The Chicago Journal of History

Spring 2018

The Chicago Journal of History

an undergraduate history publication of the University of Chicago

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Letter from the Editors-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

In popular understandings of disciplinary history, World War II appears as the paramount subject of historical research. Moving through a series of stable associations—Nazi Germany, Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and so on—established by canonical historical narratives, we all too easily arrive at an understanding of the immensely complicated and consequential event that feels secure and sufficiently complete. In this issue of the Chicago Journal of History, however, three of our authors view World War II from the perspective of overlooked historical actors—for Carlo Mole, a British special agent; for Shirin Sadjadpour, Jews in Japan; and for Emily Xiao, teachers in Japanese internment camps—in order to illuminate its underexplored dimensions. Through sensitive reading and analysis, they explore the plurality of memories from which World War II as a historical object emerged, discovering complexities that extend beyond any simplistic binary between the evil Axis and morally incorruptible Allies.

The two remaining pieces in this issue explore other memories that are often forgotten—whether wilfully or unintentionally—in post-war America. While Mikaela Gerwin demonstrates that the vigor of black female civic life predated the Civil Rights Movement, Lydia Maher reveals the centrality of former waves of migration in the formation of American immigration policy. The persistence of structural racism in America today, directed both at subjugated peoples with centuries-long histories on American soil and at refugees compelled to flee their homeland in decades past, reveals the ways in which the past presses urgently upon the present. We urge you, then, to read these pieces as a collective call for historical remembering, foregrounding historical continuity in a bid to make sense of a violently troubled present and its precarious future.

This issue would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of our featured authors; the *Chicago Journal of History* editorial board; and our hardworking designer. In winter of 2018, Chicago Journal of History hosted literary scholar Adrienne Brown who presented her lecture "The Black Skyscraper: Architecture and Perception of Race." We also organized a panel with Adrian Johns, Brian Brusokas, Lawrence Rothfield, Morag Kersel, and Jane Jacob entitled "Framed! A Panel on History, Art, and Law," moderated by Alice Goff. We'd like to use this space to formally thank Dr. Brown, Dr. Johns, Special Agent Brusokas, Dr. Rothfield, Dr. Kersel, Ms. Jacob, and Dr. Alice Goff for their time and talents as well.

We'd also like to welcome the incoming editor-in-chief, Sam Winikow, and our incoming editorial board members for the academic year 2018-19: Nadine Faisal, Lindsay Nicholas, Alexandra Price, Eric Wang, Madeline de Figueiredo, Jennifer Wang, Sam Mellins, Aaron Stockel, Ella Hester, and Wen-Li Teng.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,
Colin Garon and Darren Wan
June 2018

The Mole

Did British and Chinese secret service collaboration lead to the sinking of Shinano during the Pacific War?

By CARLO MOLE, MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Through an analysis of my grandfather's unpublished memoir, *A Mole in our Midst,*[1] I seek to shed light on a rarely discussed area of history, namely the extent and importance of the collaboration between British and Chinese intelligence agencies during the Pacific War. Kenneth Mole's memoir, written in the 1990s, recounts his experiences as a British SIS agent in Japanese occupied China during the Second World War. As part of a newly devised intelligence unit—a result of the collaboration between SEAC's Lord Mountbatten and the Chinese Nationalist Party's leader Chiang Kai-shek—Mole details his discovery of *Shinano*, Japan's largest ever aircraft carrier, and its subsequent sinking by *USS Archerfish* submarine in the Pacific Ocean. However, according to official U.S. Naval archives and Captain Enright himself, *Archerfish* came upon *Shinano* by chance, an encounter since hailed as an exclusive success of the U.S. Navy.[2] Mole's memoir contradicts this narrative, instead claiming that the whereabouts of *Shinano* were garnered from British-Chinese intelligence collaboration before being relayed to the Americans. This essay shall therefore explore previously unanalyzed evidence in order to substantiate Mole's claim to the discovery of *Shinano*. Through a careful consideration of secondary historical sources, first-hand accounts, diaries, and archival and naval log materials, I will seek to ascertain whether intelligence was used in the sinking of *Shinano*, and consequently, whether collaboration between the British and Chinese intelligence agencies in the Far East has been understated.

Shinano

On November 29, 1944, *Shinano* was sunk by four U.S. submarine torpedoes. At the time of her sinking, *Shinano* was the most powerful warship in the world, and she remains the largest aircraft carrier ever to be sunk by a submarine. Plans for her creation emerged in 1934, when the Japanese Naval General Staff, foreseeing a confrontation with the Americans, ordered the creation of three *Yamato*-class super-battleships – *Yamato, Musashi,* and *Shinano*.[3] The Japanese were convinced that the key to naval dominance in the Pacific lay in the creation of battleships. By the time the Americans had declared war, Japan had developed a superior fleet. Although the Japanese only had 10 battleships compared to the Americans' 17, they had destroyed four in their surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Japan also had more carriers, auxiliary carriers, heavy cruisers, and light cruisers than the Americans.[4] However, Japan's naval supremacy was lost after the Battle of Midway in the summer of 1942, a battle that resulted in the destruction of four Imperial carriers. To rectify the damage inflicted by the Americans, the Japanese quickly ordered the conversion of *Shinano* from a super-battleship into an aircraft carrier. *Shinano* was scheduled for completion in February 1945.[5] But by 1944, with defeat on the horizon, the Japanese Naval General Staff ordered *Shinano* to be delivered four months earlier than scheduled.[6] On November 28th, escorted by three destroyers—*Isokaze, Yukikaze,* and *Hamakaze*—*Shinano* began her maiden voyage to Kure. 17 hours into her journey, she was hit by four torpedoes, killing 1,435 Japanese service personnel and civilian workers.[7] *Shinano* was to be Japan's last hope. Her sinking signaled the end of Japan's chances in the Pacific War.

Historiography

A Mole in our Midst offers an alternative and unique lens through which to view the Pacific War. Despite the increasing role of intelligence agencies in international affairs, historical studies of intelligence are lacking.[8] According to Christopher Andrew and David Dilks, intel-

1 Kenneth Mole, *A Mole in our Midst*. Unpublished MSS, 2005.
2 Joseph F. Enright and James W. Ryan, *Sea Assault: The Sinking of Japan's Secret Supership* (New York: St Martin›s Press, 1887).
3 John Deane Potter, *Yamamoto: The Man who Menaced America,* 29.
4 Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, *Japanese Naval and Merchant Ship Losses During World War II by All Causes,* Table II, page vii.
5 Watts and Gordon, *The Imperial Japanese Navy,* 68
6 Joseph F. Enright and James W. Ryan, *Sea Assault: The Sinking of Japan's Secret Supership* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1887): 17.
7 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault*, 17.
8 Douglas Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945* (London: Routledge, 2006). 3

ligence is the "missing dimension" of history.[9] Although this 'missing dimension' is becoming increasingly accessible with the declassification of documents, British intelligence during the Pacific War has remained understudied. Indeed, as D.C. Watt suggests, "a further subject for investigation is the role of intelligence agencies on [the British and Japanese] side."[10] Douglas Ford remarks in his examination of Britain's involvement in the Pacific War that the history of intelligence, especially in the Far East, is often "taken for granted or overlooked." [11] Richard Aldrich concurs with Ford, explaining, "almost nothing has been written on the British SIS during the war against Japan."[12] When viewed alongside the historiography of the Second World War, analyses of the impact of British and Chinese intelligence collaboration have not attracted much scholarly attention. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, British activities in the Pacific paled in comparison to those of the United States. Historians focusing on the Pacific War (P. Calvocoressi, J. Keegan, A.R. Millett, W. Murray, and G.L. Weinberg) therefore scarcely discuss Britain's contribution, instead emphasizing the contributions of the United States.[13] Secondly, official histories centering on Britain's role in the Second World War have focused overwhelmingly on the Western front, largely ignoring the Pacific realm, particularly with regard to intelligence.[14]

However, a historiography of intelligence during the Pacific War does exist. For example, Ronald Lewin analyzes the United States' use of SIGINT during the Pacific War, while Richard Aldrich posits that the wartime conflict between British and American secret services in Asia mirrored political disagreement at the highest level between Roosevelt and Churchill.[15] Furthermore, Keith Stevens and Douglas Ford emphasize British intelligence in China and the Pacific."[16] Yet Rana Mitter bucks the trend with his work *China's War with Japan,* which emphasizes the importance of Chinese secret services in helping Britain and the United States to combat the Japanese.[17] This essay should thus be viewed as part of recent attempts to question the incumbent consensus among historians that Britain, and especially China, played limited roles in the Far Eastern intelligence arena. Indeed, the whereabouts of *Shinano* would not have been garnered were it not for the collaboration between British and Chinese secret services.

British, Chinese and American Secret Services

Kenneth Mole's memoir must be viewed within the political and historical context of British-Chinese collaboration. His posting was a direct result of Lord Mountbatten and Chiang Kai-shek's agreement to station collaborative intelligence stations throughout the East Coast of China in 1943.[18] Mole was situated in Wenzhou, one of two Chinese ports still unoccupied by the Japanese, in an office known as the "Liaison Office of the British Embassy."[19]

The outbreak of the Second World War witnessed a consolidation of British and American intelligence networks of human agents and listening posts in the Far East.[20] The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, and Britain's devastating defeat in Malaya and Singapore in 1942, however, reinforced an urgent need for change.[21] The Allies poured further resources into intelligence agencies in the Far East. When it became clear that the Japanese were relying heavily on Chinese resources, Britain and the United States became China's main diplomatic, financial, and military allies.[22] Yet, according to Ford, until 1943, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), and the Special Operations Executive (SOE), "found themselves without the finances necessary to employ skilled agents and to foster useful contacts within Japan."[23] Indeed, Britain played a secondary role in the Pacific War, as its war effort focused almost exclusively on Germany. It was only in 1944 that Churchill committed a

9 C. Andrew and D. Dilks (eds), *The Missing Dimension: governments and intelligence communities in the twentieth century*, (Chicago, IL: Illinois UP, 1985): 1–2.

10 D.C. Watt, 'Work Completed and Work as Yet Unborn: reflections on the conference from the British side', in I. Nish (ed.), Anglo–Japanese Alienation, 1919–52: papers of the Anglo–Japanese Conference on the history of the Second World War, (Cambridge: CUP, 1982). 296.

11 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, .

12 Richard J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of Secret Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). 3

13 P. Calvocoressi et al.,Total War: the causes and courses of the Second World War, (London: Viking, 1989); J. Keegan, The Second World War, (London: Pimlico, 1989); A.R. Millett and W. Murray, A War to be Won: fighting the Second World War, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap and Harvard UP, 2000); G.L. Weinberg, A World at Arms: a global history of World War II, (Cambridge: CUP, 1994).

14 N.H. Gibbs et al. (eds), Grand Strategy, 6 Vols, in series History of the Second World War, (London: HMSO, 1956–72)

15 R. Lewin, The Other ULTRA: codes, cyphers and the defeat of Japan, London: Hutchinson, 1982; Richard J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of SecretService* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

16 Keith Stevens, "A Token Operation: 204 Military Mission to China, 1941–1945," *Asian Affairs* 36, no. 1 (2005); Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*.

17 Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937-1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London: Allen Lane, 2001).

18 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 102.

19 Kenneth Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 5.

20 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 44.

21 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 44.

22 Richard J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of Secret Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 17.

23 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 9.

British fleet to the Pacific.[24] This had the important effect of placing more emphasis on Britain's intelligence units.

However, as Aldrich contends, the collaboration between British and American intelligence agencies was strained for political reasons. He argues that as the Pacific War intensified, from 1942 onwards, the British and Americans focused increasingly on each other's future ambitions, rather than the common enemy.[25] Britain sought to regain its lost empire to the dismay of the anti-imperial Americans. The raising of the Union Jack over Singapore was more important to the British than any victory parade through Tokyo. Ford supports Aldrich's interpretation, concluding that Britain's lack of reliable naval intelligence was a result of "the poor state of Anglo-American intelligence cooperation, which 'essentially did not exist' in the pacific between 1943-1944."[26]

What Britain lacked in partnership with the Americans, however, it made up for through its collaboration with the Chinese. In total, there were fifteen known allied intelligence agencies, but these organizations were uncoordinated and inexperienced and thus relied on domestic Chinese secret services. [27] Britain's pre-war presence on the east coast of China enabled it to establish ties with both the Kuomintang Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the communists.[28] A joint British-Chinese signals intelligence (SIGINT) station was, for example, established in Hong Kong as early as 1937. The KMT had also allowed British W/T stations concealed in Canton, Tigris, and Hainan.[29] By 1941, the British had created guerrilla and commando training operations for the Chinese, in both China and Britain. In 1942, as the war intensified, SOE formed "204 Military Mission" which consisted of six Army Commando Contingents, three of which were scheduled to enter China to train Chinese military forces at the beginning of the war with Japan.[30] By 1943, Lord Mountbatten secured the personal agreement of Chiang "to SIS operating freely in China, especially in coastal areas."[31] By the end 1943, SIS operated five radio stations across China.[32]

Britain realized that efforts to maintain its colonies would only be feasible with cooperation from the Chinese. The KMT was determined to control all secret service activities in China, forcing Britain to pursue a path of collaboration. John Keswick, a leading SOE official, suggested that the only intelligence activities in China not known to Chiang in 1943 were some joint SIS-OSS intelligence activities, but "that it was only a matter of time before they too were uncovered."[33] Operations such as 204 Military Mission gained support from Chiang, thus enabling the British to establish strong domestic intelligence links. Many of these operations were deliberately kept secret from the United States, a move championed by Chiang. Indeed, Roosevelt "ignored the practicalities of dealing with Chiang's KMT."[34]

However, British-Chinese collaboration was not without flaws. According to Mitter, "SOE and the SIS had some successes in China … but overall it was equally unable to create a coordinated and effective structure."[35] Moreover, the Chinese were wary of British intentions: Chiang considered Britain's interest in China as merely a manifestation of its efforts to maintain its empire. Ultimately, the collaboration between the British and Chinese could have gone further. In late 1944, the Director of Military Intelligence in China offered to create a new British-Chinese intelligence unit that would have provided the Chinese with British SIGINT. The Americans, however, pressured the British to withdraw the offer.[36]

Nevertheless, the assumption that Britain played a minor role in the Chinese theatre is misguided. The British Secret Service played a crucial role in combining and reinforcing intelligence collaboration between the Chinese, British, and Americans. China should be remembered firmly as one of four principal wartime Allies, alongside Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union, and thus fundamental to the victory over the Japanese.

A Mole in Our Midst

A Mole in our Midst is the autobiographical account of an eccentric young Englishman, caught up in an exotic world of espionage, romance, and danger. Kenneth Mole was born in Manchuria, China to British missionary doc-

24 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 28.
25 Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan,* 14.
26 Ford, *Britain's Secret War against Japan, 1937-1945*, 78.
27 15 Allied intelligence agencies in China: 5 British, 4 American, 4 Russian, 1 Dutch, and 1 French.
28 Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan*, 280.
29 Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan,* 280
30 Keith Stevens, "A Token Operation: 204 Military Mission to China, 1941–1945," *Asian Affairs* 36, no. 1 (2005).
31 Helliwell (Chief SI, OSS, CT) to Donovan, 'A Study of British Intelligence Organizations in China, 13 Feb 1945, DP.
32 Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of Secret Service*, 261.
33 MI6 Political Report No. 13 to FO, 3 April 1945, WO 208/474. PRO.
34 Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan,* 261.
35 Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937-1945,* 287.
36 Grimsdale to DMI, 25 June 1944, F3077/3077/10, FO 371/41676B, PRO.

tor parents in 1919. Raised by his amah, or nursemaid, he felt China was in his blood. But at the age of eight, he

Kenneth Mole, London, 1955

was ripped from his amah's arms and sent by himself to be educated in England, the homeland he had never known. Despite his separation from his family, Mole excelled at school, gaining an organ scholarship at Oxford where he studied Classics and Philosophy. When the Second World War broke out, Mole, aged 21, was faced with a philosophical crisis.

Mole's Buddhist upbringing meant that he abhorred the violence of the Second World War. He believed it was every Englishman's duty not to participate in the horrors and madness of war. Accordingly, Mole registered as a conscientious objector; a decision that risked vilification, imprisonment, and public humiliation. However, his experiences during the London Blitz changed his mind. As the war's evils became increasingly apparent, Mole realized that he had a role to play, and that the war could offer him an opportunity to return to his beloved China. He decided to enlist in the Royal Air Force.

Bespectacled and lanky, the philosophy graduate was hardly a natural soldier. But his ability to speak and write Mandarin caught the attention of the Secret Service. He was swiftly tasked with a secret mission: to gather intelligence on the Japanese in China.

