



*Scientia et Humanitas:*  
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## **Submission guidelines**

We accept articles from every academic discipline offered by MTSU: the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. Eligible contributors are all MTSU students and recent graduates, either as independent authors or with a faculty member. Articles should be 10 to 30 typed double-spaced pages and may include revisions of papers presented for classes, conferences, Scholars Week, or the Social Science Symposium. Articles adapted from Honors or M.A. theses are especially encouraged. Papers should include a brief abstract of no more than 250 words stating the purpose, methods, results, and conclusion. For submission guidelines and additional information, e-mail the editor at [scientia@mtsu.edu](mailto:scientia@mtsu.edu) or visit <http://libjournals.mtsu.edu/index.php/scientia/index>

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Editing an academic journal carries its own challenges, but it is also a labor of love. This holds doubly true for a student-run journal like *Scientia*. Our journal has a twofold mission, one academic and one educational. The academic mission is self-explanatory: showcasing our university's best graduate and undergraduate student research. The labor of love, however, truly stems from our educational mission. Over the last year, I have had the privilege of getting to know both authors and staff, working closely with them through a long and arduous process. My pride in both is immense. Although most of our initial submissions receive a "revise and resubmit" recommendation, our final acceptance rate for issue 7 was less than 33%, making this our most competitive issue yet. Almost all our accepted articles underwent at least one major revision and usually several additional minor revisions. Our authors survived several rounds of rigorous review (peer, editorial, and faculty) as well as copyediting and proofreading. Many of our authors, I'm sure, probably groaned when they saw yet another e-mail from me. Nonetheless, their dedication and diligence never failed to impress me. Likewise, *Scientia's* staff this year could not have been more professional. Despite receiving a record number of submissions this year (25 in all), our staff—all volunteers working around their own coursework demands—kept the machine smoothly running during all stages of production. Even beyond producing a high quality journal of peer reviewed student research, *Scientia* aims to prepare the next generation of scholars and researchers for the demands of academic publication, and it has been my pleasure to see authors and staff alike strive to achieve their highest potential.

Issue 7 features an eclectic and diverse set of articles—the first issue since our second, in fact, where literary analysis does not represent the clear bulk of articles. Our undergraduate articles represent three different fields: international relations, English, and psychology. Our five graduate articles feature just as wide a range: two economics, two English, and one social work.

Starting off this year's issue are our two recipients of the Deans' Distinguished Essay award, an award bestowed by the deans of the Honors College to recognize an issue's best graduate and undergraduate essay. **Hillary K. Yeager**, a doctoral student in English, represents the graduate students for her article about medieval drama. Representing our undergraduates is **Christopher R. Bearden**, who just graduated with a B.A. in psychology, writing about leadership strategies in student aviation teams.

Next we have **Mary Ellsworth**, a masters candidate in economics, writing about the impact of incarceration on the labor market participation rate for men. Two articles focused on literary analysis follow: **Sara Hayes**, another doctoral student in English, writing about games as cultural expression, and **Rebecca Clippard**, a Spanish and Japanese double major, writing on fears about the New Woman in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. After these two articles, **Muhammad A. Yadudu**, who just graduated with his Ph.D. in economics, provides an analysis of the HOPE Scholarship's impact on high school graduation in Georgia. After this analysis comes an article on foster care, written by M.A. candidate in social work **Calista Barberi**. Rounding out our issue is an article by **Kayla McCrary**, who just graduated with her B.S. in international relations. Her study of Euroskepticism and Brexit has been adapted from her MTSU University Honors thesis.

The 2017 issue of *Scientia et Humanitas* marks my fourth and final year with *Scientia*, and I can honestly say that every year the experience has simply gotten more enjoyable. I've met and worked with many fantastic people during my time; alas, too many to mention by name. Particular thanks, however, must be given to this year's staff for all their hard work, dedication, and love of the process: Erica Anderson, Ellie Carpenter, Nick Dalbey, Katie Hickman, Benjamin Kulas, Erica Macon, Kayla McCrary, Abul Hasnat Muhammed Salimullah, Sara Snoddy, and Courtney Wright. Additional kudos must be given to Nick, Ellie, and Erica Macon for their willingness to accept tough assignments, rush jobs, or even extra work. My associate editor, Hillary Yeager, made my life considerably easier with her constant assistance and support. Finally, special thanks must be given to Marsha Powers and Phillip E. Phillips, *Scientia's* faculty advisors, who were always available with advice and suggestions. A lot of hard work goes into producing an academic journal, much of it behind the scenes, but I believe it has especially paid off in this issue. Enjoy.

Dennis Wilson Wise

*Editor in chief*

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# Corpus Christi, Superstar? Decoding the Enigma of the York Mystery Cycle\*

*Hillary K. Yeager*

## **Abstract**

*The York Corpus Christi plays were a trade guild or “Mystery” series of medieval pageants that venerated the body of Christ during the summertime feast of Corpus Christi. The pageant cycle persisted for over 200 years and reflects a strong devotion to the spiritual and communal benefits. In this paper, I discuss connections between the medieval understanding of sight as experience to present the Corpus Christi plays as a form of extra-physical communion, where participants were able to experience the Eucharist by attending and participating in the pageant cycle.*

*\* Winner: Deans’ Distinguished Essay Award: Graduate Student*

The York Corpus Christi plays (also known as the “Mystery Cycle” for the connection to the trade guilds<sup>1</sup> or “mysteries”) originated sometime around 1370 in the city of York, England. They are recognized by medieval and dramatic scholars as key “monuments” in the development of literary playwriting and dramatic staging during the late Middle Ages (Beadle x). The pageants<sup>2</sup> were held in honor of the Roman Catholic feast of Corpus Christi, a Church midsummer festival that celebrated the “Real Presence of the Body of Christ in the Host at Mass” (Beadle x). One of the festival requirements included an outdoor processional involving the elevation of the Host (the consecrated bread) carried by a priest, where laity and clergy followed in devout reverence in order to “venerate” the Eucharistic bread and stimulate devotion to both the church and the Catholic Faith (Davidson, “Introduction”) The Corpus Christi pageants were similarly structured: processions, presented on wagons, moved through stations set up throughout the town. This processional served as a way for citizens to participate in a religious and cultural celebration where the “‘invisible things’ of the divine order ‘from the creation of the world’ might be displayed . . . in order to bring these things into the orbit of the collective memory” (Davidson, “Introduction”). Each pageant and the entire play sequence celebrated the Eucharistic act and the life of Christ through showcase and spectacle.

I argue that the involvement in the pageants served a multitude of purposes, benefiting both the guilds who sponsored them and the audiences who participated in them. Although some scholars, such as Alan Justice, argue for a link between guild assignments and the themes of the sponsored pageants, and other scholars, such as Clifford Davidson, suggest that participation by the community was a civic and charitable duty, a combination of these views seems more likely. Since pageants were sponsored by the guilds, sponsorship could act as a means not only of self-promotion but also of fostering community goodwill and, by operating as a form of charity, a meaningful spiritual act toward moral salvation. Similarly, the audience received moral and spiritual benefits, not only from attending the performances but also through the process of viewing itself. In this paper, I begin by offering an overview of the history of the pageants in order to contextualize them for a contemporary audience. My next section discusses medieval understandings of the moral and spiritual benefits of putting

1. Medieval trade guilds, organized by craftsmen or merchants, were formed for the mutual benefit of members, occasionally resulting in monopolies but also in the standardization of quality for certain goods and services, as well as setting and upholding consumer expectations of trading practices and guild integrity.

2. According to Meg Twycross, an entire cycle denotes a “play,” whereas individual sessions were called “pageants” (“Theatricality” 11).

on the dramas, and my concluding section offers an overview of the medieval act of seeing in order to frame an argument for a type of proxy communion. This concept of “seeing” as “experience” suggests that, through the act of viewing, the medieval audience was provided with a proxy-experience of the act of Holy Communion merely by watching the pageant and seeing the Body of Christ.

### **The History and Themes of the York Mystery Cycle**

When studying the impact of religious drama on guilds and audience, the risk arises of a static understanding of the dramas that ignores how the pageants would have changed over two hundred years. The history and complexity of the cycle, however, gives some indication of the dynamic impact of religious drama on medieval communities over this period. Today, 47 extant pageants survive from the York Cycle from the original 50. The entire text of the cycle is contained in a volume known as the *Ordo Paginarium*. It lists, in detail, the guilds involved with each play, noting any changes in guild possession of a pageant, revisions to the pageant texts themselves (such as when the Passion sequence was reworked by the anonymous author known as the “York Realist”), or any complaints issued by the guilds.

Like most medieval drama, the Corpus Christi pageants are biblical in nature and present a series of moral imperatives to the audience. The liturgical calendar rather than the Bible, however, organizes the order of events, beginning with the fall of angels from heaven and concluding with the final judgment (King, *City* 8). The cycle focuses on a redemption narrative, not a “historical” narrative, following “a common medieval pattern [that was] imposed on history” (8). Although the average layperson of the time had some working knowledge of Latin, most lay people probably only knew the Bible in terms of the worship or liturgical cycle.<sup>3</sup> The 1600s saw a rise of the return to orthodoxy in the sacrament, a “reaffirmation of the doctrine of transubstantiation” and a “vogue for devotion of the sacrament at the altar” in the Medieval Church (9). These trends can be seen not only in the subject matter of the liturgical worship during the period, which has a thematic pattern of fall and redemption, but also in the selection of liturgical materials integrated into pageant content. The thematic content relies heavily on discussing the Ten Commandments, the Fourteen Articles of Faith (the Apostolic Articles of Faith, or the “Apostle’s Creed” with seven articles for the Godhead and seven for Christ), the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Corporeal Works of Mary, and the Seven Spiritual Works of Mary.

The thematic significance of such broad subject matter, ranging from creation

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3. This theme can be observed by examining the York liturgical missals from the time period.



to final judgment, emphasizes the “element of the broken covenant between God and Adam, and the nature of the new covenant [between Christ and mankind] . . . grounded in Lenten themes of penance and reciprocal forgiveness” (King, *City* 57). Each pageant was carefully constructed with brief, attention-grabbing openers, and some even took textual liberties, deviating from the Bible. One deviation includes a conversation Eve has with the serpent in the garden during *The Expulsion from the Garden*, followed by Adam and Eve’s expressing deep sadness for disobeying God, communicating a need for atonement (57). Such adaptations provided a different dimension on the “standard” biblical stories the audience would have known while also providing a strict moral objective. Pageant 22, *The Temptation in the Wilderness*, features a surprising twist when the “Devil” directly addresses the audience. He asks, “Make rome, belyve, and late me gang / Who makis here all this thrang?”<sup>4</sup>(Davidson, *Temptation* 1-2). This address serves as an attention-getting device designed to refocus the audience’s attention prior to discussing Satan’s fall from heaven before his attempted temptation of Jesus. In this instance, it is likely the question served more of a practical purpose than a narrative one. On a festival day, it seems safe to assume that not everyone would watch every single play passing along the pageant route. Several scholars (such as Twycross “Places,” Davidson; others) suggest the possibility that not all 50 pageants were put on every year, as it would have been impossible to do so. Regardless of the function, direct address is an innovative device for plays of this type during this particular time period.

Furthermore, the plays thematically sought to hammer home the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual components of Jesus. This was communicated through his visceral image as well as his teachings and precepts. In the pageant Abraham and Issac, the *Ordo Paginarum* notes that the individual playing the “Isaac” of the pageant ought to be young and resemble Christ as much as possible. This is used as a device to allow the audience to make connections between the biblical figures. For example, during the scene of sacrifice in the play, Isaac asks to be bound. This request serves as visual symbolism and is typologically symbolic of the Passion sequence (King, *City* 65). These denotations in the *Ordo Paginarium* serve as intentional reflections of the church’s strong imperative to highlight the significance and relevance of the Passion for churchgoers as well as the importance of venerating the image of Jesus. These elements served as a means to evoke a strong personal and spiritual connection with the audience.

The exact origin date of the mystery cycle is unknown, but the first official

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4. “Make room, quickly and let me go; / Who here makes all this noise?” (Davidson, *Temptation* 1-2).

record of pageant wagons appears in the town's *York Record Book* in 1377 and again in 1387 (Beadle xxi). By 1394, a city ordinance referred directly to the pageants themselves, so a start time around the 1360s seems likely. Pageant plays on wagons were hardly a new phenomenon: cities such as Bruges, Antwerp, Leuven, and Brussels commonly held "tableaux vivant"-style pageants paraded on wagons, which may have inspired affluent tradespeople from York (Davidson, "Introduction"). By 1415, the ambling, pageant style wagons (which were propelled by men rather than beasts) were fully employed by the people of York with an additional mandate from the city that each station should be marked with a banner bearing the city's coat of arms (Davidson, "Introduction"). A 1398 ordinance indicated there would be twelve stations for the wagons to pass through, perhaps modeled on the Catholic convention of the Stations of the Cross.<sup>5</sup>

The plays began as early as 4:30 a.m. on the morning of the festival. During the earliest years of the celebration, the feast and pageants were held on the same day. However, after years of delay and issues with crowds becoming unruly the two events were separated, with the feast and festival held on one day and the pageants on the following (Twycross, "Theatricality" 12). The first pageant, *The Creation of the Angels and the Fall of Lucifer*, was presented by the Barkers (leather tanners) at Mickelgate station before the play would move on to the second station, where they would start the process over again, and the second pageant, *The Creation Through the Fifth Day* (by the Plasters), would begin at Mickelgate (12). The plays varied in length, ranging from 10 to 40 minutes, and the geographical layout of York created an ideal setting for a day filled with the theatrical productions.

### **Putting on the Play: Benefits of the Corpus Christi Experience**

While many questions remain about the exact nature of the staging of the pageants along the pageant route, some questions can be answered given extant material found in the *Ordo Paginarium*. These answers reveal much about the interwoven, complex nature of guild promotion and charity, as well as how the feast of Corpus Christi rendered promotion and charity mutually exclusive. Trade and merchant guilds sponsored the construction of their custom built pageant wagons, sometimes quite simple in their construction, sometimes quite elaborate with multiple "stage" layers. While no artifacts survive of the actual wooden wagons, detailed written descriptions remain in the *Ordo Paginarium*. For an example of the best guild marketing and pro-

5. While the Franciscan Order initiated this liturgical practice in 1342, it did not become fully adopted into all churches until the mid-1500s, but there is evidence to support its use and practice at York in the late 1300s.

motion practices, the Mercer's (i.e., Grocer's) *Last Judgment* pageant wagon warranted a detailed description in the *Ordo Paginarium* of its opulent appointments, complete with "winching gear" to lower God from heaven and a "hell mouth." The elaborate design of the staging, saved for the final performance of the pageant route, was meant to leave an impression with the audience. The God character had a special "brandreth of iron" that Richard Beadle surmises acted as a fire basket "with four ropes in the corners, in which he came and went from heaven" (xx). For heaven, the Mercer's Guild outfitted the sky with red and blue clouds, stars, sunbeams, and a rainbow, as well as mechanical angels to "run about in the heaven" as per the stage directions (xx). The wagon was, by all intentions, the "best of the best," creating a fantastic scene to wow the audience with its spectacle while also showcasing the wealth and success of the Mercers as a guild. In 1463, the Mercers upgraded their pageant wagon so that souls could "rise" out of it; in 1501 they had a new one built that lists a "hell-door, windows, angels, an iron seat, several pulleys, and a cloud" (xxi).

A great deal of the pageant was, in fact, about self-promotion and wealth accumulation: the annual production of the pageants was funded by pageant silver collected by pageant masters who "produced" the play in the modern sense (Twycross, "Theatricality" 11). These masters were separate from the guilds, yet served as an ultimate authority to decide which guilds would participate in each year of production. Being included in the annual production was a great honor: Inclusion afforded an annual opportunity to promote a guild both in terms of the services and wares of the guild and in terms of helping to elevate that guild's status in the community. Yet the Guild system in York during the period of the pageants underwent significant alteration thanks to shifts in economic structure, population fluctuation, and political and social upheaval. Heather Swanson presents the medieval craft guild as a fraternal organization that focused on the regulation of industrial relations, serving a clear political and administrative purpose in the Medieval oligarchical structure (31). Swanson further illustrates how "craft guilds can be seen as a deliberate and artificial construct of medieval urban authorities" (31). A reduction in the overall population, declining from 11,000 at the close of the 1300s to a low of 8,000 in 1600, resulted in lowered taxes, decreased building development, and a decline in the number of overall rents collected (BHO, "Economy"). In evaluating the guilds' trade registry (where all guild freemen were registered and noted), a marked downturn occurred for all trades in the 1500s due to the rise in "professional trades" such as lawyers, clerks, and scribes

(BHO, “Economy”).<sup>6</sup>

This decline in guild membership, as well as decline in the overall population, meant that paying the pageant silver became increasingly more difficult—and the added expense of putting on the pageants became burdensome for many. The pageants were funded through a system of fines divided between the pageants and the city; in order to keep the feast day pageants afloat, wealthier guilds often had to contribute to the pageants of less economically fortunate guilds, and the refusal to pay—or even a disdain against authority when speaking out—was treated as a rebellious act (Davidson xxii). Despite the fact that the costs of the pageants were often high in a town where the birth rate did not match its death rate, as well as the fact that the economy was clearly not flourishing, the Corpus Christi pageants continued with widespread support for nearly 200 years until they were suppressed (Davidson, *Corpus* 16). As Davidson argues, non economic

factors in any case outweighed economics. The play cycle, while it depended on the skills of the crafts for its wagons, costumes, and stage properties, was successful and long lasting because it tapped into the religious climate of a city which, though apparently not universally pious for its time, nevertheless held firmly to a conventional but strong belief in the efficacy of the rights and practices of traditional Christianity. (18)

Therefore, the merchants of York were willing, at great expense, to perpetuate an activity due to its religious significance and apparent spiritual benefits. The financial expense, in other words, did not compare to the moral cost of ceasing production of the plays.

Because each guild was assigned pageants as part of their “self identity and their perception of their participation in the larger reality of salvation history” (Davidson, *Corpus* 21), the guilds would have the required materials for certain props or the means to display their wares and, therefore, would have advertised their products during the pageants (Davidson, “York Guilds” 21). This display reflects some of Miri Rubin’s argument that the participation of the guilds advanced the personal interests of the guilds themselves, acting as a form of “conspicuous consumption” through “lavish displays” (197). Some assignments featured thematic relevance (for example, *The Flood* for the Shipwrights) or showcased a guild’s products or wares. In the case of the Mercers, who put on *The Last Judgment*, the pageant afforded an opportunity to

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6. The causes of such a downturn is likely due to a recession in the wool trade industry that unseated York as the highest economy, excepting only London, in England (BHO, “Economy”).

reflect the guild's prominence in the community, showcase their merchandise, and reveal the significance of their craft.

The Mercer's placement in the pageant program, as the grand finale after a long day of pageants, provided a symbolic representation of the guild's import—both materially and symbolically—to the community. Alan Justice connects 23 pageants with their “demonstrable associations” to their crafts or services, and he offers a tenuous association with another six (48). The remaining pageants, while not having a clear association, were perhaps chosen for circumstance or honored placement—since being involved in the Corpus Christi pageants processions was not only a civic honor but a great charitable contribution as well.

### **Charity, Salvation, and the Medieval Act of Seeing**

A strong push for alms giving by the medieval church, motivated by economic declines in the 12<sup>th</sup>- and 13<sup>th</sup>-centuries and rampant poverty, increased the visible efforts of charitable giving by churchgoers. The medieval concept of *caritas*, while referring to the love for and of God, could also be performative for the devotee—it could reflect one's love and devotion to one's fellow man (Davis 936). This aspect of performative charity could be tied to showing goodwill and generosity to others but also through elaborate efforts such as participating in the Corpus Christi pageants. Charitable acts were understood as acts of mercy rooted “in scriptural and patristic thought that emphasized the responsibility of all Christians to perform charitable works,” which directly related to the six corporal works of Mercy (937). This message was furthered by the doctrines of Ambrose and Augustine, who advocated the idea that “almsgiving had the capacity to erase sin and deliver the almsgiver from death” (936). In this respect, the Corpus Christi plays served as a form of charitable work that offered an ideal opportunity to secure moral goodwill and earn the potential eternal salvation for those that put on the plays. The guild members, in essence, believed their involvement with the plays acted as a charitable contribution to their community that might “buy” them an easement of sin and the promise of heaven in the afterlife as a form of indulgence.

Charitable acts and giving fall under the tenants and teachings of Jesus and serve as recurrent themes within the texts of the pageants. Consider the Seven Corporal Works of Mary (or “Works of Mercy” as they are known in contemporary Catholicism): feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, visit the sick, visit the prisoner, and bury the dead—all count as clearly charitable acts. The Mercers' play in the pageant, as discussed by Kate Crassons, focuses on the act of

almsgiving, placing “special emphasis” on the importance of aiding the hungry, sick, and naked, evoking again the Seven Corporal Works of Mary (308). Jesus reappears in this pageant wounded, crucified, and emerging

as symbol extending beyond his own sacrifice on the cross to encompass the poor as well as the wider community to which they belong, Christ draws attention to the suffering he endured for humanity. Questioning the community’s commitment to charity, he asks his people: How have you sacrificed for me? How have you sacrificed for one another? . . . The play begins by evoking the memento mori tradition so as to remind the audience members of their own impending death. (Crassons 308)

In many ways, *The Last Judgment* is a pageant imbued with lessons on how to commit acts of charity and live a good, Christian life. Christ directly addresses the audience to remind them of these precepts, suggesting that one should always hear and respond to those in need, just as God had heard mankind’s need and delivered unto Earth His son:

When any that nede hadde, nyght or day  
Askid you helpe and hadde it sone  
Youre fre hartis saide them nevere nay  
Erely ne late, mydday ne none  
But als ofte sithis as thei wolde praye  
Thame thurte but bide and have ther bone.<sup>7</sup> (Davidson, *Doomsday* 310-15)

The illustrative point here is that, according to “Jesus” and thus the Church, the most charitable individuals or organizations were always willing to give. During night or day, their hearts gave freely and never denied another human in need. Crassons rightfully illustrates that this is an important point for the time period, where “this extreme version of generosity opposes the kind of painstaking concern that drives theories of discriminate almsgiving, theories that seemed to be rapidly becoming the norm in late fourteenth and early fifteenth century England” (308). The importance of such a distinction in appropriate almsgiving stemmed from anxieties regarding a

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7. “When any that would need, in either day or night  
Asked [ the Lord] (for) help and (was given) a son  
Your free heart (or free will) would never deny  
Not early in the morning nor late in the evening  
But all of this truly, as they would pray,  
They need not but endure and have their requests.” (Davidson, *Doomsday* 310-15)

rise in the population of abject poor and a collective societal questioning of how one should give alms to others. Selective almsgiving mandated that “a person must be physically disabled . . . lame, blind, or feeble to be considered deserving of alms” (310). Despite this, *The Last Judgment* lacks criteria for establishing who is or is not worthy of receiving charity. Christ consistently refers to the need of the hungry, sick, and naked but otherwise does not offer any other precept for who qualifies for charitable acts, encouraging generosity to and from all.

But it is not enough to think of staging the pageants themselves as the only charitable act. The medieval audience itself received clear moral and spiritual benefits by attending the plays. Davidson and Katherine Walker discuss these positive impacts through the understanding of the medieval act of seeing. Walker discusses the combination of spoken word and visual performance as an opportunity for audiences to “contemplate internally the meaning of Christ’s sacrifice” where the pageants’ “continual call for spectators to listen, imagine, and remember encourages medieval audiences to move beyond the immediate visual presentation to a more contemplative state” (Walker 170). Davidson reveals how, in the Middle Ages, seeing was “in fact commonly identified with touching. The eye might even be regarded as joined to that which it sees. And seeing also could be a channel that, through faith, might lead one to access God’s grace” (*Corpus* 37). Much of the medieval theory of vision is later clarified by Roger Bacon, who originated the idea that vision originated with an object that “sends its visible qualities through the intervening air to the observer’s eye” (Miles 97). Walker clarifies this concept, bringing in the scholarship of Suzanna Biernoff and her *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages*, noting that “in the middle ages sight was an embodied practice that involved a transmission of rays from one material object to another and influenced the body of the devotee” (179). This concept of seeing and touching stemmed from classical understandings of the “active eye”: the Aristotelian belief that the eye received input (intermission) and that, through sight, the “visible object was able, in this way, to assimilate the eye and soul to its nature and essence, a tangible contact and change that was commonly understood on a popular level” (Woolgar 22).

Walker rightfully argues that it is Jesus’s direct gaze that serves as his “direct address” to the medieval audience, thus making an indelible impression. This is a significant element not only because of the intimacy of the gaze but also because of the figure (Jesus) who presents the look. Walker’s argument allows for a platform of entry for what I would like to present as a type of spiritual transformation undergone

by the spectator when viewing the York pageants. If the Medieval audience understood sight as physically transformative, then the very act of watching the pageants and seeing religious iconography brought to life through the physical embodiment of Jesus, particularly in his life and death, would have served as a very powerful emotional and religious experience.

