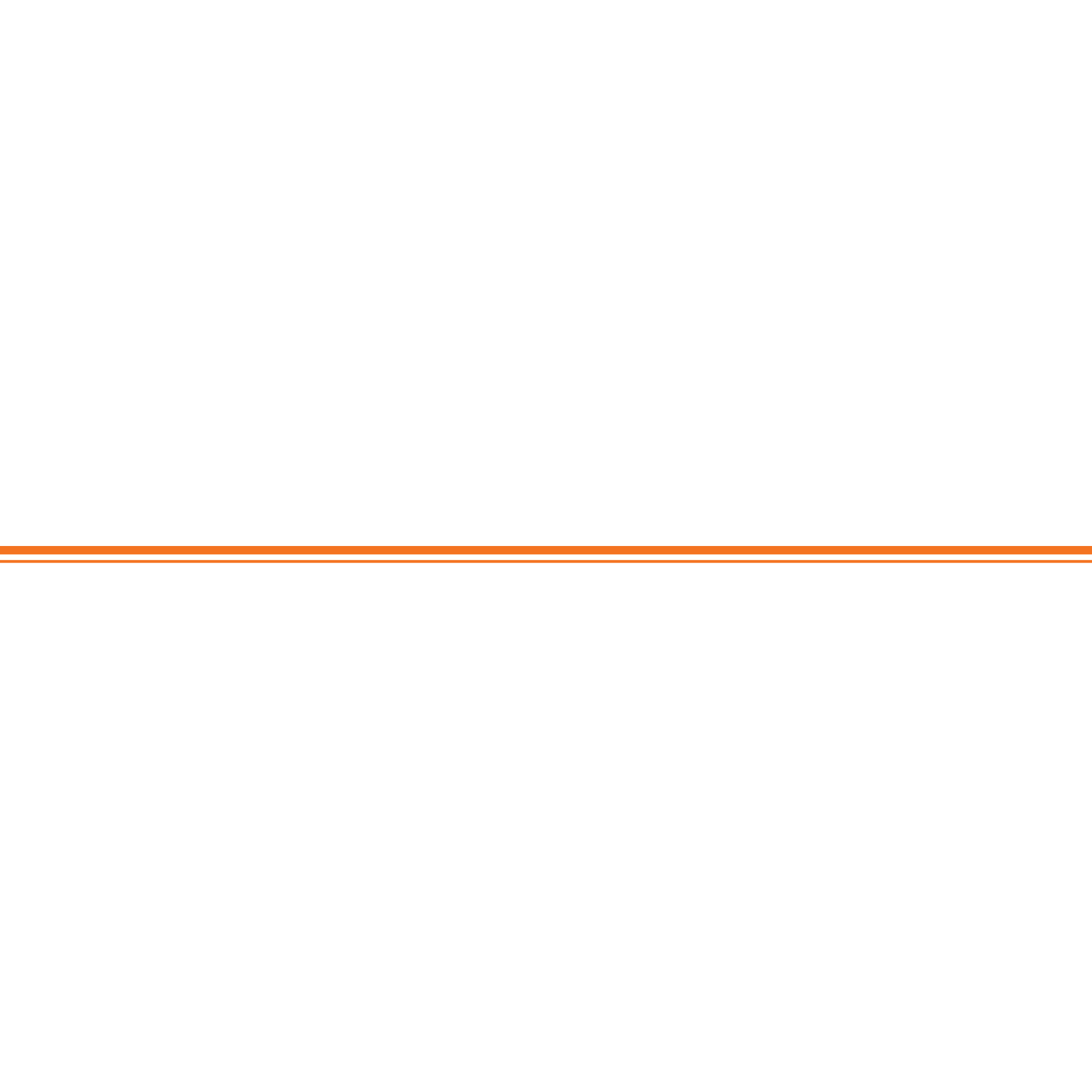
David Jansson discusses two contemporary political groups, the League of the South and the Southern National Congress. The main difference between the two is the advocacy of secession on the part of the League of the South. In contrast, the Southern National Congress advocates an alternative power structure to give the South more independence, within the context of staying part of the United States. The common element of both organizations is their constant regret for the loss of states' rights, much of which is revealed in the form of emails collected by the authors (9-10; 205-226). Emails concerning the southern secessionists are well known by a country that has already made clear that secession is not an option.

Three chapters of the book highlight the beneficial nature of cooperation that may occur between the federal government and local governments in the South. Examples of such beneficial cooperation between the federal and local levels are the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Marshall Space Center in Huntsville, and Anniston's Fort McClellan Army base. In this volume, Matthew Downs focuses his attention to the TVA. Inexpensive power from hydroelectric dams attracted industry, such as the Reyn-

olds Metals Company. With the advent of World War II, this corporation became even more important (10-12; 261-286). Also a courageous jurist in Arkansas, Federal Judge Henley, helped to lift state prisons closer to the standards of federal prisons. Adequate medical care and limits on corporeal punishment were some of his mandated goals (10-13; 287-300).

Allan McBride discusses how the Tea Party fits within the context of recent economic and political events of the South. His chapter includes survey results regarding President Obama's administration (13-14; 303-324). In some way, American Tea Party members from the South may be comfortable with blaming President Obama as the main culprit for economic ills. Despite the complaining, the South has benefited from many federal programs, even if some people do not realize it. The analysis by Natalie Davis demonstrates how, compared to some non-southern states, the South, generally, receives a greater dollar share of federal programs than it pays for (325-341).

In conclusion, some in the South are ignorant of the great degree of federal help given to their states in comparison to the taxes they pay. Some non-Southern states are, in effect, subsidizing some government programs that deliver services in the South. It is true that some Southerners may not want these services in the first place, but a significant amount of Southerners do openly want and need them. Even more often, some Southerners say they do not want the federal government to interfere in their lives, while simultaneously the majority of them partake in federal programs.





FILM REVIEW

Suffragette

2015, Canal +. Directed by Sarah Gavron. Executive Produced by Alison Owen and Faye Ward. Screenplay written by Abi Morgan. Total Run Time: 106 Minutes.