After further training, Mole was sent via India to the Chinese border. From Calcutta, the novice spy was flown in a Dakota over the Himalayas, a terrifying, sick-making journey. Armed with a pistol, a pen-camera, razor blades, and a typewriter—the only weapon he yet knew how to wield—Mole set off alone on foot and by river, a journey of over 1000 miles, for the one of only two unoccupied ports in Eastern China. As Mole recounts:

> I was told to find my way to Wenchow, a port on China's east coast, south of Japanese occupied Shanghai. I was given a fountain pen in a presentation box and told first to report to the Firm's treasurer in Kunming in westernmost China and hand the pen to him personally and in private. China was inaccessible by land, with the Gobi Desert to the North and the Himalayas and the Jap controlled Burmese jungle to the West. To the East, the Japanese controlled the entire coast from Russia in the North to Siam in the South, except for two minor ports. One was Foochow, up the coast a bit from Hong Kong, and the other was Wenchow, down the coast a little from Shanghai. That was where I was to go.[37]

It was in Wenchow that Mole made contact with another agent, Sam Gittens. Suave, savvy, and Oxford-educated, 28-year-old Gittens was half-British and half-Chinese. He was a precocious master of espionage with a long list of local informants and lovers. Working out of the "White House," a colonial structure on one of the tributary rivers in Wenchow, Gittens ran a decadent outpost of the Empire, walking a tightrope between Chinese double agents, the U.S., and British spy networks. He sated rival Chinese factions with contraband and information. Mole writes:

> We were in a large and comfortable European building, called the White House. Sam had only recently moved here from a place which had been both his office and quarters for himself and his staff. The office was known, like our office in Kunming, as the Liaison Office of the British Embassy, not a wholly convincing cover for a two-man British organisation in a remote town from which all Europeans with a modicum of intelligence had already left. The title Methodist Mission would have better merged into the landscape, but it would have been a struggle for Sam and I to feign an evangelistic spirit, what with his philanderings

37 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst*, 53.

and my Buddhist leanings.[38]

Mole, known to his counterparts as "Kang," realized his immaculate Mandarin would not get him very far: he stuck out like a sore thumb. His work would therefore rely on informants. Gittens and Mole recruited agents, briefing and debriefing them, encoding their information using 'one time pads' and sending it to Calcutta. They also gleaned information from local dignitaries by plying them with rice wine and cigarettes – commodities in high demand in wartime China.

Mole's first recruit would become one of his most valuable. The identical twin of a crane driver on a Japanese dockyard, he would replace his brother and take down details of all the ships in port. Mole details the informant's account of his first day:

> [He] waited until there was a lull in his brother's crane activities, borrowed his entry pass into the docks, and being an identical twin with a foolproof photograph, walked cleanly past the entry guards and climbed the ladder to the crane's cabin. His fear of Japanese harbour police was soon replaced by vertigo from the sickening exposure to the awesome drop below. He was shocked to see how people could be transformed into slowly moving dots when seen from high above. Safe at last in the cabin, he spent the day making notes on the shipping and troop movement activity he saw, God's gift to a spy.[39]

Realizing the agent's value, Mole commissioned drawings of the ever-growing Japanese Navy in the informant's elegant Chinese brush strokes. Upon hearing relevant information, Mole would classify material from "A," meaning "seen with own eyes," to "F"—"probably worthless"—before sending it to his superiors. For the following two years, Mole successfully reported on Japanese naval movements, perhaps enabling the Americans to make several correct interceptions.

However, Mole's most valuable informant came in the form of a tea shop owner at a Japanese Naval dockyard. Mr. Li, one of Mole's recruits, overheard the tea shop owner one night in Wenchow:

> This man had a Korean father, a Japanese mother and a married sister in Wenchow and had taken advantage of the Japanese capture of Wenchow to visit his sister there. But there he found that she'd been gang-raped by Japanese soldiers when they entered the town. Enraged and drunk in a Wenchow bar, he vowed vengeance against the Japanese… All our Mr. Li had to do was to explain to him how he could avenge his sister and even get paid for doing so, simply by reporting to us anything whatsoever he could find out about Kure dockyard.[40]

Intelligence from this informant led to Mole's most important discovery: the existence of the world's largest aircraft carrier—*Shinano*. On November 4th, 1944, the tea shop owner surfaced at the White House. Mole recounts:

> On November 4th, 1944, another starred entry in my diary, the Kure tea-house owner surfaced at our temple. He told us of a warship currently under construction at Yokosuka dockyard in Tokyo Bay, hidden beneath sisal curtains, a battleship of the Yamato class. She would be the biggest warship in the history of the world, unsinkable, with a foot-thick deck of solid steel over a layer of concrete, capable of resisting any imaginable bomb. Our Kure agent got wind of this because the construction, begun at Yokosuka in Tokyo Bay, could be completed only in Kure dockyard in the Inland Sea. He told us that she was due to leave Tokyo before the end of November for Kure. Not yet ready for action, she would be manned by a scratch crew. Her name, somehow he also knew, was *Shinano*.[41]

Appreciating the gravity of this intelligence, Mole quickly encrypted the message using a "one-time pad" to be sent to Mountbatten in India. As Mole noted, "Mountbatten in Ceylon now had a real bingo to pass on to the Americans in the Pacific and the monstrous *Shinano*, with her foot-thick deck of solid steel over a layer of concrete, was doomed."

Shinano and Archer-Fish

Named after Japan's longest and largest river, *Shinano* was considered unsinkable. She measured 872 feet, weighed close to 70,000 tons, and was armoured with 16 high angle guns, 145 25-millimeter rapid firing machine guns, and 12 multiple rocket-launchers. Her four steam

38 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 82.
39 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 98.
40 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 173.
41 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 24.

turbines were capable of developing 150,000 horsepower, generating a speed of 27 knots. The carrier provided quarter to 2,500 officers, sailors, specialists, and airmen, making her the largest carrier ever built.[42] *Shinano* was thus able to outpace enemy battleships and submarines, and withstand aerial bombs and torpedoes.

Not only was *Shinano* believed unsinkable, but her existence was completely unknown to the allies. To conceal *Shinano*, a towering steel fence had been constructed on all sides of the graving dock. Her thousands of builders, confined to quarters, lived under threat of execution if they spoke of her existence.[43] Although the Japanese Naval prospects were markedly reduced after the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944, *Shinano* offered the increasingly desperate Japanese a chance to keep in the fight against the U.S. Navy. Shinano was to be Japan's secret weapon.

Originally laid down as a Yamato-class battleship, *Shinano* was converted to an aircraft carrier. On June 15, 1944, with the war turning against the Japanese, the Yokosuka Naval Shipyard was ordered to complete the conversion four months earlier than schedule. The carrier was quickly finished and untested. On November 29, she was transferred from Tokyo Bay en route to Kure to begin accepting a stock of aircraft and armament fittings. She would be making the journey along the southern coast of Japan—waters that were heavily patrolled by American submarines—without its full capabilities.

Although this was certainly a risk, the Japanese were confident that *Shinano* would make the journey without issue. Captain Abe, the man chosen to command *Shinano*, had proven himself as one of Japan's leading naval commanders. *Shinano* was to be escorted by three proven destroyers—Hamakaze (beach wind), Yukikaze (snow wind), and Isokaze (strand wind)—each capable of reaching 35 knots. An enemy ship would be no match for *Shinano*.

Compared to the 4,000 personnel manning *Shinano* and its three destroyers, only 82 sailors were aboard *Archerfish*. On November 9th, 1944, Captain Joseph F. Enright "flew to Guam, where Vice Admiral Lockwood and his staff were located" and was given a "verbal summary of [his] assigned location and what [they] were to do."[44] After receiving new orders, *Archerfish* embarked on its mission to patrol Japanese warships for downed U.S. Air Force pilots. In effect, *Archerfish* "had authorization to roam at will over a vast expanse of enemy waters."[45]

On November 24, with the U.S. beginning its mass bombing of Japan, Captain Abe learned that a group of U.S. submarines, known as a wolfpack, were patrolling the waters of Tokyo Bay. Captain Abe decided to navigate *Shinano* further out to sea, during nighttime, in order to avoid B-29 bombers and the wolfpack. Should *Shinano* run into the wolfpack, her superior size and pace would be enough to escape.

On the evening of November 28th, with only the moon for light, *Archerfish* spotted an unknown ship. Crewmember Martin W. Fuller records, "We sighted a target coming out of Tokyo Bay. It was the largest ship I had ever seen."[46] Captain Abe had also spotted *Archerfish*, however, the Captain mistakenly presumed that *Archerfish* headed a wolfpack of other submarines. This assumption led *Shinano* to manoeuvre defensively. Had Captain Abe decided to go on the offensive, *Archerfish* would have been forced to escape. In order to avoid the submarines, *Shinano* began zig-zagging. *Archerfish* would therefore have to predict the carrier's movements to maintain its chase. The submarine had to be placed perfectly within the "firing window," which would likely only last several seconds.

Seventeen hours into her journey, *Shinano* was hit by four torpedoes. Captain Enright had found the firing window. He writes in his diary:

> The first torpedo smashed into *Shinano's* hull some ten feet below the surface. There was a tremendous roar, and a huge ball of red and orange flame rolled up the starboard of the ship and shot into the dark sky […] The blast ruptured and caused prompt flooding […] The explosion also burst through the deck above, killing engineering personnel who were asleep in their compartments. Within the next 30 seconds three more torpedoes slammed into *Shinano*.[47]

On November 29, 1944, *Shinano* was sunk, killing 1,435 Japanese service personnel and civilian workers. *Shinano* was, and remains, the largest warship ever to be sunk by a submarine. One of the survivors later wrote of the moment *Shinano* was hit by the torpedoes:

> I went over to the port side into the water and immediately got sucked into a huge exhaust vent

42 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 17.
43 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 17.
44 Jospeh. F. Enright, USS Archerfish Deck Log and Patrol Report, (November 9th – December 15th 1944).
45 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 40.
46 Marteen W. Fuller, USS Archerfish Deck Log and Patrol Report, (November 9th – December 15th 1944).
47 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 190.

***Shinano* during sea trials in Tokyo Bay on November 11, 1944.**

> about three meters below the deck along with many of my comrades. Most of them screamed in vain for help as they disappeared in the swirling water into the bowels of the ship. Just as I was about the give up hope, I managed to seize hold of a wire cable and pulled myself out of the vent and crawled back onto the deck again … As I floated away from *Shinano*, I seized hold of a big section of lumber … When I looked back, *Shinano* was heeled way over to starboard. What an incredible sight![48]

The sinking of *Shinano* was seen by the Japanese as a major loss and embarrassment. Despite the immense loss of life, the events of November 29 were hidden from the public. Survivors were quarantined to keep *Shinano's* existence secret.[49] The report of the U.S. Technical Mission to Japan included the following observation:

> Of all naval catastrophes, from the Japanese point of view, the loss of *Shinano* was most depressing. The third and last of the super warships, she was sunk on the second day of her maiden cruise, by only four submarine torpedoes. The shock which went through the Japanese Naval Ministry is better imagined than described.[50]

Captain Enright was awarded the Navy Cross, and the sinking of *Shinano* would become a legend of naval warfare. In the words of Admiral Bernard A. Clarey: "Who would have believed this leviathan, an embodiment of Japan's aspirations to snatch victory from defeat, could be stopped in such a lethal fashion by a vessel less than a thirtieth her size, a 2,000-ton American submarine?"[51]

Conflicting Accounts

Remarkably, according to official U.S. archives and Captain Enright himself, *Archerfish* came upon *Shinano* by chance. This discovery has since been hailed as an exclusive success of the U.S. Navy.[52] There is no overt evidence of intelligence having played a role in the Americans' discovery of the carrier. Captain Enright resolutely asserts in his memoir that he was unaware of the existence of *Shinano*. Mole's memoir, therefore, contradicts the U.S. narrative, instead claiming that the whereabouts of *Shinano* was gleaned from British-Chinese intelligence collaboration before being relayed to the United States.

This raises several interesting questions: Was intelligence used in the sinking of *Shinano,* or was it purely by chance? Did either Captain Enright or Mole lie? Could they both be telling the truth? If Mole's account is truthful, did the intelligence reach the Americans? Without evidence of SIGINT linking Mole's intelligence to the British

48 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 190.
49 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 256.
50 Enright and Ryan, *Sea Assault,* 260.
51 Admiral Bernard A. Clarey, "Foreword," in Joseph F. Enright, and James W. Ryan, *Sea Assault: The Sinking of Japan's Secret Supership* (New York: St Martin›s Press, 1887): xi-xvi.
52 Joseph F. Enright and James W. Ryan, *Shinano!: The Sinking of Japan's Secret Supership* (New York: St. Martin›s Press, 1987).

or Americans, these questions cannot be fully answered.

Even Mole notes the lack of evidence. He writes, "Somewhere in those 17,000 tons of American records of World War Two, there must be a reference to a report to MI6 from a teahouse owner in Kure Dockyard."[53] At the time of writing, this crucial evidence has not been found. However, this limitation does not foreclose an investigation into the sinking of *Shinano*. One can still learn important truths. As Mole remarked on his time China: "Nothing is as it seems."[54]

Mole and Enright

The plausibility of both accounts must therefore be taken into consideration. Firstly, I must answer the central question: Was it possible for Mole's intelligence to reach Captain Enright? Without this link, Mole's account loses all credibility. Crucially, the British and Americans shared intelligence in 1944. Without a fleet of its own, Britain relayed its intelligence to the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. Intelligence gathered by SIS in China would have been relayed to Bletchley Park in Britain before being sent to the United States Naval Communication Intelligence Organization. If action upon this information required the use of submarines, the intelligence would then have been sent to the Commander of the Submarine Force (ComSubPac).[55] Interestingly, one month prior to the sinking of *Shinano,* a joint Anglo-American naval intelligence base was set up at Guam. This base connected Pearl Harbor and Bletchley Park's SIGINT capabilities to Guam. Crucially, according to *Archerfish's* logs, Captain Enright visited Guam five days after Mole's discovery, and nine days before spotting *Shinano*.[56] It was therefore possible for Mole's intelligence to reach Captain Enright. However, this does not prove a connection.

Secondly, one must ascertain whether Enright's account is possible, and ultimately plausible. In other words, was it possible for *Archerfish* to happen upon *Shinano* by chance, and is it likely to have occurred? Upon first reflection, it seems unlikely. Why would a lone submarine be patrolling Japanese Inland waters? It was common practice for the US Navy, particularly towards the end of the Second World War, to deploy wolfpacks in Japanese waters.[57] Captain Enright has, however, provided a plausible reason for entering Japanese waters alone. *Archerfish* was tasked with lifeguard duties off the coast of Japan. Any downed B-29 pilots were to picked-up by *Archerfish* and returned to Guam.[58] Moreover, the fact that *Archerfish* was alone suggests that the US Navy was unaware of *Shinano*. When one considers the size and might of *Shinano* and its three destroyers, it seems unlikely that the US Navy would have sent a lone submarine. Captain Enright's account of the sinking of *Shinano* is therefore possible.

Furthermore, one must analyze the reliability of Mole and Captain Enright's accounts. On the surface, one would expect the account of a naval commander to hold strong over the word of a spy. Indeed, one can fault the reliability of Mole's claim. It is plausible that Mole personified SIGINT in the form of the Kure teahouse owner. It is not unknown for memoirs to romanticize the events portrayed, especially within the genre of intelligence, which has been influenced by popular culture. Moreover, it is conceivable that Mole was concerned about revealing state secrets; he could have also stopped short of revealing the ways and means of his gathered intelligence.

Yet, Captain Enright's account is not perfectly reliable either. Highly classified information was hidden as far as possible, which could explain its omission from the chain of events expressed in Captain Enright's memoir. Jasper Holmes, the head of clandestine communication between the Combat Intelligence Unit in Hawaii and the Pacific Submarine Command in Guam, described how information was conveyed:

> I went directly to the chief of staff of ComSubPac and delivered it orally. I did not tell him how the information was obtained, but he must have guessed. We kept no records. If I had a position in latitude and longitude, I wrote the figures in ink on the palm of my hand, and scrubbed my hands after I had delivered the message.[59]

To maintain secrecy, it was forbidden for captains to write about highly classified information. As Lewin remarks, "The captain's war diaries and patrol reports, which provided him with a rich variety of action stories and human drama, rarely—and then only incidentally—reflect the inner truth of many a successful engagement."[60] Therefore, the fact that there is no evidence of the use of

53 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 53.
54 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 67.
55 Ronald Lewin, *The American magic: codes, ciphers and the defeat of Japan* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983).
56 John Potanovic: USS Archerfish Deck Log and Patrol Report, (November 9th – December 15th 1944).
57 Lewin, *The American magic,* 239.
58 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 40.
59 Jasper Holmes in Ronald Lewin, *The American magic,* 220.
60 Lewin, *The American magic,* 225.

intelligence in either Enright's diary or *Archerfish's* logs does not prove that intelligence was not used. Indeed, *Archerfish's* communications with COMSUBPAC can be viewed in this light. The message sent to "Pearl Harbor informing them that we were chasing a large ship, possibly a carrier, and requesting help if any other subs were closer than we were,"[61] suggests that the submarine did in fact encounter *Shinano* without prior information. Yet there could have been a discrepancy between Captain Enright and his crew in their understanding of orders and events.

Further, Captain Enright's sudden flight to Guam in order to be given a "verbal summary"[62] suggests that the US Navy was handling delicate information. If the navy had been dealing purely with the lifeguard operation, they would not have recalled Captain Enright in person; they could have relayed orders via transmission. Indeed, there is no reference to the lifeguard operation after Captain Enright was given his supposed order. Perhaps *Archerfish* failed to find downed pilots—or perhaps that was not its *real* mission.

However, despite the concerns relating to Enright's account, there remains a crucial gap between Mole's intelligence and the sinking of the Shinano. Ultimately, Mole's intelligence would not have sufficed. The U.S. Navy would have almost surely needed greater information to plan and enact a sinking of *Shinano*. Mole's intelligence, that *Shinano* was "due to leave Tokyo before the end of November for Kure," was important insofar as it provided intelligence relating the whereabouts and existence of the *Shinano,* as well as its planned route. However, the intelligence did not provide an exact location or date. Mole's intelligence could have been known by the US Navy, but it could not have inevitably "doomed" *Shinano*.