As previously discussed, the Corpus Christi Feast is a celebration of the Eucharist, and the medieval audience understood the Eucharist in social terms, defining it as “the sacrament of duty towards others, the sign of unity, the bond of charity” (Crassons 305). The Corpus Christi plays themselves offer reminders of almsgiving and charity, serving as echoes of the Lenten season of sacrifice and giving where “Christ’s body and blood forge the bonds of community and remind people of their obligations to treat others with generosity and love” (306). Taking this one step further, there is also a very physical manifestation of the Eucharist: the embodied personification of Christ in the form of the “bodily Christ” in the plays, where

the body/bodies of Christ breathe, speak, and look in front of an audience of crowded bodies . . . [serving] a devotional role, one in which vision plays a key function. In this case, to perform Christ is to both physicalize and to fictionalize him. . . . The performing of Christ momentarily blurs for the audience the distinction between actor and savior, role and divine incarnation. (Walker 173)

“Seeing” Christ made his presence real and felt by the audience, but this was amplified by the presence of the physical Eucharist itself. The body of Christ, as blessed bread, was on display and celebrated throughout the Corpus Christi Feast. Most medieval people rarely actually partook in communion. Instead, the body and bread were put on display at Mass, and it was through the eyes that devotees practiced the spiritual act. To encourage this habit, churches elevated the Eucharist to become of even greater spiritual import, such as showcasing the Body and Blood on an altar surrounded with candles or by celebrating the processional of the Host through the crowded streets as it was elevated above the head of the priest. This process of Elevation had “become a true substitute for communion for the laity” and resulted in Mass becoming “essentially a voyeuristic experience” (King, *City* 21). Consider, for a moment, the fact that the medieval laity took communion once a year yet attended Mass up to three times a day, and that the act of transubstantiation was a “miracle” that could only be performed by a priest: a miracle performed during the Elevation



rite. There are multiple examples of the Elevation rite within the York pageants that expressively mirror scenes in the Nativity pageant, as discussed below. Medieval English Elevation lyrics all have a form of greeting and usually open with “hail” or “welcome.” In this way, Christ was liturgically “being greeted in person as his presence reaffirmed the active bond between heaven and earth, the forgiveness of sin guaranteed by his sacrifice which was about to be re-enacted by the celebrating clergy” (King, *City* 21). Consider the parallel of the Nativity with the consecration of the host, as Mary greets her newborn son with the Elevation lyrics typically used during the blessing of the Eucharist:

Hayle my lorde God, hayle prince of pees  
Hayle my fadir, and hayle my sone  
Hayle souereyne sege all synnes to seese  
Hayle God and Man in erth to wonne  
Hayle, thurgh whos myth  
All Pis world was first begonne  
Merknes and light.<sup>8</sup> (Davidson, *Nativity* 57-63)

King convincingly argues that, in this play, the Virgin Mary functions as a sort of priest-like figure able to “bring forth” God: Mary “gently but firmly [lifts the baby] above her head with both hands while uttering her words of greeting, in explicit imitation of the celebrant of Mass” (*City* 24). If we are to view moments such as these as symbolic of the Eucharistic act itself, as I argue, then perhaps they held even greater purpose than reminding both audience and guilds to commit acts of charity daily. The pageants, then, might have served as a type of Eucharistic act in themselves. While we see repeated acts of and requests for charity, we must also consider the references and emblematic aspects of Jesus as a living, breathing representation in the pageants. This presentation is not unlike looking up at the illuminated elevated host at Mass. During the course of the pageant cycles, the audience witnesses the miracle of the birth of Jesus with an abundance of light imagery, where it is told in *The Nativity* that Christ was “born of a Virgin, the sun of a star/A sun knowing no setting, a star always shining, always bright” (qtd. in King, *City* 101). Here, just as the sun produces a ray,

<sup>8</sup> “Hail my lord, God and the Prince of Peace  
Hail my Father and Hail my Son.  
Hail sovereign man, all sins to cease  
Hail god and man on Earth as one  
Hail, through whose might  
all peace in the world was first begun  
Darkness and light.” (Davidson, *Nativity* 57-63)

the Virgin produces a son in the same way. These light-based descriptions are paired with accompanying stage directions: when Joseph returns to the manger, he notices light shining from the stable, important because “Christ’s coming is [represented] as an influx of light” (101). Light imagery is tied to Christ, and the Christmas Liturgy makes adamant the connection between the salvation and the ingestion of the host as celebrated at Mass, as witnessed through the York Missal: “Grant to us Lord, we beg, to be refreshed by considering again the Nativity of your only begotten Son by whose celestial mystery we are given food and drink” (qtd. in 102).

If we know there is a clear connection between seeing and the body, between seeing these Elevation prayers and rites and the act of Communion and the Eucharist, it is not so far removed to imagine that the pageants themselves were, in some respect, rites that could have served as a form of ceremonial communion. After all, the priests of the day told parishioners that just looking upon the host was akin to taking communion, for “it was considered out of the question that the laity should receive communion more than occasionally, so regular Eucharistic worship for them focused on the need to look upon the consecrated Host only” (King, *City* 16). Indeed, this act of “just looking” had a multitude of powers, from “a reduction of pain in childbirth, and from toothache, a day’s guarantee of not going hungry, going blind, dying, or even aging, of finding work easy, and having all sorrows cured” (18). The act of looking upon Christ in the pageants, with Christ-figures as a representative of the “real” Jesus, may have provided a spiritual renewal greater than what we could possibly imagine today. This, possibly, is why the Corpus Christi pageants persisted for nearly two hundred years despite economic distress and population decline, for the possibility of a mystical and spiritual resonance went beyond mere spectatorship from the audience and community engagement by the guilds. The participation in and experience of the York Corpus Christi plays potentially meant a chance of getting closer to the divine, a spiritual connection even more visceral than the experience of Mass. It was akin to a sacrament, a festival and a religious rite so entwined with both civic and spiritual identity that the York community continually asked for the return of the plays even after their suppression.

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# Self-Leadership Strategies and Performance Perspectives Within Student Aviation Teams\*

*Christopher R. Bearden*

## **Abstract**

*The use of teams to achieve organizational goals requires companies to employ individuals who are competent at both performing individual tasks and working well with others. This study examines the relationship between performance strategies and the performance perceived by teammates and supervisors. Previous research indicates a positive relationship between individual work role performance and performance strategies associated with self-leadership. Self-leadership can be conceptualized as a set of self-influence strategies used by individuals to increase personal effectiveness. These strategies include functions such as self-goal setting and positive self-talk. In this study, experts supervised and rated individual work role performance using instruments developed within the research setting, and peers rated one another using the comprehensive assessment of team member effectiveness (Ohland et al., 2012). Ratings from peers, supervisors, and self-reported self-leadership were compared with one another in a correlational design. Self-leadership was measured using the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2012), the psychometric properties of which were also examined. Participants were aerospace students at a southern university engaged in operating a simulated flight dispatch center for course credit. A positive, statistically significant relationship was found between perceived team member effectiveness and expert-rated individual performance; however, the self-leadership strategies measured in this study were unrelated to the criterion variables. The examination of the self-leadership measure indicates that the construct was not adequately captured.*

*Keywords:* self-leadership, team member effectiveness, individual performance

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Manz (1986) expanded upon his pre-existing theory of self-management (Manz & Sims, 1980) by incorporating many developments in psychology to explain a comprehensive self-influence process. He calls this process *self-leadership*, which entails both proactive behaviors and thought processes geared towards engineering more productive and positive affective experiences. It is literally leadership of the self toward “personal standards and natural rewards” (Manz, 1986, p. 585). Many of the underlying theories are descriptive in that they provide an explanation for how phenomena occur. For example, Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory explains the mutually influential interaction among personal behavior, the environment, and personal qualities. However, self-leadership is a normative theory, which means it is prescriptive, describing how individuals *should* act rather than explaining why they do.

Organization-level outcomes may be contingent upon individual-level performance strategies (Krokos, Baker, Alonso, & Day, 2009), and self-leadership strategies may be able to improve individuals’ effectiveness at work (Andressen, Konradt, & Neck, 2012). The aim of the present study is to explore the psychometric properties of a measure of self-leadership and compare how self-leadership relates to both individual performance and perceived team member effectiveness in a team-based aviation work setting. Finally, since performance is perceived differently by peers and supervisors (Murphy & Cleveland, 1991), the study will provide a comparison between the perspectives of inside team members and outside observers on work role performance using a correlational design.

### Literature Review

Self-leadership rests on the assumption that learning is an internal mental process and that individuals use feedback from the environment to inform behavior. Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) describes this process through *reciprocal determinism*, wherein the environment influences individual behavior and personal qualities such as self-efficacy, i.e. the belief in one’s capacity to succeed. According to Manz (1986), a person utilizing self-leadership “chooses externally controlled situations to achieve personally chosen standards” (p. 589). Houghton, Dawley, and DiLiello (2012) use the example of choosing routinely to jog down a scenic trail. This example embodies the way in which individuals structure their environment in order to enjoy a task, activity or and increase personal motivation.

Self-leaders are able to incorporate intrinsic motives into tasks that are typically not naturally motivating through self-goal setting (Manz, 1986). Locke,

Shaw, Saari, and Latham's (1981) seminal work on the power of goal setting suggests that merely establishing reasonable goals increases performance and intrinsic motivation. According to intrinsic motivation theory (Deci, 1975), this is because individuals develop specific intrinsic motives in order to meet a need for competence or self-efficacy, and goal achievements provide the recipient with positive feedback on performance, which both meets the need for self-efficacy and enhances intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Therefore, by incorporating tangible accomplishments into tasks, self-goal setters may be more engaged in tasks they find difficult or even unpleasant (Houghton et al., 2012).

### **Behavior Strategies**

Self-leadership encompasses several behavior-focused strategies related to self-regulation and self-management (Andrasik & Heimberg, 1982; Luthans & Davis, 1979; Mahoney & Arnkoff, 1978; Manz & Sims, 1980). Manz suggested that several processes extant in the literature can be functions of a more comprehensive system of self-influence, i.e. self-leadership. For instance, self-punishment, self-cueing, and rehearsal are self-management strategies proposed by Mahoney and Arnkoff, which Manz and Sims hypothesized could motivate future performance by a desire for favorable long-term consequences. However, the self-influence process proposed by Manz (1986) suggests that these strategies are adopted to reduce reliance on external factors and include intrinsically appealing aspects of work. Therefore, self-leadership includes behavioral components of self-management theory and expands them by incorporating a higher level of rationale for guiding behavior, providing reasons for behavior management.

### **Cognitive Strategies**

Several cognitive-oriented strategies in self-leadership are explained by Vygotsky's (1986) verbal theory of self-regulation and the positive psychology movement (Burns, 1980; Ellis, 1977; Seligman, 1991). Functional strategies associated with self-leadership include evaluating assumptions and eliminating dysfunctional beliefs (Burns, 1980; Ellis, 1977) and consciously initiating positive internal dialogues (Seligman, 1991). In support of the usefulness of these types of cognitive process, Driskell, Copper, and Morran's (1994) meta-analysis of 62 studies on mental imagery found that mental task practice has a significant positive effect on performance. Self-talk has also been shown to improve performance for children in tasks (Lee, 1999; Winsler, Manfra, & Diaz, 2007). Moreover, Brinthaupt, Hein, and Kramer (2009) conclude that self-talk does serve a vital role in adult self-regulation. Further, their

results show that individuals who engage in higher levels of self-reinforcing self-talk report more positive self-esteem.

## **Rationale**

### **Self-Leadership & Individual Performance**

Since its inception, several studies have focused on self-leadership and tested its implications to determine if self-leaders exhibit better individual performance. In fact, several studies have identified a significant positive relationship between self-leadership and the user's performance (Andressen et al., 2012; Hauschildt & Konradt, 2012; Neubert & Wu, 2006; Prussia, Anderson, & Manz, 1998; Stewart & Barrick, 2000). Hauschildt and Konradt found that individual self-leadership is related to the individual work role performance of team members in a variety of interdependent teams in Germany. A positive relationship between students' self-leadership and academic performance has been discovered by Prussia et al. (1998). Additionally, self-leadership strategies may also improve employee motivation and overall job performance (Andressen et al., 2012). Hence,

*Hypothesis 1: Self-leadership will be positively and significantly correlated with observer-rated individual performance.*

### **Self-Leadership & Perceived Team Member Effectiveness**

An efficacy judgment (i.e. a judgment of competence) is one of the two universal ways individuals automatically assess one another (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). Further, for contexts in which influence is shared, Burke, Fiore, and Salas (2003) assert that team members must have confidence in the abilities of one another. Therefore, perceptions of other members are an important perspective when determining overall performance. Behavioral self-leadership strategies, such as engaging in audible self-talk, may affect how the user is perceived by his or her teammates, and while previous research suggests performance can be predicted by the cognitive-behavioral performance strategies subsumed under self-leadership, no empirical study to date has confirmed whether these strategies manifest in performance as perceived by teammates. Nevertheless, a current theoretical paper suggests individual level self-leadership strategies may lead to overall enhanced team efficacy, trust, and commitment over time through member-to-member interactions (Bligh, Pearce, & Kohles, 2006). Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated,

*Hypothesis 2: Self-leadership will be positively and significantly correlated with perceived teammate effectiveness.*



## **Individual Performance and Perceived Team Member Effectiveness**

Individual work behaviors are perceived differently by peers and supervisors (Murphy & Cleveland, 1991). For example, team member talking may lead to perceived competence by team members (Littlepage, Schmidt, Whisler, & Frost, 1995); however, talking may not lead to increased job performance on individual taskwork or job duties. Vance, MacCallum, Coovert, and Hedge (1988) provide evidence that there can be multiple valid perspectives on team member performance. Ratings may differ because the focus of supervisors is on overall effectiveness, while team ratings may be influenced by other factors (Holzbach, 1978). Furthermore, supervisors may be able to recognize and distinguish performance behaviors better due to their greater awareness and sensitivity (Holzbach, 1978). However, team members (i.e. peers) and supervisors should observe and favorably rate constructive behaviors in a workplace setting, and although individual behaviors could be interpreted slightly differently by peers and observers, ratings should display some convergence. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 3: Observable individual performance will be correlated with peer-rated/perceived team member effectiveness.*

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

All participants ( $N = 98$ ) were students enrolled in a southern university's Aerospace Seminar. The pool of participants is from Spring semester 2016 and Fall semester 2016. No data on participant demographics were collected; however, all participants were enrolled in an undergraduate senior-level aerospace capstone course designed to be completed the semester prior to graduation. Participation in the laboratory portion of the class is required for graduation; however, participation in the research portion was voluntary. Institutional review board approval and informed consent was obtained before commencing data collection. No compensation was provided to participants. Participants were assigned to teams of approximately 10 participants by the instructor of the aerospace seminar according to their major discipline/concentration within the aerospace program. Data from participants in a total of 10 teams are included. Six teams were formed in the Spring semester of 2016 and four teams were formed in the Fall semester of 2016. The average team size was 10 participants ( $SD = 0.63$ ).

### **Procedure**

**Laboratory.** The Flight Operations Center – Unified Simulation (FOCUS) lab itself incorporates multiple software components and technologies to simulate a

regional flight dispatch center (Lester, 2015). Large-screen monitors display weather, radar, and the airline's flight schedule. Students are situated at computers with headsets, access to job-aid materials, and have operational control of the simulated airline. Each semester, every student enrolled in the Aerospace Seminar is assigned to a team. Students receive an on-boarding brief as well as job and team training. The training process in the FOCUS lab is designed to build cross-specialization coordination (Littlepage, Hein, Moffett, Craig, & Georgiou, 2016). Each team completes a minimum of three simulations during the course of the academic semester.

See Figure 1 for a layout of the research setting. Dispatching flights within the lab requires coordination and information sharing from every student position. The positions featured in the lab include: flight operations coordinator, weather and forecasting, crew scheduling, flight operations data 1 – scheduling, flight operations data 2 – planning, maintenance, and pilot. Outside the nuclear team (central positions seated within the lab), several student positions make contributions to the team's work and facilitate creating a more realistic experience. These positions include student pilots operating a Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ) flight simulator at the campus airport and a duty pilot performing the duties of the ramp tower coordinator. The CRJ flight simulations and communications are incorporated into the dispatching simulations of the FOCUS lab.

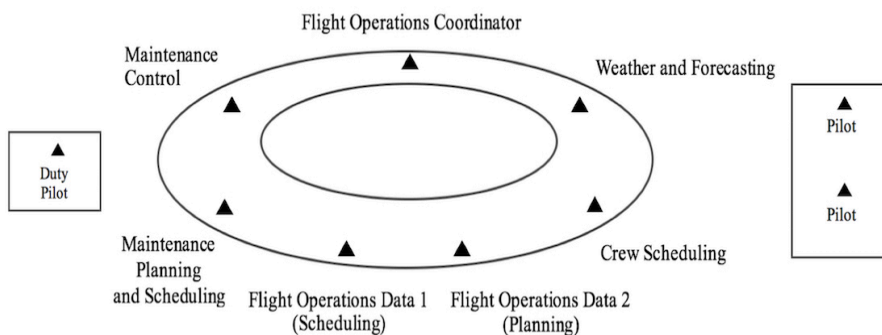


Figure 1. Student roles in the Flight Operations Center – Unified Simulation lab. Each student role is represented by a triangle (▲). In the immediate lab, seven key positions are situated in close proximity to simulate a regional flight dispatch center. These positions interact face-to-face and electronically in order to share information, coordinate actions, and complete the team's work.

## Measures

**Abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire (ASLQ).** The ASLQ is a 9-item scale used to measure self-leadership. It was first published by Houghton and his colleagues (2012) and is supported as a reliable and valid measure of global self-leadership (Nel & Zyl, 2015; Şahin, 2015). Self-leadership is assessed using three 3-item subscales. Each subscale can be traced to the self-leadership literature: behavior awareness and volition (Georgianna, 2007), constructive cognition (Anderson & Prussia, 1997), and task motivation (Houghton & Neck, 2002). An example of an item measuring behavior awareness and volition is “I make a point to keep track of how well I’m doing at work,” and an example of an item measuring constructive cognition is “Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through difficult situations.” Lab participants self-reported on the ASLQ using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (rarely) to 5 (usually) during the final class meeting of the semester.

**Behaviorally-anchored comprehensive assessment team member of effectiveness (CATME-B).** Each lab participant rates his or her team members (i.e. peers) using the CATME-B (Ohland et al., 2012). The CATME-B is a behaviorally-anchored rating scale (BARS) ranging from 1 (*below average*) to 5 (*excellent*). In a BARS, participants are given a list of “anchors” describing behaviors that would typify or represent each category of *excellent*, *average*, or *below average*. Team members did not rate themselves because self-ratings tend to be overly biased (Holzbach, 1978), especially for poor performers (Murphy & Cleveland, 1991). Each team member is reported on by his or her peers using three dimensions: contributions to the team’s work, teammate interaction, and possession of related knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA):

1. **Contributions to the team’s work:** does high-quality work; helps teammates; completes tasks; is timely in completing assignments.
2. **Teammate interaction:** is supportive; asks for teammate contributions; respects others; communicates clearly; shares information.
3. **Possession of related knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs):** acquires skills needed to meet requirements; is able to perform duties of other teammates; demonstrates skill in contributing to the team’s work.

Every dimension is measured with a single item and has its own set of relevant behavior-anchors. In the following example question, “Rate each team member on his or her *contributions to the team’s work*,” some anchors for excellent are as follows: “Does more or higher-quality work than expected; makes important contributions that improve

the team's work; helps teammates who are having difficulty completing their work.” Contrastingly, some anchors for *below average* on the same item are: “Does not do a fair share of the team's work; misses deadlines; does not assist teammates.” The scale is a published, reliable, and valid measure of team member effectiveness (Ohland et al., 2012). Team member effectiveness data was collected after the third simulation.

**Individual performance measures.** A series of 8-, 9-, and 10-item scales were used to assess participants' individual performance during the simulations. The number of items varies by position within the lab: flight operations coordinator, 10 items; weather and forecasting, nine items; crew scheduling, nine items; flight operations data 1 – scheduling, eight items; flight operations data 2 – planning, nine items; and maintenance positions, nine items. Each scale was created by researchers in the lab through the process of *task analysis*, in which essential work role behaviors were identified for each position. The task analysis information was translated into items that assess the frequency with which each participant engages in these behaviors. Each scale contains three items related to communication that remain the same, but all other items are unique because they relate to the specific behaviors that each respective position must perform. Individual performance is not measured for pilots who operate the flight simulator connected to the FOCUS lab.

After every simulation, trained observers (i.e. research staff) rate how often an individual performed the essential functions during the simulation on a Likert scale from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). Some example items are “Shares relevant information as needed with other team members” and “Performs dispatch duties in a timely manner.” As each participant engages more frequently in each of his or her work role behaviors, the overall team performance in the lab is increased, demonstrating the criterion validity of the measures (Ivakh, 2013). Ratings of individual performance presented in the study were assigned during the participants' third iteration in the simulation.

### **Data Management**

Not all participants completed all portions of the research. Further, students that were in either a pilot position (19.4%;  $n = 19$ ) or the ramp tower coordinator (8.2%;  $n = 8$ ) provided data that were not used in comparison of performance analyses or in calculating rater agreement; however, this data was used in the factor analysis of the self-leadership instrument. These positions are situated outside the immediate physical lab, and their perspectives, while arguably valid, may be markedly different and could greatly impact reliability. Therefore, most analyses do not include the full number of participants ( $N = 98$ ). The instruments previously mentioned

were either already in use within the lab or selected by the researcher specifically for minimizing the time burden to the participants without compromising the value of the possible contributions to the research literature. All surveys of team member effectiveness and self-leadership were administered via *Qualtrics* under the supervision of a researcher in the aerospace computer lab. Researcher ratings of individual performance were completed on personal electronic devices during or immediately following the simulations. Data analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS, Amos 23.0.0, and R version 3.3.2.

## **Results**

### **Initial Analyses**

Unless otherwise denoted, all analyses were conducted using SPSS. See Table 1 for descriptive statistics. Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) is widely accepted as a measure of internal consistency or is interpreted as the lower bound of the scale's reliability (Cortina, 1993). It describes the degree of interrelatedness a set of items possesses on a scale from .00 to 1.00. Typically, values of .70 are considered acceptable levels of reliability on a unidimensional scale (Cortina, 1993). The scales for individual performance demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability ( $\alpha = .70 - .97$ ). The lowest estimate of reliability for a measure of individual performance was the "flight operations data 1 – scheduling" position (.70) and the highest estimate was the "weather & forecasting" position (.97). The overall abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire demonstrated acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .78$ ); however, when assessing the subscales of behavior awareness and volition ( $\alpha = .70$ ), task motivation ( $\alpha = .64$ ), and constructive cognition ( $\alpha = .38$ ), the reliability estimates were at or below an acceptable value.

Because participants do not rate their own effectiveness themselves, there are missing values within the matrix of ratings. Cronbach's alpha could not be calculated for the CATME-B because the calculations require no missing values. To achieve a metric of interrelatedness for team member ratings similar to coefficient alpha, an index of within-team agreement was calculated using R version 3.3.2. The correlation of ratings within a group (*rng*) must be calculated per item and provides a value between .00 (no agreement) and 1.00 (perfect agreement) (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984). Ideally, each team would have at least a moderate level of consensus on the ratings of effectiveness per position. If there is perfect agreement, then each rater assigned the same score to the team member rated. Generally, a minimum value of .70 is considered an acceptable level of agreement (James et al., 1984; Woehr, Loignon, Schmidt, Loughry, & Ohland, 2015). Ratings assigned

by a participant in either the Ramp Tower or Pilot position were not used in these calculations. The average level of within-team agreement on the CATME-B for all teams (across all positions) is listed sequentially here: .81, .87, .79, .88, .84, .78, .94, .54, .85, .72 (min. = .00, max. = 1.00).

On average, across the three CATME-B items, the 10 teams generally had the most agreement on the maintenance position,  $m_g = .89$ , and the least amount of agreement on the weather position,  $m_g = .70$ . Agreement, per item, was weakest on *contributions to teammate interaction*,  $m_g = .79$ . On average, both of the other items, *contributions to the team's work* ( $m_g = .82$ ; min = .73, max = .92) and *possession of knowledge, skills, and abilities* ( $m_g = .82$ ; min = .71, max = .88), had strong agreement across teams (Woehr et al., 2015).

Each measure varies slightly in rating scale: the abbreviate self-leadership questionnaire contains nine items rated on a one-to-five scale, and the individual performance measures vary for each position (8 to 10 items) on a scale from one to seven. Therefore, the average scores were used for each participant (rather than an aggregate score) to calculate correlations. Average scores for self-leadership ( $\chi = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ,  $n = 59$ ), team member effectiveness ( $\chi = 4.42$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ,  $n = 57$ ), and individual performance ( $\chi = 5.43$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ,  $n = 42$ ) are displayed with descriptive statistics in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics*

|                           | $n^1$ | $\alpha$               | No. of items | $X$  | $SD$ | Min. | Max. |
|---------------------------|-------|------------------------|--------------|------|------|------|------|
| Self-Leadership           | 73    | .78                    | 9            | 4.07 | 0.52 | 2.67 | 5.00 |
| Team Member Effectiveness | 97    | -                      | 3            | 4.00 | 0.57 | 3.10 | 5.00 |
| Individual Performance    | 70    | .70 - .97 <sup>2</sup> | 8-10         | 5.21 | 0.94 | 2.78 | 7.00 |

Note.  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha.  $X$  = scale mean.  $SD$  = scale standard deviation. <sup>1</sup>Sample size varied across scales due to missing data points.

<sup>2</sup> = Sample size for calculating individual reliabilities varied from 5 (flight operations data - scheduling) to 13 (maintenance). The lower bound for overall individual performance was flight operations data – scheduling (70) and the upper bound was the weather position (.97). Self-leadership was measured on a 1 (*rarely*) to 5 (*usually*) scale. Team member effectiveness was measured on a 1 (*below average*) to 5 (*excellent*) scale. Individual performance was measured on a 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*) scale.

See Table 2 for correlations. Self-leadership of participants was not correlated with perceived team member effectiveness as rated by his or her peers ( $r = .14$ ,  $p = .23$ ). Similarly, self-leadership was not correlated with individual performance as rated by the lab supervisors ( $r = -.06$ ,  $p = .65$ ). Therefore, insufficient evidence was provided

by the study to support Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. However, team member effectiveness was positively correlated with individual performance ( $r = .41, p < .001$ ), which provides support for Hypothesis 3.

Table 2  
Correlations Between Measured Variables

|                              | No. of Items | $\bar{X}$ | $SD$ | 1    | 2    | 3 |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------|------|------|---|
| Self-Leadership <sup>1</sup> | 9            | 4.10      | 0.45 | 1    | -    | - |
| Team Member Effectiveness    | 3            | 4.42      | 0.33 | .14  | 1    | - |
| Individual Performance       | 8-10         | 5.43      | 0.88 | -.06 | .41* | 1 |

Note. \* = Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed).  $\bar{X}$  = scale mean.  $SD$  = scale standard deviation. <sup>1</sup>The self-leadership scale demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .78$ ); however, confirmatory factor analysis results suggest the scale does not adequately capture a single overall construct.