Reviewed by Zoe Zaslawsky

IN SARAH Gavron's 2015 film *Suffragette*, the arduous struggle for British women's suffrage is relived. Set in 1912, Gavron embarks to recreate the true story of this early movement with the fictional character of Maud Watts (played by Carey Mulligan) as its protagonist. At first, a complacent twentieth century British woman, then a reluctant participant, and finally a passionate member of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), Maud represents the life of a working class suffragette. By choosing to center the film around a fictional foot soldier, rather than the real, famous leaders of the movement, like Emmeline Pankhurst (played by Meryl Streep), Gavron documents a valuable historical perspective of Britain's suffragist movement.

The film begins by following a day in the life of Maud Watts who serves as the representation of all British working class women. Maud holds three titles society has given her that dictate her life: wife, mother, and worker—in that order of importance. She is subservient to her husband, holds sole responsibility for caring for the children, and works excessive hours with little pay. She is even oppressed in her dress—wearing restrictive corsets while working as a laundress. Even worse, she and other women are subject to sexual harassment while working. In one scene, Maud stumbles upon her boss, Mr. Taylor, molesting another young female, Maggie. When her boss notices her presence, he stops, perhaps startled by her, and whispers, “She reminds me of you at that age,” in her ear

as he leaves the room. From this scene the audience understands that abuse was common and (because jobs for women were restricted) reluctantly accepted by poor women who had no other opportunities for earning an income.

Maud is not immediately a part of the suffrage movement. She is rather alone and powerless in a world where duties are prescribed to her; she does not seem to yearn for freedom from the beginning because it is only an abstract idea—even as support for the movement first builds around her. Early on, she decides to join a few coworkers in going to give a public testimony to the government on whether it would be beneficial for women to gain the vote. Questioned about her suffragette status on the way to testify, Maud comforts her husband by assuring him she is just going to listen. However, her coworker Violet, beaten by her husband for planning to attend the hearing, can no longer testify. Maud takes her place. Maud's intentional distance from the movement is again expressed when she is asked what the vote would mean to her, and she simply replies: “I never thought we would get the vote so I haven't thought about what it would mean.”

For most of the movie, Maud is clinging to her status quo life. She denies she is a suffragette to her husband when she returns from her testimony. She again denies she is a suffragette to a government official when she is arrested during a riot following the government's announcement of no voting rights for women. In fact, it is not until she returns to work, after being in jail for a week, that she

begins to see herself as a suffragette. Mr. Taylor insinuates he knows that she was arrested (and not sick like her husband reported), but that Maggie had been making up her hours so he was not too upset. Maud knows this means Mr. Taylor has been given more time to molest Maggie, and it is that instant that Maud realizes the vicious cycle of repression and abuse that will continue with the next generation if she does not start following the suffragette mantra: deeds and sacrifice. In that moment, she embraces her path to be a suffragette soldier and goes to hear her marching orders from the highly esteemed suffragette leader: Emmeline Pankhurst.

Although the viewer has heard many references to this character and has seen her photos in newspapers, Pankhurst is only physically seen once in the film while giving a speech to suffragettes, commanding rebellion. She escapes arrest during the riot that ensues and is not seen again. Gavron intentionally softens Pankhurst's influence in this scene: it is the suffragette soldiers that are physically fighting for freedom and sustaining police brutality, not the wealthy upper class that implement the ideology with no personal sacrifice. This is again symbolized when Maud is thrown out of her home, fired from work, and kept from her son for her participation in this rally while Pankhurst goes home; Maud continually sacrifices as she grows increasingly discontent with her status in society.

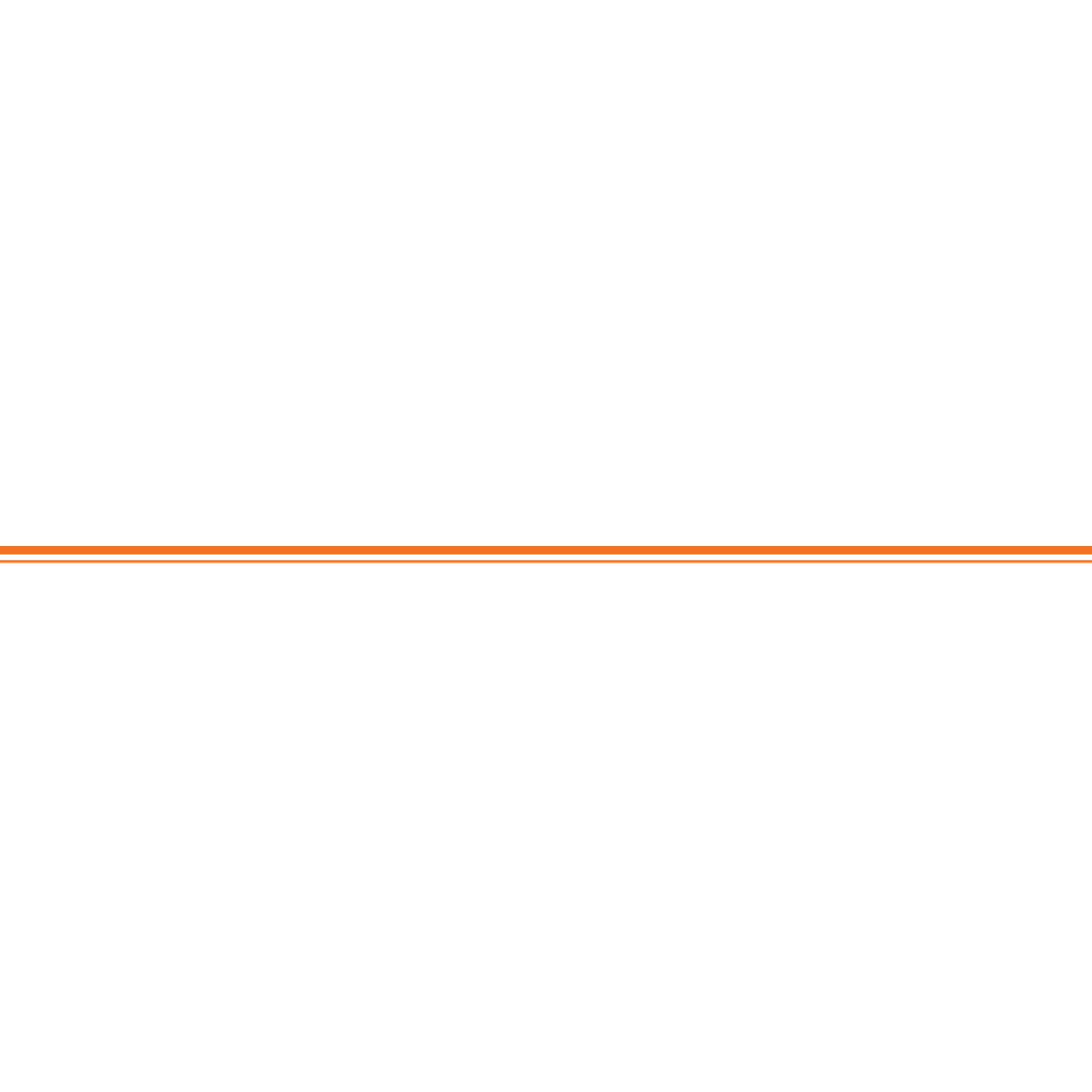
Maud renews her commitment by finally admitting that she *is* a suffragette. After Mr. Taylor fires her, Maud puts a scalding hot iron on his hand. The police is called, and a government official, who she has had run-ins with, offers her a deal. He suggests to her to become a spy and promises to keep her out of trouble. Essentially, it is an offer to restore her previous life—an enticing deal as it is obviously painful for her to be apart from her son. However, she informs him that she can no longer live in oppression. Despite his claim that her status of a foot soldier