Nevertheless, although at the time of writing it is not possible to indisputably prove the link between Mole's intelligence and the sinking of *Shinano*, it is perfectly possible that Mole, and by extension, British-Chinese intelligence operations, played a role in the sinking of *Shinano*. The delicate nature of intelligence complicates historical accounts of war, and this case is no different.

Conclusion

This essay has explored previously unanalyzed evidence in order to substantiate Mole's claim to the discovery of *Shinano*. Bedridden as a result of a rare neurological disease which led to his death in 2010, my grandfather was unable to find "the report to MI6 from a teahouse owner in Kure Dockyard," among the "17,000 tons of American records of World War Two."[63] My goal throughout was simple: I hoped to continue my grandfather's research to prove the connection between his intelligence and the sinking of the *Shinano*. Although I was unable to find a "report from a teahouse owner in Kure," I have uncovered further evidence that undermines the official U.S. narrative. However, despite the challenge to remain impartial, it is evident that questions remain. Through a careful consideration of secondary historical sources, first-hand accounts, diaries, and archival and naval log material, this essay has demonstrated that intelligence was likely used in the sinking of *Shinano*, and that consequently, collaboration between the British and Chinese intelligence agencies in the Far East has been understated. Without Lord Mountbatten and Chiang's collaboration, Mole would not have uncovered the whereabouts of *Shinano*.

APPENDIX A

The Official Secrets Act

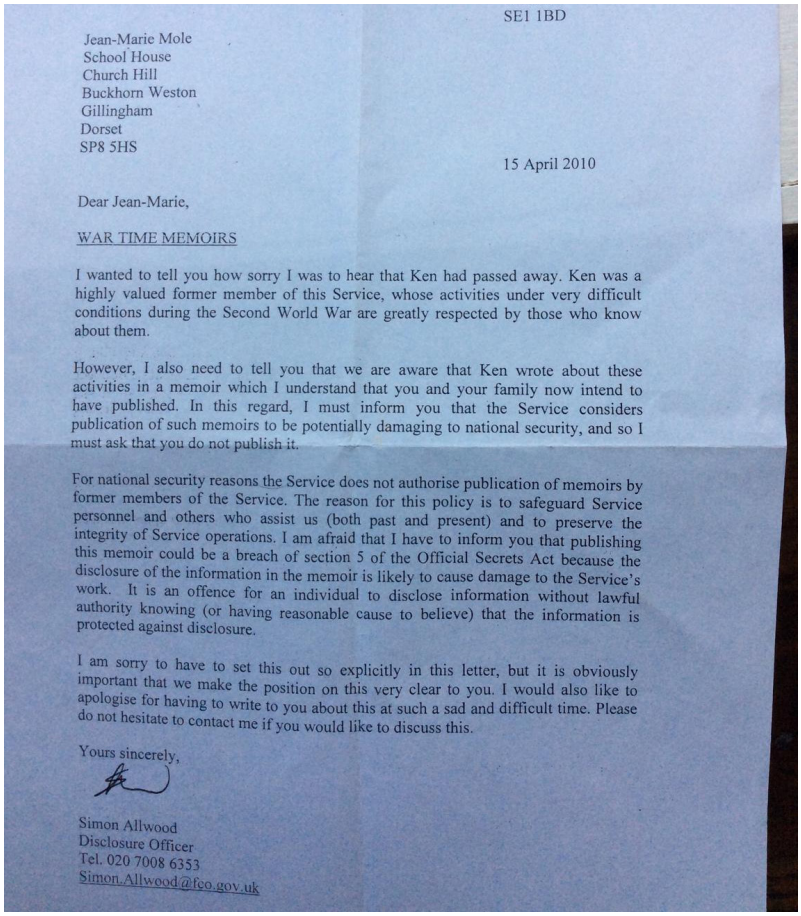
Much of the information regarding the activities of intelligence agencies in the Pacific War has remained secret, and consequently, historical narratives have been skewed. The British government, for example, does not authorize the publication of memoirs of former members of the Secret Service under the Official Secrets Act. The Act regulates the disclosure of information by current and former members of Britain's security or intelligence services. According to the Official Secrets Act, memoirs written by former intelligence personnel are censored to safeguard Service personnel and others who assist the British government (both past and present) and to preserve the integrity of Service operations. As the Act notes, the disclosure of a memoir is prohibited if it "causes damage to the work of, or of any part of, the security and intelligence services." The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a maximum of two years' imprisonment or an unlimited fine for conviction following indictment of any of the offenses in the Act."[64]

The publication of Kenneth Mole's memoir is therefore considered prohibited under the Official Secrets Act. The publication in the United Kingdom of an account by a former member of the Secret Service, without authorization, is in contravention of the Act. After Mole's

61 John Potanovic: USS Archerfish Deck Log and Patrol Report, (November 9th – December 15th 1944).
62 Jospeh. F. Enright: USS Archerfish Deck Log and Patrol Report, (November 9th – December 15th 1944).
63 Mole, *A Mole in our Midst,* 53.
64 OSA, Section 10(1)(a)

death in 2010, his family's attempt to publish the memoir was halted by the British government. The family was informed by the British Disclosure Office that the publication of *A Mole in our Midst* breached "Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act because […] the memoir is likely to cause damage to the Service's work."[65]

Yet, since 1989, there have only been thirteen cases prosecuted under the Art, with three involving members of the public—an MP's staff member, a writer, and a TV producer. Of the thirteen, five officials, and one member of the public spent time in jail. The longest sentence received—one year—was served by a former intelligence agent who attempted to sell information a Dutch intelligence agency.[66] Significantly, the thirteen cases involved relatively new classified information. The publication of a memoir recounting events from the Second World War is thus unlikely to be pursued. Moreover, the publication of information prohibited under the Official Secrets Act does not prohibit publication abroad. Indeed, in the case of *Observer and Guardian v United Kingdom* in the European Court of Human Rights in 1991, the fact that a former MI5 personnel's memoir, *Spycatcher,* had been published in the United States played an important role in its subsequent publication in the United Kingdom.[67] The publication, or reference to, *A Mole in our Midst*, outside of the United Kingdom is therefore unlikely to be problematic.



SE1 1BD

Jean-Marie Mole
School House
Church Hill
Buckhorn Weston
Gillingham
Dorset
SP8 5HS

15 April 2010

Dear Jean-Marie,

WAR TIME MEMOIRS

I wanted to tell you how sorry I was to hear that Ken had passed away. Ken was a highly valued former member of this Service, whose activities under very difficult conditions during the Second World War are greatly respected by those who know about them.

However, I also need to tell you that we are aware that Ken wrote about these activities in a memoir which I understand that you and your family now intend to have published. In this regard, I must inform you that the Service considers publication of such memoirs to be potentially damaging to national security, and so I must ask that you do not publish it.

For national security reasons the Service does not authorise publication of memoirs by former members of the Service. The reason for this policy is to safeguard Service personnel and others who assist us (both past and present) and to preserve the integrity of Service operations. I am afraid that I have to inform you that publishing this memoir could be a breach of section 5 of the Official Secrets Act because the disclosure of the information in the memoir is likely to cause damage to the Service's work. It is an offence for an individual to disclose information without lawful authority knowing (or having reasonable cause to believe) that the information is protected against disclosure.

I am sorry to have to set this out so explicitly in this letter, but it is obviously important that we make the position on this very clear to you. I would also like to apologise for having to write to you about this at such a sad and difficult time. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Allwood
Disclosure Officer
Tel. 020 7008 6353
Simon.Allwood@fco.gov.uk

Personal family papers. From British Disclosure correspondence with Kenneth Mole's wife – Jean-Marie Mole.

65 British Disclosure Office (PO BOX 1300, London, SE11BD) Correspondence with Kenneth Mole's wife – Jean-Marie Mole. See Appendix A

66 *Former MI6 man Daniel Houghton admits secrecy breach*. BBC News, 14 July 2010, as accessed: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10629017; *Bungling spy who tried to betray MI6 secrets for £2m walks free*. Daily Mail, 4 September 2010, as accessed: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1308718/MI6-worker-Daniel-Houghton-jailed-trying-sell-secrets.html#ixzz1h56xLtel; Davies, Caroline. *MI6 man tried to sell colleagues' names for £2m*. The Guardian, 3 September 2010, as accessed: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/sep/03/mi6-man-jailed-selling-names

67 *The Observer and Guardian v. The United Kingdom,* 51/1990/242/313 , Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights, 24 October 1991, available at: http://www.refworld.org/cases,ECHR,3ae6b7234.html [accessed 15 March 2018]

The Resident Enemy

A Study of Civilian Antisemitism in World War II Japan

By SHIRIN M. SADJADPOUR, UC BERKELEY

The whole relationship of the Japanese to the West is necessarily discordant and ambivalent: one admires and loathes Western civilization… [then] one demands idealism of oneself.[1]
Karl Löwith, *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism*

Antecedents

The anomalous nature of Japanese antisemitism can first be derived from its unique culture -- one that is rooted in folklore heavily influenced by the country's long history of isolation. The Japanese, despite their relatively late exposure to Judaism and its followers, had for centuries maintained a uniform perception of "foreigners" in the broadest sense; the artistic and oral expressions of those who were both unfamiliar and unseen were persistent however lacking in factual evidence or sheer contact. Foreigners in the Japanese mind have, for the most part, been regarded with contempt and suspicion as indicated by a supernatural being known as *marebito* in ancient Shinto myth. According to Iwai Hiroshi's *Encyclopedia of Shinto* the *marebito* is defined as follows:[2]

> "Rare person. A term originally referring to a visitor. Orikuchi Shinobu defined *marebito* as spiritual entities that periodically visit village communities from the other world — the "everlasting world" (*tokoyo)* across the sea — to bring their residents happiness and good fortune. Orikuchi traced the prototype of the *marebito* to ancestral spirits (*sorei*). Despite the dread and disdain of community residents for the *marebito*, their belief that the *marebito* bring blessings led to the development of customs for and notions of welcoming the *marebito*."[3]

Although the *marebito* were known to bear gifts, the uneasiness associated with "visitors from afar" on native soil had evolved over time, eventually anthropomorphizing into a major figure of Japanese Shinto lore: the *oni*.

The *oni* are considered a *yōkai* (loosely translated to "bewitching," "apparition," or "mystery"), a class of supernatural spirits often characterized as malevolent and mischievous, and have been interpreted as a representation of the "foreigner" since its rather ambiguous conception. While its artistic depictions vary, the *oni* typically takes the form of a hideous and horned ogre-like creature. It has long and unkempt black hair, claws, and a curved horn on either side of its head; its skin is most commonly blue or red (see figure 1).[4] The *oni*'s distinctive build, movements, and wide-mouthed maniacal laughter in early folk art resemble the barbarity ascribed to Japanese caricatures of Occidentals. The *oni* is notorious for its trickery and ability to corrupt, thus its victims are primarily archetypical Japanese women -- porcelain and frail -- who symbolically embody the essence of Japan's spiritual purity. This character's significance, however, resides in its role within a fundamental structure of Shinto mythos -- that is, the invocation, propitiation, and ultimate expulsion of an encroaching, evil deity.[5]

The conflicting paradigms of the *marebito* and *oni* conditioned the way in which Japanese people would later conceive Jews. German Jews in particular, however interestingly belonged to two categories of the foreigner in Japanese mythology. Whereas the "enlightened" German scholars who represented westernness and civilization aligned with the *marebito,* the deviance associated with Jews in 19th and 20th century European antisemitic thought matched that of the *oni*. The duality of German Jews profoundly contributed to the ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding their status during World War II; they were simultaneously imagined as dangerous "visitors from afar" by virtue of sensationalized Jewish stereotypes and admirable members of a highly esteemed German culture.

Furthermore the "foreigner" has, throughout Japanese history, been cyclically propagated depending on the most menacing cultural competitor of the time.

1 Karl Löwith, *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995) 228.
2 Japanese names in the text and notes appear in the Japanese order, surname first.
3 Hiroshi Iwai, *Encyclopedia of Shinto* trans. *Shinto Jiten* (Shibuya-kyu Tokyo: Kokugakuin University Press, 2004), 102-3.
4 James F. Davidson, "Memory of Defeat in Japan: A Reappraisal of '*Rashomon,*'" *The Antioch Review* Vol. 14, no.4 (December 1954): 497.
5 David G. Goodman, and Masanori Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1995), 16.

Figure 1: A traditional depiction of a samurai battling an *oni*. Source: Artist unknown, woodblock print

Similarly the broad categories of *oni* and *marebito* were applied to peoples and nations, acting as hollow vessels to be filled by any relevant "other." Each peril exhibited some or all of the following: adherence to an occult religion; pursuit of a grand conspiracy for global conquest geographically, culturally, and spiritually (or creation of a single world order); an overwhelming desire to destroy Japan's national identity.[6]

Japan's obsession with its self-proclaimed uniqueness can perhaps be traced back to China's direct and indirect guidance in constructing Japan's culture. In the early Edo period, Japan idealized Chinese civilization and for centuries borrowed freely from it: language, religion, government, architecture, and art among many others. By the 19th century however, Japanese intellectuals claimed their nation had surpassed China, and the masses were subsequently conditioned to adopt a cultural contempt for their new rival. Citizens completely transformed their perception of a country which had in elemental ways given shape to their own society.[7] In a psychological study of Japanese consciousness, experts concluded that substantial similarities between Japanese culture and its Chinese predecessors threatened strengthening notions of Japanese exceptionalism.[8] By fabricating a rivalry between nations, Japanese intellectuals sought to perhaps destroy any lingering sense of cultural debt that stood in the way of Japan's uniqueness.[9] Pejorative racial depictions of China, especially popularized throughout the Meiji period, provided a foil against which Japan confirmed its own national identity -- one independent and superior to that of any other country.

Even before Japan's exposure to 20th century antisemitism, nationalists had already developed a theory of an alien occult religion whose global conspiracy would destroy Japan's "pure" national essence. Thus Japanese antisemitism cannot completely be attributed to the cultural-religious models mentioned above. Its emergence prior to World War II was preceded by the "Christian threat," articulated and urgently disseminated by Japanese nationalist Aizawa Seishisai's *Shinron* of 1825:

> "They all believe in the same religion, Christianity, which they use to… destroy native houses of worship, deceive the local peoples, and seize those lands. These barbarians will settle for nothing less than subjugating the rulers of all nations and conscripting all peoples into their ranks. And they are becoming aggressive. Having overthrown [other] native regimes… they turned their predatory eyes on our Divine Realm."[10]

Although Europeans remained largely out of sight in early Japanese history, Western nations entered the forefront of Japanese concerns as they dominated the global sphere through political interference, spiritual condescension, and economic exploitation.[11] Within this context two key incidents elicited Aizawa's writings. First, China's humiliating defeat against Britain during the Opium War (1842) reduced the country to a semi-colonial status; second, the religious institutions governing Japanese spirituality had been steadily declining for two centuries.[12] Fearing Japan's potential spiritual subversion by a western power, Aizawa created a terrifying portrait of the "Christian barbarian." Over time he, alongside a committee of zealous bureaucrats and nationalists generated a sense of national urgency in the face of this approaching beast and negotiated the establishment of State Shinto, an all-encompassing governing system that will be discussed later.

Ironically however, this recurrent plot's intent

6 Seishisai Aizawa, *Shinron* (1825), 55.

7 Louise Young and Frank Dikotter, "Rethinking Race for Manchukuo: Self and Other in the Colonial Context" in *Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1997), 158-76.

8 Stanley Rosenman, "Japanese Anti-Semitism: Conjuring up Conspiratorial Jews in a Land without Jews" in *The Journal of Psychology* vol. 25 (Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis, 1997), 2-32.

9 Young, "Rethinking," 159.

10 Seishisai Aizawa, "Shinron" in *Meiji bunka zenshu,* vol. 15 (Kyoto: Nihon hyoron-sha, 1929), 24-25.

11 Löwith, *Martin Heidegger*, 228.

12 Goodman, *Jews in,* 19.

was never to instill a genuine or lasting sense of hatred for another group or peoples. Instead, the elaborate construction of a dangerous "other" reawakened preexisting notions of Japanese exceptionalism within the collective psyche during periods of spiritual or political atrophy. It demanded total participation in the heroic defense of this mythical uniqueness. By propagating a conspiracy that could theoretically result in Japan's demise, leaders mobilized the citizenry to attain ulterior agendas -- for example, justification to declare war.

Between the Chinese, Christians, and Hitler's 20th century "Jewish Menace," the driving force of Japanese history was seemingly the fear of cultural and spiritual collapse, especially by the hegemonic hand of the Occident. The Jews would experience the same pattern of exploitation on the eve of World War II: Japanese antisemitism was, above all else, strategic in nature, manipulating threats both real and imagined to galvanize the nation's spirit to ease profound anxieties of cultural atrophy and the usurpation of its identity.[13] As a result, the antisemitism exhibited by Japanese civilians was shallow, temporary, and a direct product of the government's ever-fluctuating wartime stance on the "Jewish Question." Moreover the public's general lack of uniformity was evident as nuanced degrees and expressions of antisemitism existed within different socio-economic classes.