### Confirming the Abbreviated Self-Leadership Questionnaire

See Figure 2 for factor model. In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the covariance structure implied by the theoretical model is compared to the covariance matrix of the sample data (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). The abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire data were analyzed using CFA in SPSS AMOS version 23.0.0. Each item was loaded onto a single factor, or latent variable (i.e. self-leadership), and the model was estimated using maximum likelihood. Values seen in Figure 2 indicate most of the items were poorly accounted for by the latent variable, with squared multiple correlation coefficients ( $R^2$ ) displayed above the box representing each item. Typically, values above .70 or 70% are desirable. Additionally, several of the items were not explained by self-leadership, namely *constructive cognition* Item 1 (CC\_1), “I try to mentally evaluate the accuracy of<sup>2</sup> my own beliefs about situations I am having problems with,”  $B = .23, SE = .11, R^2 = .06$  and task motivation Item 1 (TM\_1), “When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like,”  $B = .24, SE = .13, R^2 = .05$ .

Further, the model is evaluated by how well the sample data “fits with” the model-implied matrix. This is accomplished using goodness-of-fit indices, which are

used in determining whether the model is a plausible explanation for the observed data. The CFA results indicated a lack of fit,  $\chi^2(27, N = 85) = 48.82, p = .006$ , comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990) = .88; Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; Tucker & Lewis, 1973) = .83; and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA, Steiger & Lind, 1980) = .10. A minimum value of .90 for the CFI and the TLI are generally required for the model to be accepted as plausible (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Furthermore, the rule-of-thumb for an acceptable RMSEA value is typically a maximum of .08 (Thompson, 2004). Combined, these results suggest that the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire (ASLQ) does not adequately measure self-leadership in the sample.

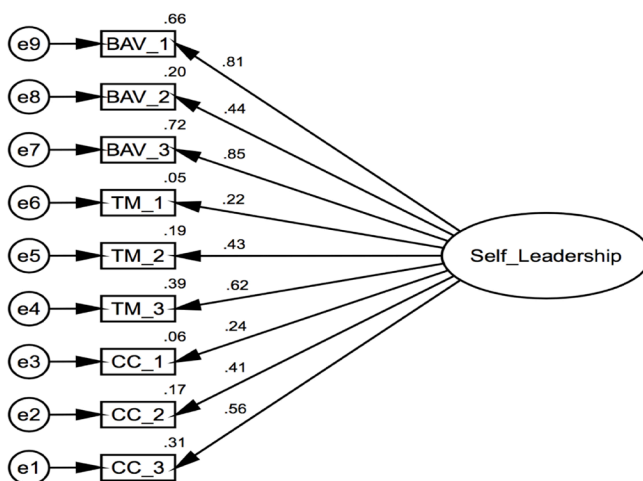


Figure 2. Model of self-leadership as proposed by Houghton, Dawley, and DiLiello (2012). The model was created in IBM SPSS Amos version 23.0.0 and estimated using maximum likelihood. Standardized estimates are depicted,  $\chi^2(27, N = 85) = 48.82, p = .006$ , CFI = .88; TLI = .83; and RMSEA = .10. BAV = Behavior awareness and volition; TM = Task motivation; CC = Constructive cognition.

### Discussion

The full measure of self-leadership demonstrated acceptable internal consistency using Cronbach’s alpha; however, when examining the constituent subscales, two of the subscales had poor reliability (task motivation,  $\alpha = .64$ ; constructive cognition,  $\alpha = .38$ ). All of the individual performance scales demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability ( $\alpha = .70- .97$ ). Moreover, there was sufficient within-team agreement across the 10 teams to compare perceived team member effectiveness with other constructs such as participant self-leadership and individual performance. Although



the CATME-B scale was designed so that a 3.00 on the scale would represent *average* team member effectiveness (Ohland et al., 2012), the average across the three items in this study was 4.00. Despite the behavior anchors provided to the raters, it appears that they did not utilize the full scale. Team members may have been unwilling to rate their teammates as below average or did not perceive their teammates as below average. Another interpretation is that the behavior anchors do not generalize to the work setting in such a way as to allow the raters to assign accurate ratings of effectiveness.

Average inter-rater agreement was weakest on *contributions to teammate interaction* ( $r_{wg} = .79$ ), which could indicate a need for more specific or different behavior anchors for teammate interaction. This could also reflect discrepancies in the way that individuals define teammate contributions to team interaction in certain positions within the lab. For example, the flight operations coordinator has a clearly defined role in team interaction (average  $r_{wg} = .75$ ) through dispatching of flights at regular intervals, and therefore may be judged more on supportive statements or solicitations for teammate contributions. Contrastingly, the weather and forecasting position does not require systematic information exchange in the same way, and therefore his or her contributions to teammate interaction (average  $r_{wg} = .65$ ) may be evaluated more on information sharing or clear communication.

The strong average agreement across the 10 teams on *contributions to the team's work* ( $r_{wg} = .82$ ; min = .73, max = .92) and *possession of knowledge, skills, and abilities* ( $r_{wg} = .82$ ; min = .71, max = .88) could indicate a shared perception of overall general effectiveness of team members, which may be easier to rate using these items. Another explanation is that it reflects participants' shared understanding of the valuable contributions of the various aviation specialties to the success of the team in running the dispatch center. Across the three items, teams generally shared the most amount of agreement on the effectiveness of the maintenance position ( $r_{wg} = .89$ ) and the least amount of agreement on the effectiveness of the weather and forecasting position ( $r_{wg} = .70$ ).

Individual performance was found to be significantly and moderately correlated with team member effectiveness ( $r = .41, p < .001$ ), which supports Hypothesis 3. On average, as team members were perceived as more effective by their peers, they were also rated more favorably by their supervisors on the frequency of job-related behaviors. Therefore, team members seen by their peers as possessing superior knowledge, skills, and abilities, and contributing to teammate interaction and contributing to the team's work were also rated as higher performers by the researchers in the lab.

This third comparison between team member effectiveness and individual performance provides evidence for the convergent validity of the individual performance measures. Team member effectiveness was measured using an established instrument, the comprehensive evaluation of team member effectiveness (Ohland et al., 2012), and individual performance was measured using an instrument developed by researchers within the lab. Because individual performance and team member effectiveness were found to be positively related, this suggests that the instrument developed in the lab is a viable measure of performance.

The first and second hypotheses, stating that self-leadership would be positively and significantly correlated with both individual performance and team member effectiveness, were not supported by the initial analyses. Team member effectiveness was positively correlated with self-leadership ( $r = .14, p = .23$ ), but the correlation was not statistically significant. Interestingly, self-leadership's correlation with individual performance was also not statistically significant ( $r = -.06, p = .65$ ). However, results from the CFA determined self-leadership was not reliably captured by the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire, especially task motivation and constructive cognition strategies. Therefore, it is not clear whether self-leadership is truly unrelated to performance in the FOCUS lab.

Overall, the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire (ASLQ) performed poorly when compared to previous psychometric evaluations (Nel & Zyl, 2015; Şahin, 2015). The reliability estimates reported by Nel and Zyl for the questionnaire and its subscales were much higher than the results presented in this study: the 9-item scale reliability decreased from .89 to .78. Further, the coefficient alphas decreased in each of the subscale dimensions: behavior awareness and volition from .85 to .70, constructive cognition from .78 to .64, and task motivation from .71 to .38. Moreover, the same model, as tested in Nel and Zyl's research (2015;  $N = 405$ ), had higher CFA fit-indices (indicating a better statistical fit of the model to the data) than in the present, e.g., CFI = .99 versus CFI = .88 in this study, and RMSEA = .07 versus RMSEA = .10 in the present study. Şahin's reliability estimates for the self-leadership subscales (between .42 and .76) were lower than those reported by Nel and Zyl and similar to those found in this study. However, the CFA conducted on the ASLQ by Şahin ( $N = 324$ ) resulted in fit-indices that closely approximated Nel and Zyl's findings, CFI = .98 and RMSEA = .06. Overall, both Nel and Zyl as well as Şahin indicate that the single-factor model of the ASLQ is plausible. Fit indices reported in the previous studies may be better due to their larger sample sizes.

The ASLQ was selected to establish a quick measure of performance strategies that could be used to predict individual performance in the research setting while minimizing the burden to participants. As an established measure, the reliabilities of the scale and subscales should supersede the minimum values (.70). Results from this study show that the three factors of *behavior awareness and volition*, *constructive cognition*, and *task motivation*, as measured by the ASLQ, may not be specifically relevant to the sample of participants. Another possible reason for failed reproducibility of the studies in the literature is this study's small sample size. Still, this sample of participants in this study is markedly different from those in Nel and Zyl's study, as well as Şahin's examination. Therefore, results from this study could reflect sample characteristics rather than a global self-leadership construct. The generalizability of the results of this study is not known, but future attempts to utilize the ASLQ as a measure of self-leadership (especially in the aviation industry) should consider a pilot study to test whether the measure will adequately capture the construct.

The positive relationship between self-leadership and individual performance has been found using self-reported individual performance (Hauschildt & Konradt, 2012) and more extensive measures of self-leadership (Andressen et al., 2012), but not with the shorter 9-item abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire. The studies by Andressen et al. and Hauschildt and Konradt provided the basis for hypotheses one and two, yet because the self-leadership construct was measured in both studies using a more diversified instrument that included a wider scope of dimensions identified by Manz to be associated with the construct of self-leadership, future research in a similar setting should consider utilizing a more robust measure. Item sampling error is error introduced into the analysis because the specific set of items selected failed to measure the intended construct within the sample and is one of the possible explanations for why the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire failed to reliably measure the constructs included. More specifically, participants may use task motivation or constructive cognition to improve their performance, but the specific items included in the instrument did not accurately represent the construct to the sample of participants.

The first several psychological instruments to be used to measure self-leadership included a minimum of 34 items that spanned nine dimensions of self-leadership (Cox, 1993; Manz, 1993). Additional scales for measuring self-leadership have been designed by researchers since 1993, including those presented by Anderson and Prussia (1997) and Houghton and Neck (2002). Most of these scales include more factors and may be more appropriate to measure self-leadership within the research setting.

Some example constructs included in these measures are *self-problem-solving initiative* and *self-observation*. Participants in the lab may utilize several of these strategies, which are associated with self-leadership, but were not included in the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire. In other words, future research should widen the scope of the instruments to ensure that enough sample characteristics are measured, which will require more items that measure additional dimensions to ensure the construct of self-leadership is adequately captured.

### **Conclusion**

Initial results investigating the internal consistency of the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire were questionable; however, upon further review, the results presented in this study suggest that the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire is not a reliable measure of self-leadership in the present research setting. The generalizability of these results is unknown, but future application of the abbreviated self-leadership questionnaire in an aviation science or aviation work setting may require a pilot study to determine if the measure is able to capture the self-leadership construct. A more robust measure of self-leadership, such as the self-leadership questionnaire (Anderson & Prussia), may be a better measure because not all dimensions of self-leadership or items measuring these dimensions may generalize to various settings (Neubert & Wu). Additionally, peer ratings of team member effectiveness were found to be positively correlated with observed individual performance as rated by lab researchers. This provides evidence supporting the construct validity (especially convergent validity) of the individual performance measures, which were designed within the lab

### **Acknowledgments**

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# Does Criminal History Impact Labor Force Participation of Prime-Age Men?

*Mary Ellsworth*

## **Abstract**

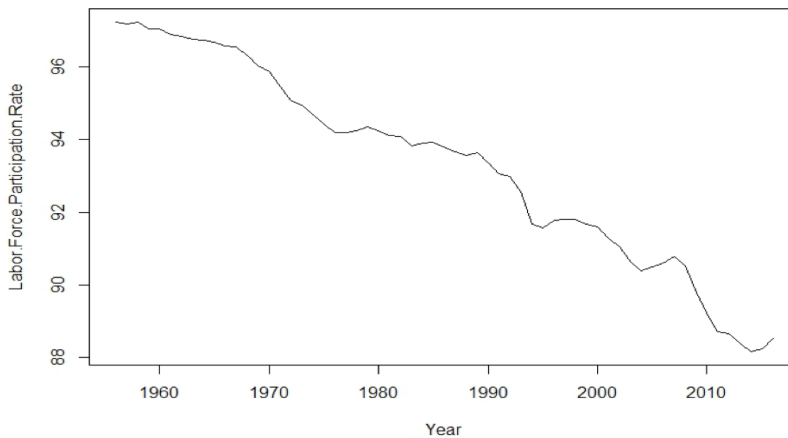
*This paper investigates the relationship between criminal background from youth and future labor force participation for prime-age men (25-54 years old) in the United States. Since January 1980, the percentage of prime-age males not in the labor force has increased from 5.5% to 12.3%, which coincides with an increasing proportion of previously incarcerated prime-age men due to increased incarceration rates during the 1980s and 1990s. Previous studies have shown that supply-side factors, such as disability insurance or working spouses, do not account for most of the decline in prime-age male labor force participation. Using NLSY79 data, this study uses linear regression analysis and finds that criminal charges received at a young stage in life are associated with more weeks out of the labor force, even up to 26 years in the future. This suggests that a large number of previously incarcerated prime-age men may be dropping out of the labor force due to discouragement in finding work. Further research, however, is required to imply causality by assessing the extent to which men with criminal backgrounds would have struggled in the labor market regardless of conflict with the law due to lifestyle or personal attributes.*

Why is an increasing proportion of prime-age American men each year choosing not to work? The labor force participation rate measures the proportion of people age 16 and older who are either working or actively seeking work (Hipple, 2016). Therefore, people who are unemployed but looking for work are still counted as being in the labor force. Sixty years ago, the civilian labor force participation rate for prime-age men (25-54 years old) in the U.S. was over 97% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), but that number has been dwindling ever since, which can be seen in Figure 1. The average rate for 2016, for example, was 88.5%. The U.S. currently has the third lowest labor force participation rate out of all 34 OECD countries (Thompson, 2016). The decline in the prime-age labor participation rate is even more concerning than the decline in the overall labor force participation rate since the latter rate is affected by retirees as well as young people who choose not to work for reasons such as schooling. This paper investigates a demand-side explanation for the decline in prime-age male labor force participation, criminal history, and finds that incarceration during one's youth (23 years old at the latest) corresponds to lower labor force participation even 26 years after reporting having received criminal charges.

The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world—about five times the average rate for OECD countries. According to an estimate by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (see Anderson & Carson, 2016), the U.S. rate of male incarceration in 2015 was 863 per 100,000 males in the population. Schmitt and Warner (2010) estimated the ex-felon population to be between 12.3 and 13.9 million people. If incarceration and criminal history in general have a significant effect on the ability of individuals to find jobs, this could mean a large number of capable, prime-age men are choosing to drop out of the labor force due to discouragement, since “the stigma of incarceration can reduce demand for the labor services of the formerly incarcerated even years after their reentry into society” (Council of Economic Advisers, 2016, p. 32). It is possible that this stigma can affect demand for an applicant's services many years after the crime has been committed, depending on how far back into an applicant's history employers go for their background checks. As the U.S. incarceration rate continues to increase, the proportion of prime-age men susceptible to dropping out of the labor force also increases.

Why does it matter if prime-age men give up looking for work due to discouragement? One issue is the effect on the validity of unemployment statistics. While the U.S. has had low unemployment rates several years running, these numbers only account for people actively seeking work. Therefore, unemployment rates alone provide

a misleading representation of the country's labor market health. If a person drops out of the labor force due to a persistent inability to find a job, the unemployment rate goes down, causing the illusion of an improving economy when in fact the labor market simply forced a citizen to give up seeking employment. Juhn and Potter (2006) found that dropping out of the labor force, rather than entering unemployment, has become the primary response to poor labor market conditions. Another problem with men exiting the labor force due to discouragement is their increased likelihood of turning to desperate measures such as crime in order to survive. According to Western (2002), an increase in the length of one's incarceration contributes to the learning of illegal skills. Graves (2014) notes that regardless of the source of decline in prime-age male labor force participation, this decline indicates a problem for economic growth, as historically this is the group that has comprised the largest share of the U.S. workforce.



*Figure 1.* The decline in the U.S. prime-age male labor force participation from 1956-2016.

### **Literature Review**

The Council of Economic Advisors of the U.S. Executive Office (2016) argues that the long-term decline in labor participation for prime-age men is not primarily due to changes in labor supply—for example, men choosing not to work due to working wives or public assistance. According to the Council, nearly 36% of prime-age men not in the labor force lived in poverty in 2014—casting doubt on the hypothesis that non-participation represents a choice enabled by other personal means or income sources. Supply-driven decreases in labor participation are not a cause for concern because they indicate people are choosing to drop out of the labor

force because they have a better alternative. There is reason to believe that demand for labor as well as institutional factors, criminal history in particular, better explain the change in labor force participation for prime-age men. This should cause concern as it leaves both workers and the labor market worse off by eroding human capital and stunting economic growth. Black, Furman, Rackstraw, and Rao (2016) claim that labor supply explanations do not account for both declining workforce participation and lower relative wages. If men with a criminal background were simply choosing to work less, wages would increase for their peers who continue participating in the workforce. Instead, wages are declining, which suggests the demand curve for labor from formerly incarcerated workers has shifted inward.

While few empirical studies focus on the effect of criminal history on labor force participation, the effect of criminal history on labor outcomes other than labor force participation, such as employment and wages, is well documented. Using data from over one million unique defendants in a Texas county, Mueller-Smith (2015) finds each additional year of incarceration reduces post-release employment by 3.6%. Pettit and Lyons (2009) analyzed the age-graded labor market effects of incarceration and found that the negative effect of incarceration on employment was higher among men imprisoned after age 30 while the negative effect on wages was mostly consistent for all ages. Western and Beckett (1999) found a consistent decrease in weeks worked per year, even after 15 years since having reported being incarcerated, for people incarcerated during youth. On the other hand, some research has found temporary positive effects on employment and wages after release from prison compared to before incarceration. Bushway, Stoll, and Weiman (2007) found immediate spikes in employment after being released from prison, which they attributed to a new mindset about the importance of work and staying out of prison. Nonetheless, they also noted that employment rates returned to pre-prison rates within 18 months.

Kling, Weiman, and Western (2001) articulate the common endogeneity problem for most research on the economic effects of criminal history: “Are the labor market experiences of ex-offenders due to the effects of conviction or incarceration, or are they due to characteristics of offenders that simultaneously place them at risk of arrest and low earnings or employment?” (411). Incarceration effects, they note, cannot be wholly reduced to offender behavior since they are also a function of policy choice. For example, the increased incarceration rates in the 1980s and 1990s were not due to behavioral shifts but rather changes in sentencing and post-release supervision policies.

Despite many sources citing criminal history as a likely determinant of labor force participation, no empirical studies specifically test for this relationship for prime-age men. I will use data from the 1979 cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79) to test the impact of criminal history incurred during youth on future labor force participation for prime-age men.

### **Data and Methodology**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has collected the NLSY79 survey data, a nationally representative sample of Americans born between 1957-64. Respondents were first interviewed in 1979 and were interviewed annually until 1994, after which they were interviewed every two years. For the current analysis, three cross-sectional linear regression models were created to test the relationship between criminal history and future labor force participation for male respondents of the NLSY79, one for each of the following years: 1988, 1998, and 2006. These models measure the impact of criminal history incurred at youth on future labor participation for different periods in the individuals' lives. In all three years, all men in the cohort are at prime working age (25-54 years old).

To measure criminal background, two variables are included: whether the individual has received charges for illegal activity and whether the individual has been stopped by police for anything except a minor traffic offense. The latter variable is included to test whether less serious encounters with the law may be showing up in future background checks, which could affect labor participation. Data for both variables is only available for the year 1980, as surveyors only asked respondents in 1980 about their criminal history, at which time all respondents were between the ages of 16 and 23. Therefore, these models can only measure the effect of criminal history during youth on future labor force participation. Considering the eight-year variation in age of respondents, some respondents had more time to get involved in criminal activity than others. The dependent variable in these linear regression models is weeks out of the labor force. We expect criminal history to correlate positively with weeks per year out of the labor force. Control variables to account for variability among respondents include: age in 1980 and dummy variables for black; live in an urban area; live in the south; currently in jail; married; and have a health limitation for work. For the 1988 model, a variable is also included for whether or not the individual in 1980 expected to be working in five years. Including this variable attempts to account for people who planned to be in school for an extended length of time, thus affecting their future labor force participation.

## Results

Descriptive statistics for the 1988 model are shown in Table 1, and the regression results are shown in Table 2. Having received criminal charges in the past produced a significant, positive effect on weeks out of the labor force for individuals in 1988, meaning individuals were less likely to be in the labor force in 1988 if they had received criminal charges by 1980. Being stopped by the police for something other than a minor traffic offense by 1980 also added weeks out of the labor force but was not significant under the t-test. We can assume from this result, therefore, that being stopped by the police for something other than a minor traffic offense will not show up on future background checks. The R<sup>2</sup> value shows this model explained 14.58% of the variation in male labor force participation in 1988. It is assumed that there is omitted variable bias, as there are other variables that could help explain why these men may be out of the labor force, thus accounting for the relatively low explanatory power of the model. For example, we are not including whether the individual receives disability insurance or any current enrollment in an educational program. Except for living in the south, which was surprisingly associated with fewer weeks out of the labor force, all variables produced the expected coefficient signs. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) were calculated for all variables, all of which were less than 1.2, showing multicollinearity not to be present. The Breusch-Pagan test revealed heteroskedasticity in the model ( $p = 0.000$ ), so White's robust variance-covariance matrix was used to correct the standard errors of the coefficients. With corrected standard errors, the effect of criminal charges received in or before 1980 on labor participation is 2.22 more weeks out of the labor force in 1988. The RESET test showed the linear model to be an appropriate specification for the data ( $p = 0.0018$ ), and the Shapiro-Wilk test found the residuals are normally distributed ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics for 1988*

|                   | Min | Max | Mean    | Std. Dev. |
|-------------------|-----|-----|---------|-----------|
| <b>lfp88</b>      | 0   | 52  | 7.1531  | 15.1467   |
| <b>black</b>      | 0   | 1   | 0.2682  | 0.4431    |
| <b>age</b>        | 15  | 23  | 18.5317 | 2.2598    |
| <b>charges</b>    | 0   | 1   | 0.1659  | 0.3720    |
| <b>stoppolice</b> | 0   | 1   | 0.2862  | 0.4520    |
| <b>south88</b>    | 0   | 1   | 0.3796  | 0.4853    |
| <b>work5yrs</b>   | 0   | 1   | 0.9528  | 0.2122    |
| <b>urban88</b>    | 0   | 1   | 0.7509  | 0.4325    |
| <b>jail88</b>     | 0   | 1   | 0.0233  | 0.1509    |
| <b>married88</b>  | 0   | 1   | 0.4461  | 0.4971    |
| <b>health88</b>   | 0   | 1   | 0.0366  | 0.1879    |

Table 2  
1988 Regression Results

|                    | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Std. Error</b> | <b>t value</b> | <b>Pr(&gt; t )</b> |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>(Intercept)</b> | 25.7503         | 1.9069            | 13.5039        | 0.0000***          |
| <b>black</b>       | 3.6530          | 0.4867            | 7.5062         | 0.0000***          |
| <b>age</b>         | -0.5594         | 0.0928            | -6.0284        | 0.0000***          |
| <b>charges</b>     | 2.2190          | 0.5884            | 3.7710         | 0.0002***          |
| <b>stoppolice</b>  | 0.6160          | 0.4801            | 1.2830         | 0.1995             |
| <b>south88</b>     | -2.5022         | 0.4422            | -5.6578        | 0.0000***          |
| <b>work5yrs</b>    | -3.0759         | 0.9680            | -3.1775        | 0.0015***          |
| <b>urban88</b>     | -7.9192         | 0.4841            | -16.3584       | 0.0000***          |
| <b>jail88</b>      | 24.2812         | 1.3871            | 17.5045        | 0.0000***          |
| <b>married88</b>   | -1.4166         | 0.4316            | -3.2825        | 0.0010***          |
| <b>health88</b>    | 3.7954          | 1.0879            | 3.4887         | 0.0005***          |

Note: R<sup>2</sup> = 0.1458, N = 4,721

Significance codes: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Descriptive statistics for the 1998 model are shown in Table 3. Results from the 1998 regression model (Table 4) were similar to those of the 1988 model (Table 2), but the effect of incarceration on labor force participation was even stronger for the 1998 model. Receiving a criminal charge during youth had a significant, positive effect on weeks out of the labor force even eighteen years after respondents were asked about having criminal history in 1980. Once again, being stopped by the police for something other than a minor traffic offense was not significant under the t-test. Heteroskedasticity was also present for this model and, as before, was corrected using White's method. After correcting the standard errors, having a criminal charge by 1980 led to 3.65 more weeks out of the labor force in the year 1998. This represents an increase of 1.43 weeks out of the labor force from the 1988 model. The 1998 model had an issue of misspecification by the RESET test ( $p = 0.3757$ ), meaning a non-linear model could have fit the data better. The model explained 12.62% of the variation in labor force participation for 1998.