actually means she is merely fodder, she remains loyal to the cause. From there she becomes more militant, mirroring the suffragette movement's growing ferocity. Suffragettes were at war with the English government, planting bombs in mailboxes and cutting communication lines, because "war is the only language men understand." They even bomb a government minister's home (knowing that it was empty). Maud participates in the attack, because she is now completely alienated from her old life—which occurs when her husband gives her son up for adoption claiming he could not be a mother. After the intensely dramatic scene between mother and son, Maud has no reason to try to live as a slave and a soldier any longer.

In the film's climax, the foot soldiers are growing weaker. Their brutal treatment in prison, as well as the government's silencing of the press, has left their cause grasping for air. Even Pankhurst is said to die in prison. They must gain the world's attention and decide to show the WSPU flag at a derby where the king will be present. When their plan is met with some complications at the derby, Maud's friend in the movement, Emily, decides to act on her own. She turns to Maud and repeats what Pankhurst said: "Never surrender. Never give up the fight." And then Emily kills herself by stepping in front of the racing horse. However powerful, the viewer is surprised that a character with more appearances during the film did not become the martyr.

The movie does not end with women obtaining the vote, but Gavron does show a changing tide. Maud pulls Maggie out of the laundry factory and into a safe job. Women have not gotten the vote yet, but the older generation will maneuver any obstacle to insure a better life for young women. The film's final scene shows the march for Emily, the martyr, transitioning into old footage of the procession and fades to black with facts about women's suffrage throughout the globe.

Sarah Gavron's *Suffragette* gives a voice to those not always remembered in history: the foot soldiers. Although Maud Watts was not an actual person, her story transcends the long held debate of historical fact vs. Hollywood fiction by showing its true merit as a universal story. "Maud Watts" and "English women" are interchangeable. Gavron purposely does this; she wants the world to see who committed the sacrifices and deeds that Pankhurst famously called for. The middle class, as in many social movements, were the muscle behind revolutionary ideology. This explains why the film highlights the tragic scenes detailing Maud's life of oppression while also lessening the importance of Pankhurst. *Suffragette* expertly depicts the struggle of English women for voting freedoms. Even though some aspects (like the character of Maud Watts) are not historically accurate, the larger story of the average foot soldier is the film's main concern, and it is successfully told.



TRIBUTE TO JERRY SMITH

Our long-term, and dearly loved, administrative associate of the Department of History, Jerry Smith, retired at the end of 2015. In this section, we all want to let her know how much she has meant to the department.

Jerry helped myself and every member of the History Department with so many things including how to maneuver CAS and UAB Administration bureaucracy. During my years as Graduate Program Director, she was a tremendous help with guiding me in maintaining records of our graduate students, and she always figured out ways to maintain money for our graduate assistants when money for other MA humanities and social science programs was being cut.

Dr. John E. Van Sant

In 2007 Jerry Smith joined our department as Administrative Associate and has transformed it. Many in the department owe her much because of her uncanny ability to solve problems. For faculty and students, she played a huge role in helping navigate the UAB bureaucracy resulting in funding for conference trips and support for speakers and Phi Alpha Theta events. She has set the bar high, unfortunately she has retired, and we wish her well.

Dr. Colin Davis

Let me begin by saying that Jerry is a person of infinite patience. My first contact with her was on the phone when I was attempting to register for graduate classes. At that time I was in non-degree status which required special access into the registration system. It took several back and forth phone calls to finally get everything straight. What was becoming frustrating for me did not faze her at all. Later, when working as a graduate teaching assistant, Jerry was always very helpful in answering questions and assisting me in any way she could. She made the experience one of the best I've had. Thanks Jerry! We miss you!

Mike Barrett

Jerry was here when I started, and she has been always very helpful. She has helped me push through arcane procedures at the university so many times, and I feel greatly indebted to her.

Dr. Walter Ward

During my time as a graduate assistant, working with Jerry was an absolute pleasure. She was always helpful, friendly, and kind. I knew her door was always open to any of the hundreds of questions I always had ready for her. But my relationship with her transcends the workplace: I consider her a great friend. I wish her the happiest of retirements--it's certainly well deserved!

Tim Granger

During my time as department chair I realized that Jerry was literally the heart of the department. Not only because her work sustained us all but also because she genuinely cared about each individual. When someone had professional or personal reasons for celebration or condolence, Jerry was the one that made sure the department knew and offered support. I would not have survived without her friendship and wisdom.