Germany and Japan are the unheavenly twins of post-war history. [14]

Martin Bernd, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World*

An Unusual Alliance

The post-World War I conferences of Versailles and Washington established a new order defended by the Western victors, namely the United States, Great Britain, and France. While these great powers maintained the status quo through the interwar years, a reinvigorated Germany and the emerging Japanese Empire presented challenges to the forces in control: both were led by fiercely right-wing nationalist governments that sought to antagonized the Western superpowers and expand their borders. By 1933, Japan and Germany withdrew from the League of Nations and grew increasingly isolated. Under these circumstances Adolf Hitler considered Japan to be a potential ally. Perhaps his earliest image of Japan as the victor over Russia in 1904-1905 continued to shape Hitler's thought. To an extent he even admired the Japanese, having on several occasions compared Aryan heroism to that of the Japanese *samurai* and later expressed a desire to utilize the *kamikaze's* sacrificial and loyal spirit as a model for German soldiers.[15] However by virtue of their mutual adversary, Communist Russia, Hitler opted for a Japanese-German alliance. This would eventually amount to the Anti-Comintern Pact, concluded on November 25, 1936 (see figure 2).

The ideological dissonance between Germany and Japan made the Anti-Comintern Pact all the more startling. The foundation of Nazism can be derived from Hitler's ideological manifesto, *Mein Kampf,* in which he details a hierarchy of racial superiority in the following categories: "the founders of culture, the bearers of culture, and the destroyers of culture, [with] only the Aryan considered as the representative of the first group."[16] How could Japan, whose peoples were classified as inferior within his structure, find a German alliance appealing? Moreover, the Japanese Empire had declared itself and its "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" a champion of racial equality -- why should they embrace an ally whose ideology sanctioned the persecution of an entire ethnic

Figure 2: Japanese Embassador Kintomo Mushakoji signing the Anti-Comintern Pact; to his right, German representatives Joachim von Ribbentrop and Dr. Hermann von Raumer; to his left, German diplomat Otto von Erdmannsdorff; in the background from left, Captain Kojima, Dr. Theodor Böttiger, General Hiroshi Oshima, Kojiro Inoue, legation secretaries Yanai and Furuuchi

13 Goodman, *Jews in,* 24.

14 Bernd Martin, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995), 12.

15 Adolf Hitler and Martin Bormann, *The Political Testament of Adolf Hitler: the Hitler-Bormann Documents, February-April 1945*, ed. L. Craig. Fraser (CPA Book Publisher, 1945), 16-28.

16 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* trans. Ralph Manheim (Munich: Eher Verlag, 1994), 241.

group?[17]

Official circles in Japan -- except for the few pro-German groups within the Navy -- kept their distance from National Socialism. Indeed the Japanese feared the danger of communist infiltration and greatly abhorred Soviet Russia's ideology, but if Hitler wanted to gain Japanese support against the Soviet Union the race question had to be resolved. In his own analysis of World War I Hitler suggested that encirclement had been Germany's undoing; in any future war he wanted to ensure Germany was "back free" when attacking its opponents.[18] Japan acted as both a counterweight against the Soviet Union and an ally against Western powers, whose colonial holdings in Asia made them vulnerable to Japanese expansion.

Although high-ranking Party members found ideological compromise to be unthinkable, the German Foreign Office repeatedly tried to define "Non-Aryan" in such a way that it sounded acceptable to Japanese ears.[19] The practical benefits of a Japanese ally proved too great for Nazi leadership, and so Japan was promoted to an "honorary Aryan" status.[20] The Japanese interpreted the pact solely as an anti-Soviet defense alliance to strengthen her Manchurian and Chinese territories. Hitler on the other hand simply used the Anti-Comintern Pact to declare Nazi Germany's claim to worldwide power -- the agreement would be rendered meaningless soon after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939.[21] It was within this context of secrecy, deception, and ideological dissonance that the Anti-Comintern Pact was formalized, perhaps resulting in the lasting contention regarding Japan's unresolved stance on her ally's "Jewish Question."

Whatever is still true culture in contemporary Japan, particularly simplicity, politesse, any beauty, is nothing new but rather something which preserves what is ancient.[22]
Karl Löwith, *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism*

Karl Löwith

In 1933 Adolf Hitler arrived in Marburg, where local professors were cordially invited to view one of his increasingly anticipated orations. In accordance with his racial policies, however, all Jews were denied access to the marquee in which he made his speech. Karl Löwith, a highly respected professor of philosophy at Marburg University, was one of the many Jewish scholars who would slowly become ostracized from their intellectual circles (see figure 3). Following his eventual escape to Japan, Löwith wrote an illuminating memoir, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933*. Through this insightful work I will address the development (or perhaps lack of development) of antisemitism within the intelligentsia in Japan. In the earlier stages of Hitler's rise to power, Löwith recalls the ambivalence and skepticism expressed by his fellow colleagues both Jewish and Aryan. A close friend, whom Löwith refers to as "F" in his memoir, suggests that while Hitler was definitely not the future *Führer,* he was perhaps a magical idiot who would get the masses moving until the real ruler emerged. Others were described as partly unsure, partly disappointed, but surely unconvinced.[23]

Löwith's concerns heightened, and with good reason: "The German uprising manifested itself in Marburg as it slowly did elsewhere, at first by the SA men hounding Jews" he writes.[24] He gave his final lecture in 1933, just as the first round of Jewish professors were being dismissed by the university board. Although there was some protest amongst the faculty, Löwith's Aryan colleagues suggested they did not exacerbate the current situation, to wait and see how things would develop, and perhaps avoid any personal exposure until the anti-Jewish

17 Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 163.
18 Hitler, *Mein,* 80.
19 Martin, *Japan,* 216.
20 Hitler, *The Political,* 31.
21 Martin, *Japan,* 221.
22 Löwith, *Martin Heidegger,* 230.
23 Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933: A Report* trans. Elizabeth King (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 75.
24 Löwith, *My Life,* 77.

measures would "surely moderate."[25] By the final months of 1933 Löwith's social contacts in Marburg had depleted almost entirely -- only occasionally would some of the older professors visit him at his home.[26] As Löwith received letters from his Jewish colleagues -- most of them had emigrated, finding positions in Zurich, Paris, and Rome -- a sense of urgency dawned on him as he scrambled for employment elsewhere. For the next two years, he would travel through Italy, Paris, and Prague, working as a visiting lecturer in universities not yet tainted by Nazi influences.

Upon returning to Marburg for three days in the spring of 1935, Löwith learned that his teaching license was revoked in Germany altogether despite any legal justification for its revocation.[27] He even travelled to Berlin to contest the decision, where he was vaguely told by the Ministry that the chairman of the lecturers' association had taken such measures without any particular charges being brought against him.[28] It was during these next few days when Löwith met a Japanese academic, who, to Löwith's surprise, greeted him with unusually cordial goodwill and claimed his most recent work, a habilitation thesis, had been eagerly followed among Japanese philosophers.[29] On his suggestion Löwith wrote to Baron Kuki, a famed professor of philosophy in Kyoto. Almost a year later, in June of 1936 Löwith received a telegram from Japan, offering him a chair at the University of Sendai. He later discovered this offer had been tirelessly negotiated by the Baron himself, who battled numerous attempts by the German Embassy and German Cultural Institute to block Löwith's appointment on racial grounds.[30]

After a 33 day sea voyage from Naples, Löwith arrived in the Japanese city of Sendai. From the first day, Löwith noticed the exceptional politeness and courtesy with which he was received and shepherded to his housing.[31] There, he was allowed a spacious university home where he made a seemingly effortless transition and, within months he felt at home -- so much that the comfort led to a slip of the tongue as he would often say "Marburg" instead of "Sendai."[32] The allure of a German-Jew in the local academic circle was palpable among his Japanese colleagues, lending a new impetus to his existence in a foreign country. Löwith recalls that he did not even initially notice his stark difference in appearance as he was just one of the few Germans in Sendai at the time -- while he expected to make the acquaintance of other westerners (most of whom were Canadian, Italian, Swiss, or American), he often preferred the company of his Japanese colleagues.[33] Löwith's academic clout effectively defined his sociopolitical status as a German Jew in Japan, impacting -- rather favorably -- his associations with local citizens of the same intellectual class.

Japanese Naivety

As heightening tensions in Europe caused small ripples of antisemitic thought to reach Japan, Löwith attempted to enlighten locals deceived by German propaganda whenever the opportunity arose. What he had previously theorized, however, was quickly proven to be true: how *could* the Japanese distinguish what was Jewish and what was German when there were so few in their proximity?[34] Löwith observes that his Japanese associates were simply incapable of it, no matter how much they read about it in the newspapers: "most of them were totally naive," he writes, "and some of them said 'Jews' when they meant England and American capital."[35] The anecdote regarding mathematician "K," a professor at Sendai University, provides a classic example of this case:[36]

> "One day [K] came to see [Löwith] for the correction of an essay written in German -- [K] knew that [Löwith] was Jewish. He had received an invitation from a German mathematician to co-author a publication which was to contain a German, an Italian and a Japanese contribution, and was due to appear in Germany. K felt most honored, and wrote a foreword in which he expressed the hope that the collaboration between the three mathematicians would strengthen the tripartite pact between Japan, Germany and Italy in science too. In

25 Löwith, *My Life,* 79.
26 Löwith, *My Life,* 82.
27 Löwith, *My Life,* 109.
28 Löwith, *My Life,* 109.
29 Löwith, *My Life,* 110.
30 Löwith, *My Life,* 113.
31 Löwith, *My Life,* 117.
32 Löwith, *My Life,* 117.
33 Löwith, *My Life,* 117.
34 Löwith, *My Life,* 101.
35 Löwith, *My Life,* 101.
36 Löwith refers to real characters using the first initial of their first name for the purpose of anonymity.

> the same breath he expressed his highest admiration for Albert Einstein, without whose scholarly work modern algebra would not have progressed. At the end of the foreword he thanked [Löwith] for his help with corrections. When [Löwith] tried to get the point through to him that it would be better to omit his name, and that the printing of his sentence about Einstein could cause serious problems for his German colleague, this harmless man was suddenly nonplussed, so remote to him seemed the notion that in Germany even 'pure' mathematics could be stifled by National Socialism."[37]

K's separation of the academic sphere from the socio-political climate of World War II was not entirely unique, nor was it unusual among the intelligentsia. In his memoir, Löwith mentions the loyalty with which his Japanese colleagues protected him: when Otto Koellreutter, a German professor and Party member visited Sendai, Löwith's colleagues carefully avoided any arrangements that would expose his Jewish background.[38] Some had attended his lecture, during which Koellreutter illustrated the unity of the *Volk* and Nazi leadership with a comical diagram in which he drew a vertical line from the apex of the word *Führer* to the *Volk* written below.[39] The Japanese professors in attendance had found his lecture so trivial that they did not withhold their criticism -- a seemingly shocking display to Löwith, who believed the Japanese to be a typically passive and unassertive peoples.[40]

Despite Japan's pact with Nazi Germany, the driving force of its ally's ideology -- antisemitism to a genocidal degree -- was never formally recognized or supported by the Japanese government. In July 1937 the Nazi government requested a list of German citizens employed at Japanese universities from the Foreign Ministry. The Nazis procured a total of 74 names, enabling the German embassy in Japan to identify and potentially eradicate German Jews working as instructors -- these intellectuals, including Löwith were thought to have tremendous (and dangerous) potential in influencing Japanese public opinion. By September 1939 the Japanese-German Cultural Exchange Cooperation Association, a Nazi affiliated academic coalition established in 1938, expressed their contempt of German Jews in Japanese academia as they were unqualified to represent Germany. Such a statement was issued to Japan's Minister of Education and was swiftly rejected. In response the department reserved its power to appoint and dismiss all foreign instructors at its discretion, asserting that Germany's "race problem" was limited to Germany alone:

> "[The German-Jewish instructors'] qualifications as teachers is not a matter of race but of their scholarly accomplishments. Foreign instructors [held] personal contracts with the presidents of the schools where they [were] employed. The ministry [had] no authority to override presidents' discretionary decisions to renew or terminate contracts."[41]

Although this statement would soon make school presidents the targets of Nazi pressures, Japan had for the time being protected German-Jewish instructors from expulsion. The academic contributions offered by such instructors were not to be restricted by racial prejudices although in theory nationality was a criterion used to define foreign civilians -- either as allied, neutral, stateless, or enemy nationals.[42] Despite an underlying admiration for western cultures, Japanese rhetoric failed to distinguish among various Europeans beyond the broad categorization of *gaikokujin*, whose three characters that form the word directly translates to outside (*gai*), country (*koku*), and person (*jin*). In contrast there were pre-existing words for the Chinese (*chugokujin*) and the Koreans (*kankokujin*), both of whom were considered Japan's inferiors. The very word used to describe Jews, *yudayajin,* was only popularized by necessity in the early 1900s when imported and translated works of antisemitic Soviets following the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and subsequent Russian Civil War (1917-1922) reached Japan -- the most important text being the translation of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Stationed in Siberia

To understand the crux of Japanese antisemitism, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* must be discussed. Following the Russian Revolution and collapse of the Romanov Dynasty in October 1917, the Japanese gov-

37 Löwith, *My Life,* 102.
38 Löwith, *My Life,* 121.
39 Löwith, *My Life,* 121.
40 Löwith, *My Life,* 121.
41 Makoto Honobe, *Ruisu Fuugo Furanku Sensei: Seitan Hyakunen Kinenshi* (Kofu-shi, Japan: Ruisu Fuugo Furanku sensei tsuito shaonkai, 1993), C.7.38.
42 W. Puck. Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored Guests: Westerners in Wartime Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017) 10.

ernment joined American, French, British, Canadian, and Czech forces in a joint intervention. Japanese troops amassed a force of 72,000 soldiers, and although intervening nations had withdrawn by June 1920, the Japanese military remained in Siberia. Because *The Protocols* text was distributed throughout the region as required reading for anti-Bolshevik detachments, many Japanese soldiers acquired copies themselves hoping that from it, they could understand the nature of Russia's revolution.[43]

This text, nicknamed "the bible of anti-Semitism" by notable historian and Japanologist David Goodman, consists of 24 lectures in which members of a fictitious secret Jewish government -- "the Elders of Zion" -- present an elaborate plot for world domination by controlling the press and global economies. These "Elders" supposedly believe that societal order could only be achieved through the coercion and subversion of all non-Jewish peoples by a single, hegemonic Jewish leader. While *The Protocols* was admittedly fabricated by the Russian secret police in France during the infamous Dreyfus Affair (1894-1899), the Japanese mistakenly recognized *The Protocols* text as fact due to its authoritative position in Russian society.

The text's influence on Japan was nothing short of profound: it introduced a frightening image of a people who were previously unknown to them. As discussed in the first pages of this paper, Japan's long history of isolation and racial homogeneity generated an underlying mythos of potential destruction by a foreign power. Suddenly *The Protocols* text suggested this very fate: Japan's ultimate fear was both realized and justified as it materialized before them in the form of the Jews. In response the Japanese authorities hurriedly began negotiating policies to address this new threat. However, this task proved problematic: few Japanese in those days had any knowledge of Jews or Judaism in general -- it was only after the 1931 occupation of Manchuria that a sizable Jewish population entered the Japanese mainstream for the first time.[44]

Within Major General Higuchi Kiichiro's Japanese headquarters in Siberia, there were a number of officers assigned to specialize in Jewish affairs. The role of these "experts" was to advise Japanese authorities on what should be done with the thousands of Jews who fled the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik Revolution and settled in the Japanese-controlled Manchurian city of Harbin. Colonel Norihiro Yasue and Naval Captain Koreshige Inuzuka, two middle-echelon officers, quickly rose to fame as Japan's leading experts on Jews after personally undertaking the translation of *The Protocols* text in 1924. After engaging in many conversations with White Russians throughout the early 1920s, the two presented an assessment of Jews after having subscribed *The Protocol's* antisemitic rhetoric. During an exceptionally turbulent period of Japanese history -- civilian restlessness, severe economic problems, a devastating earthquake -- it was no wonder that the officers were quick to identify Jews as perfect culprits for their own country's problems.

Under the pseudonym of *Hokoshi*, Colonel Norijiro authored more antisemitic texts such as *The Revelation of a Revolutionary Movement, Behind the World Revolution,* and *The Jewish Control of the World,* disseminating propaganda worthy of Goebbels himself:

> "The Bolshevik Revolution is part of the Jewish plot… they seek to control the world's economy, politics and diplomacy. Unless the Japanese realize this danger Japan will be left behind in the struggle for world supremacy; The League [of Nations], Freemasons… are under Jewish control. The Jews are revolutionaries and they are encroaching on the Manchuria economy, and the Japanese must guard their interests in both Japan and Manchuria against the Jews."[45]

Captain Koreshige similarly engaged in the antisemitic discourse under pseudonym *Kiyo Utsunomiya,* publishing numerous articles, newsletters, and journals. In effect the officers popularized the use of publications as a literary

Figure 4: Vacationing Japanese women play tennis at one of many Karuizawa tennis courts. Photographer John Nelson, taken in 1930.

43 Goodman, *Jews in,* 78.

44 David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis & Jews: the Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945* (New York: KTAV Pub. House, 1988), 170.

45 Ho Koshi [Yasue Norihiro], *Sekai kakumei no rimen* [Behind the World Revolution] (Tokyo: Niyu Meicho Kankokai, 1924), 36.

outlet for Japanese antisemitism, a unique feature of Japanese wartime culture.