Table 3  
Descriptive Statistics for 1998

|                   | <b>Min</b> | <b>Max</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Dev.</b> |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>lfp98</b>      | 0          | 52         | 5.9096      | 15.1212          |
| <b>black</b>      | 0          | 1          | 0.3018      | 0.4591           |
| <b>age</b>        | 15         | 23         | 18.4740     | 2.2594           |
| <b>charges</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.1529      | 0.3599           |
| <b>stoppolice</b> | 0          | 1          | 0.2784      | 0.4483           |
| <b>south98</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.3828      | 0.4861           |
| <b>urban98</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.6911      | 0.4621           |
| <b>jail98</b>     | 0          | 1          | 0.0312      | 0.1740           |
| <b>married98</b>  | 0          | 1          | 0.5740      | 0.4946           |
| <b>health98</b>   | 0          | 1          | 0.0343      | 0.1820           |

Table 4  
1998 Regression Results

|                    | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Std. Error</b> | <b>t value</b> | <b>Pr(&gt;  t )</b> |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>(Intercept)</b> | 9.7801          | 1.9313            | 5.0640         | 0.0000***           |
| <b>black</b>       | 2.5451          | 0.5300            | 4.8020         | 0.0000***           |
| <b>age</b>         | -0.1355         | 0.1007            | -1.3459        | 0.1784              |
| <b>charges</b>     | 3.6467          | 0.6703            | 5.4402         | 0.0000***           |
| <b>stoppolice</b>  | 0.1540          | 0.5321            | 0.2894         | 0.7723              |
| <b>south98</b>     | -1.8096         | 0.4855            | -3.7272        | 0.0002***           |
| <b>urban98</b>     | -1.4398         | 0.5000            | -2.8798        | 0.0040***           |
| <b>jail98</b>      | 23.2325         | 1.3330            | 17.4288        | 0.0000***           |
| <b>married98</b>   | -3.3242         | 0.4810            | -6.9104        | 0.0000***           |
| <b>health98</b>    | 3.9344          | 1.2432            | 3.1647         | 0.0016***           |

Note. R<sup>2</sup> = 0.1262, N = 3,937

Significance codes: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Descriptive statistics for the 2006 model are shown in Table 5. Table 6 shows that criminal charges still had a significant positive effect on weeks out of the labor force in 2006, twenty-six or more years after the men had received the charges. Despite having fewer total significant explanatory variables, the 2006 model explained 31.52% of the variation in labor force participation for 2006. After correcting for heteroskedasticity, criminal charges received by 1980 led to 2.7 more weeks out of the labor force for men in 2006 compared to those who had not received criminal charges by 1980. Overall, criminal charges had the highest effect in the 1998 model, eighteen years after respondents reported having received the charges, but for all models criminal charges correlated with at least a two-week increase in weeks out of the labor force.

Table 5  
Descriptive Statistics for 2006

|                   | <b>Min</b> | <b>Max</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Dev.</b> |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>lfp06</b>      | 0          | 52         | 6.4605      | 15.9842          |
| <b>black</b>      | 0          | 1          | 0.3159      | 0.4649           |
| <b>age</b>        | 15         | 23         | 18.4874     | 2.2564           |
| <b>charges</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.1508      | 0.3579           |
| <b>stoppolice</b> | 0          | 1          | 0.2779      | 0.4480           |
| <b>south06</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.4047      | 0.4909           |
| <b>urban06</b>    | 0          | 1          | 0.6625      | 0.4729           |
| <b>jail06</b>     | 0          | 1          | 0.0187      | 0.1355           |
| <b>married06</b>  | 0          | 1          | 0.1040      | 0.3053           |
| <b>health06</b>   | 0          | 1          | 0.5809      | 0.4935           |



Table 6  
 2006 Regression Results

|                    | Estimate | Std. Error | t value | Pr(>  t ) |
|--------------------|----------|------------|---------|-----------|
| <b>(Intercept)</b> | 6.3057   | 1.9393     | 3.2515  | 0.0012*** |
| <b>black</b>       | 1.9806   | 0.5253     | 3.7706  | 0.0002*** |
| <b>age</b>         | -0.1108  | 0.1008     | -1.0991 | 0.2718    |
| <b>charges</b>     | 2.7011   | 0.6777     | 3.9855  | 0.0001*** |
| <b>stoppolice</b>  | -0.3708  | 0.5355     | -0.6925 | 0.4887    |
| <b>south06</b>     | -0.0519  | 0.4843     | -0.1073 | 0.9146    |
| <b>urban06</b>     | 0.5045   | 0.4902     | 1.0291  | 0.3035    |
| <b>jail06</b>      | 21.7622  | 1.7085     | 12.7377 | 0.0000*** |
| <b>married06</b>   | 25.0577  | 0.7539     | 33.2372 | 0.0000*** |
| <b>health06</b>    | -3.5357  | 0.4834     | -7.3141 | 0.0000*** |

Note.  $R^2 = 0.3152$ ,  $N = 3,422$ ; Significance codes: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

### Ex-Ante Discussion

There are several issues with using data for criminal history from only during an individual's youth, as was done in this analysis. We cannot see the individual's subsequent crimes, if any, which would also affect their labor force participation. Bushway and Reuter (2001) found that the effects of crime vary over one's life course. In particular, the negative effects of incarceration are more severe during later periods of life. In addition, some employers only look back a certain number of years when conducting background checks, so possibly charges received as a young adult may not show up in background checks later in one's career. This being said, the fact that receiving a criminal charge during youth significantly increased weeks out of the labor force up to 26 years later implies that the effect of total criminal charges received over a lifetime would have a very substantial impact for men on their labor force participation.

As previously mentioned, omitted variable bias likely affects the models, which could be biasing the significance of criminal charges on labor participation. It would be useful to have data for whether individuals are currently in school or some other institution (other than jail) that would deter or prevent labor participation. There is also a problem of endogeneity—that is, men who have received criminal charges may possess common characteristics that predispose them to non-participation in the labor force. In other words, it could be something about their natural disposition or lifestyle that caused them to be involved in crime, which is also the factor affecting their labor participation rather than the fact that they received criminal charges in the past. Future research could be improved by including variables that measure various personality and lifestyle characteristics of individuals.

## **Conclusion**

Losing millions of prime-age workers in the U.S. labor force is a major loss of productive capacity for the economy. This study found that prime-age male labor force participation is negatively affected over one's lifetime by having received a criminal charge during a young stage in one's life. However, the relatively less serious matter of being stopped by police for something other than a minor traffic offense did not affect male labor participation in a significant manner. The results for criminal charges present a major problem for our labor market; prime-age U.S. males are being discouraged from participating in the labor force long after their crime was committed. It is likely that this effect grows stronger the later in life one receives charges. As the U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world, an increasingly significant portion of our working-age population is being affected. Jacobs (2015) proposes criminal justice reform policies as a way to reduce the persistence of this problem. She suggests that while "ban the box" policies that limit employers' ability to see applicants' criminal history during the hiring process would be a short-term goal, we need a much more rigorous change in our criminal justice system as a whole to reduce the inflow of prisoners as a long-term solution. For this kind of reform to become a reality, more studies with evidence on the detrimental effects of crime on labor force participation must be done. Unfortunately, while criminal justice reform could improve the labor force participation of prime-age men, it would not help the men who have already received charges. Therefore, even if reform does happen, it would take years for the effects on labor force participation to show up in data.

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# Playing Games as Cultural Expression: Mah Jong, Chess, and Bourré in the Works of Amy Tan and Tim Gautreaux

*Sara Hays*

## Abstract

*The opening lines of Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club, after the brief initial prologue, are: "My father has asked me to be the fourth corner at the Joy Luck Club. I am to replace my mother, whose seat at the mah jong table has been empty since she died two months ago. My father thinks she was killed by her own thoughts" (19). These lines connect for the reader, from the very beginning of the novel, the playing of mah jong to deeper considerations of culture, legacy, and tradition. While both mah jong and The Joy Luck Club are internationally popular, the opposite is the case for the Cajun card game bourré and the Cajun short-story writer Tim Gautreaux, whose story "Died and Gone to Vegas" utilizes bourré in a way that is thematically similar to, but culturally different from, Tan's use of mah jong in The Joy Luck Club. This paper examines both Tan's and Gautreaux's use of games—mah jong, as well as chess, and bourré respectively—as cultural receptacles and means of folkloric preservation.*

The opening lines of Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, after the brief initial prologue, are: "My father has asked me to be the fourth corner at the Joy Luck Club. I am to replace my mother, whose seat at the mah jong table has been empty since she died two months ago. My father thinks she was killed by her own thoughts" (19). These lines connect for the reader, from the very beginning of the novel, the playing of mah jong<sup>1</sup> to deeper considerations of culture, legacy, and tradition. Tan's book was immensely popular and inspired equal amounts of praise and criticism. Numerous scholars have examined the mother/daughter, generational relationships explored in the novel, but critics like Sau-ling Cynthia Wong have criticized Tan's "exoticising" depictions of Chinese culture (191), claiming they "enable Orientalism to emerge in a form palatable to middle-class American readers"(181). Wong may have a point, but others, particularly Tara Fickle, have recognized the value of the novel's use of mah jong as a structural and thematic anchor for the cultural themes within the story.

While both mah jong and *The Joy Luck Club* are internationally popular, the opposite is the case for the Cajun card game bourré<sup>2</sup> and the Cajun short-story writer Tim Gautreaux, whose story "Died and Gone to Vegas" utilizes bourré in a way that is thematically similar to Tan's use of mah jong in *The Joy Luck Club* in that both authors harness the culturally significant elements of these specific games, and gameplaying in general, to anchor their narratives and to deepen the connections among their characters. Folklorists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and even literary scholars have all noted the importance of gameplay to group identity formation and to the preservation of the generational wisdom of a culture. Regardless of geography, mothers teach daughters, fathers teach sons, and, like any other cultural knowledge, the rules and meanings of a people's games are preserved by the new initiates. While many authors have used games and gameplay to make various cultural statements, this article will focus specifically on Tan's and Gautreaux's use of games—mah jong and chess as well as bourré—as meaningful examples of how works of literature can become cultural receptacles and the means of folkloric preservation.

### **Mah Jong—The Game of One Hundred Wonders**

Suyuan Woo, the aforementioned mother two-months-dead in Tan's novel, had formed the San Francisco Joy Luck Club in 1949, two years before her daughter Jing-mei (June) was born, the same year she and her husband had immigrated to

1. There are many correct variations of the spelling of the game, but I adopt the spelling Tan uses in *The Joy Luck Club* unless it is spelled differently in a passage being quoted.

2. A trick-taking card game similar to Spades.

California from China. She had recruited the other three members of the group—the Hsus, the Jongs, and the St. Clairs—from families they had met at the First Chinese Baptist Church Bible study, a church they felt compelled to join after becoming the recipients of the church missionaries' charity. Jing-mei observes:

My mother could sense that the women of these families also had unspeakable tragedies they had left behind in China and hopes they couldn't begin to express in their fragile English. Or at least, my mother recognized the numbness in these women's faces. And she saw how quickly their eyes moved when she told them her idea for the Joy Luck Club. (Tan 20)

The club had been inspired by Suyuan's experiences living in Kweilin as an officer's wife during WWII, where the original Joy Luck Club had been similarly formed. Suyuan, feeling stifled by the heat, by the terror of the war, and by the threat of imminent invasion, had recruited three other young women "with wishful faces" (23), surely an intentional parallel of the numb faces of the San Francisco recruits.

The original club members had operated under self-imposed, ritualistic strictures—each hostess had been required to provide a feast of lucky foods such as dumplings, boiled peanuts, and oranges; once the game had begun, no talking was allowed except for the game-related exclamations of "Pung!" and "Chr!" (Tan 24); they had had to "play with seriousness and think of nothing else but adding to our happiness through winning" (24); and the money for the game had been prominently displayed in a bowl rather than kept with each player, a variation which had assigned ironic reverence to the tens of thousands of worthless yuan involved. Additionally, when the gameplay had finished, they would laugh and tell funny stories late into the night, thus participating in an ancient oral storytelling tradition. Fickle notes that coming together to play mah jong serves "in a very real sense as a form of survival and social warfare that encourages its players to re-author, if only for a few hours, their roles as disenfranchised victims" (76). They had decided to call the group The Joy Luck Club because hoping for luck in the game would bring them joy, but their true luck had been in finding joy with each other in an otherwise hopeless time.

The San Francisco Joy Luck is similarly as ritualistic as the Kweilin Joy Luck but with a different regimen. The group still rotates among hosts, the hosting family being responsible for the meal, but instead of the group's money being displayed in a bowl, it has been transformed into stock market shares and is discussed in a formal meeting at the beginning of the evening. As a result, the mah jong game is still

played “for fun” (Tan 30) for almost no money at all. On the evening of Jing-mei’s first time taking her mother’s place at Joy Luck, she approaches the mah jong table with a certain amount of nostalgia, perhaps even reverence. Without having to be told, she senses which chair had been her mother’s because it “has an emptiness to it” (33). She intuitively knows that her mother’s corner of the table was the East and recalls her mother telling her, “The East is where things begin, . . . the direction from which the sun rises, where the wind comes from” (33). In mah jong, a roll of the dice designates each player as one of the four winds, the East being the first to play, the North being last, and certain tiles are associated with certain winds, similar to suits in a deck of cards. Tan, therefore, uses the memory of a dead mother to mystify the otherwise mundane aspects of the game, namely where the players sit and the use of directional winds to designate the playing order

As the game begins, Tan captures the rhythm of the play. The first step is to symbolically “wash” (33) the tiles. An-mei pours the tiles onto the felt-topped table, and the women swirl them around with their hands; Jing-mei notices that they “make a cool swishing sound as they bump into one another” (33). The next step, after the winds are assigned, is to stack the tiles into four walls. Western mah jong players usually use long trays to hold the four groups of tiles, with the one for the East being distinguished in some way, but Chinese mah jong tiles are usually thicker and easily stand up on their own, so no trays are needed (Rep 21). The Joy Luck women then go through the process of selecting and organizing their tiles for that round, much like a card player draws and organizes his hand before beginning to play. As Jing-mei explains, “I rearrange my tiles, sequences of bamboo and balls, doubles of colored number tiles, odd tiles that do not fit anywhere” (Tan 34). Jing-mei follows her aunts’ lead as they slowly and carefully sort their tiles and prepare to play, a ritual they have had decades to perfect. Her presence at the table represents the next generation’s stepping up to receive the cultural knowledge of its forebears.

As the round finally begins, the no-talking rule of Kweilin is clearly not in effect here. Jing-mei observes: “Now we begin to play, looking at our hands, casting tiles, picking up others at an easy, comfortable pace. The Joy Luck aunties begin to make small talk, not really listening to each other. They speak in their special language, half in broken English, half in their own Chinese dialect” (Tan 34). Their small talk consists of competitive, passive-aggressive jabs at each other’s shopping, sewing, and cooking abilities born out of a decades-old familiarity with one another. Although they talk during gameplay, a crucial folkloric element from the Kweilin



Joy Luck is still intact—the storytelling impulse. At a lull in the game, Auntie Ying proclaims loudly, “Oh, I have a story” (35), but instead of being a funny tale like the ones told by the Kweilin women, Auntie Ying’s story is about a friend’s son who had been arrested for stealing TVs, a story that makes Auntie An-mei uncomfortable considering that her own son had been arrested in the past for stealing car stereos. The San Francisco Joy Luck, after so many years, appears to be a mere shadow of its Kweilin predecessor, and Jing-mei’s boredom with the game, coupled with her apathy toward her fellow Joy Luck “cousins,” seems to be signaling the unlikelihood that the next generation will maintain the group after their parents have gone.

During Jing-mei’s first night at Joy Luck, she mentions that she had learned to play mah jong from some Jewish friends, and a brief exchange takes place in which her aunts, and her mother in her memory, decidedly denounce the Jewish version of the game as “not the same thing” (Tan 33). When she asked her mother the difference between the two types of mah jong, her mother answered cryptically that the difference was in the way the game is played: “Jewish mah jong, they watch only for their own tile, play only with their eyes. . . . Chinese mah jong, you must play using your head, very tricky” (33). While Suyuan’s sentiments here seem harsh, Chinese mah jong players are understandably protective of the traditions of the game. Mary C. Greenfield examines the “Mahjong craze” in the United States in the 1920s, which saw a game once reserved for the upper echelons of society explode into a mass-marketed phenomenon (329). Jelte Rep explains how traditional mah jong sets were handcrafted out of the shin bones of cows in small, family-owned shops in China. Each shop would focus only on a particular phase of the process—cutting and bleaching the bone, cutting the bamboo backing, carving and painting the symbols, etc.—and young boys would be apprenticed to learn one of these skills as an artisan. When American businessmen were frantically trying to fulfill the demand of their American customers, they would ship crates full of bovine shin bones to the shops in China, but the workers, usually multiple generations in one shop, could not be compelled to work faster or take shortcuts. So, enterprising mah jong investors ultimately bought the smaller shops wholesale and moved all the operations, including many of the workers, into larger factories in Shanghai. This way, the methods could be preserved while increasing the speed of production exponentially. Eventually, synthetic materials replaced the natural ones, and designs began to be stamped on the pieces rather than carved (Rep 24-27).

Almost a century later, there are dozens of variations of mah jong, and guidebooks often feel compelled to divide gameplay advice into regions. Fickle suggests, “By

treating Chinese mahjongg as ‘real’ (or at least more perfectly realized) mahjongg and its Jewish counterpart as a bastardization, ... Lindo reveals from the beginning that ludic strategies are inextricable from cultural ones” (77). Game-playing techniques are taken seriously as cultural artifacts through which cultural knowledge is passed down: “It is through mahjongg, then, that the nuanced question of what it means to be Chinese and to be American first gets articulated in the novel’s opening pages” (Fickle 78). When Suyuan and the aunties dismiss Jewish mah jong, their real intent is to delegitimize the popularized Western version of the game, preserving instead the game as an element of their culture which belongs to them.

Fickle has noticed that the very structure of the novel is arranged like a game of mah jong. She claims that from “the outset, in fact, *The Joy Luck Club*’s structure very explicitly invites a reading of the novel as a game of mahjongg” (70). The story is split into sixteen sections, like the sixteen rounds in a standard mah jong game, and grouped into four larger chapters which could represent the four winds embodied by the four players at the four corners of a traditional mah jong table. Additionally, the eight women who tell their stories in turn mirror the eight bonus tiles in a mah jong set, which “are also called *The Eight Apostles* by the Chinese, a reference to the eight immortal followers of the great Chinese philosopher Lao Tse (from the second century B.C.E.) who, through their ascetic and devout practice, became saints in their kingdom of heaven” (Rep 17). The book’s structural parallels to mah jong are unmistakable and highlight the aunties’ preoccupation with balance as well as legitimize the playing of a game as a serious cultural artifact. Fickle suggests that imposing “a sense of order, affiliation, and teleological progress on what appears to be an otherwise meaningless jumble of eight different sets of stories and memories, Tan’s use of mahjongg as a unifying structural element is by no means her only foray into the counterintuitive possibilities of making the real world comprehensible by turning it into a game” (74). Indeed, if mah jong, which is exclusively played by an amiable group of friends in the book, represents to the reader the cultural knowledge and memories of the novel’s older generation of mothers and aunties, then *Waverly Jong*’s foray into the individualistic, competitive world of championship chess might serve as a metaphor for the younger generation of daughters’ disconnection from their folk traditions brought about by being raised in America.

### **Chess—The New American Rules**

Tan presents chess as the cultural negative of mah jong. When *Waverly*’s brother, Vincent, receives a chess set from one of the missionary ladies at a

charity Christmas party thrown by the First Chinese Baptist Church, Lindo is gracious to the woman's face, but when they arrive home, Waverly remembers, "My mother told Vincent to throw the chess set away. 'She not want it. We not want it,' she said, tossing her head stiffly to the side with a tight, proud smile" (Tan 93). Although chess has nearly as rich a history as mah jong and has its origins in India and the Persian Empire, this scene clearly associates playing chess, at least for Lindo, with the West and, more specifically, America. Lindo is not interested in allowing her daughter to play chess in tournaments because she knows they will be playing by American rules, which she does not trust. When Waverly begins to win and to earn notoriety in the neighborhood, however, her mother, perhaps subconsciously, tries to coach her to adopt the language and strategies of mah jong. Not fully understanding how chess is played, she encourages her daughter to try to lose fewer pieces, and she discusses her attack strategies using the four winds, similar to the four winds used in mah jong.

Fickle's interpretation of Tan's game metaphors is that "the salience of *The Joy Luck Club's* use of games like mahjongg and chess lies in how it indirectly broaches the concept of the 'race card' and Asian American identity by suggesting that what it means to be Asian or Asian American is inextricable from what it means to be a game player" (71). In other words, according to Fickle, Tan perhaps exaggerates the connection between the skills needed to excel at strategy games and the fundamental nature of the Asian/Asian American experience, her twin intention being both to expose and embrace an unfavorable, trickster stereotype. Fickle, however, has inadvertently reduced the Asian culture to a series of tricks and strategies for survival, a disservice which misses Tan's tone and diminishes the status of the games as folkloric reservoirs. Fickle suggests that "it is only through games and game terminology that the aunties and their daughters can even begin to articulate their own ideas about identity and filiality" (71), but in fact it is more plausible to see Lindo attempting to adapt her own cultural knowledge to her daughter's game-playing atmosphere. Lindo's obvious ignorance shames Waverly, however, which causes her to assign her mother outsider status when she tells Lindo that she should "shut up" because she "doesn't know anything" (170). The result is a devastating rupture in the mother/daughter relationship that lasts into Waverly's adulthood and destroys her gift for chess as well as her connection to her heritage.

Furthermore, rather than representing cultural community like mah jong, chess is an individual sport that actually isolates Waverly from her family and her culture as she becomes more successful. She does make a temporary friend in her

teacher from the park, Lau Po, but she moves on when she learns all that he has to teach. Waverly's community rallies around her when she begins to win tournaments; for example, various businesses hang congratulatory signs in their windows and volunteer to sponsor her, but she seems just as embarrassed by the attention as by her mother's ignorant public boasting. When the offers for sponsorship begin to arrive, Lindo decides Waverly will be exempt from chores and from meals, a change which understandably irks her brothers. Lindo responds that Waverly is subject to the "new American rules. . . . Meimei play, squeeze all her brains out for win chess. You play, worth squeeze towel" (Tan 97). Later, when Waverly does attempt to spend time with her brothers, they treat her like an outsider and an annoyance. Finally, the tournaments, where she should be surrounded by peers, are full of nemeses, not friends. Chess, then, is presented in the novel as a draining force that dismisses communal bonds as strategic weaknesses, while mah jong is presented as a low-stakes pastime that encourages community and cultural preservation. Neither depiction is wholly accurate, however, as there are obviously amiable chess-playing communities as well as cut-throat, high-stakes mah jong tournaments.

### **Bourré—Nobody Plays to Lose**

Although mah jong has been widely written about in history books, how-to books, and articles, the opposite is true for the Cajun card game bourré. Besides Roy J. Nickens's 1972 book *Bouré*, mentioned in Rick Bragg's 1996 *New York Times* article "In Louisiana, Card Game Reveals the Cajun Spirit," the National Cajun Bourré Association published the now-difficult-to-find *Official Rules and Techniques of the Cajun Card Game Bourré (boo-ray)* by Preston Guidry in 1988, and both his and Nickens's texts were preceded by Henry Engler's self-published pamphlet, *Rules and Techniques of Bourré* in 1964. Many collections of American, and even specifically Louisiana, folklore and traditions—such as Terry Ann Mood's *American Regional Folklore: A Sourcebook and Research Guide* (2004) and Jan Harold Brunvand's *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction* (1968), which even has a section on folk games—include no mention of the game, and those that do acknowledge the game as an element of the region's folklore offer, at most, a paragraph or two briefly explaining how the game is played. Curney J. Dronet's *A Century of Acadian Culture: The Development of a Cajun Community: Erath (1899-1999)* (2000) features one small passage which mentions the game in reference to the leisurely activities of the town on Saturdays. Dronet explains that "the women did the shopping while the men usually frequented the local bars. Many would indulge in the Cajun card game of 'Bourée,' a card game that is still very popular in Erath" (54).

He then provides a short paragraph outlining the rules of the game before moving on, without further comment, to the typical activities in Erath on Sundays. Perhaps most surprising is the absolute lack of a *bourré* presence in Frank de Caro's *Folklife in Louisiana Photography: Images of Tradition* (1990), a fascinating photographic profile of the region which offers images of various cultural activities such as cooking, dancing, playing music, river baptizing, farming, and even an image of a woman playing a slot machine, but there are no images of anyone playing cards. This sparse folkloric treatment of *bourré* suggests that the game, while regionally popular, has remained within the boundaries of the Acadian culture and has not experienced a mass-market expansion like mah jong, making attention from regional authors like Bragg and Gautreaux that much more important for its preservation.

*Bourré*, according to Bragg, is a descendent of a French card game called "rams" and has been in Acadia since the 1800s. Hoyle's *Modern Encyclopedia of Card Games* (1974) claims, however, that *bourré* is descended from a French card game called "Écarté" (39), but the entry in no way mentions the game's regional ties to Cajun Louisiana, a lack which makes the entire entry rather suspect. As Bragg notes, practically every household in Louisiana has its own variation on the rules of the game, but *bourré*, which means "to trounce," is basically a trump game like hearts or spades where "tricks" are taken, but it is more "like poker in its spirit and drama" (167). Nicolae Sfetcu calls *bourré* a "game with imperfect information" (n.p.), which is likely the most accurate description available. With so many regional variations spread over such a small geographical playing area, *bourré* really is a cultural phenomenon rife with folkloric potential.

Tim Gautreaux's short story "Died and Gone to Vegas" takes place on a steam boat during an employee *bourré* game. The boat's cook Raynelle Bullfinch, the lone female crewmember, hosts the game, and the story opens with her initiation of newcomer Nick Montalbano into the mysteries of *bourré*, which she says even "a pet rat can play" (37). The extended scene of the story bears a striking resemblance to Jing-mei's first time attending the San Francisco Joy Luck Club. As the other players begin to arrive and to take their places, the participants settle into a comfortable ritual. Like the Joy Luck mah jong game, everyone seems to know his expected role and assigned seat, and as the game progresses, the players playfully insult one another and intersperse small talk into the rounds. The reader perceives that this *bourré* game is a ritual which the participants have been observing for a long time and which contributes to the unique identification of their culture. As Bragg demonstrates, *bourré* is

“a social game, mostly, played at a more congenial pace than poker, yet nobody plays bourré to lose” (169). Like mah jong, bourré is a community game played in a group of friends most of the time, though there is only one winner, and the stakes can get rather out of hand.