Dr. Carolyn Conley

Even when I came as an interview candidate, Jerry helped me to feel at home in our department as a member of a larger family. She shared in all the paperwork challenges that met me at each stage through my UAB journey, and we shared our joy at each landmark along the way, such as the day in March 2014 that I found out that I was receiving a Humboldt grant. We celebrated like family with Colin in his office, and I departed for Germany with the sense that I was an ambassador for our program overseas. When I ran out of business cards in Germany, Jerry sent more-- just another gesture of how the connection remained alive in no small thanks due to her diligence. She was a connective thread which bound everything together and helped to make it work. She remains an inspiration to us all.

Dr. Andrew Demshuk

The magnitude of this woman's work and efforts cannot be fully articulated. Ms. Jerry Smith's numerous contributions to the History Department include her dedication and willingness to help, and her kind words of encouragement, and her constant effort to provide up to date and accurate, helpful information. I have benefitted from her kindness and skills many times and I'm truly thankful for this.

Katie LaFonte

Working with Jerry Smith has been a brief, but sweet experience. Joining the History Department in 2015, she welcomed me with open arms, trained me and most importantly, believed in me. It was a true pleasure working with her. I will never forget her humorous nature, which made my transition to this department enjoyable. I am sad to see her retire, but she deserves it. Her hard work and dedication to UAB, combined with her awesome personality will be truly missed!

Alisa Dick

I would like to say Jerry possessed all the attributes that made a great administrative assistant -- but that would only be giving her minimal credit. She has been the glue that held the department together--from knowing who to call to personally handling so many things, making sure they were completed and in a timely manner. I am continually in awe of not only her efficiency, but her warmth and caring attitude. I count myself fortunate to have worked with her and honored to call her my friend.

Beth Hunter

Jerry's importance to the department cannot really be put into words. Though one of the best ways I can describe it is through the phrases I would hear from the faculty throughout my time as a Graduate Assistant. These were things like, "Jerry'll know what to do or how that works," and "It's gotta go through Jerry first," and "Ask Jerry, she has the final say." I honestly do not believe that this department would have functioned nearly as well without her constant expertise and willingness to help and listen.

Tyler Malugani

When Jerry came to the history department in 2006 or 2007, I did not know what to think. She always brought up UAB rules that prevented me from doing this or that. But as time went by I realized that she helped me to avoid wasting time and to find alternative paths to my goals. She showed extraordinary intelligence in remembering thousands of arcane bureaucratic regulations affecting the activities of the history department.

Dr. Stephen Miller

The History Department will not be the same without the guidance and leadership of Jerry Smith. Jerry is one of the most delightful people that I have met at UAB, and also one of the most efficient and capable. She is always accessible and extremely supportive; a more selfless person you will not find. It has been a pleasure working with her and following her guidance. It is a privilege to call her my friend, and my experience at UAB has been much more complete and special because Jerry was a part of it. Thank you Jerry for all you have done and continue to do for everyone! I wish you all the happiness in the world!

Chris Perry

I clearly remember the first time I heard of Jerry. I had just started as graduate student at the department and was visiting the orientation for new students. Jerry's name was constantly mentioned by the present faculty and students who raved about her amazing ability to navigate institutional bureaucracy. During the following two years, I clearly understood their reverence for Jerry. She has innumerable times help me with every question I had and has guided me through every procedure I needed to follow. She was always available and ready to help if you need her. Thank you, Jerry.

Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga

I suspect that Jerry never anticipated planning a film premiere on the IMAX Theatre as part of her work in the History Department. When Media Studies joined the History Department in 2010, I was incredibly grateful to find Jerry as a master of UAB policies and procedures that helped me plan a number of special events and course offerings. No matter how unusual, Jerry was a tireless supporter and answer-getter and general hand-holder. I am grateful for all her professional help and all the conversations shared over office-brewed coffee. My favorite: our shared wonder at all the odd things a dog will eat.

Michele Forman

Jerry has been a great friend to me and the History Department! I respect Jerry for her honesty, integrity and work ethic. She is a loving and caring person. It has been a joy to work with her. I am honored to call Jerry my friend.

Kaye Nail

For more than a decade Jerry Smith, our office manager, served as the glue that held our department together. She guided us through the move from Ullman to Heritage Hall. Over the years, as an expert professional, she coordinated everything from preparing department reports to arranging receptions for speakers and graduation events. But most of all, Jerry has been a caring friend who we wish the best for as she begins her retirement.

I look forward to hearing her laugh and seeing her smile on her visits back to the department.