Indeed Japan's Jewish population remained minimal throughout the following decade, but it did not prevent antisemitism from garnering the citizens' interest. The Japanese viewed the Jews with a mixture of admiration and fear -- intellectual circles were especially drawn to their mystique and the general fanaticism they caused throughout the western world. Between 1926 and 1935, approximately 60 books and 80 articles regarding the Jews circulated throughout Japan alongside a myriad of translated works by Russian antisemites.[46] This initial surge increased exponentially shortly after the translated release of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf.* Publications surrounding the "Jewish Peril" popularized rapidly in Japan from the late 1930s through wartime with a total of 170 books and 472 articles: in less than a decade, the book count tripled while the number of articles grew sixfold.[47] In 1938 alone, approximately 20 books and 117 articles about Jews were published.[48]

Figure 5: Child sits on patio of Antonin and Noemi Raymond's summer home in Karuizawa. Photographer unknown, taken in 1933.

Finally, the spectacle of Hitler's racist regime in Germany transformed the Jewish Question into one of the most gripping topics of debate within the Japanese intelligentsia. It is this very phenomenon that distinguishes Japanese antisemitism from that of Germany: Hitler's antisemitism was founded in sheer hatred. It was internalized by the masses so deeply that they unwittingly enabled and justified the extermination of an entire people by a fundamentally antisemitic government. In Japan, however, the concept of a cunning, organized, and powerful people generated intense curiosity specifically within academia, catalyzing a desire to study them, learn from them, and potentially exploit them. What Löwith observes as a German-Jewish academic in Japan is that its antisemitism never escalated beyond an intellectual fad, discourse at best. Indeed an antisemitic faction existed, but it found expression in publications rather than in acts of government-sanctioned aggression. With the exception of a few threats and politically motivated antisemitic posters, there were no attacks against Jews or Jewish institutions, nor were there any explicitly antisemitic organizations in Japan.[49]

Summers in Karuizawa

Although Löwith's time in Japan was mostly spent in Sendai, he enjoyed summers at the resort town of Karuizawa alongside other upper-class European emigre families. This rural mountain town was first touted as a potential summer retreat in 1881 by British scholar-diplomat Ernest Satow (1843-1929), who described the area as "a beautiful plateau… an ideal destination for hiking, plant viewing, and escaping Japan's oppressive summer temperatures."[50] With the timely completion of a direct railroad between Tokyo and Karuizawa in 1893, the town attracted many foreign travelers who were "summering," a typically western aristocratic practice of escaping to the cool breezes and panoramas of mountainside resorts.[51]

Karuizawa's general ambiance was a replica of western tastes: the main street was lined with foreign bookstores, antique shops, barbers, Christian churches, and English signs. The Karuizawa Summer Residents' Association (KSRA), formed in 1913 by the town's western "regulars," financed the construction of traditionally western recreational facilities such as tennis courts, nine-hole golf courses, and skiing and skating sites (see figure

46 Ben-Ami Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese: The Successful Outsiders* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1993), 170.

47 Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese,* 170.

48 Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese,* 170.

49 Jennifer Golub, "Japanese Attitude towards Jews" in American Jewish Committee Publications (Los Angeles: American Jewish Committee, 1992), 5.

50 Ernest Mason Satow and Ian C. Ruxton, *The Diaries and Letters of Sir Ernest Mason Satow (1843-1929), a Scholar-Diplomat in East Asia* (London: Mellen Press, 1998), 29.

51 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 76.

4).[52] Moreover the summertime villas lacked Japanese authenticity as they often resembled standard two-story wooden cabins with open verandas and spacious patios (see figure 5).

Over the next few decades however, "summering" was adopted by Japan's upper class, particularly by businessmen and diplomats, who soon constructed large residences alongside pre-existing villas. By 1930 the proportion of of foreign-owned residences dropped from a majority to just one-third, with Japanese vacationers noticeably outnumbering foreigners. Nonetheless, Westerners continued to shape the appearance and feel of the community, fashioning a setting that would serve as a surrogate for their homelands.[53] In a period when western aesthetic was becoming increasingly synonymous with modernity, Karuizawa predominantly attracted Japanese aristocrats associated with American or European businesses or Christian churches -- that is, those who sought a taste of the "western" life. Throughout the 1930s Karuizawa exhibited a unique case of gentrification as it quickly transformed into a Western residential and commercial district surrounded by lower-income Japanese neighborhoods.

In 1937, summer traffic between Tokyo and Karuizawa had grown so much that additional train and airplane services were provided. Despite the economic depression, the town's luxuries had steadily increased: two full golf courses, three luxury hotels, horse stables, race tracks, markets, public baths, and a myriad of other facilities were constructed with the number of private villas peaking at 1,454.[54] By 1939, the Karuizawa settlement was a multiracial cosmopolitan community functioning under a class-contingent inclusivity: Löwith recalls how one was more likely to come across colleagues and acquaintances in Karuizawa than anywhere else in Japan.[55] In effect, the town was a racially insular community based on pre-war socioeconomic privilege. German Jews like Löwith managed to integrate themselves into Karuizawa's semi-autonomous, semi-exclusive society among other Westerners. This form of segregation was unwittingly honored by surrounding Japanese communities despite international tensions as there was little to no effort to distinguish between Nazi Germans and Jewish Germans.[56]

The KSRA was fundamental in nurturing Karuizawa's Japanese-Western integration; the association enacted bylaws in its bilingual handbook to formalize "a spirit of kinship."[57] This handbook, written in 1930 by KSRA leaders, hoped to affirm an alliance of Japanese and non-Japanese residents with "the purpose of promoting the welfare and contributing to the pleasure of all persons spending the summer in Karuizawa" while advocating "international friendship among the residents."[58] Despite efforts to foster racial inclusivity, the KSRA did not necessarily shelter the town from Hitler's pre-war and wartime influence: it approved and oversaw the annual National Socialist Teachers Association (NSTA) conference commencing in August 1939.[59] It was during this time that Karl Löwith would make his first visit to Karuizawa, where he happened upon two ex-colleagues from Marburg participating in the event. While one pretended not to remember Löwith, the other was embarrassed, making hurried excuses as to why he was unable to see Löwith.[60]

Although both were active Party members, Löwith feared "Dr. D," chairman of the NSTA and secretary of the German-Japanese Cultural Institute in particular. He was known as "Japan's Custodian of Culture," an "obsequious and pushy, subservient and petty-bourgeois" Nazi whose ability to speak and read Japanese rendered him exceptionally able to influence the Karuizawa residents.[61] He had unsuccessfully attempted to block Löwith's appointment as early as 1936 and was still endeavoring to prevent the renewal of his contract.[62] "Dr. D" was a zealous organizer, Löwith recalls, and his energy in the pursuit of propagandist aims was considerable as he overexerted himself in serving the new German culture.[63] Nonetheless Löwith's time in Karuizawa would soon prove his fears wrong: while visiting Nazi ambassadors assailed their audience with Nazi ideology, Japanese

52 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 77.
53 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 77.
54 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 79.
55 Löwith, *My Life,* 123.
56 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 46.
57 Shoko Komatsu, *Karuizawa to hisho* (Kyoto: Yumani shobo, 2009), 3.
58 Komatsu, *Karuizawa,* 3.
59 Löwith, *My Life,* 123.
60 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
61 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
62 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
63 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.

spectators often visibly exhibited the superficiality with which they embraced their ally's rhetoric.[64]

Take, for example a public lecture Löwith attended, in which the Japanese nationalists Fujisawa and Kanokogi spoke of Pan-Asiatic politics.[65] In an effort to connect with attending Party members, Löwith believes, the two speakers attempted insubstantial comparisons between Germany and Japan: "Confucius was compared with Hitler… Japan's relationship with China [was compared] to that between Germany and Austria," both of which were ridiculed soonafter.[66] Furthermore Fujisawa freely referred to Hitler's *Mein Kampf* out of context, oblivious to the fact that certain "unfavorable" chapters regarding Japan's racial status were omitted in Japanese translations.[67] Löwith concludes:

> "[The Japanese] could never tell how far their solidarity with Germany really extended, in contrast to which the Germans, as ever, posed as the superior school masters who had to explain their mission to the Japanese. The German side openly expressed their doubts about the outcome of the war with China, while the Japanese bowed to Germany's strength and ended their lectures with *'Heil Hitler'*… Beyond that [the Japanese] had little to say about race, blood, heritage, ancestors…"[68]

In contrast, expatriates were quick to adopt Nazi teachings and applied them almost immediately. Consider the case of married couple "R," who Löwith met prior to 1939. "R" lived happily as German expats in Japan for some decades already: while the husband was the founder and headmaster of a German school in Yokohama, the wife oversaw the "Sunshine House" in Karuizawa, a grand villa open year round.[69] During the formative years of the Nazi Party, Löwith recalls her personal disgust towards its ideology as she frequently criticized the intolerance she read about within those circles.[70] Within just a few years however, perhaps due to the Japanese-German alliance and subsequent influx of Nazi sympathizers in Japan, "R's" political views would shift dramatically, aligning suddenly with that of their villa's steady flow of National Socialist guests:

> "[The husband] had adopted the habit of complaining about his burdens and annoyances [as being a German resident in Japan]... although he, like most old residents in Japan, actually led an extremely comfortable life, as expatriate teachers' salaries by far exceeded those in Germany… His wife took charge of managing the spacious house, whose furnishings and fare suddenly corresponded to German customs in every way… She treated her Japanese servants and the local authorities in the worst possible way, because she did not have the least inclination to understand and adapt to foreign customs and Japanese psychology."[71]

During his visit in 1939, Löwith had asked to recuperate in "R's" home. "While there would have been absolutely no question about it under normal circumstances," Löwith writes, "the registration of a [German Jew] at a German bed-and-breakfast hotel had become a tricky problem due to the policy of racial segregation and its ensuing complications."[72]

Figure 6: Portrait of Altschul. Photographed by Klaus Titzler, 1987

"R" did eventually allow Löwith to stay, however under the condition he ate dinner later than usual as she did not want to startle the German New Year guests with a Jewish resident.[73] Despite Löwith's geographic isolation

64 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 46.
65 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
66 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
67 Löwith, *My Life,* 124.
68 Löwith, *My Life,* 125.
69 Löwith, *My Life,* 127.
70 Löwith, *My Life,* 127.
71 Löwith, *My Life,* 127.
72 Löwith, *My Life,* 128.
73 Löwith, *My Life,* 128.

from Nazi rule, German expatriates within local Japanese communities exhibited an unfaltering Party conscience. Perhaps the distance from home emboldened Germans to behave as if still in Germany, an innate sense of duty Löwith describes as "keep[ing] in with" the National Socialist agenda.[74]

Antisemitism in Japan is one of the greatest anomalies in the history of that prejudice. A country containing no more than 1,000 Jews, one that is neither a Christian nor Muslim society, should not—logically speaking—have anti-Semitism.[75]
Jennifer L. Golub, *Japanese Attitudes Toward Jews*

Heinz Altschul

After Japan was opened to Western commerce in 1862, a small population of Jewish traders settled on the mainland and established a community in Kobe, a historically significant port city. Although Jewish emigres never constituted so much as a percent of Japan's population, by 1923 the Jews of Kobe had founded multiple cultural institutions, a synagogue, and a Zionist organization, becoming the oldest surviving Jewish community in Japan at the time. In 1940, a total of 50 Jewish families were accounted for in Kobe by local officials.[76] Among these families was that of Heinz Altschul, a German-Jew with a blue collar background and an long history with Japan (see figure 6). His memoir, *As I Record These Memories… Erinnerungen eines deutschen Kaufmanns in Kobe (1926-29, 1934-46)* provides an intimate record of life in Kobe as a middle-class German-Jew. Through his work, I will illustrate the ever-fluctuating and often conflicting nature of Japanese antisemitism as demonstrated by the local citizens' day to day interactions with Altschul throughout the war.

Altschul was born in the industrial city of Dresden, a factory hub for three major industries: cigarettes, cameras, and women's hats. His father was a manufacturing representative for Winckler and Co., a company that distributed raw materials used in hats worldwide, and Altschul would soon adopt the same line of work in his adult life. In 1925, his father secured a job for Altschul at Winckler and Co.'s office in Japan -- it was during these formative years that Altschul developed a fondness for Japan, prompting him to return there as a permanent resident in the years leading up to World War II.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Altschul recognized the many signs which foreshadowed the dangerous trajectory of Nazi leadership, the first being his sudden removal from the Dresden Rowing Club.[77] Although initially hesitant to leave Germany, the Jewry's worsening conditions convinced Altschul to accept an auspicious five-year contract in Japan as a department head. Within a few months, he, his wife Hanni, and infant son Bob travelled to Kobe where they would settle for the next two decades. Between 1934 and 1938, Altschul admits he could not think of any better time than the years spent in their *Nunobiki* home -- with its mountainside brook, pleasant neighbors, the camphor trees and beautiful views, Kobe was a wonderful place to call home, so long as it remained untainted by Hitler's hateful ideology.[78]

In 1938 however, Altschul began to notice the presence of Nazism in Kobe, particularly within local organizations where he was an active member. One of the committee men in the German Club, for example, was an ardent Nazi by the name of Brüggemann. He had eliminated Altschul from an upcoming bowling tournament despite the protest of others, eventually forcing him to resign altogether.[79] From then, Altschul explains, friends with whom his family had good relationships for years suddenly did not know them anymore -- neighbors would cross the street when they saw Altschul, in fear that if they talked to him, one of the resident Nazi affiliates would immediately retaliate.[80]

Compliance

To understand the behavior of Japanese citizens, one must note the nature of Japan's collective psyche, particularly in the years leading up to wartime until 1945. The *kokutai* (loosely translating to "national body") was a national policy responsible for the development of Japanese ultranationalism and the spiritual mobilization of the nation's citizenry.[81] The theory's origins can be traced back to the works of Kato Hiroyuki (1836-1916)

74 Löwith, *My Life,* 129.
75 Golub, "Japanese Attitude," 5.
76 Tamar Engel. "The Jews of Kobe" in *The Jews of Kobe* (1993, xenon.stanford.edu/%7Etamar/Kobe/Kobe.html), 1.
77 Heinz Altschul, *Heinz Altschul: "As I Record These Memories…" Erinnerungen eines deutschen Kaufmanns in Kobe (1926-29, 1934-46)* ed. Nikola Herweg, Thomas Pekar and Christian W. Spang (Germany: OAG Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 2014), 32.
78 Altschul, *As I Record,* 33.
79 Altschul, *As I Record,* 39.
80 Altschul, *As I Record,* 40.
81 The *kokutai* is a particularly complex and fundamental feature of Japanese ideology in the years leading up to World War II. To avoid any needless explanations, this paper

and Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), Meiji era nationalists who were concerned with Japan's socio-political position in a noticeably Western-dominated world order. To combat both real and imagined notions of national inferiority, Meiji leaders sought the unification of Japanese citizens under an all-encompassing imperial institution. This construct was rooted in an ancient myth in which the emperor was a direct descendent of the Shinto sun deity *Amaterasu-ōmikami* -- from this, it is suggested that the citizens were a mythical national family under the divine leadership of the emperor, recognized as an incarnation of the state itself. The singularity of the Japanese peoples was propagated extensively as the nation's distinguishing characteristic, one that would later justify the government's expansionist claims for a Japanese Empire.[82]

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Prince Fumimaro Konoe, the *Kokutai no Hongi* ("Cardinal Principles of the National Body") pamphlet was issued by the Japanese Ministry of Education. The text, which contained teachings regarding every aspect of the state, was disseminated as a work of ideological indoctrination: from it citizens were taught to put the nation before the self, defining the state as a "family" in which one's loyalty to the emperor should be no different from the filial and sacrificial kinship between a child and their father.[83] In effect, the *kokutai* would result in the psychological and spiritual synchronization of the Japanese citizens, each bred to behave in whatever way necessitated by the state.

Many of Altschul's personal experiences portray this national phenomenon. In 1941 for example, "excitement was great everywhere after the news of Pearl Harbor," Altschul recalls, "and during the first year the Japanese were in very high spirits. Germany was now an ally, and much was made of it in the Japanese press. So the Germans had a good standing all of a sudden, much better than it had been before, and they took advantage of it."[84] Some of the Germans who had already been living in Japan now acted as self-appointed Nazi ambassadors, exploiting the wave of Japanese civilian respect towards resident Germans. Although they had assimilated quite smoothly into local society, Aryan Germans suddenly wished to make themselves authoritative figures in the community, often demanding citizens to act accordingly towards Jewish residents when in their presence. Altschul's rowing club coach Glombik, a close friend from his earlier years, "became the number one Nazi in Kobe" and a feared resident to Japanese citizens who suddenly "behaved strangely when [Altschul] appeared somewhere" near Glombik.[85]

These Nazi-affiliated German residents, despite lacking any sort of official title in Japan, oftentimes influenced the behavior of local Japanese officials by virtue of the Axis Pact which promoted a German-Japanese friendship. When Altschul attempted to renew his travel permit, a Japanese police officer exhibited unusually arrogant behavior:

> "[Altschul] asked very politely one of the policemen if [he] could borrow his pen, [to which he responded] very obnoxiously. [He] threw [Altschul's permit] on the table, and said, 'if you do not have a pen, then you cannot get a permit.'"[86]

It was only after a presumably pro-Nazi German exited the office that a different Japanese officer graciously agreed to talk to him about his permit renewal -- "these were things you got used to," Altschul reflects, "and there was nothing else you could do about them."[87] Since the state was, at the time, focused on strengthening its relationship with Germany, the citizens were to interact with their allies accordingly. This form of antisemitism, as personally experienced by Altschul, was visible under certain conditions unique to wartime; for example, in the presence of Nazi officers or ambassadors as described above. Only then did antisemitism become an outward expression, not in the form of violence but through temporary, ideological code switching and hesitant acts of exclusion.