Throughout the game in Gautreaux’s story, Nick’s status as an outsider, like Jing-mei’s, is emphasized. Like Jing-mei, he is a college dropout, and even though he has had only one semester of college, Raynelle uses Nick’s partial education to separate him from their circle. While explaining the rules of the game, she ribs him, “This ain’t too hard for you is it? Ain’t college stuff more complicated than this?” The chief engineer, furthermore, calls Nick “fresh meat” while good-naturedly squeezing his neck, indicating that his presence, even though he is a newcomer, is accepted (38). Although Raynelle claims the game is simple and teases Nick about being able to understand, she nonetheless takes the time to explain all the rules and to answer his questions. Eventually, like Auntie An-mei, she simply says, “Trust me, you’ll catch on quick” (38). However, perhaps the most significant indicator of Nick’s outsider status is that, even if he had been familiar with bourré, he would still lack all the information necessary to succeed at Raynelle’s version. She reveals that every “hand has five tricks to take. If you take three tricks, you win the pot. Only on this boat, we got a special rule. If only two decide to play that hand after the draw, then it takes four tricks to win” (38). So, even if Nick had been an experienced bourré player, he would have been at an initial disadvantage within this small bourré community until he acclimated to their rules. Similarly, Jing-mei has played mah jong before, but she will remain an outsider among her aunties’ smaller mah jong community until she learns to play the game in a way they accept. Granted, the Joy Luck Club’s defense of their way of playing mah jong is more of a cultural statement than the steam boat’s additional special rule. In both works, though, the reader is granted access to a closed community through the eyes of the outsider character.

The most folkloric element of the bourré game in “Died and Gone to Vegas” is the oral storytelling ritual which accompanies it. Like both of Suyuan’s Joy Luck Clubs, oral storytelling is an indispensable part of Raynelle’s game and preserves the cultural tall tales of the region. Additionally, the storytelling ritual allows each player to distinguish himself among his peers, to establish his credibility within the culture, and to compete for the biggest reactions from his audience. Ed Piacentino calls “Died and Gone to Vegas” the “Cajun *Canterbury Tales*” (123), and indeed the steam boat’s

name, cheekily, is the *Leo B. Canterbury*. Each player takes a turn telling a tall tale in the style of what Gautreaux himself calls “energetic hyperbole” (Levasseur and Rabalais 22), and the tales grow increasingly unbelievable as the game progresses. All but Nick’s story are designed to incite laughter at the expense of a bumbling protagonist who incurs unbelievable, sometimes slapstick, misfortune because of his greed. Similarly, the Kweilin Joy Luck women had told each other humorous stories about “a rooster that ran into the house screeching on top of dinner bowls, the same bowls that held him quietly in pieces the next day! And one about a girl who wrote love letters for two friends who loved the same man. And a silly foreign lady who fainted on a toilet when firecrackers went off next to her” (24). Jing-mei does not participate in the oral storytelling when she plays mah jong, nor is it necessarily expected of her, but Nick is pressured into telling a tale, which he does reluctantly, as a necessary completion of his initiation into the bourré group. He does, however, assert some individuality and control over the ritual by telling of a tale based on selflessness and success rather than on greed and misfortune. The tale seems to be Gautreaux’s way of pondering the future and adaptability of the culture, but as soon as the tale concludes, Raynelle wins a wealthy pot and immediately begins making plans to head to Vegas. Nick’s daydream prediction about the misfortunes she will encounter, which include losing her money, getting in a fight with a blackjack dealer, and hitching a ride home with a group of Jehovah’s Witnesses in a broken-down car, is the final tale of the story and assures the reader that the storytelling tradition as it exists is firmly planted.

One final, fascinating correlation between mah jong and bourré, which is not necessarily represented fully by Tan or Gautreaux, is their similar approach to game-playing ethics; namely, both games prohibit mercy or sympathy towards one’s opponents. Paul Festa explains, in mahjong

any form of cooperation among players is prohibited and speaks poorly of a person’s ‘game character’ (*paipin*). Indeed, one important measure of skill and talent in mahjong, Sheng tells us, is precisely the degree to which one player is able to impair the game of another—and “the victim will then turn around and praise the victor.” (20-21)

Similarly, Sfetcu explains that bourré generally has a “must play to win” rule which “can have contentious results if a player is playing ‘nice,’ trying to keep others from bourréing. Most games disallow such ‘nice’ plays; players must attempt to bourré [to cause another player to take no tricks] as many other players as possible” (n.p.).

Though mah jong and bourré are both social games with deep, cultural heritages, there ultimately can be only one winner at the table. However, the mah jong groups in *The Joy Luck Club*, while ritualistic and steeped in tradition, are not ultimately cutthroat, and Raynelle's bourré game is concerned more with the stories than the money. So, perhaps the documentary burden of cultural, regional fiction extends only so far before the loyalty to narrative takes over.

Mah jong and bourré are only two examples of regional games studied by folklorists and historians and preserved in fiction. Additionally, scholars have found meaningful work studying other areas of gameplay, such as children's schoolyard games, board games, and video games, not to mention sports. Works of literature featuring games bring them to life with vivid detail while honoring the cultures surrounding them. Clearly, game playing traditions are fertile fields for scholars to harvest, and hopefully more authors will follow Tan's and Gautreaux's example and produce fiction which highlights under-utilized regional games.



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# Bram Stoker's Anxieties Concerning the Emancipation of Women

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## Abstract

*Through Bram Stoker's Dracula, this essay illustrates the anxieties concerning what was known as the "Woman Question." During the Victorian Era, the more independently-minded New Woman arose as a figure representing a rebellion from social norms, and the question of women's place in society, whether in the domestic or the business spheres, was debated. By examining the male protagonists' reactions to Mina Harker as well as Lucy Westenra's vampiric transformations, the works and theories of Stoker critics, as well as Dracula's relevant historical background combined with a feminist reading of the book, can broaden our understanding of the emancipation of women in the Victorian Era. Ultimately, two reactions to the New Woman will be analyzed based on the two female protagonists. By examining reactions to Lucy, as well as the theories of other critics, vampirism becomes not just a transformation of the body but a representation of the fears of Victorian men. With Lucy, who embraced her independence, the male characters focus on her destruction. Through her death, Stoker offers one solution to the problem of the New Woman. Upon analyzing Mina Harker, Stoker reveals his other, more likely, solution. Rather than revulsion and violence, Mina's transformation emphasizes how Victorian women should also contribute in upholding the patriarchal values. Dracula is Stoker's answer to the "Women Question."*

In *Dracula*, Bram Stoker clearly illustrates his and Victorian society's anxieties about the role of women as the dissimilar fates of Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker reveal. Stoker wrote *Dracula* during the late Victorian period, a time of rapidly changing roles for women. This was not change, however, without resistance. "The Woman Question," as the debate over the roles of women was known, troubled many who considered whether women should work the same jobs as men or whether they should continue to be caretaker of the family and home. Many Victorians, Stoker among them, disagreed that women should be given more freedom and instead believed that such pivotal change would be the downfall of society. Wishing to make his conservative views more palatable, Stoker conceals them within his two female protagonists. While the horror genre as a whole typically restricts men and women to specific gender roles, Stoker ventures further by suggesting possible solutions to his great fear that women will abandon their proper station. The conservative consensus seemed to be that womanhood "was under threat from the unwomanly woman" (Crozier-De Rosa 418). Despite the increase in factory-labor jobs, women were still confined to fitting jobs such as seamstress or governess. If a woman did assert more independence than commonly thought appropriate, she was referred to as a "New Woman."

The New Woman debate "encompassed issues such as property ownership, marriage contracts, inheritance law, and female sexuality, among others" (Swartz-Levine 345). The confident and assertive New Woman figures were not readily accepted into Victorian society and were often thought to be going against Nature's intentions. The phrase "nature's intentions," of course, refers to the ability of women to have children and take on the role of family caregiver. The perceived danger of the New Woman was her challenge to the strict societal guidelines. Carol Senf writes of the New Woman that she not only "chose financial independence and personal fulfillment as alternatives to marriage and motherhood" but that also "when it came to sex the New Woman was more frank and open than her predecessors. She felt free to initiate sexual relationships [and] to explore alternatives to marriage and motherhood" (35). With the strict focus on paternal lineage, the sexually free New Woman had the potential to upheave Victorian society through sexual intercourse and a rejection of idyllic motherhood. The agitation surrounding "The Woman Question" influenced Stoker, and he embedded his anxious opinion through his only two female characters, Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker, and their contrasting vampiric transformations.

From the very beginning of *Dracula*, Stoker describes Lucy Westenra as a New Woman, even before she is transformed into a vampire. The New Woman of Victorian society was a sexually independent woman assertive in decision-making. From her correspondence with Mina, we understand Lucy to have three suitors and, rather than submitting to her father's selection of a husband, Lucy takes the matter into her own hands. Her death opens a whole new set of possibilities. Vampiric Lucy ventures out alone at night and rejects the role of motherhood. When the men witness Lucy's return to her tomb, they see her fling "to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast" (Stoker 188). She has clearly chosen independence and personal fulfillment over motherly obligations, even to the point of violence. Stoker emphasizes the terror of the New Woman by having Lucy drink from children. Rather than a caregiver, a vampiric Lucy only has the parasitic urge to take sustenance from children in a reversal of familial roles.

Mina Harker's complacency regarding her nurturing role contrasts with Lucy's desire for independence. With her male-dependent actions, Mina exhibits the behavior of an anti-New Woman. When writing to Lucy, Mina says, "I have been working very hard lately, because I want to keep up with Jonathan's studies, and I have been practising shorthand very assiduously. When we are married I shall be able to be useful to Jonathan" (55). Mina has a very different concept of her place in society. Already she spends much of her time learning to be "useful" to her fiancé and studying only what interests him. Just as Stoker created a stereotypical New Woman in Lucy Westenra, he writes Mina Harker as the motherly Victorian woman, one who is extremely content in her societally pressured role.

To further confirm the accepted role of caregiving women, Stoker utilizes the physicality of the vampire transformation to connect the New Woman with the concept of monstrosity. As a vampire, Lucy exhibits typically masculine behavior, thus emasculating Stoker's male characters and illustrating society's anxieties concerning the New Woman. He emphasizes much of Lucy's perceived negative alterations through color. When the male protagonists open Lucy's coffin in the graveyard, they note that her lips were "crimson with fresh blood, and that the stream had trickled over her chin and stained the purity of her lawn death-robe" (187). White, often associated with the purity of wedding night sheets, is ironically paired with Lucy's death robes. Stoker's use of the word "purity" makes the implication even clearer. As a vampire, Lucy's actions are now connected with a loss of virginity and sexual impurity.

The use of color to associate the idea of impurity is not limited to the white-

red dynamic. As Phyllis Roth argues, the “facile and stereotypical dichotomy between the dark woman and the fair, the fallen and the idealized, is obvious in *Dracula*” (411). She points out that Seward describes Lucy’s hair “in its usual sunny ripples” but, later, when the men watch Lucy’s return to the tomb, the text describes her as a “dark-haired woman” (qtd. in Roth 417). Though the juxtaposition between Lucy’s fair and dark hair indicates her fallen status to the men, Lucy’s descent into vampirism is a physical representation of her taboo as well as a metaphorical one. Stoker presented the New Woman’s true nature based on the pejorative stereotype that the women’s selfish acts go against Nature’s intent. Lucy therefore loses her human appearance at the same time she relinquishes her caregiving role.

A similar metaphor of transformation can be applied to the men of *Dracula* as well. While women lose their place in society when connected with Dracula, men only grow more pure. Jonathan Harker, the early protagonist who has the most contact with the Count, goes from dark to light hair. His changes are the opposite of Lucy Westenra’s physical alterations. After the events of Dracula’s attack on Mina Harker, Dr. Seward notes that Jonathan’s hair has turned from dark brown to white almost overnight (Stoker 263). Since Jonathan’s encounters with the Count leave him with white hair, it can be surmised that he gained, rather than lost, social approval.

The contrasting reactions to encounters with Dracula resonate with Victorian ideas on male and female spheres of influence. In his influential essay “Of Queens’ Gardens”, Victorian art critic John Ruskin summarizes his opinion of men’s higher place in the Victorian social order by stating that the “man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trials” and that men must be “*always* hardened;” he also writes that a man “guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation” (1587-88). Ruskin emphasizes the popular idea that women extend influence only in the home, and only in support of her husband. When her new husband sees the Count again for the first time, Mina emphasizes her supportive role when she writes, “I do believe that if he had not had me to lean on and to support him he would have sunk down” (Stoker 155). Unquestioningly cooperative, Mina emphasizes the ideal Victorian woman in her response to Jonathan’s momentary weakness. She considers her husband’s stumble a loss of strength rather than a sign of weakness, and she is more than happy to quietly support him though, had Mina stumbled herself, she might have taken it as a character flaw. Not realizing the contradictory nature, she is content in the knowledge that without her strength, her husband would have fallen.

Ruskin goes even further and argues that a man will “guard the women” (1587) from temptation, insinuating that women will not last against the dangers presented by the commercial world. He references the commercial sphere of influence when he discusses the “rough work in open world” with its “perils and trials” as opposed to the female, domestic sphere of the home (1588). Men’s strength was in their ability to navigate the business and political side of Victorian society, while women were meant to stay tucked away from these masculine dangers. In the popular book *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits*, Sarah Stickney Ellis wrote of women that “the sphere of their direct personal influence is central, and consequently small; but its extreme operations are as widely extended as the range of human feeling” (1584). When Jonathan stumbled from the shock of seeing Dracula in a London street, Mina more than happily becomes his emotional support, a role she steadily enforces for the continuation of the story. Stoker also presents the concept of domestic and commercial spheres in the form of the transformative hair. Jonathan with his white hair has gained experience and age from his encounters with monsters while Lucy, having of her own left will the domestic sphere of influence, becomes a woman ill-favored by Victorian ideals.

Feminist readings of *Dracula* often cite Lucy’s letter where she asks, “Why can’t they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her?” and additionally notes that men like “women, certainly their wives, to be quite as fair as they are; and women, I am afraid, are not always quite as fair as they should be” (Stoker 58, 60). On the surface, this appears to be a different definition of *fair*, one more connected with popular Victorian opinion of women’s place in the home, but Stoker’s emphasis on Lucy’s darkened hair later connects the two ideas. In noting the place of men and women, Lucy ironically stumbles upon her foreshadowed death. Having lost her purity and social place, she must not be allowed to live—she is no longer “quite as fair” as she should be both physically and socially.

That Dracula caused Lucy’s transformation is secondary to the discovery that she now represents the opposite of Victorian society’s desire in a woman, specifically in a wife. This fact is shown in Abraham Van Helsing’s single-minded focus on Lucy before ever mentioning a plan to slay Dracula. Once Lucy has been killed, he says, “Now, my friends, one step of our work is done, one the most harrowing to ourselves. But there remains a greater task: to find out the author of all this our sorrow and to stamp him out” (Stoker 193). The reference to Lucy is curious, considering they have not dealt with the main antagonist (and title of the book). Despite calling Dracula the

dangerous “author,” Lucy is perceived as “the most harrowing” because she represents the independence of a New Woman. She is a terrible danger for Stoker and his masculine characters because she craves neither child nor escort. Their “greater task” is to stamp out the creator of their greatest fear. As she does not require the standard husband to care for her, *fair* therefore does not just refer to Lucy’s now-darkened hair but also to the outward sign of the perceived emotional defects. Having discarded the desired characteristics for a husband’s wife, Lucy’s brutal subjugation is more easily justified. Dr. John Seward speaks for the entire group when he writes of his first encounter with the vampiric Dark Lucy:

He recognized the features of Lucy Westenra. Lucy Westenra, but yet how changed. The sweetness was turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness. Van Helsing stepped out, and, obedient to his gesture, we all advanced too; the four of us ranged in a line before the door of the tomb . . . but Lucy’s eyes unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs we knew. At that moment the remnant of my love passed into hate and loathing; had she then to be killed, I could have done it with savage delight. (Stoker 187)

John expresses bewildered shock at seeing such a change in Lucy Westenra, but there is an underlying sexual reaction as well. He notes with horror her “adamantine” disposition and “heartless cruelty” but also Lucy’s “voluptuous wantonness,” a point at which critic Phyllis Roth observes that “only when Lucy becomes a vampire is she allowed to be ‘voluptuous,’ yet she must have been so long before, judging from her effect on men and from Mina’s descriptions of her” (414). In other words, only as a New Woman is Lucy allowed to be “voluptuous,” indicating that, in the masculine sphere, an independent woman is held to a different, and lower, standard than in the home setting. Just as Lucy has transformed, John’s feelings quickly transform as well, and he seizes upon hatred as an acceptable substitute for his sexual fear.

Lucy is alluring prior to her transformation, but afterward, her open sexuality is seen as a threat to Victorian men. According to critic Eric Kwan-Wai Yu, the “perception of Lucy’s ‘voluptuousness,’ thus, may be interpreted as the men’s projection of their repressed desire: it is not we who want her, it is she who tempts us” (153). In Kwan-Wai Yu’s interpretation, the men are the victims, unable to overcome their own temptation of a “voluptuous” New Woman, an argument supported by the death of Dark Lucy, which is discussed later. His analysis could explain John Seward’s violent reaction to Dark Lucy. Repressed by social standards, none of the men were permitted



to imagine Lucy in a sexual way unless married to her. Once Lucy strongly expresses her sexuality, John worries he too will become unrepressed. Stoker plays on society's fears by heavily emphasizing Lucy's rejection of woman's submissive nature and the helplessness of the men she encounters.

Stoker purposefully positions his male protagonists in situations of powerlessness. John Seward's immediate hatred for Dark Lucy is one example, and Jonathan Harker's fascination with Dracula is another. When attempting to kill Dracula in his coffin, Jonathan writes that his "eyes fell upon me, with all their blaze of basilisk horror. The sight seemed to paralyse me" (Stoker 53). Despite the opportune circumstances, Jonathan falters the moment Dracula looks at him. Stoker creates a scene tense with frantic energy. The mention of the basilisk emphasizes how paralyzed he felt, as basilisks were creatures said to kill with a single glance. At this point, Jonathan has realized his danger and understood that Dracula's murder would likely prevent his own, but his body betrayed him once he saw Dracula's eyes. This weakness in the face of Dracula is seen once more when Mina prevents Jonathan from falling to the ground.

The Count appears to affect the male's ability to remain always strong in the commercial sphere. Critic Talia Schaffer writes that "Dracula's powerful eyes shift Harker/Stoker into his attitude of stiff, stony passivity. The eyes give him a thrill of horror at his own sensations of pleasure" and that Jonathan's "body is strainingly retentive" (400). She argues that Stoker identifies with his male characters and emphasizes the abnormality of their passivity. Though the male characters do have an undercurrent of attraction to vampires, I would argue that Stoker emphasizes submissive action to encourage fear of more than just passive men. If it were just the fear of non-dominating males, the novel would have focused solely on male vampiric transformation. In actuality, the Count's time-consuming effort is spent granting Victorian women his dominant powers while the men attempt to prevent the newly independence-minded women from harming society.

The subverted sexual feelings on the part of the Victorian men could be an attempt to reinforce their masculinity and Victorian values. Unlike Schaffer, Christopher Craft focuses not on the vampire's eyes, but instead argues extensively for the sexualized "Vampire Mouth." When faced with Dark Lucy, her fiancé Arthur Holmwood "fell back and hid his face in his hands" (Stoker 188), a decidedly uncharacteristic action from the Victorian nobleman, almost effeminate in nature. Upon hearing her seductive voice call to him, Arthur "opened wide his arms" (188). Not only is this action the opposite of Ruskin and Ellis' spheres of masculine and feminine

influence, Arthur opening his arms is also decidedly passive. Craft argues that “the vampire mouth fused and confuses what Dracula’s civilized nemesis, Van Helsing and the Crew of Light, works so hard to separate—the gender-based categories of the penetrating and the receptive” (445). *Dracula* could therefore be argued to deliver not just dominant women, but fear of gender fluidity as well. Stoker emphasizes the confusion over strict gender identities by reversing women and men’s sexual roles. This disorientating concept is particularly relevant to the reunion of the vampiric Lucy with her fiancé. Upon seeing his transformed fiancé, Arthur “falls back” and “hid his face in his hands,” gestures more commonly associated with Victorian females. This “monstrous” female, the New Woman, not only undermines femininity through her actions but also undermines masculinity.

From a narrative perspective, the horror of seeing the transformed Dark Lucy would likely arouse a degree of alarm in anyone. More likely, though, Lucy emasculates her fiancé, breaking the constructed societal norms of the day. In connection with the recurring Vampire Mouth, Lucy has now the ability to take penetrating initiative. The teeth of the Vampire Mouth act as a phallic representation of sexual domination. Upon seeing her fiancé in the graveyard, she says “come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you. Come, and we can rest together. Come, my husband, come!” (188). The extended use of the word “come” brings to mind orgasm, but also note the tense of the aforementioned verb. Lucy gives an order to her would-be husband, the man that she would normally unquestioningly obey. Her behavior signifies the dangerous change that she no longer behaves as a woman should. Rather than shame, her transformation has allowed her to embrace a different, more sexual side of herself. It is at this point Arthur “opened wide his arms” in agreement of his now more-passive sexual role. Her words thus signal the most terrifying part of her transformation, a complete division from patriarchal and strict gender role standards.

Considering their noble cause is to destroy the now-assertive Dark Lucy, it is ironic that Craft christens the male protagonists the “Crew of Light,” having, he says, “taken my cue from Stoker: Lucy, *lux*, light” (445). In a scene noted for its nonconsensual atmosphere, the male fears of sexual expression are resolved. A long, descriptive paragraph of Lucy’s demise sufficiently sates the fears of an emasculated Crew of Light, as Stoker writes:

Arthur took the stake and the hammer, and when once his mind was set on action his hands never trembled nor even quivered. Van Helsing opened his missal and began to read, and Quincey and I followed as well as we could. Arthur placed the point over the heart, and as I looked I could see its dint in the white flesh. Then he struck with all his might. The Thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood-curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut, and the mouth was smeared with a crimson foam. But Arthur never faltered. . . . And then the writhing and quivering of the body became less, and the teeth seemed to champ, and the face to quiver. Finally it lay still. (192-93)

John Seward's previously-mentioned "savage delight" has now been fulfilled, though Dark Lucy's "blood-curdling screech" and her "writhing" and "quivering" ought to give readers pause. The male protagonists even go so far as to refer to Lucy as "the thing," simultaneously revoking her sex and humanity. Her pain is always followed by an emphasis on this loss. When she screeches, Stoker notes that the sound came from "the opened red lips" and, when she quivered, "sharp white teeth champed together." The careful lack of feminine pronouns further dissociates the woman from the murder. Stoker describes Arthur's face as "set, and high duty seemed to shine through it" (193). The reader is meant to identify with his unfaltering attitude and "high duty" that grants the Crew of Light courage, but what is this high duty exactly? Lucy had neither committed murder nor transformed the children from whom she fed. Her saviors seem to be punishing the crime before it had been committed. Stoker is emphasizing that Dark Lucy no longer has the best interests of patriarchal society in mind. Desiring her independence, Lucy is now a feared woman. Calling such a task "high duty," Dracula hides its true purpose and supports the noble-sounding name given to the male protagonists by Craft.

Roth argues that "the central anxiety of the novel is the fear of the devouring women" (419). To extrapolate from this argument, it can therefore be assumed that the non-devouring woman, the woman who allows herself instead to be fed upon, would be an asset. Mina Harker, for example, has a similar situation to Lucy, but the outcome diverges from Lucy's violent death. Having been bitten by Dracula, the same Crew of High Duty that righteously destroyed Lucy now works hard to protect Mina from herself. Ultimately they decide the best course of action is to prohibit her

from further involvement. Mina does not seem to mind and even writes that “they all agreed that it was best that I should not be drawn further into this awful work, and I acquiesced” (Stoker 226). Mina’s opinion is secondary to the male protagonists, and without a protest she submits to their authority.

Their hunt for Dracula touches on the dangers that Victorian women should be neither independent nor venture into the commercial sphere. For Stoker, not only does Mina represent all that is ideal about Victorian society, but she takes an active role in submitting herself to patriarchal authority. Always thinking of her husband first, Mina does not voice her complaints aloud. While they scour the city, Mina writes in her journal “now I am crying like a silly fool, when I *know* it comes from my husband’s great love and from the good, good wishes of those other strong men” (226). Stoker writes Mina as a stereotypical Victorian woman overcome by emotion. Despite knowing that intellect is more highly valued, she cannot help but cry at being abandoned. Because of this perceived weakness in temperament, she associates crying with fragility and the male figures with both authority and strength. Despite her own opinions, she has an overwhelming confidence in the male protagonists’ abilities and “good, good wishes.” Through Mina, Stoker is encouraging not only the men to maintain societal norms, but for women to have an active role in submitting to patriarchal standards.

There is an obvious but very crucial difference between Mina and Lucy: Mina gets married. Not only does she get married, Mina also she spends the first portion of *Dracula* writing about her soon-to-be husband and her desire to be useful to him. Mina’s view on the women’s sphere corresponds to Ellis and Ruskin’s views. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Mina views sexual freedom with loss, and equates Dracula’s actions, not with sexual independence but with betrayal. “Unclean, unclean! I must touch him [Jonathan Harker] or kiss him no more” is her first reaction upon realizing Dracula has forced her to drink his blood (248). Equating female sexual freedom with impurity, Stoker thus implies that female sexuality will degrade society. Despite being the victim, she only orders herself not to touch or kiss her fiancé, as if the Dracula connection was contagious. Significantly, Mina only rejects herself now that she has been associated with Dracula. Critic Stephen Arata notes that both vampire sexuality and female sexuality “are represented as primitive and voracious, and both threaten patriarchal hegemony” (468). Equating female sexuality with something monstrous and animalistic, Stoker thus implies that female sexuality will degrade society but softens his sentiment through a female lens.