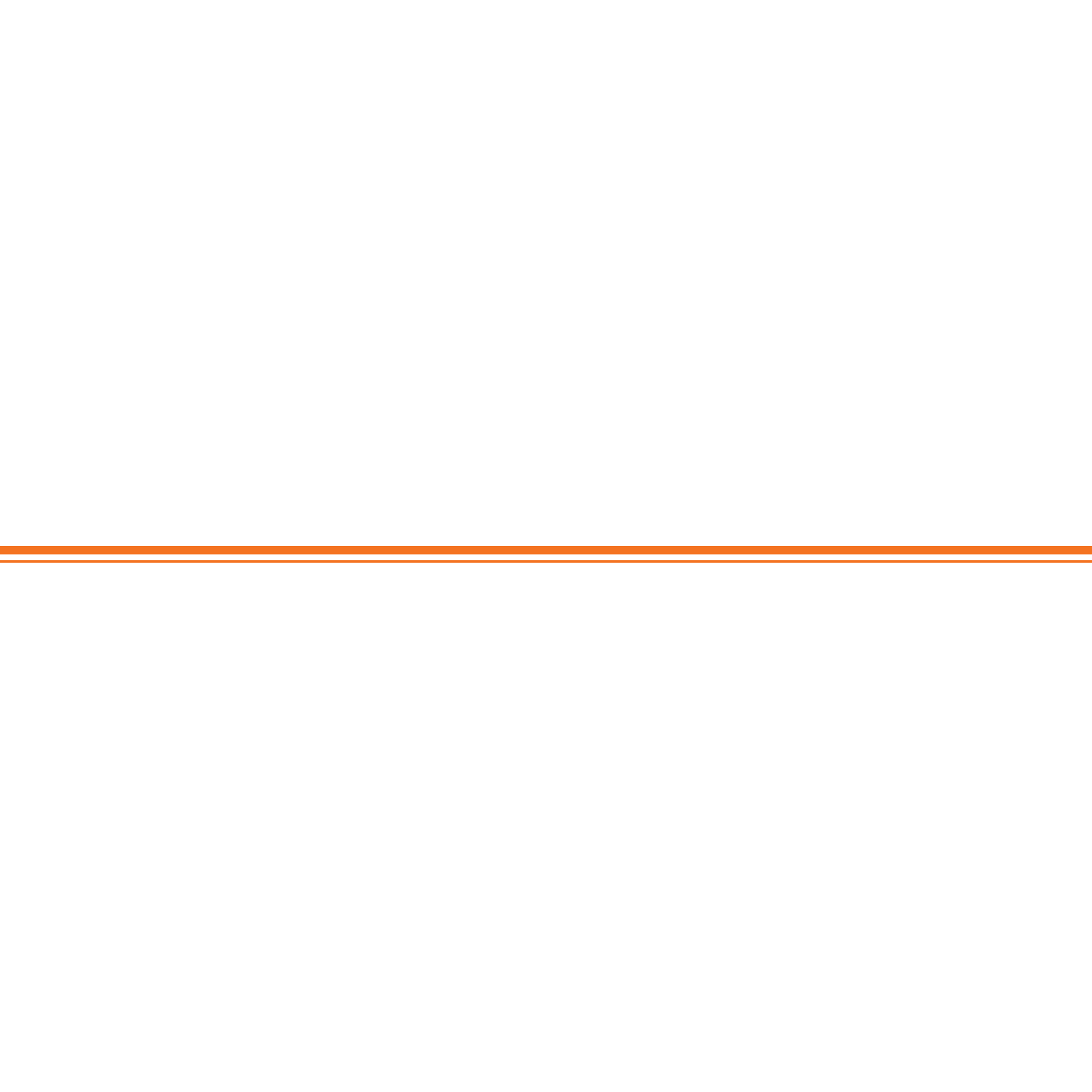
Harriet Amos Doss

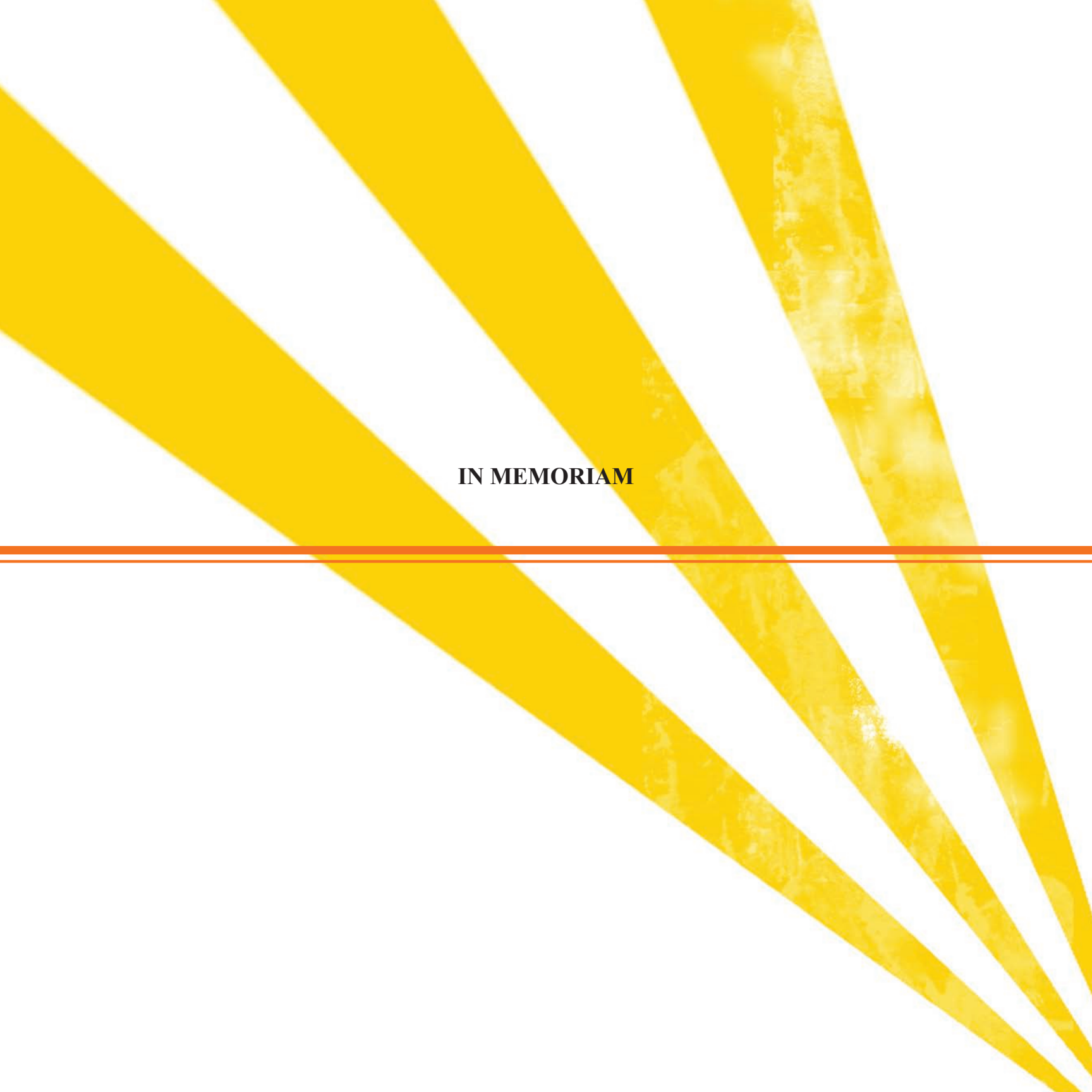
Dear Jerry,

Thank you for all you have done for me and our department over the years. You handled every challenge with patience and perseverance. You will be missed!

Jordan Bauer







IN MEMORIAM



Glenn Alan Feldman, Ph.D.