In the same vein, the onset of Nazi pressures to oversee Japan's German-Jewish population greatly affected Altschul's most intimate associations, especially that with Sumie-san. At age 19 she began working for the family as their son's caretaker and stayed with them for 11 and a half years -- long enough to be considered fam-

mentions the broadest elements of the *kokutai* and the necessary context relevant to understanding Japanese anti-Semitism. The complete translation of *Kokutai no Hongi* issued by the government in 1937 is readily available. For further information, see Murayama Masao's "The Logic and Psychology of Ultranationalism" (1946).

82 Bruce E. Reynolds, *Japan in the Fascist Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 58.

83 *Kokutai No Hongi. Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan* (Harvard University Press, 1949).

84 Altschul, *As I Record,* 45.

85 Altschul, *As I Record,* 50.

86 Altschul, *As I Record,* 74.

87 Altschul, *As I Record,* 54.

ily, according to Altschul.[88] During those years she even learned German, understanding almost every word of the family's conversations.[89] Nonetheless Altschul writes that she, "like all Japanese, was of course very patriotic" and when the time came, her innate devotion to the state easily outweighed her personal connection to the family:

> "All servants who worked for foreigners were drilled by police to report regularly about what took place in the household. So the police was fully informed of every step [they] made, of every visitor who came to [them], of every place [they visited]... [Altschul] considered Sumie-san fully trustworthy, but as a matter of her patriotism [they] knew she would have to report whatever she thought was important to the police. So [they] had to be quite careful… and this situation became more important and more serious as the war progressed…"[90]

A Complicated Kindness

The German-Japanese friendship slowly faded into the background of Japan's wartime culture as the political situation between the United States and Japan became more strained. Following Pearl Harbor, the American forces retaliated with equal force -- this was an event that Altschul recalls vividly:

> "When the 'Doolittle air raid' occurred, I happened to be with Bob in one of the shopping streets not too far from our house, when all of a sudden sirens sounded all over, and people rushed back and forth very excitedly, not really knowing what was going on. And all of a sudden, an airplane flew overhead… and a few minutes later we heard some explosions on the other side of Kobe… Of course, it made a big impression, and it showed that Japan could be attacked, too."[91]

Japan's wartime enemy had shifted away from the grand Communist threat as outlined by the Anti-Comintern Pact's international mission and centered its focus on the United States. Otto Tolischus (1890-1967), a Pulitzer prize winning journalist, presented a rather illuminating theory of Japanese racism towards resident Jewish refugees during wartime in his book *Tokyo Record* (1943). In it, he observes that public sentiment often paralleled current events, a tendency towards greater public hospitality when diplomatic relations warmed and more "latent hostility" when they deteriorated.[92] The innocuous nature of Japanese public opinion suggests that citizens often felt little to no personal stake in political matters; it was even unclear as to whether or not they paid much attention to them.

As Otto described it, most Japanese were utterly disinterested in the Anti-Comintern Pact or the Axis Alliance, nor did they feel any responsibility to contribute to Hitler's promised "new order" in which the Japanese were placed (rather reluctantly for diplomatic purposes) under the category of "honorary Aryans." Despite the deep dislike of Japanese people he witnessed among his American colleagues, his time in Japan was described as pleasant, having experienced no evidence of racial hatred on the streets.[93]

Testimonies from assimilated Westerners like Heinz Altschul added a neglected dimension to the discourse of civilian racism in Japan. Their accounts of wartime conditions call for further reconsideration of the conflict as a race war driven by race hate, as embodied by Japan's allied power, Nazi Germany. Did Japanese civilians subscribe to exhortations about racial purity and spiritual supremacy as evidence of their own racial preeminence, and, were those ideas internalized enough to effectively manifest outward acts of racial hostility towards German-Jewish refugees in their town?

Evidence from Altschul's personal experiences suggest that whereas propaganda was effective in inciting nationalism and generating ideological conformity, in many cases the Nazi's imported racial policies were unsuccessful in producing a sincere hatred of Jews -- most of whom went unrecognized in local communities. This indicates, rather, that a clear ideological divide separated most civilians -- even intellectuals -- from their military and political leaders, that is, those who came in most direct contact with Nazi party members. Even so, many political leaders were ambivalent towards Hitler's racially driven ideology, typically adopting the bare minimum of antisemitic policies to appease pressures from the German consulate. The Gestapo *Obersturmbannführer* Josef Meisinger's attempts to influence the Japanese authorities

88 Altschul, *As I Record,* 54.
89 Altschul, *As I Record,* 54.
90 Altschul, *As I Record,* 54.
91 Altschul, *As I Record,* 48.
92 Otto D. Tolischus, *Tokyo Record* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1943), 43.
93 Tolischus, *Tokyo Record*, 46.

is a fitting example.

Acting as a liaison between the Gestapo and German Embassy in Japan, Meisinger came to Tokyo in 1941 to present an extermination or enslavement policy for the 18-20,000 Jews in Japanese-occupied territories. His proposals included creating a concentration camp on Chongming Island or sending Jews on freight ships off the coast of China to starve.[94] Because Japanese authorities in Shanghai refused to yield to Meisinger's pressures, his proposals were reduced to the creation of what became the Shanghai ghetto, an isolated slum with about twice the population density of Manhattan. Compared to the mass genocide undertaken in Nazi-controlled Europe, some 2,000 Jews would die in the Shanghai ghetto.[95] The Japanese authorities' rhetoric neither represented nor reflected the interests of the citizenry at large. For much of the local Japanese population, interactions with resident foreigners were guided by practical concerns driven by a broader political agenda -- a form of racism that demanded the compliance of racist thought specifically during wartime rather than the adoption of it as a lasting ideology beyond the context of World War II.[96] In the words of famed Israeli historian Ben-Ami Shillony:

> "The Jews to whom the anti-Semitic theories applied were, to the Japanese, remote figures, living in Western cities, controlling the world economies and manipulating Russian communism. The theories had little relevance to Jews actually living in Japan or in Japanese-controlled-territories, who were neither particularly rich nor revolutionary, and whom the Japanese in any case could not distinguish from other Western foreigners. As the Japanese did not categorize foreigners by religion, Jews were treated in the same way as other Westerners."[97]

Ideological Dissonance

Although the *kokutai* guided the behavior of Japanese citizens, this was also contingent upon the unity of the Empire's leadership. Indeed the *Kokutai no Hongi* text provided uniform teachings of topics ranging from domestic policies to civilization and culture; however there was nothing to be said about Japan's national stance on antisemitism, nor was there ever an official government statement made during World War II. The leadership's position on the matter was profoundly split: this ambivalence is apparent in the government's ever-fluctuating policies towards resident Jews.

As briefly mentioned before, military officials and "Jewish experts" Colonel Norihiro and Naval Captain Inuzuka expressed starkly antisemitic attitudes in anonymously written publications. Following Japan's initial exposure to a global Jewish conspiracy as articulated by *The Protocols* text, the two became leading figures of Japanese antisemitism through the 1920s and into the early 1930s.

When the issue of antisemitism entered the forefront of Japanese politics following the Anti-Comintern Pact, a conflicting consensus was made at the Far Eastern Jewish National Conference of 1937. At the conference, which took place in the small village of Harbin, 21 delegates representing Jewish communities of the Japanese mainland and occupied territories gathered to discuss the circumstances of their residency in the wake of the Anti-Comintern Pact. Following an opening declaration by Dr. Avraham I. Kaufman, a leading figure of Jewish communities in Japanese territories, and the recitation of a Hebrew prayer, Major General Higuchi declared a rather surprising stance regarding the "Jewish Question" in Japan:

> "While we find quite serious Jewish problems in some European countries, [the Imperial Japanese Empire] with the national manifesto of 'Gozoku Kyowa' [five-family harmony] offers sufficient protection for the hard-working and righteous Jewish people and tolerates their peaceful existence… I sincerely look forward to the Jews making a great historical contribution to the objective of building the New Far East."[98]

In total defiance of their German ally's racial policies, Japanese officials present at the Far Eastern Jewish National Conference -- Army Major General Higuchi, Army Major Onouchi Hiroshi, and Army Major Kawamura to name a few -- accepted the following conditions within a single day:

> "Although the Jews are deprived of their human rights and national rights in some countries, they enjoy every kind of national right and complete

94 O'Neill, Mark. "A saved haven: Plans to rejuvenate Shanghai's rundown former Jewish ghetto will celebrate the district's role as a sanctuary during the second world war," *South China Morning Post*, August 1, 2006; Features: Behind the News; page 11.

95 Ernest G. Heppner, *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 47.

96 Brecher, *Honored and Dishonored,* 7-8.

97 Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese*, 165.

98 Naoki Maruyama, "Facing a Dilemma: Japan's Jewish Policy in the late 1930s" in *War and Militarism in Modern Japan: Issues of History and Identity,* ed. Guy Podoler (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2009), 22-38.

> freedom in economic activities to the same degree as other nationals living in both Japan and Manchukuo. There is no oppression against minorities that degrades the moral virtue of the nation and hurts the common culture of human beings in both Japan and Manchukuo. The Jewish residents in both Japan and Manchukuo devote their abilities and powers as loyal subjects to the development of the country where they live in awareness of their duties to the country."[99]

The German government's immediate protest came as no surprise to Japanese leaders. Its Tokyo Embassy filed a formal complaint with the Japanese Foreign Ministry to be forwarded to the Army Ministry. Chief of Staff Hideki Tojo, however, ignored it entirely.[100]

Just one year later, celebrated army general and director of the Foreign Ministry's Jewish research department Shioden Nobutaka (1879-1962) attended an antisemitic conference in Erfurt in 1938 on behalf of the Japanese government. During this trip he personally met with Julius Streicher, the editor of a notoriously antisemitic journal *Der Stürmer* in which Shioden was featured in a center piece titled "General Shioden, the Japanese anti-Semite."[101]

On December 5, 1939, the highest officials within the Japanese government -- the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita, Army Minister Itagaki Seishiro, and Navy Minister Yonai Mitsumasa -- held a secret meeting, later to be called the Five Minister's Conference. The objective was clear: to resolve the Japanese government's position on the "Jewish Question," yet little progress was made. While some refused any involvement with the Jewish people altogether, others found great value in the imagined power of the Jewry, hoping to exploit it for the benefit of Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" and its quest for Empire. The latter opinion would serve as the basis of Yasue and Inuzuka's "Fugu Plan" which suggested the mass-settlement of Jews in an autonomous region near Shanghai. In effect, the officers believed the Jews would bring with them technological advancements, managerial skills, and massive capital, thus developing the occupied territory on behalf of the Japanese Empire.[102] Interestingly, the two notoriously antisemitic officers never considered adopting plans to eliminate the Jewry despite the prevalence of Nazi ideology and their personal admiration of Hitler.

In a publicized meeting with a group of Jewish businessmen in 1940, Foreign Minister and famed diplomat Yosuke Matsuoka stated he "was the man responsible for the alliance with Adolf Hitler, but nowhere has [he] promised that [Japan] would carry out [Hitler's] antisemitic policies in Japan… I have no compunction about announcing it to the world."[103] When the Pacific war began, Matsuoka publicly professed that "entering into the Tripartite Pact was the mistake of [his] life… Even [his] death won't take away this feeling."[104]

Finally, in July 1941 Shioden would emerge again with the publication of his book, *Yudaya shiso oyobi undo* ("The Jews: Their Thought and Their Movements"), with an introduction by the former prime minister Baron Hiranuma Kiichiro. The text, which further articulated Jewish plans for world domination, garnered a widespread readership. Shioden utilized his popularity to release more antisemitic articles and give speeches, eventually transforming his personal antisemitic beliefs into a political platform. In the Diet elections the following year, Shioden received more votes in his electoral district than any candidate in the whole country.[105]

As exemplified by the various conflicting statements made between 1937 and 1941, Japanese leadership would continue to lack any cohesion regarding antisemitism until the war's bitter end. The citizens were met with ambivalence and no standard to conform to -- Japan was ruled by a coalition of military officers and bureaucrats, none of whom attained a preeminent position.[106] It is no wonder that like its leadership, the masses exhibited an equally conflicting form of antisemitism where in which the extent of hostility mirrored the opinion of several individual government figures. Although sociopolitical pressures for conformity were strong, the constant need for consensus prevented antisemitism from taking root in Japan.

Furthermore the power of the *kokutai* and its ability to galvanize citizens rests, perhaps, in the cultural au-

99 Maruyama, "Facing a Dilemma," 28.
100 Maruyama, "Facing a Dilemma," 28.
101 Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese*, 172.
102 Meron Medzini, *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Japan and the Jews During the Holocaust Era* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016), 52.
103 Johanna M. Meskill, *Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan: The Hollow Diplomatic Alliance* (New Brunswick: AldineTransaction, 2011), 48.
104 「三国同盟の締結は、僕一生の不覚だったことを、今更ながら痛感する。これを思うと、死んでも死にきれない」"第69回 ぼく一生の不覚 〜三国同盟締結・松岡洋右の誤算〜"NHK. September 26, 2001. Retrieved October 30, 2010.
105 Shillony, *The Jews and the Japanese*, 173.
106 Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 173.

thenticity of the text -- that is, the work itself is founded in Japanese myth, written solely for the Japanese people, with the purpose of glorifying the nation's "uniqueness." Despite the noticeable uniformity of its people, Japan was able to foster this desired outcome with tireless ideological indoctrination over the course of multiple generations. For this reason the characteristics that defined Japanese citizens -- self-sacrifice, loyalty, conformity, etc. -- was possible to achieve through the *kokutai,* and proved useful in mobilizing a country towards war. In contrast antisemitism was an imported ideology that lacked any basis in Japanese history, having only been introduced in the early 1900s. A hostility towards Jews, who were long unknown to the Japanese people, served little to no purpose unless exploited for political gain -- say, to please a fundamentally antisemitic ally like Germany.

> *The [Japanese] learn what is foreign in itself, but they do not do so for themselves… and for this reason they do not have any impulse to transform what is foreign into something of their own.*[107]
>
> Karl Löwith, *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism*

Until the Bitter End

For the entirety of World War II, the status of the German Jew in Japanese society remained unresolved and profoundly split both in theory and practice. Part of this polarity can be attributed to two ancient Shinto representations of the "foreigner" which provided broad generalizations to classify any unwanted "other:" the first was the malevolent and dangerous foreigner destined for expulsion, and the second was a gift-bearing visitor from afar. Although Japanese perceptions of varying foreigners were often uniform, the classification of Jewish peoples proved problematic. They, unlike "others" of the past, exhibited distinct traits in both the *oni* and *marebito* lore: they were "culture destroying" peoples who were particularly influential in what Japan believed to be a world dominated by the West. As a result Japanese leaders were torn between admiration and fear, ally and enemy, forming inconsistent policies that generated fickle civilian sentiment towards resident German Jews.

The autobiographies of Karl Löwith, an intellectual and Heinz Altschul, a blue-collar worker provide differing accounts of Japanese antisemitism loosely determined by class. In the case of Löwith, a pre-existing culture of collegiate interactions between Japanese and western scholars proved favorable even in the tide of war. More often than not Löwith's niche expertise shielded him from antisemitic behavior by colleagues, who remained bound to the principles of meritocracy. Despite the pervasiveness of Hitler's racial hierarchy following the translation of *Mein Kampf*, Löwith's "Jewishness" was seemingly diluted in Japan; he was able enjoy the leisure afforded by the Japanese upper class even during a war waged against his own people.

Ripples of Nazi rhetoric continued to reach Japanese shores in the years following the Anti-Comintern Pact, however Germany's racial ideology aroused curiosity, skepticism, and scholastic interest among intellectuals in Japan, generating academic debate and research in the form of publications. The circulation of Hitler's "Jewish Peril" endowed Löwith with the same sensationalized Jewish qualities of economic prowess, cultural influence, and the fear associated with their perceived strength. Japan's "Jewish Question" became a question of what could be learned from the Jews and applied to strengthen Japan; as a German Jew Löwith was a spectacle in a foreign intellectual circle, bearing the roles of both teacher and student:

> "This connection between [him and his Japanese colleagues], who seem to be incompatible, is highly optimistic: one wants to preserve the best in what is Japanese and supplement it with Europe's best, thereby adding to the perfection of Japan and the perfection of Europe, as if cultures could be combined in such a way that one brings home the good and leaves behind the bad…"[108]

In the case of Altschul the average Japanese citizen did not subscribe to the antisemitism readily expressed by the German public, but a heavily diluted form of it emerged. The extent of civilian antisemitism ebbed and flowed to match the state of Japanese-German relations as expressed by their leaders. Local citizens were inconsistent in their behavior towards Jews as they lacked any depth of influence despite German attempts to indoctrinate its overseas ally. The nature of Japan's wartime culture was that of compliance, and a fundamental aspect of such behavior was devotion to Japan and Japan alone. What the government sought to gain from European civilization was not its religious or moral foundation (the

107 Löwith, *Martin Heidegger,* 232.
108 Löwith, *My Life,* 127.

internal), but its external advancements: the technology, military organization, and science that made the West so powerful.[109] Perhaps it was for this reason that Nazi teachings did not have the power to shape the Japanese psyche in the same way the *kokutai* did. Since what was western in origin was not and could never be innately Japanese, an imported ideology like antisemitism had little to no purpose for citizens who were conditioned to embody and preserve all that was spiritually and morally Japanese. The extent to which they understood Hitler's National Socialism was shallow, and what they were taught of antisemitic thought was not particularly convincing. Thus what was foreign remained foreign, and the residual traces of Nazi ideology that did resonate in the Japanese public was predominantly limited to wartime alone.