While Lucy Westenra embraced her new sexual fluidity, Mina Harker was content in the domestic sphere. When reminded by Abraham Van Helsing of Dracula's successful attacks on her, Mina replies, "No, I shall not forget, for it is well that I remember. . . . Now, you must all be going soon. Breakfast is ready, and we must all eat that we may be strong" (Stoker 258). Mina simultaneously reminds herself of the domestic hemisphere while discussing Dracula's actions to prove her disinterest in his offer. On the subject of women's natural place in society, John Stuart Mill argued that "the rule of men over women differs from all these others in not being a rule a rule of force: it is accepted voluntarily; women make no complaint, and are consenting parties to it. . . . Men do not want solely the obedience of women, they want their sentiments" (1062). Mina has accepted that she will be left behind, but she is so assured of her role that she ensures the men have a hearty breakfast before they venture out into the commercial sphere. Dark Lucy only takes from society, but Mina gives both her emotional and physical support and takes an active role in her own sexual and societal suppression.

*Dracula* exemplifies the notion that not only does patriarchal society confine women, but that women often willingly submit to these restrictive measures. In Victorian society, women could do very little without the security of husband and marriage. Mina takes an active part in the destruction of Dracula, the creature that offered Lucy sexual and societal independence, because ultimately Mrs. Harker rejects nonpatriarchal values. Not only is she the obedient wife, she also perpetuates the suppression of her sex, fulfilling Mill's observation that men desire not just women's obedience but also their sentiment. Though lonely at being left behind, Mina has confidence that "some day Jonathan will tell me all" (Stoker 226), emphasizing that her needs are secondary to her husband's wants.

From Mina and the male protagonists' perspectives, Stoker's vampires are leeches, feeding off the blood of others while contributing little to society. Higher class women paralleled this situation. Confined to the home and without the possibility of working, "middle-class Victorian women were held up as guardians of the nation's and the empire's moral health" (Crozier-De Rosa 418). In her active role to support her husband, Mina ultimately rejects the monstrous vampire lifestyle in favor of society's approved non-working females. Dark Lucy emphasizes that some considered the New Woman a monstrous abomination, but Stoker ultimately parallels Mina's behavior as the ideal for an idle women. That Lucy drinks from children is also symbolic, outlining the anxiety that a younger generation will degrade in a society of dominant women

who want neither man nor children and who do not contribute to the social order. Lucy's death is a necessity for Stoker to alleviate the reader's fears of an influx of Dark Lucys invading in a similar manner as Dracula's attempts to invade London. Stoker vividly describes the crucial problem of Victorian society through Lucy Westenra and then offers the solution through her death and Mina Harker's repression. Ultimately, *Dracula* illustrates a patriarchal society's anxieties about the emancipation of women from traditional roles and advocates a continuation of the active suppression of women.

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# The Impact of the HOPE Scholarship on High School Graduation in Georgia

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## **Abstract**

*Since Georgia enacted its widely acclaimed merit aid HOPE policies, many states have followed suit, ostensibly due to its large, positive, and significant impact on college enrollment. There has been muted interest in the impact of the policy on high school graduation of both students who will go on to college and those who will not. Using a differences-in-differences methodology, I contrast high school graduation rates in Georgia against similar states and found the enactment of the HOPE Scholarship has increased the probability of graduating high school by 12.5%. When viewed in light of a 7% point jump in college enrollment due to HOPE Scholarships (Cornwell et al., 2006), I conclude that the policy has increased the graduation rates—by about 5%—of students who will not be immediately enrolling in college after graduation from high school.*



America may be facing a silent high school graduation problem. Although figures provided by government agencies seem to show a tremendous leap in graduation rates (see Figure 1), the raw numbers mask a hidden but fundamental problem. By 2011, around 12% of all high school graduates obtained this credential through the General Education Degree (GED) (Murnane, 2013).<sup>1</sup> While statistically indistinguishable, labor market outcomes and long-term educational achievement is very different among GED holders than among true high school graduates (Cameron & Heckman, 1993).

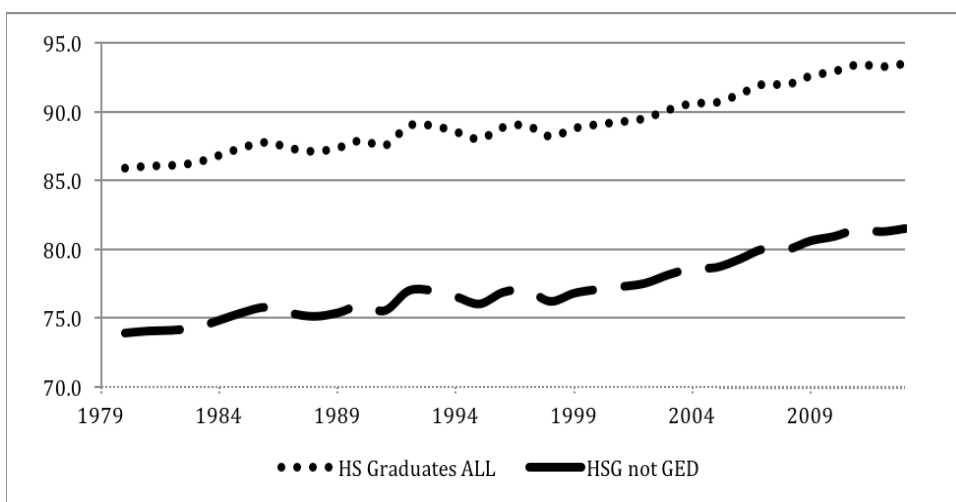


Figure 1. A plot of graduation rates over time. The dotted line shows the graduation rate, including the GED, while the dashed line shows the graduation rate without GED credentials, assuming the GED rate is 12% of the total every year. Source: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED524955>.

To develop and maintain a highly skilled workforce, many states have resorted to providing merit-based subsidies that incentivize college enrollment. However, Fenske et al. (1997) argue that policies that intervene earlier in students' education may be just as important. Research on the efficacy of these merit-based policies tend to focus mainly on the impact of said policy on tertiary enrollment (Dynarski, 2002).

In this study, I examine the impact of Georgia's Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE) scholarship on high school graduation. Using a pooled

1. The General Educational Development (GED) certificate was supposed to be an equivalent credential to the high school diploma for veterans of the Second World War. It has later morphed into the medium through which many Black, Hispanic and lower income individuals receive their diploma. As a result of this transformation, the value of the credential has weakened considerably (Cameron & Heckman, 1993).

cross-section of IPUMS CPS Annual Social and Economic supplement (ASEC) data, I analyze the impact of Georgia's 1993 HOPE Scholarship/Grant programs on graduation rates. I use a differences-in-differences identification strategy to contrast the graduation rates of individuals in Georgia against those in other states after the HOPE Program was started.

The main contribution of this paper is the better understanding it provides of the positive impacts of merit aid policies such as the HOPE Scholarship. I expect the rate of high school graduation to increase in Georgia relative to its peer states that lack a merit aid policy. High school graduation rates will increase because (1) the discounted cost of attending an institution of higher education is reduced substantially, and (2) the demand for labor in states with merit aid policies will gravitate towards students with higher educational attainment.

I find that the enactment of the HOPE Scholarship increased the probability of students graduating from Georgia high schools by around 12.5%. In practical terms, this result echoes the conclusions of Henry and Rubinstein (2002) and Pallais (2009). In both instances, the performance of students on standardized tests increased in states where merit aid policies are instituted relative to peer states. It is not surprising that scores on standardized tests improved, since the eligibility conditions of merit aid rests on the students attaining a minimum cutoff on the tests. What is surprising is that distribution scores have shifted upwards; fewer students perform poorly on standardized tests when merit aid policies are enacted. Along similar lines, I also find the distribution of graduating grade point averages (GPAs) is shifting upwards towards the cutoff point.

### **Background**

As part of legislation aiming to introduce a lottery into the state of Georgia, Governor Zell Miller in 1991 proposed a unique model where the bulk of the proceeds of the lottery scheme would be devoted to educational causes. In 1991, the Georgia legislature passed the lottery amendment while statewide residents narrowly passed a referendum supporting the amendment in 1992. This paved the way for the enactment of the HOPE Scholarship and the HOPE Grant programs.

#### **The HOPE Scholarship**

The HOPE Scholarship was created to encourage the academic achievement of Georgia's high school students and Georgians seeking degrees from postsecondary institutions (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.). Funding for the program is derived from Georgia Lottery for Education, and is administered by the

Georgia Student Finance Commission. To qualify for a HOPE Scholarship, a student must be a U.S. citizen, a Georgia resident for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the award, and must graduate high school with a 3.0 GPA. To retain the scholarship, the student must maintain a 3.0 or B average throughout his/her academic program (limited to 6 years) with regular inspection by the state to ensure compliance. The scholarship is very generous—estimated around \$4,700 in the 2003 academic year (Cornwell et al., 2006). When the HOPE Scholarship was first enacted, a student could get \$1,000 towards tuition at private universities. This amount was later increased to \$3,000 to reflect the growing trend of tuition increases. At the beginning of the program, eligibility was capped for students whose annual family income exceeds \$66,000. The \$66,000 hard cap was first increased to \$100,000 in 1994 but then later abolished in 1995.

### **The HOPE Grant**

This is the second plank of the lottery-funding program introduced under the HOPE Program. The HOPE Grant program provides assistance to residents of Georgia pursuing certificates or diplomas at Georgia's public tertiary institutions. Its aim is to encourage residents to obtain practical training provided in 2-year colleges to broaden the talent pool of Georgia's workforce. The eligibility criteria for the HOPE Grant program are the same as for the scholarship with one exception: students need not graduate with a 3.0 GPA.

### **Merit Aid: Incentive, Effort, and High School Student Quality**

Bishop (1996) argues that pecuniary incentives that subsidize college costs are also expected to elicit more effort by high school students in order to meet or exceed the threshold of the merit aid policy. To demonstrate how this transpires, consider the following. Students cannot determine ex-ante if their academic effort will enable them scale the eligibility threshold. To obtain a grade point average sufficient for the merit aid scholarship, students who are either at or are perceived to be right below the threshold will likely exert more effort to scale that hurdle. That is, a student with a 2.9 GPA may exert moderately more effort to cross the 3.0 mark. At the same time, a student with a 2.5 GPA may substantially improve his/her effort in order to scale the threshold. Even if the student with the 2.5 GPA falls short of the cutoff (finishing with a 2.9 GPA, for example), that student's probability of graduation nonetheless increases immensely. In essence, merit aid creates a positive externality that leads students to perform better, hence improving the chances of graduation (Betts, 1998; Kremer, Miguel, & Thornton, 2009) Indeed, the number of students graduating with

a 2.90-2.99 GPA rose faster in Georgia than in surrounding states (Bugler, Henry, & Rubenstein, 1999).

Another externality introduced by merit aid policies is that they improve the quality of high school students across the ability spectrum (Betts, 1998). Employers will realize that when standards are improved, the quality of students seeking to attain those standards is higher, and they therefore should be compensated differently.

While the general consensus is that merit aid improves quality, Price suggests that merit aid simply rewards students who do not need the help (2001). He contends that since well-to-do students will attend college with or without merit aid, the policies do not lead to the attainment of their main objective: providing “equal opportunity.”

Both higher achieving students through the HOPE Scholarship and lower achieving students through the HOPE Grant benefit from merit aid policy. Note that the main eligibility criteria of the HOPE Grant are high school graduation regardless of grade. Rational students who had no thought of obtaining post-secondary education are incentivized to graduate with the promise of a free technical education. The skills learned from these technical colleges would have taken years to obtain if the student had started working immediately upon graduation from high school (Jepsen, Troske, & Coomes, 2014).

## **Data and Empirical Specification**

### **Data**

I use data from three major sources in this study: the March Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) from the Current Population Survey (CPS);<sup>2</sup> Common Core data from the National Center for Educational Statistics; and Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. I pool ASEC data from 1993–2003 to create a large data set containing the constructed graduation status of all individuals. I create the graduation status variable as a binary variable coded as 1 for any individual in the data with an above 12th-grade education and coded as 0 for any individual who has a 12th-grade education and below. Due to a large sample size and compatibility issues, the analysis is limited to the 16 comparable states in the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB)<sup>3</sup> as done in Cornwell et al. (2006).

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2. ASEC CPS provides the usual monthly labor force data, but in addition it also provides supplemental data on work experience, income, noncash benefits, educational attainment, and migration. <https://www.census.gov/prod/techdoc/cps/cpsmar13.pdf>

3. These states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Table 1 shows the similarities between Georgia and the SREB states. I include as control variables parental income, school investments in facilities and teachers, and macroeconomic variables such as unemployment and minimum wage. Data on state expenditures were extracted from NCES' Common Core data while unemployment figures were derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. All other variables were sourced from the CPS ASEC data.

| <b>TABLE 1</b>  |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| <i>Means of key variables in the SREB sample</i>            |         |        |
|   | Georgia | SREB   |
| Graduation Rates (%)  | 66      | 68     |
| Hours Worked (Weekly)                                       | 16.8    | 17.54  |
| Household Income (\$)                                       | 70,015  | 66,764 |
| Parents with HS Diploma (%)                                 | 85      | 81     |
| State Per Capita Education Expenditures (\$)                | 7,493   | 7034   |
| Unemployment Rates  | 5.26    | 4.56   |
| Youth Labor Force Participation (%)                         | 53      | 57     |
|   |         |        |
| No. Observations  | 329     | 6847   |
| <i>Notes. Income figures are expressed as 1995 dollars.</i> |         |        |

I removed all entries with negative income figures and limited all the income variables to within three standard deviations of the mean. I limited hours worked weekly at 60. These adjustments did not alter the sample size significantly.

To obtain an accurate representation of high school graduation, I construct a variable that looks at the current state of residence and tied it to the migratory history of the respondent. CPS data has a variable that captures the migration history of respondents over one-year intervals. For example, if a respondent indicates Alabama as his current state of residence and also indicates no history of migration over the past year, then this suggests that the state of residence and the state of high school graduation are the same. A secondary outcome variable that estimates whether or not the HOPE Program increases the probability of young adults joining the labor force is considered. This is a binary variable that indicates whether or not the respondent is in the labor force. CPS data also has demographic data about the respondent's age, sex, gender, and family characteristics. I present some summary statistics in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

*Breakdown of key variables by state*

| <b>STATES</b>        | <b>HOURS<br/>WORKED<br/>WEEKLY</b> | <b>HOUSE-<br/>HOLD IN-<br/>COME (\$)</b> | <b>PARENTS<br/>WITH HS<br/>DIPLOMA<br/>(%)</b> | <b>PER<br/>CAPITA<br/>EDUC EXP<br/>(\$)</b> | <b>UNP<br/>RATES<br/>(%)</b> | <b>YOUTH<br/>LFP (%)</b> | <b>#. OF<br/>OBS.</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| ALABAMA              | 16.5                               | 63,923                                   | 84   | 6,239                                       | 5.6                          | 58                       | 337                   |
| ARKANSAS             | 17.47                              | 58,599                                   | 83   | 6,078                                       | 5.4                          | 64                       | 289                   |
| DELAWARE             | 20.1                               | 77,302                                   | 86   | 9,599                                       | 4.2                          | 58                       | 294                   |
| FLORIDA              | 16.9                               | 66,680                                   | 84   | 7,287                                       | 5.1                          | 60                       | 988                   |
| KENTUCKY             | 16.98                              | 67,889                                   | 82   | 6,338                                       | 5.4                          | 62                       | 362                   |
| LOUISIANA            | 15.7                               | 65,556                                   | 85   | 6,304                                       | 6.4                          | 60                       | 296                   |
| MARYLAND             | 19.57                              | 93,635                                   | 93   | 9,012                                       | 6.4                          | 56                       | 286                   |
| MISSISSIPPI<br>NORTH | 14.12                              | 56,132                                   | 76   | 5,351                                       | 6                            | 50                       | 316                   |
| CAROLINA             | 19.27                              | 69,643                                   | 83   | 6,473                                       | 4.7                          | 59                       | 617                   |
| OKLAHOMA<br>SOUTH    | 17.66                              | 65,581                                   | 88   | 5,980                                       | 4.5                          | 59                       | 368                   |
| CAROLINA             | 16.97                              | 70,885                                   | 82   | 7,280                                       | 5.6                          | 55                       | 305                   |
| TENNESSEE            | 18.33                              | 71,118                                   | 84   | 6,041                                       | 4.9                          | 60                       | 292                   |
| TEXAS                | 18                                 | 59,325                                   | 70   | 7,215                                       | 5.7                          | 55                       | 1318                  |
| VIRGINIA<br>WEST     | 19.7                               | 78,689                                   | 86   | 7,654                                       | 3.9                          | 54                       | 382                   |
| VIRGINIA             | 15.12                              | 57,287                                   | 84   | 7,790                                       | 6.9                          | 50                       | 397                   |
| GEORGIA              | 16.8                               | 70,015                                   | 86   | 7,492                                       | 4.5                          | 53                       | 329                   |

*Notes.* PER CAPITA EDUC EXP. Represents state expenditures per pupil. UNP RATES are mean unemployment rates. YOUTH LFP stands for youth labor force participation rates. NO. OF OBS. stands for number of observations

### Empirical Methodology

The aim of this study is to examine whether Georgia’s merit aid (the HOPE Scholarship) has increased the rate of high school graduation. At first blush, the answer seems mechanically simple. When merit aid is available, more students will graduate from high school in pursuit of the program’s benefits. The eligibility criteria, which requires students to attain a 3.0 GPA, presents a twist on this presumption. That is, students with a 3.0 GPA or above typically graduate from high school with or without merit aid. Hence, the graduation rate of students with a GPA that exceeds the threshold will not be affected by the policy. Those at the margin and those within striking distance of the cutoff are the ones most affected by the policy.

Therefore, the identifying assumption is that upon enacting the HOPE Program, high school students in Georgia will graduate at higher rates than their counterparts in surrounding states with similar characteristics. I use a differences-in-differences method similar to its application in Singell, Waddell, and Curs (2006) to determine the impact of the HOPE Program on high school graduation:

$$Grad_{it} = \delta (GA * HOPE) + \gamma X_i + \alpha T + \beta s (ST) + \epsilon_{it}$$

We compare each individual  $i$  at time  $t$ , to determine whether the policy as implemented causes the graduation status to differ between Georgia and the surrounding states.  $ST$  are state level macro variables that change over time, such as unemployment and education expenditures.  $GA$  is an indicator for the state of Georgia, and  $HOPE$  is an indicator for years after 1994. Even though the HOPE Scholarship was enacted in 1993, I am constrained to use 1995 as a cutoff due to the data setup. By design, the ASEC CPS data is collected in March of every year. Any respondent that indicates he or she has graduated must be referring to his status based on the previous year. That is, if a respondent in March 1995 indicates having completed 12th-grade, then it must mean that he or she graduated around June 1994.

The coefficient of interest is  $HOPE.X$ , is a vector of individual level covariates, and is the error term. I include a linear time trend to control for secular growth in graduation rates. Graduation rates in the U.S. have been rising due to higher college premium, the sophistication of the U.S. economy, and laws aimed at keeping students in school. This time trend variable is expected to wash away most of the up-tick in graduation rates coming from other sources. NCES data show large disparities in graduation rates between male and female, white and black, and low-income and high-income groups (NCES, 2011). This makes it imperative to analyze the sample with respect to these dimensions.

While it is hard to detach the impact of class from the impact of race on high school graduation rates, Storer et al. (2012) still find the difference in drop-out rates on the basis of race statistically significant.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Full Sample**

I initially ran a naive model of equation (1) above in order to obtain a sense of the magnitude and direction of the coefficients. To do this, I ran a simple logit without any non-student covariates, hence obtaining the summary estimates of the model as seen in column 1 of Table 3. The reported coefficients are the marginal effects of the

policy. Judging by the low F statistic of the specification, the model is not properly specified. The coefficient shows the positive correlation between the enactment of the HOPE Program and higher graduation rates.

**TABLE 3**

*Marginal Impact of merit aid policies on high school graduation*

|                                   | (1)     | (2)     | (3)     | (4)    | (5)    |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| <b>GA*HOPE</b>                    | 0.168** | 0.121** | 0.138** | 0.125* | 0.099* |
| <b>Parental Characteristics</b>   | X       | Y       | Y       | Y      | Y      |
| <b>Individual Characteristics</b> | X       | X       | Y       | Y      | Y      |
| <b>State Level Covariates</b>     | X       | X       | X       | Y      | Y      |
| <b>No. of Observations</b>        | 7176    | 7,176   | 7176    | 7,176  | 7176   |
| <b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>       | 0.05    | 0       | 0.19    | 0      | 0.26   |

*Notes.* \*\*\* p < 0.01, \*\* p < 0.05, \* p < 0.1.

I estimate a second model that measures parental income and present the results in column (2) of Table 3. This shows the enactment of the HOPE Scholarship in Georgia has led to a 12.1% increase in graduation rates. I improve the model further by adding variables dealing with parental education as controls to determine the causal impact of the HOPE Scholarship. This is motivated by the work of Foley, Gallipoli, and Green (2014) who argued that there is a strong causal relationship between the educational attainment of parents and the graduation decision of their children. After adding parental education measures, the coefficient for increases from 12.1% as seen in model (2) to 13.8% in this specification (column 3, Table 3). The fourth model is my preferred specification. It incorporates macroeconomic variables in addition to the covariates mentioned above. Column 4 of Table 5 shows the result of this analysis. It shows that the marginal effect of instituting the HOPE Scholarship program on graduation rates in Georgia is around 12.5% significant at a 90% confidence level. These results are comparable but smaller in magnitude to Keane and Wolpin (2000) who conclude that a proposed \$25,000 subsidy to low-income households can decrease high school drop out rates by two-thirds.



### Other groups

Table 4 presents the estimates of the impact of HOPE scholarships/grants on high school graduation for female students, black students, and low-income groups. The first column of Table 4 shows the regression results when the sample is restricted to female students. The marginal effect (0.143) is higher when compared to the full sample (0.125). The second column shows the result of the analysis when restricted to black students. The results show the HOPE Scholarship increasing graduation rates of black students by 36%. The analysis on black students may be spurious due to small sample size. It is expected that, as in the case of females, black students should respond more to the policy. Column 3 of Table 4 presents the result of the analysis on lower income student's regression.

**TABLE 4**

*Marginal Impact of merit aid policies on different populations*

|   | <b>Female<br/>Students</b> | <b>Black<br/>Students</b> | <b>Lower<br/>Income</b> | <b>Upper<br/>Income</b> | <b>Low<br/>Educ.</b> | <b>Highly<br/>Educ.</b> |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>GA*HOPE</b>                                    | 0.143**<br>(1.97)          | 0.36+<br>(4.57)           | 0.23**<br>(2.24)        | 0.07<br>(0.91)          | 0.042<br>(0.40)      | 0.158**<br>(2.44)       |
| <b>Parental Characteristics<br/>Individual</b>    | Y                          | Y                         | Y                       | Y                       | Y                    | Y                       |
| <b>Characteristics<br/>State Level Covariates</b> | Y                          | Y                         | Y                       | Y                       | Y                    | Y                       |
| <b>No. of Observations</b>                        | 3293                       | 1,015                     | 3561                    | 3506                    | 3,576                | 3600                    |
| <b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>                       | 0.22                       | 0.18                      | 0.14                    | 0.24                    | 0.16                 | 0.23                    |

*Notes.* \*\*\* p < 0.01, \*\* p < 0.05, \* p < 0.10. The numbers in parentheses are cluster standard errors. +The results from the black student sample may suffer from low sample size.

The marginal effect of 0.23 indicates an above average impact for this group. The implied subsidy provided by the HOPE Program is much higher for lower income families as a percentage of their income. It is not surprising that this group responds at a higher rate than their wealthier counterparts. These results are consistent with Angrist and Lavy (2002), who also find that the impact of high school cash incentives leads to stronger graduation rates for low-achieving students.

## **Discussion**

The social and economic gains of having more graduates in a state are both substantial and long lasting (Catterall, 2011; Levin et al., 2007). However, those who drop out and those who graduate differ in some important characteristics (Eckstein & Wolpin, 1999). Factors such as a healthy labor market may incentivize students to drop out (McNeal, 2011). As such, providing a financial incentive may encourage students to stay in school and graduate.

The impact of a comprehensive policy like the HOPE Program, which incentivizes college enrollment, should also encourage students to graduate from high school. The estimates presented in Tables 3 and 4 show graduation rates increasing by around 10% to 12.5% when the HOPE Program was instituted.

The results also confirm the heterogeneity of the policy's impact on different groups. Disaggregating the results for different subgroups is very useful, especially as it relates to formulating policy objectives because different groups have different elasticities to the policy. For instance, we can see from Table 4 that lower income groups have a higher response rate to the policy when compared to the full group. The results suggest that around 5,793 more students are graduating from high school in Georgia as a result of the HOPE Program. This large increase in the number of high school graduates has significant impacts on the economy of the state. Using D'andrea's (2010) baseline estimates, every high school dropout is expected to cost the state \$1,100 in Medicare costs and \$950 in incarceration costs annually. At this rate, Georgia could save around \$6.3 million in Medicaid costs and about \$5.5 million in incarceration expenses per year.

## **Conclusion**

I analyze the impact of merit aid policy in Georgia (HOPE) on high school graduation rates. Unlike many studies on this policy, my analysis seeks to find the pre-college benefits of the policy. Results from differences-in-differences shows a 12.5% increase in high school graduation due to the policy. The responsiveness to the policy is more pronounced on the traditionally lower graduating groups—women, minorities, and students from poorer backgrounds.

While the results presented here are robust, care must be taken in extrapolating the results to other states. Because Georgia was the first to implement the policy, it is uncomplicated to use Georgia as a treatment. States that have not implemented a similar policy were similarly uncomplicated to use as controls. Many states unveiled several policies to improve graduation rates in the 1990s, so extending the same model

to other states will be susceptible to confounding effects. What can be concluded from this analysis is that when incentives are provided encouraging students to enroll in college, these same policies will have a positive effect on all students—not just those who will eventually enroll in college.