Professor of History

May 30, 1962 -- October 19, 2015

Glenn Feldman: A Study in Contradictions

by Dr. Wayne Flynt, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus, Auburn University

Glenn Feldman was one of the most complex men I have known, in many ways a study in contradictions. I suppose they began at birth to mother Julia Garate Burgos Feldman, a Catholic born in Lima, Peru, and Jewish father Brian Feldman from Brooklyn, New York. Faithfully Catholic for most of his life, he finally wearied not so much of Catholic doctrine as at authoritarian priests who inferred that voting Democratic had become at least a venal sin and perhaps a mortal one. Fed up with the politics of his Catholic church, he became a faithful, happy, and contented Episcopalian.

That story is much more than a glimpse into the intellectual and professional world of Twentieth Century Southern politicized religion, a world that Glenn loved to study and one he wrote about in eleven books. It also provides a window into his psyche, temperament, and character. He was not a man who allowed other people to interject their traditional wisdom into the reality of his life or understanding of history. No matter how venerated the source or ancient the provenance, if it made no sense to Glenn and contradicted his sources and analysis, he would have none of it.

As his major professor at Auburn University, I argued with Glenn endlessly over the periodization of the Ku Klux Klan and the strength of the South's minority progressive tradition. Like most scholars of my generation, I favored the notion of three quite different Klan epochs (the violent, racist period of Reconstruction; the more diverse, anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant, one-hundred-percent American Klan of the 1920s; and the anti-black, anti-Civil Rights Klan of the 1950s forward). I also believed in certain hopeful, sunlit epochs of enlightenment within the long dreary night of reactionary politics, racism, and anti-intellectualism. Glenn marshaled his evidence for a seamless historical Klan, always racist at its core and ever present in the South from Reconstruction on despite ebbs and flows in membership. Furthermore, no matter how much the South *seemed* to change for the better, at root it could never expunge its violence, racism, and intolerance. Despite our differences, I loved him like a son, and I think he reciprocated as if I have become his academic father. On a host of issues I represented traditional wisdom and he revisionism. But we maintained a relationship growing rarer by the day in Twenty-first Century Alabama and America: the capacity to disagree fundamentally and fiercely without jeopardizing friendship or mutual respect for each other.

Glenn's generosity of time and friendship, as well as his candid and constructive criticism of fellow graduate students' work, puzzled some of them though in time he won the respect of most. With a small cohort of similarly enthusiastic older doctoral students, he helped organize a phenomenally successful national symposium focusing on the recent South. It drew other senior doctoral students from such universities as Brandeis, Harvard, and other distinguished doctoral programs to Auburn. That two-day conference and the papers presented there entirely by students was seldom matched and never exceeded by annual sessions of the Southern Historical Association that I attended for half a century. And those young scholars soon took their places on the faculties of Tulane, Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, the University of North Carolina, Pembroke, Western Carolina University, and elsewhere as the most productive scholars of the South in Glenn's generation.

Like his two daughters Hallie and Rebecca, his students and friends could not mistake either his high standards, his rapier wit, or his stern disagreement as anything other than tough love, nor his kindness and generosity as emanating from any motive or reservoir of the spirit other than concern for their welfare and long-term success. Sacrificing their own ease in Zion for the welfare of others became a way of life for Glenn and Jeannie. As a consequence of their appreciation for the annual graduate student dinners at our home, which my wife and I hosted, Glenn and Jeannie one Christmas gave me a beautiful gray jacket which I still wear and treasure two decades later. Their budget could not afford the jacket, just as his career could not afford controversy at UAB, or his love of Catholicism could afford his independent political thought and action, or his moral conscience could afford the racial and economic consequences of his sensitivity to the injustice of Alabama public life.

But that's just who Glenn was. For all his contradictions in family relations, religion, and temperament, he came as a whole package, not in parts. He successfully blended seemingly impossible parts: kindness, gentleness, sensitivity, justice, intellectual and scholarly detachment, tradition, and gravitas, with revisionism, tolerance of lifestyles and political views different from his own, pride of family, willingness to defy authority whether academic or religious, determination to defend his rights, adherence to deeply held personal moral and traditional religious and family values, a raucous, whimsical sense of humor, and a propensity to play the role of practical jokester that took strangers completely by surprise.

Perhaps it was that initial fusion of Jewish and Catholic religions or the immigrant streams from Europe and Latin America that made him so bold a critic of southern bigotry and exceptionalism. Or perhaps temperamentally he just enjoyed nothing better than a worthy intellectual challenger and historical disagreements worth a good fight. Or perhaps his fierce pride in his origins and opinions combined with his Manichean sense of right and wrong to send him into the courtroom when someone offended his sense of fairness and justice.

After one such confrontation with bullying UAB administrators convinced him that he would have to find a faculty position elsewhere, Glenn called me about possible jobs. For a fine, funny, likeable teacher who was also becoming one of the South's most prolific and productive scholars, I knew he would have little problem finding another job as good or better than the one at UAB. But as I began to suggest possibilities in various parts of the South and America, he interrupted with his qualifiers which greatly complicated his search. He was not interested in any position outside a one-hundred mile radius of Birmingham. He had parents, brothers, and friends in the Magic City, his beloved All Saints' Episcopal Church in Homewood, his wife and daughters' interests, schools, and friends, the distinguished series in Twentieth Century Southern Politics that he co-edited for the University of Alabama Press. Besides that he loved Alabama and planned to continue to live in Birmingham and commute to his new job. After all, Alabama's state motto, "We Dare Defend Our Rights", could have been the theme of his life, despite the fact that whoever thought of it and the legislators who enacted it obviously did not have Glenn in mind when they did so. Like always, Glenn had a way of complicating everything.