Figure 1
Walker, Lee Jay. "Art of Japan and Yoshitaki: Oni Demon, Namazu, and Japanese Culture." moderntokyotimes.com. http://moderntokyotimes.com/?p=3454 (accessed 3 November 2017).

Figure 2
Getty Images. "Germany and Japan: Anti-Comintern Pact." gettyimages.fr. http://www.gettyimages.fr/detail/photo-d'actualit%C3%A9/germany-free-state-prussia-berlin-anti-comintern-photo-dactualit%C3%A9/548788841#-germany-free-state-prussia-berlin-anticomintern-pact-japanese-the-picture-id548788841 (accessed 30 November 2017).

Figure 3
NSSR Philosophy. "Karl Löwith." newschoolphilosophy.wordpress.com. https://newschoolphilosophy.wordpress.com/2015/02/15/karl-lowith/ (accessed 12 November 2017).

Figure 4
Old Tokyo. "Playground in Karuizawa, 1930." oldtokyo.com. http://www.oldtokyo.com/playground-in-karuizawa/ (accessed 18 November 2017).

Figure 5
Maruko, Mami. "American photographer recounts childhood in wartime Karuizawa." japantimes.co.jp. https://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2012/08/07/general/american-photographer-recounts-childhood-wartime-karuizawa/#.WiYn9xNViko (accessed 18 November 2017).

Figure 6
Bild Archiva Austria. "Heinz Altschul." bilsarchivaustria.at. http://www.bildarchivaustria.at/Pages/ImageDetail.aspx?p_iBildID=17534668 (accessed 30 November 2017).

109 Löwith, *Martin Heidegger,* 230.

Teaching in the Desert

White Women Educators in Japanese-American Incarceration Camps

By EMILY XIAO, YALE UNIVERSITY

Like any other fourth grade teacher in America, Martha Shoaf began the school day by leading her pupils in the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.[1] Yet, the flag in her classroom was an unusual one—it had been sketched on a twelve-inch piece of art paper by a boy in the class. Before the makeshift flag existed, Shoaf and her students had saluted to an empty corner. The school was unusual, too, for it had been built inside the barbed wire fences of Manzanar. Located in central California, Manzanar was one of ten concentration camps administered by the War Relocation Authority (WRA) during World War II. And Shoaf's class consisted entirely of Japanese American students who had been removed from their homes on the West Coast after Executive Order 9066.[2]

White women like Martha Shoaf traveled to the camps to take up teaching positions in schools set up by the WRA. There, they found educational facilities inadequate and supplies scarce; they also encountered young students whose lives had been profoundly disrupted by incarceration. Many of these teachers articulated their motives using the language of benevolent compassion, and they often assumed an oppositional stance toward racism. Moreover, the benevolent, yet unequal, relationships they forged with their students could not be easily described in terms of a straightforward, unidirectional exertion of disciplinary power.[3] Indeed, they could be genuinely affectionate at times. I will argue, however, that these relationships were ultimately constrained by the official role that white women teachers played as cultural facilitators in a program of assimilation. They operated within a broader, state-directed project founded upon racist assumptions of cultural pathology in Japanese American students and the desire to socialize them into the white American mainstream.

A number of scholars, including Thomas James and Gary Okihiro, have sought to reconstruct the significance of education in the Japanese American incarceration experience.[4] James argues that the camps were pedagogical institutions concerned with the "transmission of culture through formal schooling," delineating the function of WRA schools in organizing social meanings within camp communities.[5] I build upon this work by focusing specifically on white women teachers as important agents of cultural transmission. Meanwhile, Okihiro's work on Nisei student relocation to college campuses engages with the concept of anti-racism and the contributions of white advocates who devoted their labor to the relocation project. He links his study to earlier works about white individuals who performed benevolent care work for Asian American charges, often with the "added baggage of paternalism, or maternalism, termed 'white racist love' by Asian American writers."[6] Okihiro challenges the binary of racism and anti-racism, exploring ways in which inclusion, through forced assimilation, may be fundamentally racist. In addition, John Howard's study of Jerome and Rohwer is useful for its analysis of the camps as gendered spaces that offered expanded opportunities for women.[7] This provides a helpful starting point for my examination of the dynamic between the white and Japanese American women who taught in camp schools, and the ways in which gender and race must be understood as relational concepts. In understanding the particular attitudes and deeds of white women who taught in camps—and the gendered dimension of their contributions—I also draw from the work of scholars like Peggy Pascoe and Margaret D. Jacobs, who have written about the ideological practices of white women

1 Martha Shoaf, interviewed by John Allen, November 7, 2002, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive.

2 On February 19, 1942—two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor—President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing the mass removal of Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast. Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were subsequently incarcerated in concentration camps in the western interior of the United States. More than two-thirds of them were U.S. citizens.

3 Peggy Pascoe also challenges this framework in her study of Victorian women reformers working in the Chinese American community in the American West. See Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), xix.

4 Thomas James, *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942–1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987); Gary Okihiro, *Storied Lives: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999).

5 James, *Exile Within*, 4.

6 Okihiro, *Storied Lives*, x.

7 John Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front: Japanese Americans in the House of Jim Crow* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 12.

reformers during the Victorian era. I seek to explore how similar contradictions of race, gender, and social authority may play out in a time period dominated by a different set of cultural assumptions.

I will begin this essay by exploring the diverse backgrounds and motivations of white women who taught in camp schools, extending their narratives beyond stories of pure altruism. I will then consider intercultural relations between white and Japanese American women, focusing on the ways in which both race and gender mediated their social position in the camps. The essay will then discuss the pedagogical underpinnings of the camp curriculum and its emphasis on democratic principles. Finally, it will seek to understand the various ways in which teachers engaged with these curricular aims in the classroom, with particular implications for the bonds they could form with Japanese American students. Ultimately, even the most well-intentioned educator was constrained by her ability to navigate unequal hierarchies of race and gender, and by the broader pedagogical project that had been laid out in the camps.

Coming to Camp, By Choice

"She had very honorable intentions, and she had every intent that she would try to rectify some of the wrongs that were being done to us," Henry Mitayake recalled of his high school freshman year teacher at Minidoka, a camp in Idaho. The wife of a Marine fighter pilot, Mitayake's teacher had read about the incarceration of Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor and felt that there was "some kind of injustice being done to these people." Sensing an opportunity for both personal career advancement as well as benevolent work on behalf of people in the camps, she volunteered to teach at Minidoka.[8]

In this section, I explore the motives underlying the decisions of white women like Mitayake's teacher to relocate to camp schools. How were their contributions understood, either by themselves or by the War Relocation Authority? To begin with, we should not take for granted that their presence within the camps was universally accepted among white Americans. Helen Amerman Manning, who also taught at Minidoka, recounted several occasions during the war when she walked down the streets of nearby Twin Falls, Idaho with a former student, a Japanese male, and encountered verbal harassment from white servicemen.[9] Though their friendship—made possible by wartime displacement and unequal levels of mobility—was one between teacher and student, it could nevertheless be perceived with great suspicion. Indeed, at a time when Japanese citizens and resident aliens were deliberately constructed as threats to national security, what did it mean that white women were able to live, work, and socialize in the camps? What were the factors that motivated them to teach young Japanese Americans who had been incarcerated? Altruism offers a partial explanation, but such benevolence must also be understood in the context of teachers' material circumstances, as well as the social mobility and legitimacy that these roles could provide.

White teachers who worked in the camp schools came from a range of geographical and ideological backgrounds. Henry Mitayake's teacher hailed from Idaho, where her husband had last been on assignment as a mining engineer.[10] Others traveled considerably greater distances to the state to take up their teaching positions. At Minidoka, Helen Amerman Manning initially lived in a dorm with several other teachers, consisting of two missionaries from Japan (one Baptist, one Episcopal), a woman from Emmett, Ohio, one from Boise, two from Minnesota, and one from Kansas.[11] Another teacher came from Occidental College in California, and Manning herself had grown up in New Jersey and received her education at Michigan State College and Stanford University; her paternal grandfather had been a missionary in Japan.[12] A seventh-grade student at Poston, in southwestern Arizona, attested to this striking geographical diversity when she wrote: "Our teachers are from outside of camp. Some from eastern, northern, southern, and western states and another from Hawaii."[13] Nevertheless, some regional variations could be observed. For example, almost all of the white teachers at Jerome and Rohwer were from the South, typically from Arkansas.[14]

Regardless of geographical origin, many of the teachers cited benevolent or altruistic motives for coming to camp. For example, Martha Shoaf, a graduate of UCLA, had Japanese friends who were incarcerated after the evacuation order, and she felt that she had to "do something"

8 Henry Miyatake, interviewed by Tom Ikeda, May 4, 1998, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
9 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito, August 2, 2003, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
10 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito.
11 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, September 29, 1942, ddr-densho-171-2, Helen Amerman Manning Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
12 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito.
13 Sheryl Ritchie, "School Life in Poston," in *Through Innocent Eyes: Writings and Art from the Japanese American Internment by Poston I Schoolchildren,* ed. Vincent Tajiri (Los Angeles: Keiro Services Press and the Generations Fund, 1990), 46.
14 Thomas James has attributed this selective recruitment to a desire to give those camp schools a visible connection to the local school system. James, *Exile Within*, 50.

about the situation. She returned to school to obtain her teaching credentials, then immediately signed up to teach at Manzanar.[15] Another teacher, Edith Waterman, often drove by the Santa Anita Racetrack, one of the temporary "assembly centers," and was deeply moved by the circumstances of the children she witnessed there.[16] Other forms of altruism were linked to religious institutions. Mary Blocher Smeltzer, who taught at Manzanar, was a member of the Church of the Brethren, a historic peace church founded upon principles of social activism. Her husband, Ralph, was also a teacher and had been ordained as a minister in the church. A conscientious objector to the war, he had refused to sell defense stamps in school. Motivated by a sense of social justice, the couple decided to travel to Manzanar together in September of 1942.[17]

Yet, there was more to the story than pure altruism. Teaching positions in the camps offered white women real opportunities for material advancement. Teachers working for the WRA received far higher salaries than those who worked in school districts in rural states, including the segregated white schools of the South.[18] Helen Amerman Manning expressed her astonishment at the level of pay: "I didn't have any other opportunities lined up, and my goodness. Two thousand dollars a year?" Combined with the subsidized pricing for room and board in camp, the job offer amounted to a "pretty good bargain."[19] Similarly, Elaine Clary Stanley chose to work at Manzanar rather than Huntington Beach High School, in California, because of the better pay.[20] One exception to this trend was Poston, a camp in southwestern Arizona that was under the jurisdiction of the Office of Indian Affairs until 1943. Because the OIA could not offer as high a salary as the WRA, the camp experienced a relatively higher rate of teacher turnover.[21]

Though I focus on white women who taught in the camps, there were also a fair number of male teachers, particularly at the high school and administrative level.[22] At Tule Lake, for example, the white teachers consisted of 46 women and 10 men; all of the male teachers worked in grades ten through twelve.[23] I nevertheless seek to understand teaching as a distinctly gendered profession, whose historical mythologization entailed such feminized images as the genteel schoolmarm and the old spinster. At the elementary school level, in particular, teaching had come to be regarded as women's work over the course of the nineteenth century; by the 1920s, over 90 percent of primary schoolteachers were women.[24] During the mid-nineteenth century, school reformers such as Henry Barnard and Catherine Beecher had promoted the notion that young, unmarried women who had completed their education were more nurturing than men and could best occupy themselves as teachers.[25] These ideas could be seen as continuous with those of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—namely, that educated women were necessary for bringing up knowledgeable citizens of a republic.[26] For white women, such images therefore shaped the social meaning and appeal of teaching opportunities in camp schools.

However, these same social expectations also imposed important limitations on many women's commitment to the teaching profession. Conventionally, new domestic responsibilities would demand these young teachers' attention after marriage, and their husbands would provide for their financial and material support.[27] Indeed, even when white teachers forged genuine intimacies with their Japanese American students in the camps, they nevertheless regarded their positions as jobs that they could leave to fulfill other obligations. Elaine Clary Stanley, for example, was eager to leave Manzanar to join her new husband in Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi.[28] And in a letter home to her family, Helen Amerman Manning remarked upon the imminent departure of one of her female

15 Martha Shoaf, interviewed by John Allen.

16 James, *Exile Within*, 31.

17 Mary Blocher Smeltzer, interviewed by Richard Potashin, July 17, 2008, Manzanar National Historic Site collection, Densho Digital Archive.

18 Howard, *Concentration Camps*, 95; James, *Exile Within*, 45.

19 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito.

20 Elaine Clary Stanley, interviewed by Richard Potashin, August 21, 2010, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Digital Archive.

21 Lane Hirabayashi, "Afterword," in *Through Innocent Eyes*, 95–96. Poston had been built on the Colorado River Indian Reservation and was therefore the only camp administered jointly by the War Relocation Authority and the Office of Indian Affairs, which oversaw the reservation system. See Jeffery F. Burton, Mary M. Farrell, Florence B. Lord, and Richard B. Lord, *Confinement and Ethnicity: An Overview of World War II Japanese American Relocation Sites* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 215–219.

22 Male teachers were likely perceived to be better prepared academically to work at the highest levels of the curriculum and to meet the challenge of disciplining difficult older boys. See Joel Perlmann and Robert A. Margo, *Women's Work? American Schoolteachers, 1650–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 94.

23 "Annual School Report," Education Section, Community Management Division, Tule Lake, 1944, Box 90, Reel 104, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Microfilm, Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

24 Perlmann and Margo, *Women's Work,* 1.

25 Perlmann and Margo, *Women's Work,* 29.

26 Perlmann and Margo, *Women's Work,* 30.

27 Perlmann and Margo, *Women's Work,* 29.

28 Elaine Clary Stanley, interviewed by Richard Potashin.

colleagues, who was getting married. Already dealing with an acute teacher shortage, Manning predicted that the school was "really going to be in a mess now."[29]

For many white women, the teaching profession was linked to social interpretations of their marital status and moral respectability in the community. In her study of women teachers in the American West, for example, Polly Welts Kaufman described the mythological ideal of the schoolmistress from the East as an educated, self-sacrificing, unbendingly moral figure dedicated to the welfare of children.[30] Indeed, some camp teachers used such legitimizing social roles to their personal advantage. An unmarried 38-year-old woman with a master's degree from the University of California, Virginia Tidball lost her job when the institution she taught at, El Dorado Junior College, closed its doors for lack of students during the war.[31] Having been unemployed for several months and eager to leave the family farm, Tidball contacted a number of WRA administrators about teaching positions in the camps in Arkansas. As John Howard has argued, she was able to benefit from playing the part of a "spinster teacher," a role seen as suitable for mobile and single white women.[32]

Another important "pull" factor that enhanced camp teachers' sense of mission was the patriotism attached to such teaching positions. Elementary school teachers at Minidoka received a handbook that urged: "May this challenge serve as an inspiration for your contribution to the war effort."[33] Similarly, the teacher's handbook for Amache Elementary School, at Granada, stated: "Probably at no time in your life have you launched on an experience which holds as many possibilities for service to your fellow man."[34] In general, wartime and accelerated industrial production had brought new opportunities for American women, whose activities were not merely domestic issues but also matters of national and patriotic concern. Teachers were among those who left their occupations for higher-paying jobs in defense industries; at the beginning of the war, the National Education Association reported a nationwide shortage of 50,000 to 60,000 teachers.[35] The War Relocation Authority therefore struggled a great deal to recruit and retain adequate teaching personnel for the camp schools. Indeed, many centers employed older teachers who had been out of the profession for a number of years, likely after getting married and leaving the workforce to raise families.[36] Such teachers were probably impelled to come out of retirement by the wartime "days of need," as suggested by M.P. Gunderson, a school principal at Tule Lake.[37]

These factors—altruism, patriotism, and material advancement—were all essential elements in the War Relocation Authority's recruitment of teaching personnel. By charging camp teachers with special civic duties, they imbued the position with a degree of patriotic significance that competed with the allure of other, more lucrative opportunities. Whether they were missionaries or conscientious objectors, former retirees or adventure seekers, the white women who came to teach in the camps professed a number of motivations for the work they took on. While we should continue to regard altruism as an important element of their story, we must also contextualize it within these women's personal and social circumstances. Moreover, even as wartime changes facilitated new opportunities for women—even for Japanese American women inside the camps, as we shall see—they did not completely overturn the constraints of race or gender.

Nisei Teachers' Perspectives

We turn now to the experiences of the incarceree teachers who came from inside the camps. Our understanding of the social position of white women in the camps would not be complete without some consideration of the intercultural relations between white women teachers and their Japanese American colleagues. After all, white women teachers interacted on a daily basis not only with their students, but also with the rest of the camp community. A comparison between white and Japanese American teachers demonstrates that teaching was not only a gendered profession, but also a racialized one. Moreover, we must look to specific configurations of both gender and race in order to locate sites of authority that white women teachers themselves might not have fully acknowledged.