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# Policy Analysis on Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

*Calista Barberi*

## **Abstract**

*Youth aging out of foster care every year pose a potential security and financial liability to society (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). Although several policies and programs exist for these young adults, limited evidence exists as to the efficacy of these programs (Courtney et al., 2011). Further funding and program evaluation are needed, as well as a more clearly defined continuity of services to young adults in the process of aging out of foster care. Politicians must rise to the occasion to modify funding in existence, and advocate to effectively care for this vulnerable population (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016).*

Youth aging out of foster care are not prepared for adulthood, which is a national crisis for the future of society. Although such youth are the future, they currently have a frightening risk of incarceration, living in poverty, becoming homeless, and lacking basic skills for living independently (National Youth in Transition Database, 2014). If the country at large is not willing to invest in youth aging out of foster care now, they will far exceed the investment cost by paying for these youths later in jails, food stamps, and a subgroup lacking skills to contribute to society (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). While several options exist for youth aging out, limited studies exist as to which programs work and should continue to receive funding (Valentine, Skemer, & Courtney, 2015). The solution to youth aging out is to first study programs created to help youth aging out, and then fund evidence-based programs nation-wide (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). Congress should allocate more resources to researching what is effective, and then fund programs that make a difference. Programs designed to help these aging out youth are developing merit, and they deserve funding to expand their programs and educate young adults on access to these resources (Valentine et al., 2015). Advocacy groups must come together to educate politicians on this social problem, encourage the funding for studies, and then utilize promising programs for the youth aging out of foster care. Ultimately, the government is responsible for funding evidence-based programs to help youth aging out of foster care.

Each heading in this article exposes the problems of youth aging out and reveals the most responsible process and decision. First, one must become familiar with a specific social problem or issue of youth aging out of foster care. Next comes identifying the array of options to help these youth, comparing the relative merits of each competing option. After evaluating the lack of positive programs, the researcher drafts a proposal and seeks supporters for the proposal. Key presentations are crucial for the proposal's success, and the conclusion of this article evaluates the issue of youth aging out of foster care.

### **Familiarize Oneself with a Specific Social Problem or Issue**

Youth aging out of foster care fare worse than their peers, lacking “financial resources as well as family and other supports, placing them at risk for developmental disruptions and other negative outcomes” such as low educational attainment, homelessness, health problems, employment issues, and financial difficulties (Paul-Ward & Landon-Polovina, 2016, p. 2). Youths aging out of foster care are also more likely to have lower grades, drop out of high school, find less than full-time employment,



and spend their working lives at or below the poverty line. Youths with a history of poverty or trauma are also at a greater risk for mental health problems (Paul-Ward & Landon-Polovina, 2016). Also, a correlation exists between the adult homeless population and those who have a history in foster care. Further research found correlations between youth in foster care and substance use, mental health diagnoses, and poor work history (Patterson, Moniruzzaman, & Somers, 2015). In congruence with this study, another cohort found that foster youth may have a sense of “learned helplessness” (Gomez, Ryan, Norton, Jones, & Galán-Cisneros, 2015). Youth in foster care have every decision made for them, so they have not developed the habit of making decisions for themselves. This helplessness also stems from the trauma the foster children endured at a young age as well as moving from foster family to foster family (Gomes et al., 2015).

Conservative estimates find that one in five will become homeless after 18; at age 24, only half will be employed; less than three percent will have earned a college degree; 71% of women will be pregnant by 21; and one in four will have experienced post-traumatic stress disorder at twice the rate of United States war veterans. Too often, many are at risk of moving back into government systems—from juvenile centers to prison (Soronen, 2014).

In addition to the studies and journal articles, a National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) survey also reports data on the well-being of foster care youth aging out of custody. The NYTD shows youth in foster care have many risk factors that could potentially harm a youth’s ability to succeed as an adult. The study compared foster care youth at age 17 and age 19. A number of youth had risk factors at age 17, including homelessness, drug use, and incarceration (National Youth In Transition Database, 2014). At age 19, several of the youth continued to have substance use issues, 24% were incarcerated over the past couple of years, and 12% had children. Youth aging out of foster care are also at greater risk for homelessness. Out of the NYTD surveyed youth, 19% of males and 20% of females reported being homeless at some point between ages 17 and 19. The NYTD survey showed that those who are no longer in foster care at age 19 were at the greatest risk of becoming homeless. Moreover, the NYTD survey shows that females who had children by age 17 were more likely to have another child by age 19. However, the NYTD survey shows that youths who had some support with at least one positive adult at age 17 were more likely to continue that relationship until 19 (National Youth In Transition Database, 2014). The NYTD

survey reports hope for young adults and that policies regarding young adults aging out can continue to be developed. Some states have worked hard to extend foster care to 21, but resources for older youth are limited and difficult to access. A Health and Human Services report found that the Foster Care Independence program meant to help foster children make the transition to adulthood is inconsistent from state to state, and it provides too little for these troubled young people (Soronen, 2014).

Congress has recognized youth aging out of foster care as a problem, and it thereby passed the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999. Per the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the Foster Care Independence Act has increased funding to children aging out of foster care and changed some of the eligibility requirements. The act also allocates funds for youth that are already out of foster care but under age 21. Some of the money can be used to help with the cost of housing (Summary of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, 2016). The Foster Care Independence Act also allocates a portion of the funds to help with employment and continuing education (Social Security Administration, 1999). The funds provide

assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, secondary education, career exploration, housing, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in budgeting, substance abuse prevention education, and education in preventive health measures including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention. (Social Security Administration, 1999, para 21)

The Social Security Administration also includes the fact that Medicaid expanded its coverage to “18, 19, and 20-year-olds who have left foster care” (Social Security Administration, 1999, para 21). A John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence program is funded by the Foster Care Independence Act and aids youth aging out in several independent living areas (Children’s Bureau 2012).

Courtney et al. (2011) evaluated the Foster Care Independence Act, comparing youths in the states of Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. By age 26, youth who had aged out of foster care had significantly less education, both high school and post-secondary education, when compared to the youth in the general population. A high percentage of these 26-year-old former foster youth were also living at or below the poverty line. To be exact, “two-thirds of the young women and 42 % of the young men reported that they had been food stamp recipients” (Courtney et al., 2011, p. 43). The study reports that children who can stay in foster care until age 21 generally fare better than those

who exit custody at age 18. The study also emphasizes that programs need further evaluation to determine efficacy. Therein lies a crucial problem: youth aging out still struggle, even though laws and funds exist to help them (Courtney et al. 2011). Congress must allocate more funds in the Foster Care Independence Act for studies evaluating programs to help youth aging out, and it must then demand funding for programs that work.

### **Identify an Array of Relevant Options**

Advocates for youth aging out of foster care must consider a variety of options when looking at the lack of research for programs aiding youth who age out of foster care. Currently, the Chaffee Independence program allocates only a very small percentage of funds for studying program efficacy (McDaniel et al., 2014). Because these youths have varied backgrounds and experiences, they need a personalized program to “meet each youth’s individual needs rather than provided uniformly to all youth in care” (McDaniel et al., 2014, p. 3). The options available to youth aging out have limited documented efficacy (McDaniel et al., 2014). Therefore, researchers must conduct more studies regarding youth aging out and the programs created to help them (McDaniel et al., 2014).

One program out of Illinois is the Community Assistance Programs (CAP) (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010). The CAP is a four-week classroom and job-practice training program, and it provides subsidized employment at the end of training (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010). This program specifically targets employment and does not touch other aspects of adult living, such as filling out a housing lease or balancing a budget. Moreover, of the “298 foster youth who were the focus of our study, 42% were placed in at least one subsidized job but only 26 % completed at least 1 hour of employment at subsidized jobs in which they were placed” (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010, p. 31). The researchers indicate that the lack of participation may be due to youth expressing interest in one type of job but getting assigned to a job that held little to no interest to them (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010). This study noted that the program had limited funds, and the study was limited to one county (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010). Furthermore, the study was performed “for administrative purposes rather than for research” (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010, p. 33). Thus, Dworsky and Havlicek conclude that more researchers need to study the programs designed to help youth aging out in order to determine their effectiveness (2010).

Like CAPs, a plethora of other programs exist to help solve part of the problem of youth aging out. The Covenant House exists to help homeless young

adults, including those aging out of foster care. They provide temporary housing for those that have no place to live, and they advocate for change within the foster care system. This program focuses on two aspects: homelessness and awareness (“Foster Care,” 2016). The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, which influences policy for youth aging out, produced the Opportunity Passport. The Opportunity Passport aims to help youth aging out financially by helping the youth set up a bank account and matching the funds the youth contributes (Kunchinski, Peters, & Sherraden, 2012). A resource website for youth aging out reports an organization for youth if they are going to college, an organization with inspiring stories of youth aging out, and a workbook developed to help youth aging out of foster care (“Aging Out Institute,” 2016). Each program serves youth aging out in part of their struggles, but most fail to support the whole of the vulnerable young adult.

The Youth Villages YVLifeSet Program is another program that serves vulnerable young adults. Valentine, Skemer, and Courtney of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation evaluated the efficacy of the YVLifeSet Program with positive outcomes (2015). Using “evidence-informed tools, counseling, and action-oriented activities,” YVLifeSet teaches independent living skills to these young adults (Valentine et al., 2015, p. 4). The YVLifeSet Program targets six main areas: “employment and earnings, housing stability and economic well-being, health and safety . . . education, social support, and criminal involvement” (Valentine et al., 2015, p. 10-11). YVLifeSet improved the outlook for youth aging out of foster care in the subjects of “earnings, increased housing stability and economic well-being” (Valentine et al., 2015, p. 7). Although the YVLifeSet program did not improve all six targeted areas in a participant’s life, it has the best outcomes compared to other programs that serve vulnerable young adults. Again, the study emphasized the need for more research regarding programs aimed at helping youth who are aging out of the foster care system (Valentine et al., 2015). If research does not somehow show that a program is effective, then Congress should question whether that program should continue to receive funding.

### **Compare the Relative Merits of Competing Options**

Although each competing program has merit, none of the previously mentioned programs is evidence-based to the point of providing nation-wide recommendations for youth aging out of foster care. For example, the CAPs program is a classroom based program, which yielded few positive results and had one study with no research purpose (Dworsky & Havlicek, 2010). The Foster Care Coalition, Jim

Casey Youth Opportunities Act, and numerous other organizations aim to alleviate the problem of youth aging out (“Aging Out Institute,” 2016). The YVLifeSet has one randomized control trial, which produced positive results in three out of six portions of the study, but this is not an impressive study (Valentine et al., 2015). If Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation receives no more funds for research, YVLifeSet is the best evidence-based option for youth aging out of foster care (Valentine et al., 2015). Despite the relative success of YVLifeSet, however, more studies on this issue need to be funded; funding programs that do not make a difference in the lives of foster care youth risks condemning foster youth to poverty and subsequent hardships in life.

Per an interview with A. Rivera, a national policy advocate for youth aging out of foster care, the overall problem is that research over the last 16 years has yielded few results about what works for young adults (November 2016). Programs may or may not work, and at this point policy advocates have very few randomized control trials to prove program efficacy (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). Since the passage of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, youth are still behind their peers in their ability to be contributing adult members of society (Courtney et al., 2011). Several competing options exist to help foster youth who age out, and Congress must re-evaluate which programs receive funding before backing a specific program. Each of the programs listed says that it benefits youth aging out, but very little quantitative or qualitative evidence exists. The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) must modify funding and work collaboratively with the states to fund studies adequately and, consequently, programs proving to make a difference (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016).

### **Draft a Proposal**

Currently, advocates for youth aging out are already hard at work in Washington, D.C. to make changes for these vulnerable young adults. The YVLifeSet program employs an advocate who is working on a national proposal to fund further studies of programs aimed at helping youth aging out of foster care. Although yet to be formally presented, the rough-draft proposal includes the mission to “promote the growth of promising and innovative programs for improving the outcomes of transition-age foster youth; and the development and dissemination of a robust evidence-base on what works for improving outcomes” (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016).

Fiscally, each youth aging out is costing approximately \$300,000 over their lifetime (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). Similarly, another group of researchers have found the cost of youth aging out to be “approximately \$20,800 per year”

per young adult aging out of foster care (Peters, Dworsky, Courtney, & Pollack, 2009, p. 2). The solution is to fund programs that help youth aging out and save the government money.

To save the government money in the long-run, the proposal asks that there be an amendment to the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program to allocate funds “to be used for research and development of innovative and promising approaches with the long-term goal of improving the employment, education, housing, mental health, financial stability, and/or criminal involvement outcomes of transition-age foster youth” (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). The primary funding source will be from the CFCIP, but states and counties will also contribute and work with non-profit businesses and philanthropists to fund the studies and the programs themselves. The first phase suggests a 12-month study, where the “state and major county welfare agencies” participate in the grant program. The grant applicants will identify youth aging out or a subgroup of the population, current needs in the area for these youth, and “potential innovative or promising programs that would address identified needs of transition age foster in the state or county” (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). The proposal suggests capping the grants at 20 program participants for the first phase, with the total funding at \$2.5 million divided among the grants.

Those programs that complete phase one will then be eligible for phase two, with grant amounts for \$2 million for innovative programs, or \$5 million for promising programs, over 5 years. The difference in an innovative and promising program is the number of randomized control trials already conducted for the program. The final phase is to fund collaboration between states that have evidence-based programs and states that lack services for youth aging out. Those states that have completed the first two phases will then create a model to be used for states nationwide and produce a list of evidence-based programs which states must utilize to receive funds from the CFCIP (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). The states will then choose from the evidence-based program list. The policy is an effective proposal. The proposal leaves some ambiguity, by giving some decisions to the states. This is an excellent strategy, considering that the current political climate supports state sovereignty. This policy implementation will require collaboration between legislators on all levels of government, as well as philanthropists, community organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and the youth aging out of foster care. It will require great commitment and cooperation, but helping this vulnerable population is worth the effort.

### **Seeking Supporters for the Proposal**

For the policy proposal to modify the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, the policy proposal needs support from all levels of government and from those not in government offices. Some of the stakeholders involved with policies regarding youth aging out of foster care include the state departments over children's services as well as judges, lawyers, probation officers, mental health providers, government and non-profit employment agencies, banks, those involved in the education system, and the youth aging out of the foster care system (Valentine et al., 2015). Specifically, for this proposal to amend the CFCIP, foster care advocacy groups who support the proposal must seek additional support from lawmakers and the public. Policy support includes support from advocacy groups and philanthropic support, such as the Casey Foundation, which supports the YVLifeSet program out of Youth Villages (Valentine et al., 2015). The MDRC study of the YVLifeSet Program was funded by "The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation" (Youth Villages, 2015, p. 2). Another example of philanthropic support is from the Day Foundation, which donated \$42 million to Youth Villages to expand the YVLifeSet Program (Rutschman & Luecke, 2011). This kind of support is crucial in aiding to fund future studies for youth aging out.

Furthermore, government support is as crucial as philanthropic support. An example of key state supporters is already in place in Tennessee. The support came in 2013 from Gov. Bill Haslam and Tennessee Department of Children's Services Commissioner Jim Henry who "committed to helping Youth Villages offer the program to every young person who ages out of state custody in Tennessee" (Youth Villages, 2015, p. 1). The state matched funds to Youth Villages to expand services. This unprecedented act of support is a great example of a collaborative effort between state officials and non-profits. Although Mr. Henry is no longer the current Commissioner, he can exert his personal influence over his contacts to support policy change. This type of support can continue with the proposal to modify funds to research programs and fund the evidence-based programs.

Another government official in support of young adults is U.S. Representative Jim Cooper, who was involved with National Adoption Month ("Jim Cooper on Families and Children," 2016). Likewise, Congresswoman Diane Black, who has ties with the YVLifeSet program, is an additional government supporter of evidence-based programs for youth aging out of foster care (Youth Villages, 2016). On the other

side of the country is U.S. Representative Karen Bass, who supported a proposal to extend the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program to youth up to age 23 (“Legislation,” 2016). Each of these government officials can be utilized to form a collaborative group dedicated to creating legislation for evidence-based programs for youth aging out of foster care.

Not only should government officials support policy to help youth aging out, but many non-profits should sponsor the policy for evidence-based programs. Youth Villages is a non-profit supporting youth aging out and is a key supporter of the policy to fund evidence-based programs (A. Rivera, personal interview, 2016). In addition to advocacy on a national level, Youth Villages works on a state and local level to advocate for foster youth aging out (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016). Youth Villages advocates support by utilizing youth speaking to the government officials and sharing their struggles and successes (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016). Advocates also create key partnerships with other community resources, and they work to spread awareness of the struggles for this population, and the YVLifeSet program designed to help them (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016).

Community relationships with those who already work with youth aging out of foster care is fundamental for fostering support for a policy proposal. The grassroots effort of staying connected with state workers, foster parents, lawyers, judges, and even the youths aging out of foster care is also important. Thus, target audiences turn into advocates for policy change. Specifically, for this proposal, a YVLifeSet advocate can reach out to youth aging out, who then share their success stories with government officials, who then advocate at a state or national level for policy change (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016). Ultimate support for the proposed change to the CFCIP needs a sponsor at the federal level, but advocacy comes from all types of people and organizations. These relationships are important for supporting the policy proposal to modify CFCIP funding for evidence-based programs (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016).

### **Make Key Presentations**

The first target audience to consider are the young adults who would be eligible to participate in the study. Accordingly, this would include youth turning 17 in Department of Children’s Services (DCS) custody but would also include those recently aged out, up to age 21. Youth aging out must learn that their voice is important and become empowered to self-advocacy. NYTD survey representatives will contact youth and ask for their input, explain the upcoming proposal to the youth in clear,



easy-to-understand terms, and emphasize the importance of youth participation. The purpose of this presentation to the young adults are to elicit a response in order to determine if the youth is receptive to participating in another study. NYTD representatives must collaborate with the state department to obtain the contact information for these youth and allocate three to six months for preparing youth to become their own advocates (National Youth in Transition Database, 2014).

The second target audience are the legislators and legislative staff who will support and vote on the policy proposal. Legislators can use expert power, which occurs “when senders display their personal credentials and knowledge to convince others” (Jansson, 2014, p. 328). They do this by using the credentials of and the work done by the Casey Foundation and the example of the MDRC study already complete (Valentine et al., 2015). Legislators can also utilize value-based power, which “is derived from a person’s ability to appeal to others based upon their shared ethical commitments” (Jansson, 2014, p. 330). The legislator can connect with other legislators who are already advocating for youth aging out (“Legislation,” 2016).

On the national level, Karen Bass is an excellent target for supporting this change in funds for researching programs that aim to support youth aging out (“Legislation,” 2016). Furthermore, this advocate can reach out to conservatives, emphasizing the \$300,000 per youth, and the nearly \$7 billion dollars per year, for each cohort of youth aging out (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). Senators and representatives can utilize process power, which occurs when they work to “influence the tenor, tempo, or scope of conflict of deliberations in order to get a specific proposal enacted” (Jansson, 2014, p. 335). The congressmen do so by proposing the policy as a win-win situation, since the proposal utilizes already-existing funds with an emphasis on efficiency (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). Although this proposal has the potential to drastically change and efficiently aid youth aging out, it is not a policy in need of mass media attention. Key supporters at local, state, and national levels can support this proposal by reaching out to the national legislators through email and phone calls (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016). Keeping in mind that some conservatives oppose allocation of funds as “handouts,” the proposal should be the most efficient and cost-effective solution.

Using power and discretion are keys to getting the policy proposed and pushed through legislation, but the point is mute if the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program lacks the connections with those who will carry out the studies. Thus, the need for working with a task group, which will “focus on producing or

influencing something external to the group itself” (Jansson, 2014, p. 402). Organizations such as the Casey Foundation advocate for youth aging out and seek to influence policy. The Casey Foundation collaborated with MDRC to produce the randomized control trial for the YVLifeSet program (Valentine et al., 2015). Therefore, the MDRC should conduct the future studies proposed in the change to the CFCIP. They are the final target audience for the proposal to modify CFCIP.

### **Conclusion**

Consequently, youth aging out are not prepared for adulthood, and the programs that currently exist have little evidence that they help their target population (Valentine et al., 2015). Youth aging out pose a financial risk to society, and it is also fiscally responsible to limit funding to only evidence-based programs (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). The government keeps these youth in custody until they turned 18. Therefore, they are responsible for helping them become successful young adults. Since very few randomized control trials currently exist, funding for more studies necessary to better utilize funds set aside to help youth aging out (Valentine et al., 2015). The solution is to first study programs created to help youth aging out, and then fund evidence-based programs nation-wide (A. Rivera, personal interview, November 2016). Community advocates, philanthropists, non-profits, and legislators are among those who can make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable young adults (K. Mullins, phone interview, November 7, 2016). These stakeholders must work together to pass legislation to better utilize funds for programs to help our most vulnerable youth aging out of foster care.

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# An Analysis of Euroskepticism's Influence on Britain's Vote to Leave the European Union\*

*Kayla McCrary*

## **Abstract**

*In June 2016, the United Kingdom held an in/out referendum on membership in the European Union (EU) resulting in a narrow victory for Euroskeptics. Historically, Britain has notably been a Euroskeptic nation, and the following analysis of Britain's relationship with the EU will explore the implications of Brexit in context with Euroskepticism. This analysis is a result of previous research on the British vote to leave the EU and draws substantially on research in the fields of voting patterns, social identity, and Britain's unique characteristics that culminated in the vote to leave the EU. As a result, this paper relies heavily on historical implications of Euroskepticism as well as recent literature on the theories of Euroskeptic voting, demographics, and the history of the relationship between the UK and the EU. The paper concludes that populist and anti-globalist sentiments driven by political parties such as the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) mobilized Euroskepticism, allowing for a philosophy to transform into effective policy change. The main driving factors behind Britain's unique position of leaving the EU were economic and social. This conclusion is substantiated by a constituency-based analysis, which utilizes demographic data, voter turnout, and the referendum result data in order to quantify Euroskepticism and its impact on the top constituencies that voted to leave the EU.*

*Keywords:* European Union, Euroskepticism, Brexit, UKIP, Britain, referenda

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Since the inception of the European project following World War II, Britain was considered a skeptical partner, thus leading to the notion of Britain being a “Euroskeptic” nation. In 2016, the United Kingdom (UK) held an in/out referendum regarding membership in the European Union (EU). The withdrawal of Britain from the EU, also known as “Brexit,” was considered a lengthy, multi-step process essentially signaled by the referendum in favor of leaving. After a hotly contentious political battle between the Leave and Remain campaigns, the result of the referendum was a close victory for pro-Leave, the most dedicated of the Euroskeptics. The aim of this analysis is to understand the elements of Euroskepticism that contributed to the strained relationship between Britain and the EU and ultimately led to the result of the EU Membership Referendum. This essay will explore the multifaceted and unique elements of British Euroskepticism in regard to Brexit, analyze identifiable British Euroskepticism vis-à-vis political parties and the referendum, and conclude with an observation of voter turnout data in top Euroskeptic constituency areas.

### **Defining Euroskepticism**

The term *Euroseptic/Euroskeptic* has differing connotations and definitions. Generally, the term denotes a sense of disillusion from Europe, the European Union, the EU’s aims and goals (usually further political integration), or EU institutions. Moreover, scholars have further defined Euroskepticism as a “barometer that measures non-adherence to the European Union,” as “hostility to participation in or the entire enterprise of the EU,” and as an “expression of doubt or disbelief in Europe and European integration in general” (Condruz-Bacescu, 2014, p. 53; George, 2000, p. 15; Hooghe & Marks, 2007, p. 120). Foundational research into Euroskepticism by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2005) creates a hard-versus-soft dichotomy that essentially allows for comparisons and categorizations of the identifiable variations of Euroskepticism. Euroskepticism is observable in political parties’ philosophies, proposed or implemented national or local policies, and the beliefs espoused by politicians. In “soft Euroskepticism,” there is an observable opposition or concern regarding one or several policies or policy areas. Soft Euroskepticism could be expressed in terms of an opposition to a single European policy that interferes with a specific national interest. Opposition to the EU’s freedom of movement policy, but not the EU as a whole, on the basis of national interest being at stake or compromised, is an example of soft Euroskepticism. “Hard Euroskepticism” is the highest degree of opposition to the EU. Hard Euroskepticism includes a principled opposition to the EU and its policy aims, especially further political integration, and is clearly observable in political parties

that support national withdrawal from the European Union or the dismantling of the EU altogether. Similar to soft Euroskepticism, hard Euroskeptics are acting on the basis of their respective national interest or philosophical opposition to foundational aspects of the EU, such as supranationalism. Voting to leave the EU is one of the clearest examples of hard Euroskepticism. Other examples include political parties such as the United Kingdom Independence Party and British Member of European Parliament (MEP) Nigel Farage's clearly observable opposition to the EU through anti-EU imposed immigration discourse and support of Britain's withdrawal from the EU.

There are four types of Euroskepticism relevant to Britain's vote to leave the EU. These types are based on specific subsidiary issues of economics, sovereignty, democratic legitimacy, and political criterion (Condruz-Bacescu, 2014). While Euroskepticism is not solely a British issue, and Britain's relationship with the EU is not wholly contentious, the result of the EU referendum made the ultimate "hard Euroskeptic" decision to leave the European Union.

### **British Euroskepticism**

The uniqueness of British Euroskepticism can be hypothesized as stemming from several defining characteristics of the UK: geography, the cultural notion of "Britishness," preferred political system and style of governance, and media (Grant, 2008; Geddes, 2003). In the following sections, the implications of these characteristics will be analyzed in relation to Euroskepticism and Brexit.

**Geography: Physical and philosophical distance.** The UK shares a border with only one EU member state, Ireland, and is separated from the rest of Europe by ocean. The notion of geographic distance from Europe, often referred to as "the continent" by the British, offers insight into Britain's unique characteristics in reference to its relationship with the EU. Charles Grant (2008) offered four explanations as to why the British are Euroskeptic, with the first of the four reasons being geographic distance and its effect on British history and perception of Europe. According to Grant (2008), Britain was oriented to other continents more so than any other European continental power. Maritime Britain's superior trade and colonial expansion into North and South America, Asia, and Africa led not only to strong economic ties to these regions, but also altered patterns of immigration and cultural exchange. Similarly, other European powers sought influence and trade ties with continental partners, especially amongst themselves. European countries, including Britain, were also involved in numerous wars and conflicts, with World War II being most notable for

British Euroskeptics. Furthermore, Grant (2008) noted the prevalent British belief of Britain's involvement in World War II as being the nation's "finest hour," providing a "smug sense of superiority vis-à-vis most of the other peoples of Europe" (p. 3).