Remembering Dr. Glenn Feldman

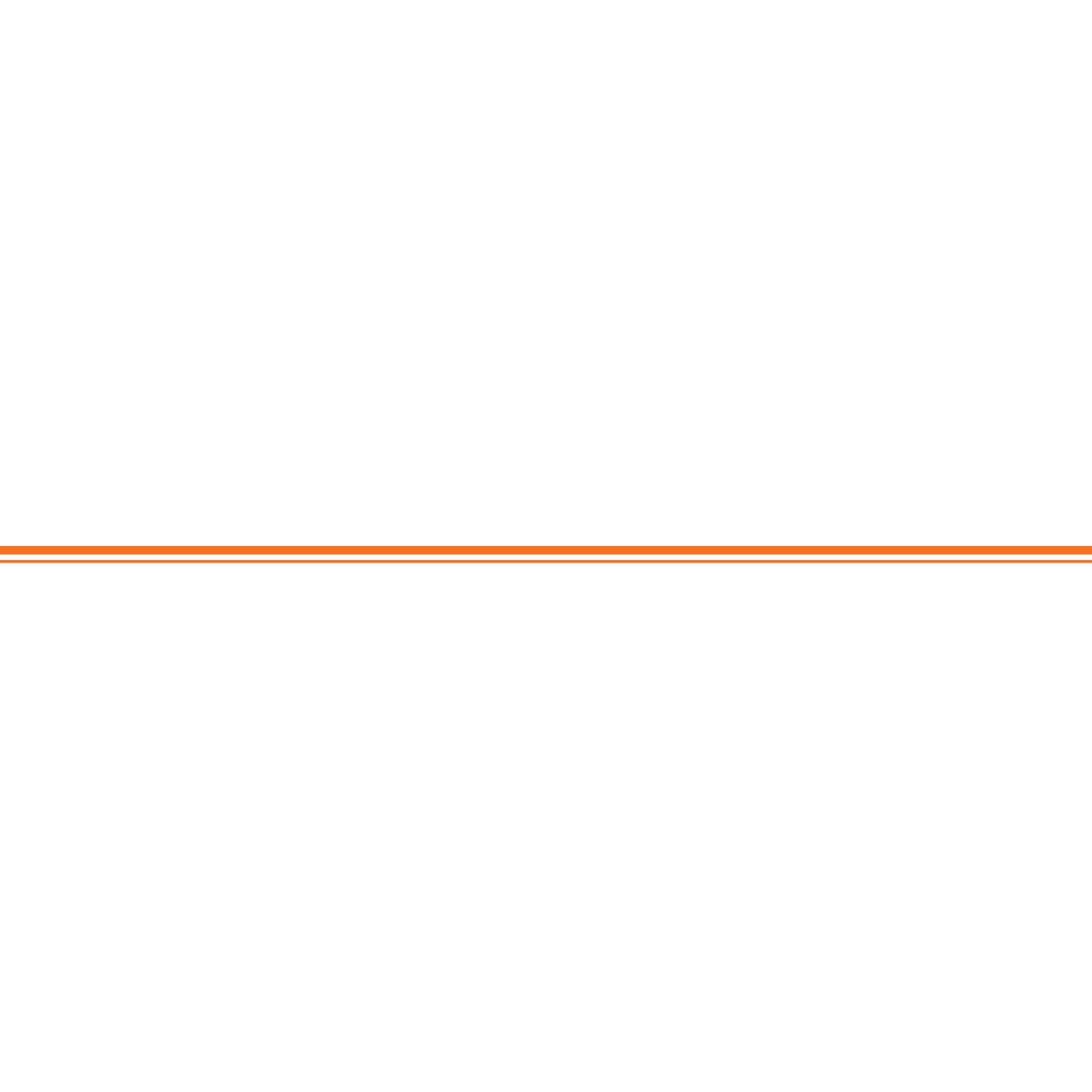
by Tyler Malugani

There are many reasons for which Dr. Glenn Feldman will be remembered, all of them well deserved and important in their own way. In the world of historical achievement, Dr. Feldman's prolific writing will likely be best remembered. His published works (which include over 150 published articles and 11 books) span varied topics including politics, race relations, civil rights, religion, economics, labor, violence, and historiography, most of which focus on the U.S. South. He quickly became the voice of a generation of U.S. Southern historians and without a doubt should be looked at as one of the great of not only his time, but of all time. His works are even now considered essential reading to anyone interested in Southern history right alongside those of C. Vann Woodward and V. O. Key, and those who have read his work can clearly see why.

In the world of academics, Dr. Feldman's skill as an educator will likely be best remembered. He had the ability to captivate his students with his mixture of humor, historical fact, and engaging questions. Even those students least inclined to history (whether through ability or passion) took something from his classes, and most found a new sense of appreciation for his subject about which he cared so much. Simply, his passion was infectious, and students who had the pleasure of taking one of his classes caught at least a little bit of the passion for themselves. I know this first-hand as he changed my academic life after I took one of his graduate classes. I immediately fell in love with political history. I knew it was not entirely because of the subject, it was mainly because of the way he taught it and of the fun I had discussing it with him.

While these reasons to remember Dr. Feldman are great and should not be forgotten, these are not the only reasons I will remember him for. He made a distinct and substantial impact not only on my academic life, but in my life in general. I will remember him for his open door policy (which I used quite often), and his willingness to discuss anything and everything from politics to sports. I will remember him for his excellent taste in movies and television and his many recommendations for me. I will remember him for the playful teasing and banter we had during classes as well as outside them. I will remember him for his side-splittingly funny stories. I will remember him as a loving father and husband, and as a man who would never miss an opportunity to brag about his family. And I will remember him as my mentor, both in academics and in life.

He was a sensational writer, scholar, and teacher. He was a truly good man with a kind soul. He was a loving father and husband. And he was my mentor, my inspiration, and my friend.





ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND EDITORS



Vulcan Historical Review Editorial Board, 2016



Robby Ballard is a native of the Southside of Birmingham and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in History at UAB. He teaches American History at The Altamont School where he also serves as the faculty sponsor for the Junior History Reading Seminar, and the Knightly Chefs, a Middle School club devoted to intelligent eating.



Katherine Dover is currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree in History. Her primary historical interest is environmental history in the United States from World War I to the present. She also enjoys researching the environmental histories of global conflicts and urbanization. After completion of her M.A., she hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in environmental history, and would like to eventually teach at a university level.



Yasmin El-Husari is a senior History and Secondary Education double major at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She began her love affair with history in the second grade when she discovered Laura Ingalls, and today, she aspires to become an educator who will share that same love with students in her own classroom.