Conversely, some writers disagree with the notion of geography being a negative feature contributing to the idea of a "British identity" separate from "Europe" or "European." Notably, Baron Bhikhu Parekh (2009), a political theorist and Labour member of the House of Lords, wrote on the implications of British history and identity in accordance with its geography. Parekh (2009) noted Britain's complex global relationships as a positive feature of its position in the world, citing examples of "a common European heritage," "close ties with the [United States]," and a "[British] political consciousness" shaped by the Empire and "Commonwealth of over fifty countries" (p. 38). Furthermore, Parekh (2009) celebrated Britain's identity as a trifecta simultaneously encompassing European, Atlantic, and globalized identities. Writing in 2009, Parekh's claim that Britain should not "define itself in isolation from the rest of the world" and should instead embrace "all three [identities], and not just the first two [European and Atlantic]" is a reference to Britain's struggle to identify itself geopolitically and culturally in a modern context (p. 38). In 2017, Britain is still struggling to place itself in a position where a multifaceted identity can be embraced and cultivated, not only in terms of external relations with other nations, but also internally.

Undoubtedly, the relationship between identity and Euroscepticism is identifiable. In 2015, a study of national identity from the British Social Attitudes data from 1996–2014 gathered in order to map a trend of social attitude toward the European Union was published (Ormston, 2015). In this report, one of the main conclusions derived from the available data indicated that while identities are difficult to measure, as some may hold multiple identities with differing levels of importance, most respondents did not see themselves as Europeans.

Starting in 1996, the percentage of respondents who described themselves as "European" was at 10%, followed by a slight decrease in 1997 and a substantial increase from 9% to 12–17% in 1998–1999 (Ormston, 2015). Interestingly, while 1998–1999 are the height of this survey's results, the percentage of respondents who described themselves as European decreased substantially and fluctuated between 11% and 12% for the following five years—2000–2005 (Ormston, 2015). While the percentage of respondents describing themselves as European increased sharply during 2005–2006, the rate once again dropped and fluctuated again with a 1% - 4% change from 2007–2014 (Ormston, 2015). The British Social Attitudes surveys measured the



“extent to which people in Britain identify with multiple national (and in the case of European, supranational) identities that are commonly associated with Great Britain and/or Ireland” (Ormston, 2015).

As individuals can hold multiple identities, this raises the question of how strongly “Europeanism” can compete with the British and subsidiary identities. Thomas Risse (2000) remarked on this notion, stating that individuals can hold multiple identities that are contextually bound, and membership of a group can lead to distinctions from other groups e.g. British, French, or German (as cited in Geddes, 2013, pp. 198-200). Furthermore, the cohesiveness of member groups is “often based on emotional ties” to the group linked closely to ideas about nationality, nation state, and sovereignty (Geddes, 2013, p. 33).

In 2015, a *Eurobarometer* poll indicated that 64% of British respondents only saw themselves as British, which was the highest percentage amongst all responding countries, followed by Cyprus and Greece (Eurobarometer Report May 2015, 2015). Furthermore, an additional report composed with British Social Attitudes data by NatCan Social Research concluded with the interpretation of British Euroskepticism by noting that few Britons “feel a sense of European identity” and, as a result, Britons “are not convinced of the practical benefits of [EU] membership as [they] were in the 1990s” (Curtice & Evans, 2015, p. 32).

The identity debate, while multifaceted, has implications far beyond those of answering the question of who is British, especially in light of Brexit. In regard to Brexit, the identity question stretches over into immigration and migration, globalization, and Britain’s future with the EU and the world.

**Governance.** An important source of tension between Britain and the European Union since its inception was the conflict involving preferred styles of governance. The EU, as it is currently conceived, is a supranational entity, meaning that its member states have pooled sovereignty to an overarching institution of decision making. In addition to political integration, there is also economic integration in the EU—most notably the free trade area in which there are no tariffs or trade barriers within member states, as well as an Economic Monetary Union with a single currency, the Euro (although some have opted out). The UK is not a member of the Eurozone and has opted out of the single currency provision.

Supranationalism also entails that EU law supersedes law made at the national level. Some scholars contend that Britain prefers a system of governance with inter-governmental cooperation, or intergovernmentalism, which would conflict with the

EU's supranational governmental structure. Intergovernmentalism, as noted by Geddes (2013), places power in "unanimity as the basis of decision making" and "allows a veto to be exercised to protect national interests" (p. 24). Neofunctionalism, a contrasting theory on integration, places value on a collective and regional process of integration, reducing the role of the nation state.

**Media.** British media is undeniably unique in its ability to shape Euroskeptic opinion. According to Grant (2008), the British media is "uniquely powerful and [Euroskeptic]" (p. 3). Furthermore, Grant (2008) posed that three-quarters of the 30 million individuals who read British newspapers are reading Euroskeptic material (p. 3). This claim was justified by noting that British newspapers often print falsehoods about the EU because journalists are "allowed" to do so, and often newspapers' owners encourage or demand anti-EU material (Grant, 2008, p. 3).

One of the most widely circulated newspapers in Britain, *The Sun*, boasts a circulation of approximately 1.8 million and is owned by media giant Rupert Murdoch. According to a post published directly by *The Sun*, the outlet urged readers to "beLEAVE in Britain and vote to quit the EU" and "free ourselves from dictatorial Brussels" (*The Sun*, 2016). Following *The Sun* in circulation figures, *Daily Mail* secures second place with 1.6 million in circulation in 2016. *Daily Mail* supported Britain's withdrawal from the EU with the headline: "If you believe in Britain, vote Leave: Lies, greedy elites and a divided, dying Europe—we could have a great future outside a broken EU" (*Daily Mail Comment*, 2016).

Perhaps less ostentatiously, the *Daily Telegraph*, which has approximately 472,000 in circulation in 2016 and 490,000 in 2015, was seen as neutral. Yet, the *Telegraph* eventually posted on June 20, 2016 in support of Britain leaving the EU, noting that there was a "benefit from a world of opportunity" in voting to leave (*Telegraph View*, 2016). Member of Parliament, former mayor of London, and a leader of the Brexit campaign, Boris Johnson was often a star columnist for *The Telegraph*. Yet, *The Telegraph* also published an opinion piece by United States President Barack Obama, which urged for a vote to remain in the EU, with the headline: "Barack Obama: As your friend, let me say that the EU makes Britain even greater" (Obama, 2016). *The Sunday Telegraph*, their sister paper, also supported Brexit.

While many of the top media outlets in Britain were backing Brexit, there were several news entities that were in favor of remaining in the EU: *The Times*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Guardian*, *Evening Standard*, *The Financial Times*, and *The Observer* (Spence, 2016).

**Political parties.** When considering the elements of British Euroskepticism, it is important to note the philosophies of political parties in Britain that have historically been Euroskeptic. While there are Euroskeptics of all political affiliations, notably the most Euroskeptic of most modern political parties in the UK has been the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), which is analyzed below.

**United Kingdom Independence Party.** Inarguably one of the most impactful political upsets in modern British history, a political party which started with a group of 20-somethings and operated out of a Caffè Nero for months managed to usher in the ultimate Euroskeptic dream: a decisive victory to leave the EU in a referendum vote. Drawing upon populism, right-wing exasperation with “political elites” in both Parliament and the EU, and British unionism, the UKIP is interesting yet categorically indescribable.

Starting in 1991, Alan Sked founded the Anti-Federalist League, which would eventually turn into the UKIP in 1993. For many years, the UKIP remained in the shadows until Nigel Farage entered the fray in 2009, bolstered by the backlash regarding the Lisbon Treaty and the seeming influx of immigrants after EU enlargement of former Communist Eastern European bloc countries. Farage, a figure that now serves as a divisive reminder of Brexit woes and conjures up feelings of xenophobia and racism for many, worked diligently to distance himself from political elites and those “posh boys” he despised. Most of the inside analysis of Farage will be gleaned from an interpretation of the recently published *The Brexit Club*, authored by Owen Bennett, on the Leave campaign in 2016. Additionally, drawing upon literature on the UKIP, right wing extremism in modern Britain, the Euroskeptic tendencies of the Conservative Party, populism, and anti-globalism will help further explain and substantiate the rise of the UKIP and its effect on the overall outcome of the EU referendum vote.

Bennett characterized Farage as a political gambler and an anti-establishment man who has great disdain for the posh elite, especially within the Conservative Party. Bennett is not the only author to do so. Farage, especially in his own political works and speeches, sets himself apart as a figure of anti-establishment and as a man of the ordinary people. As a self-declared maverick and anti-establishment politician, he serves as a Member of European Parliament in the very institution he claimed to despise since 1999, winning re-elections in 2004, 2009, and 2014. In 2016, *Politico EU* named Farage as the fifth most influential MEP out of a list of forty and as one of

the two most influential and effective speakers in the EP chamber (Schmidt, 2016). Farage, despite his own claims, is far from ordinary.

The wave on which Farage rode to victory in the Brexit referendum is also far from ordinary. The populist, anti-establishment, and anti-globalist wave across Europe has been fueled incessantly by tensions with the fundamental framework of the EU: freedom of movement of people. Anti-immigration has become, by far, one of the most influential policy points of right-wing extremist movements across Europe and the UK. The “left behind” of globalization also exhibit backlash against those who have benefited from globalization. The terms “left behind” and “have-nots” were used in recent literature on Brexit and the rise of right-wing extremism and populist movements in Europe and the United States. In a working paper on the recent mobilizations of anti-establishment populism in the United States and Europe, authors Inglehart and Norris (2016) proposed several theories on the matter. The economic inequality perspective, which “emphasises the consequences for electoral behavior arising from profound changes transforming the workforce and society in post-industrial economies,” is applicable to Brexit Britain (Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 2). Supporters of Brexit and the UKIP, who Inglehart and Norris (2016) would perhaps categorize as a “less secure strata of society,”<sup>1</sup> have reportedly been more skeptical of immigration than, for example, respondents with college degrees or skilled workers (p. 2). However, the theory of cultural backlash, which Inglehart and Norris (2016) have surmised as building upon a silent revolution theory of value change, with cultural shifts experiencing a negative backlash, may prove more pertinent to explain the appeal of the UKIP and its populist, anti-establishment rhetoric.

Authors Ford and Goodwin (2014) wrote that the UKIP’s emergence was based on changes to Britain’s economic and social structure that pushed the “left behind” to the side. Relatedly, the generational changes in the values of Britain have left the older, more traditional voters behind in the sense that those traditional views are seen as parochial by the young, university-educated strata. As a result of these shifts in social change, alongside an increasingly multicultural and liberalized Britain, the “left behind” were drawn to a political party that promised to represent them and their views. Ford and Goodwin’s (2014) additional research surmised three motives of UKIP support as the following:

1. The “less secure strata of society” category includes “low-waged unskilled workers, the long-term unemployed, households dependent on shrinking social benefits, residents of public housing, single-parent families, and poorer white populations living in inner city areas with concentrations of immigrants” (Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 2).

1. A “hard” brand of Euroskepticism that opposes the principle of Britain’s EU membership;
2. Strong opposition to immigration and concern about its effects on the British economy and society;
3. Dissatisfaction with established politics in Westminster and how the established political parties have managed immigration and the [Eurozone] post-2008 financial crisis (p. 278).

Drawing on previous research, it can be concluded that the UKIP and the cultural backlash theory best explains the mobilization of the UKIP’s politics, which served as a vehicle for hard Euroskeptic policy change vis-à-vis withdrawal from the EU.

While these sentiments have existed in the UK before the existence of the UKIP, the UKIP brought the hard Euroskeptic movement to the forefront and capitalized on the movement to create effectual policy change. Moreover, the UKIP capitalized on the shift in political change with those “left behind” by mainstream parties, most notably the Conservative Party. According to Ford and Goodwin (2014), Britons with no formal qualifications were twice more likely than middle-class Britons and graduates to feel that they had no say in government (p. 281). The politically “left behind” electorate were disenchanted from the political process, the mainstream political parties, and traditional society. Ford and Goodwin (2014) seemed to agree that the UKIP mobilized the “left behind,” especially the blue-collar, white, and male voters who fell into the “less secure strata” as explained by Inglehart and Norris (2016).

Another facet of the success of the UKIP once again relies on the argument of the politics of identity. Hayton (2016) noted that one of the overlooked facets of the UKIP includes the politics of national identity. While it can be contended that the UKIP is indeed simultaneously a unionist and nationalist party, Hayton (2016) argued that Englishness is the pivot around which key elements of the party’s appeal revolved; moreover, the “Anglo-Britishness” aspect of the UKIP does not challenge the UK as a set of devolved nations, but rather celebrates English identity more so, and exacerbates the divide between Scottish and English identities (pp. 2-5).

The UKIP is undeniably nationalist. Moreover, the UKIP seemingly favors “Englishness” as a defining factor of “Britishness.” For example, an excerpt from UKIP material declaring that Britain faces an existential crisis from the rise of Scottish, Irish, and Welsh nationalism seems to indicate an uncompromising view of Britishness

by rejecting notions of Scottish, Irish, and Welsh nationalism as anti-British and therefore anti-English.

In campaigning, the UKIP was affiliated with two organizations: Vote Leave and Leave.EU. Farage endorsed Leave.EU and was a member of Vote Leave. Leave.EU was started by Arron Banks, a UKIP donor and businessman out of Bristol, England. Vote Leave was established as the official campaign in favor of leaving the EU by the Electoral Commission and was founded by political analysts Matthew Elliot and Dominic Cummings. Vote Leave was a multi-party coalition that held a committee with heavyweight names such as Michael Gove (Conservative MP for Surrey Heath), Douglas Carswell (UKIP MP for Clacton), Iain Duncan Smith (MP for Chingford and Woodford Green), Boris Johnson (Former Mayor of London and MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip), Daniel Hannan (MEP for South East England), and Andrea Leadsom (MP for South Northamptonshire). Vote Leave focused on the economic and domestic rule aspects of leaving the EU whereas Leave.EU handled social aspects such as immigration.

### **Analysis: The EU Referendum**

On June 23, 2016, a majority in England and Wales voted to leave the EU; Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Gibraltar voted to remain. Outside the capital city boroughs of London, almost every region had a majority voting to leave, some by merely one percentage point. Overall, 17,410,742 votes (52%) were cast to leave the EU, and 16,141,241 votes (48%) were cast to remain.

Impressively, the Remain campaign took a majority of London (59.9%) and Scotland (62%). The turn-out was 72% with over 30 million votes overall. Turn-out was lower, however, in areas with a younger population. Areas with higher percentages of residents with higher education and formal qualifications saw a positive relationship between level of education and qualifications and voting to remain (Rosenbaum, 2017). When considering this pattern, an analysis of the top Euroskeptic constituency areas substantiates the characteristics of the British Euroskeptic and the result of the referendum. The following section is a test of relationship between elements of Euroskeptic identity and voting patterns. The methodology included taking the results of the referendum by constituency area and noting the top five areas with an overall percentage in favor of leaving the EU. Following this calculation, an analysis of the constituency in regard to its Euroskeptic qualities, as well as an investigation into which characteristics could fuel such a high percentage (70% or more) turnout for

leave, aims to serve as a way by which an otherwise qualitative explanation of British Euroskepticism can be quantified by empirical data.

### **Voting to Leave: The 70% Club**

In the EU referendum, the narrow majority of the voting population voted to leave. However, in constituency areas such as Boston, South Holland, Castle Point, Thurrock, Great Yarmouth, Fenland, Mansfield, Bolsover, and East Lindsey, the vote percentage to leave was over or equal to 70%, topping out at 75% in Boston. Such a high percentage of votes cast for leaving the EU raises the question: why did these areas predominately vote to leave?

**Constituency: Boston and Skegness (and South Holland).** In Lincolnshire, Boston and Skegness, with neighboring South Holland, had 75.56% and 73.9% leave vote percentages, respectively. According to 2011–2012 census data, 10.6% of Boston's population of roughly 65,000 are migrants from the newest EU member states such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Romania (Gallagher, 2016). In 2012, the local councilor responsible for housing, population, and communities, Mike Gilbert, said that the biggest challenge brought about by the high levels of immigration was the perceived disadvantages of immigration. Throughout 2001–2011, Boston saw a six-fold increase in foreign-born residents (Freytas-Tamusa, 2016). As a result of the growing migrant and migrant-born population, tensions between native British and EU citizens became a "microcosm for the Brexit vote's immigration debate" (Moore, 2016). Seemingly, a major factor in the high percentage of votes for leave has to do with disapproval of immigration. As non-British citizens (EU and non-EU citizens) were not allowed to vote even if they lived in Britain, the reflection of the vote is only that of native British and those with British citizenship. Moreover, the Policy Exchange think tank named Boston as the least integrated area in Britain, adding a quantifiable measure to the idea that racial tensions exist in Boston (Boyle, 2016). The high amount of immigrants has been linked to the substantial opportunity for agricultural and low-skilled work in Boston (BBC News, 2016).

**Constituency: Castle Point.** With a reported population of 86,608 in 2001, Castle Point is in the British county of Essex. In the referendum, Castle Point had a turnout of 75.38%; 72.7% of the vote cast was in favor of withdrawal from the EU. Currently, Castle Point's Member of Parliament is Rebecca Harris of the Conservative Party. Castle Point has 21 Conservative local councilors, 14 Canvey Island Independent Party councilors, 5 UKIP councilors, and 1 independent councilor. In 2011, the average

median age of Castle Point citizens was 45 years old. In a report by the Essex County Council in 2015, between 25.86%–28.78% of Castle Point citizens were aged 65 or older (Essex County Council, 2015).

According to the same report, 9% of households are older singles with private pensions, aged 66 or older; 7.4% of households are elderly couples with “traditional views” aged 66 or older; and 7.3% of households are couples without children or with adult children living with them aged 55-65 (Essex County Council, 2015, p. 5).

**Constituency: Thurrock.** Neighboring Castle Point, the constituency of Thurrock has similar concerns. With a population of 163,270, Thurrock is in the county of Essex and has a Conservative Member of Parliament, Jackie Doyle-Price. In Thurrock, the leave percentage of the vote cast was 72.3%. According to investigative reports, in the port town of Tilbury, many of those who voted to leave the EU were swayed by the economic arguments (Noack, 2016). Tilbury and its surrounding area are a caricature of the “left behind.” Massive layoffs in the 1980s due to modernization and emerging industries left the area behind (Noack, 2016). Those who voted to leave were reportedly in industries such as the car manufacturing industry—industries that could be effected substantially by EU trade and the allure of new trade deals (Noack, 2016). Immigration does not seem to be as distinctive a factor as trade and industry, but it still is reported as important with local council and supporters from the UKIP in the area.

### **Theories**

According to the top in the 70% plus range, the commonalities seem to correlate with previous discussion on Euroskepticism and the “left behind” strata. As a result, it can be hypothesized that the main driving factors for the top Euroskeptic, and thereby top leave constituencies, are economic and social.

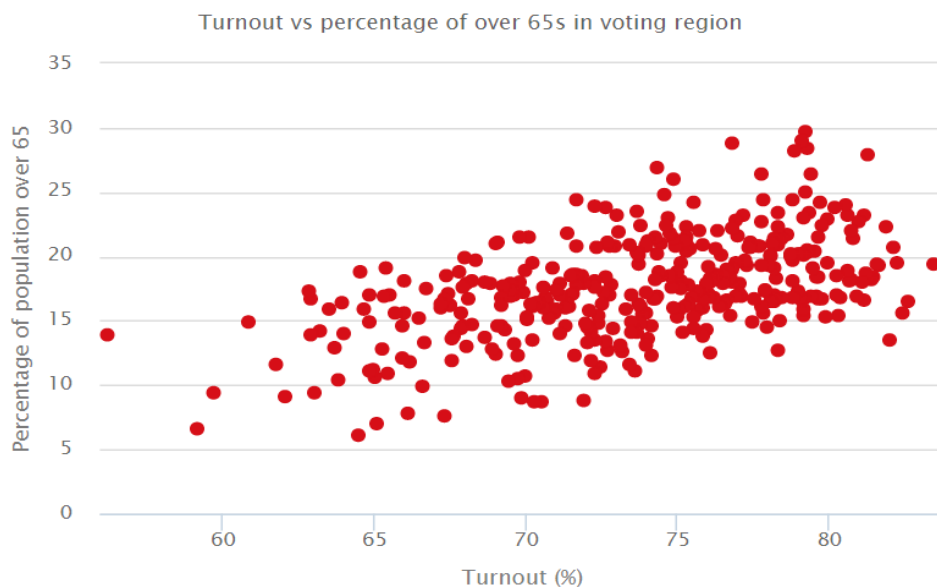
Within the economic factor was the appeal of new markets outside of the EU, which Vote Leave indicated as a possibility only by leaving the EU, and the backlash against foreign migrant workers. Additionally, there are several social factors that are important for understanding the higher vote leave percentage. Firstly, a majority of the areas analyzed (Boston, South Holland, Castle Point, Great Yarmouth, Fenland, Mansfield, Bolsover, and East Lindsey) have portions of the population that would most likely be Euroskeptic, such as the pensioner age, with the exception of Thurrock. As previously discussed by Robert and Ford (2014), the UKIP’s emergence was based on changes to Britain’s economic and social structure that pushed the “left behind” to the side. As mentioned prior, the generational changes in the values of Britain have left the older, more traditional voters behind in the sense that those traditional



views are seen as parochial by the young, university-educated strata. As a result of these shifts in social change, alongside an increasingly multicultural and liberalized Britain, the “left behind” were drawn to a political party which promised to represent them and their views. In this case, the UKIP and Vote Leave/Leave.EU mobilized the “left behind” in these areas to fulfill the hard Euroskeptical decision to leave the EU in order to right the supposed wrongs caused by the EU and the out-of-touch political establishment in Westminster.

The point is then raised as to how one can explain the remaining portions of England and Wales that voted to leave the EU, especially those which do not exhibit obvious correlations with the theories posed. In looking to analyze the possible answers to such questions, it is imperative to understand the voter turnout for the referendum. Overall, the turn-out for those more likely to vote to remain in the EU (young, college educated, and middle-class) was lower than that of over-65s.

**Chart 1: Turnout vs. Percentage of Over-65s in Voting Region**



Source: ONS

Turn-out for those more likely to be Euroskeptical (aged 60+) was higher than 60% in most cases, as can be seen in Chart 1: Turnout vs. Percentage of Over-65s in Voting Region.<sup>2</sup> For those aged 18-24 and eligible, 64% voted compared to 90% of

2. Data for this chart was taken from the ONS. This chart depicts the percentage of turnout for the EU Referendum vote by voting region (or constituency area) in relation to the percentage of population over the age of 65. There is a positive relationship between the increased turnout percentage by voting area and the percentage of population over the age of 65, indicating that areas with an older population had higher voter turnout rates than that of areas with younger populations.

over-65s. The results found that 64% of young people who were registered did vote, rising to 65% among 25-to-39-year-olds and 66% among those aged between 40 and 54. It increased to 74% among the 55-to-64 year age group and 90% for those aged 65 and over. It is speculated that more than 70% of young voters chose to remain in the EU (Helm, 2016).

In analyzing motivations for voting choice, one can subscribe to the social group theory for explaining many of the questions regarding Brexit's turnout. Barring any consideration of the somewhat untruthful campaigns and any misconceptions or misunderstandings of the vote choice, social group theory can explain the way individuals choose to vote as per the social characteristics and properties of the group in which they belong or identify. Essentially, the argument is that people vote politically as they are socially. Additionally, economic and cultural backlash theories follow in the same regard with overlapping imposition of social variables confounding the results. Without oversimplifying the explanation, it seems as if the data points to a correlation between how the region is categorically "left behind" in the globalized world and how willing they would be to reject the notions of the EU and accept the fervor of an anti-establishment populism movement as one which encapsulates the needs of the ordinary British people who have been "left behind."

Moreover, the issue of immigration, while a driving factor in the votes of many, was reportedly second to issues over national sovereignty and the principle that decisions about the UK should be made in and by the UK Parliament alone. In Lord Ashcroft's poll of 12,369 voters after the referendum, one-third of Leave voters indicated that the most important factor driving their vote was national sovereignty, followed secondly by immigration and border control, and thirdly by concerns over the EU's expansion of powers (Lord Ashcroft Polls, 2016). Thus, one can consider the relationship between the "national sovereignty" and "immigration and border control" variables as interlinked. Essentially, while the UK is not part of the borderless Europe vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement, the fact remains that the UK is obligated to meet some of the EU's immigration requirements. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the relationship between being concerned with national sovereignty and being able to legislate the control of borders is interlinked in many cases.

### **Conclusion**

The 2016 European Union Membership Referendum held in Great Britain resulted in a narrow victory for the Euroskeptics. Historically, Britain has exhibited Euroskeptical tendencies in its relationship with the EU, and undoubtedly the result of

the referendum has exacerbated both the Leave and Remain campaigns' calls for a change in relationship with the EU. For some Remainers, leaving the EU is considered a major loss. For the Leave campaign, leaving the EU is long overdue—the EU has made hard Euroskeptics of them all. However, with the continued pressure placed on Britain to stake its claim in regard to its relationship with Europe and the rest of the world, Britain must show its flexibility and not succumb to rigid isolationism. As Euroskepticism rides on the political waves of anti-establishment and anti-globalization rhetoric, nations in the EU and the United States have exhibited some of the same defining skeptical characteristics. With Brexit comes great consequences of plunging into an unknown territory outside the realm of the EU, but the possibilities of continuing a relationship with the EU whilst seeking trade agreements and global partnerships across the world are enticing for an emerging British power.

In essence, Euroskepticism has not seen its ultimate moment, but it has seen its greatest victory thus far. Across the EU, additional member states are dealing with rising momentum for Euroskeptic politicians and policies. The political climate is ripe for Euroskeptics to seek additional victories. In turn, the onus is on the Europhiles to keep the European Union before the momentum reaches its peak and results in yet another victory.

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