George Evans completed his Bachelor's degree at UAB with a double major in English and History and he is now pursuing his masters in English. His ultimate goal is to become a professor of British Literature. When not writing an absurd amount of papers, George enjoys hanging out with his wife Emma, reading books, and eating an absurd amount of cheeseburgers.



Paul F. Gentle is an economist who earned his PhD at Auburn and did a post-doc at the University of Georgia. He has authored or co-authored over forty articles, book reviews and technical government reports. He is especially interested in American and Chinese history. He has taught at Samford University, in Birmingham, Alabama; Peking University, Remin University and City University of Hong Kong, among others. He has had financial posts in state and local government in Alabama.



Tim Granger received his B.A. and M.A. in history from UAB in 2013 and 2016. His focus in both was British history. Although the majority of his work has centered on the English monarchy in the fifteenth century, he also studies the history of the greater medieval period (especially the connections and tensions between religion and politics), ecclesiastical history, and ancient history. His goal is to acquire a Ph.D. in history. Now graduated, he hopes to spend his summer reading and watching science fiction and fantasy, and preparing to teach Western Civilization in the fall.



David Henslee is currently completing his Masters degree in History at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He holds a Bachelors of Arts Degree in History and a Bachelors of Science degree in Zoology from Auburn University. His graduate studies have included U. S. and European studies as well as studies in military history and the history of technology. In his off time Mr. Henslee enjoys doing most anything outdoors, and often in these adventures he is accompanied by his Australian shepherd – Elwood.



Anna Kaetz is a local from Alabama, and began her academic career at UAB in the spring of 2014. She completed an internship at the Reynolds-Finley Historical Collections of Lister Hill Library in the spring of 2015 and currently maintains a student worker position there. She will continue her academic studies at UAB in June of this year where she will begin her graduate studies. She plans to eventually gain a Ph. D. in History and continue a career in academia. Her areas of studies include Intellectual history, European history with a concentration in French history, and American History with a concentration in the Civil War Era.



Grace Larkin is currently in her first year of the UAB graduate program for history. Her academic interests include occult and religious histories, particularly the study of Catholicism, witchcraft, and demonology, modern Europe, and World War II. She enjoys a good cup of black coffee, crochet, yoga, and all things nerdy.



Nick Leader is currently pursuing a dual degree in History and Philosophy at UAB. His hopes are to attend graduate school to continue his education and one day receive his PhD in History. His experiences at UAB have been amazing, and he is incredibly grateful to have had such wonderful professors to study under. Working with the editors of the VHR has been a blast, and he has been able to meet others who share interests in History.



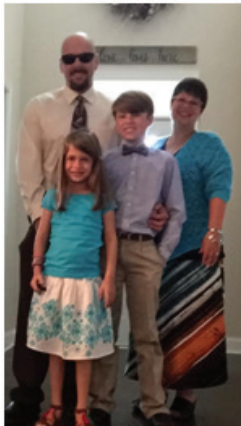
Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga is from Bulgaria. She obtained her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Public Policy and International Relations from the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo, Japan. She was adjunct professor at Florida International University (FIU) and the University of Miami. She is currently a graduate student in the Department of History at UAB. Nadejda is interested in civil-military relations, military history, and Japanese history and politics. She currently lives in Birmingham with her husband and two kids.



Ty Malugani graduated in December 2015 with a Master's Degree in History from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He currently volunteers at both Sloss Furnaces Industrial Museum as a tour guide and Oak Hill Cemetery as an archivist. He wrote his thesis on post-Civil War Atlanta, and his historical focus is late 19th and early 20th century American urban, industrial, and political history.



James Nunez is a recent Education Specialist Graduate at UAB. He is a ten-year veteran of education and a life-long historian – sharing knowledge as a twenty-five year broadcaster, a theologically – educated minister, and Jefferson County schools educator. James lives with his wife in Springville, AL. Nunez’s academic interests lie within re-imagining the history classroom by promoting a primary document-driven sociological problem-solving laboratory. He hopes to pursue a PhD in Fall 2016 at UAB within Educational Studies in Diverse Populations. For fun, James enjoys music of all types, sports, reading, creative writing and gardening.



Chris Perry is currently a Graduate Teaching Assistant at UAB, who will graduate in August 2016 with an M.A. in History. Chris is also a ten-year veteran of law enforcement who took a detour from his position as a Police Sergeant to become a full time father to his two children, Jesse (13) and Maddie (7). Chris has documented this journey as a full time dad and 44-year-old History grad student in his blog *The Uber Dad Chronicles*. Chris’ primary interests are the “two Republics” the late Roman Republic and the Early American Republic, history of religion and, recently, 20th Century American Politics. Chris credits his wife Dr. Cheryl Perry as the impetus for his scholarly pursuits, although she might call herself his muse



Aaron Getman-Pickering is a junior history major at UAB, but originally hails from upstate New York about thirty minutes or so from Woodstock. He enjoys playing soccer, pickleball, and of late, badminton. In the future, he hopes to work in public policy.



John David Russell is a lifelong resident of Alabama. He is a former member of the U.S. Army reserves, and spent time on active duty. He holds a B.S. degree from Auburn University in Finance. He also completed the course work for his M.A. in History from U.A.B. in June 2016. Additionally, he holds a State Mortgage Bankers License. His primary area of interest is economics and the history of the South in the 20th Century.



Stephanie Womack earned a J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law in 1992. After working as a litigation attorney in New Orleans and Birmingham, she left the practice of law to raise her son. Stephanie is currently pursuing a master's degree in history at UAB with the goal of teaching history at the college level.



Zoe Zaslawsky is a twenty-three year old Master's of History student at UAB. She is especially interested in the areas of Holocaust history, the founding of Israel, and modern American political history. Zoe hopes to one day obtain a Ph.D. and become a professor. She is a writer, a painter, and an avid researcher who loves to travel.

CHI OMICRON CHAPTER INITIATES

Fall 2015:

Nadejda Bontcheva-Loyaga
Anna Kaetz
Nicholas Leader
Nick Maloof
Melissa Thomas

Spring 2016:

Lisa Mazenko
Emma Houghton
Sammy Jane-Akson
Andrew Smith



\$10.00
ISBN 978-0-692-21319-3