29 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, November 5, 1944, ddr-densho-171-63, Helen Amerman Manning Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
30 Polly Welts Kaufman, *Women Teachers on the Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), xvii.
31 My discussion of Tidball is based on John Howard's biographical description in *Concentration Camps*, 95-96.
32 Howard, *Concentration Camps*, 104.
33 *Elementary Teachers' Handbook,* Minidoka Project Schools, Hunt, Idaho, Helen Amerman Manning Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
34 *Teacher's Handbook,* Amache Elementary School, Amache, Colorado, Box 39, Reel 45, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation.
35 James, *Exile Within*, 47.
36 "Second Quarterly Report, July 1 to September 30, 1942," circa October 1943, Box 1, Folder 4, Mary Buford Courage Papers, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.
37 M.P. Gunderson, "Personal Narrative of M.P. Gunderson, Elementary School Principal, High School Principal and Assistant Project Director," Community Management, Tule Lake, Box 98, Reel 114, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation.

It is important to note that the administration of camp education was strictly hierarchical, and white women were by no means at the apex. Rather, the chain of authority extended from "teacher to principal to superintendent to other members of the WRA administration."[38] Along these lines, Thomas James has argued that teachers occupied a secondary status between administrators and the managed community, with little say about camp policy.[39] Teaching did offer educated women a greater degree of autonomy in their professional lives, and some women took on higher roles as principals or even higher-level administrators in camp schools.[40] In general, however, women teachers were subject to the educational authority of male administrators. And the qualifications of women who did become administrators were nevertheless contested, including by other women. Helen Amerman Manning, for example, privately criticized the administration and pedagogical methods of Millie Bennett, the elementary school principal, as a "complete flop."[41]

Still, white women teachers expressed their professional and cultural authority not only in relation to upper-level male administrators, but also in relation to their Japanese American colleagues and students. At the same time, the experiences of Nisei, or second-generation Japanese American, teachers deserve attention in their own right, for they shed light on the fractures between race and gender in shaping professional opportunities both before and during the war. On one hand, the organization of camp life and the presence of a concentrated Japanese American community produced novel opportunities for Japanese American women who were incarcerated. For instance, the collectivization of tasks like meal preparation, laundry, and childcare meant that domestic responsibilities—usually performed by women—tended to be lighter.[42] Japanese American women also entered the camp labor force on the same WRA wage scale as men.[43] Yet, persistent racial assumptions continued to shape Japanese American women's access to positions of social authority, even as those same positions elevated their white counterparts.

In the camp schools, Japanese American women could take up teaching positions that had previously been closed to them. In her memoir of incarceration, Yoshiko Uchida observed that her sister was able to put her professional skills to use as a teacher at Tanforan, for the first time since graduating from Mills College.[44] In the pre-war years, teaching jobs in mainstream public schools had been inaccessible to Japanese Americans; few of them qualified for state certification, though many were college-educated. Hannah Lai, who had always wished to enter the profession, planned to attend teachers' college in Japan before returning to the United States to teach in a Japanese school. She hoped that, by that time, racial discrimination would become less of a barrier and she could then obtain an American teaching credential.[45]

In the early days of the assembly centers, self-organized community schools relied on young Japanese American teachers for their personnel. In the temporary schools at Tanforan, none of the teachers had official state accreditation, though there was a "sizable proportion of college graduates and a good sprinkling of Phi Beta Kappas."[46] Both Uchida and her sister relied on support from white contacts and former teachers outside the camps, who donated books, school supplies, educational materials, and toys for the younger children.[47] And a small four-room cottage, in a state of "terrible disrepair," was converted into a suitable nursery school through the efforts and resourcefulness of Uchida's sister and several friends.[48]

However, when the War Relocation Authority implemented its own school designs at the relocation centers, they systematically sought out accredited white teachers from outside the camps. Their reliance on the seemingly neutral marker of professional certification, however, both ignored and reified the structural barriers that the Nisei faced in obtaining accreditation. Initially, the work of white elementary and secondary teachers in WRA-organized schools was supplemented by that of Japanese American teacher assistants, while Japanese American instructors were placed in charge of nursery school and general or vocational adult classes.[49] For example, Helen Amerman

38 *Teacher's Handbook,* Amache Elementary School.
39 James, *Exile Within*, 55.
40 One such example is Dr. Genevieve Carter, who served as the superintendent of education at Manzanar.
41 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, October 19, 1943, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
42 Howard, *Concentration Camps*, 99.
43 Howard, *Concentration Camps*, 101.
44 Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 87.
45 Hannah Lai, interviewed by Tom Ikeda, March 14, 2011, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
46 James, *Exile Within*, 27; Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 90.
47 Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 88, 90.
48 Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 87.
49 "Education Program in War Relocation Centers," February 1945, Helen Amerman Manning Collection, 4.

Manning's first assistant teachers at Minidoka were a "brilliant young" history major from Reed College and a "keen girl" who had majored in English.[50] Due to the exigencies of the teacher shortage, Japanese American teachers were eventually trained through in-service or summer school programs and placed in charge of their own classrooms.[51] In some cases, they were noticeably more educated than the white teachers who trained them.[52] The training of Japanese American teachers under white guidance can, in some sense, be linked to earlier Victorian-era programs of training "native helpers" among a racial minority community, who could then serve people of their own ancestry. Such initiatives were meant to assuage public fears about racial mixing between white women and their charges.[53] While the process of training Nisei teachers was largely a matter of practicality—and Victorian values had long been challenged by a more egalitarian outlook—such programs also privileged the professional expertise of white women teachers, made possible by unequal access to teaching certification.

A summary of the education program by the War Relocation Authority stated that every teacher was employed as a wartime civil service employee and was required to have a valid teaching certificate.[54] However, the realities of teacher hiring were more complicated, and more haphazard, than what WRA administrators reported in their narratives of camp education. At Minidoka, for example, Hannah Lai began as an assistant in a fourth grade class, but she suddenly found herself in charge of 34 children when the teacher fell ill during the first week of school.[55] In a similar situation, Lily Kajiwara was an assistant teacher in a classroom at Manzanar, when the white teacher abruptly resigned in the middle of the term. Despite their lack of training, Kajiwara and another Nisei woman, Hannah Ikeda, were assigned to take over the class for the remainder of the year.[56] In such cases, the supposed necessity of formal training procedures by white faculty was deemed largely impractical.

White women teachers could claim a degree of respect from their students that was largely unavailable to Nisei teachers. One of the major challenges faced by Japanese American teachers was that their pupils were unaccustomed to seeing somebody like them at the front of a public school classroom. Although they were familiar with older Issei instructors in the private language schools, Japanese American students had attended mainstream public schools since 1907, when President Theodore Roosevelt pressured the San Francisco school board to integrate Japanese children.[57] In these schools, they sat in classrooms headed exclusively by white teachers. As Henry Tani, the supervisor of Tanforan High School, remarked, "the Nisei as a teacher was an unknown thing," an implausibility to many Japanese American students.[58] Indeed, describing the sense of disorientation that had accompanied the disruptions of incarceration, one high schooler at Topaz wrote: "I sometimes pinch myself, am I really in Utah, or is this California, do I live in a barrack with other people […] and *do we have teachers of our own race*, do we go to school in barracks and then I pinch myself once, twice and then I am out of my daze" (emphasis mine).[59]

War Relocation Authority administrator John D. Cook asserted that students preferred white teachers to Japanese American teachers, having a "greater respect for the unknown quantity which is embodied in Caucasian teachers," as well as a "feeling of inferiority which has been induced by evacuation and by long years of discrimination."[60] While Cook's assessment from an administrative perspective merits some skepticism, students likely did ascribe greater authority to white teachers. Ironically, the so-called "unknown quantity" that elevated white teachers probably derived from the fact that the white woman as a teacher was a known thing. In other words, students typically expected to see a white woman at the front of a classroom, and they had already learned to associate her with a social role that was familiarly imbued with pedagogical influence and the license to discipline.

Age was another important consideration, as it played a differentiating role in determining social authority even among white women teachers themselves. For example, Helen Amerman Manning wrote of her frustra-

50 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, October 12, 1942, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
51 "Family Welfare: Orientation Program," April 1944, Box 1, Folder 7, Mary Buford Courage Papers.
52 James, *Exile Within*, 59.
53 Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Doctor Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards: The Life of a Wartime Celebrity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 10.
54 "Education Program in War Relocation Centers," 3.
55 Hannah Lai, interviewed by Tom Ikeda.
56 Lily Kajiwara, interviewed by Richard Potashin, July 24, 2010, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
57 Okihiro, *Storied Lives*, 17.
58 Henry Tani, "The Tanforan High School," quoted in James, *Exile Within*, 28.
59 As quoted in Michael Tunnell and George Chilcoat, *The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese Internment Camp Based on a Classroom Diary* (New York: Holiday House, 1996), 53.
60 John D. Cook (Reports Officer), "Little Black School House," Education Reports, Tule Lake, Box 90, Reel 104, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation.

tion with the constant presence of Gladys Gilbertson, a colleague, who often sat at the desk at the front of her classroom. Manning was disconcerted, specifically, by the implications of having "an older teacher standing behind me in my class."[61] The inadequate physical environment of the camp schools, and the limited classroom space available to teachers, only exacerbated such tensions. It is unsurprising, then, that age also played a role in differentiating white and Japanese American teachers. In general, white teachers tended to be older than their Nisei counterparts. Sumiko Ikeda, a high school junior in Poston, remarked that some of the Japanese American teachers were "so young that at times it is hard to distinguish between students and teachers."[62]

The differences in status that white and Japanese American teachers experienced were not merely abstract. They also lived and worked in profoundly different material circumstances. For example, Japanese American teachers were paid $16 to $19 a month for a 40-hour work week, while white teachers received a regular teaching salary of $150 to $200 a month, along with subsidized room and board.[63] WRA orientation materials for teacher recruits apologized for the substandard conditions that they would encounter upon arriving in camp, noting that "the housing for the teachers is about as bad as it could be. This also applies to the Japanese residents and to the rest of the administration."[64] Yet, the white residents of camp had access to considerably better resources and facilities. When Helen Amerman Manning first arrived at Minidoka, she noted that the teachers' dorms were fitted with flush toilets and hot water. They also received furniture from the Empire Hotel in San Francisco, which was then occupied by military command. In contrast, the Japanese homes lacked private access to water.[65] Yoshiko Uchida recalled the first time she went into the special barracks of the white staff members at Topaz. A young couple had come to teach in the camp, bringing along their six-month-old baby. The small family lived in half a barrack—the same area of space allotted to three Japanese families—and they enjoyed the comforts of carpeting, furniture, and a fully equipped kitchen. "I was amazed at the transformation and realized this was the first time in six months I had been inside a normally furnished home," Uchida wrote. "I was filled with envy, longing, and resentment."[66]

In some camps, these discrepancies extended to the classroom. The white teachers in Topaz taught at Mountain View School in Block 8, which was close to their living quarters and the administration buildings. Desert View School, meanwhile, was located at the opposite end of camp, in Block 41, and was staffed by resident Japanese American teachers.[67] None of the elementary school barracks were ready for use, but the conditions in Block 41 were "even more alarming" than those in Block 8. As Uchida recalled, there were "large holes in the roof where the stove pipes were to fit, inner sheetrock walls had not been installed, floors were covered with dust and dirt, and again there were no supplies for teaching."[68]

White teachers were treated as intermediaries between the administration and the incarceree population; administrators sometimes asked them to disseminate information about federal policy aims to the children, who would then relay it to their parents.[69] To an even greater extent, Japanese American women were positioned between their white colleagues and the community and expected to serve as cultural interpreters. For example, in the preschools, the primary teacher who coordinated parent engagement and activities was aided by a Japanese assistant, "who helped to interpret the program to the patrons, and the community to the supervisor."[70] More informal arrangements could also be seen between white and Japanese American women. During Helen Amerman Manning's first days at Minidoka, she found a valuable resource in Frances Maeda, a college graduate. "She has helped me a great deal to really see life from the Japanese angle," Manning wrote to her family.[71] At the same time, some white teachers were nonplussed to find that their Japanese American colleagues were fluent in other, unexpected forms of cultural knowledge. Lucille Reed, an elementary school teacher at Poston, wrote in her diary about a meeting with a group of Japanese American primary teachers: "They are so helpful and wonderful to one. We learned songs and I felt quite strange having a Japanese girl teach me all of the

61 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, April 10, 1943, ddr-densho-171-20, Helen Amerman Manning Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
62 Sumiko Ikeda, "High School Life in Poston," in *Through Innocent Eyes*, 47.
63 Tunnell and Chilcoat, *Children of Topaz*, 42.
64 War Relocation Authority Orientation Materials, Poston Relocation Center, Box 1, Folder 2, Mary Buford Courage Papers.
65 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, September 29, 1942, ddr-densho-171-2, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
66 Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 117.
67 Tunnell and Chilcoat, *Children of Topaz*, 43; Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 117.
68 Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 118.
69 James, *Exile Within*, 55.
70 "Education Program in War Relocation Centers," 7.
71 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, September 29, 1942, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.

nursery rhymes that I should know better than she but did not."[72] While Nisei women were ascribed a limited degree of cultural authority and expected to provide interpretive services to their superiors, individuals like Lucille Reed also erroneously assumed that they lacked access to other strands of culture—such as common nursery rhymes—on the basis of their racial identity.

White women who came to the camps to teach did not exist in a social vacuum. Rather, their relative agency emerged from the position they held with respect to both their students and their colleagues. For Japanese American women, professional experiences in the project schools were constrained by their racial identity, illustrating the extent to which race and gender must be understood as relational categories in producing social possibilities. Compared to their white counterparts, these women navigated harsher material circumstances as well as limited social and physical mobility. Nevertheless, many Japanese American women proved themselves to be highly capable in the classroom. In the end, they were praised even by WRA administrators, who reported that "they proved eager to learn, hard workers, and at the end of a very short period of time ranked as our best teachers."[73]

A Curriculum for the Community

"The training of children must center around the life of the community," wrote John D. Cook on the education program at Tule Lake. "They must study the civic organization of the colony; they must come to understand the need for law and justice; to accept their responsibilities as voters and citizens of the community."[74] Of course, the deep irony of such thinking lies in the fact that the students' communities were organized around incarceration: geographically constrained, heavily administrated, and short on democratic possibilities. The incarceration centers offered few opportunities for self-government, and a significant portion of the population was disenfranchised.[75] Nevertheless, the War Relocation Authority sought to inculcate Japanese American children with a "true picture of America and her institutions, that students might better understand their rights and privileges and perform their civic obligations."[76] How and why did administrators insist on teaching principles of democracy to a population of young people living behind barbed wire?

In this section, I outline the WRA's overarching pedagogical aims and the larger mission with which white women teachers were inextricably connected. The project schools did not exist only to teach children their ABCs; rather, administrators viewed formal schooling as a valuable opportunity for civic acculturation. After all, the camps were always understood to be only temporary institutions, from which young Japanese Americans would eventually be dispersed into mainstream communities across the United States.[77] However, this aim of resettlement also entailed enormous pressure to erase conspicuous markers of racial and cultural difference in Nisei youth.

It is important to note that the "Americanization" of second-generation Japanese Americans was not unique to camp schools or even to the wartime period. As Gary Okihiro has pointed out, it was a process that had taken place since 1907, when Japanese children were allowed to attend mainstream public schools.[78] We must also contextualize camp education within the dominant pedagogical trends of a nation at war. President Roosevelt and Congress had attached heightened significance to education, an institution already historically regarded in the United States as important for nurturing civic competence.[79] Indeed, in the pre-war years, political conservatives and liberals alike had agreed that educators should emphasize the merits of democracy in their classrooms.[80] Conservative educators, who gained greater support during this time, urged teachers to foster patriotism and national unity, and public schools were subject to expanded wartime responsibilities.[81] The war bond drives and Red Cross events that took place in project schools were therefore representative of activities in schools across the nation.[82]

However, education within the camp schools differed in a few important respects. For one, camp pedago-

72 Lucille Reed, "Teacher's Diary," in *Through Innocent Eyes*, 91–93.
73 Gunderson, "Personal Narrative of M.P. Gunderson."
74 Cook, "Little Black School House."
75 Howard, *Concentration Camps*, 87; James, *Exile Within*, 57.
76 "Summary of the Educational Program of the Amache Elementary School," Granada, Box 39, Reel 45, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation, 26.
77 As Greg Robinson observes, the War Relocation Authority adopted a "quasi-official state policy" of dispersing Japanese Americans throughout the United States. In doing so, they operated under the theory that the geographic concentration of Japanese Americans in densely populated areas catalyzed prejudice. Greg Robinson, *After Camp: Portraits in Midcentury Japanese American Life and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 73.
78 Okihiro, *Storied Lives*, 17.
79 Charles Dorn, *American Education, Democracy, and the Second World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2.
80 Gerard Giordano, *Wartime Schools: How World War II Changed American Education* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 120.
81 Giordano, *Wartime Schools,* xxi & 22.
82 "Summary of the Educational Program of the Amache Elementary School," 34.

gy and curricular proposals reflected a more progressive outlook than conventional school curricula. "The set-up for education here is really fine—the administration see eye to eye on the finest progressive slant," wrote Helen Amerman Manning about the schools at Minidoka.[83] The camp curriculum had been developed by Dr. Paul Hanna and his graduate seminar at Stanford University in cooperation with the War Relocation Authority, and their proposed methods were distributed as a handbook to all project schools. A liberal educator, Hanna promoted the concept of a "community school" based on ideals of social justice and reform. By engaging with group life, children would be exposed to civic principles through direct experience and participation in the community.[84] This differed from traditional curricula, in which subjects were not integrated and democratic behaviors were taught directly to students, rather than explored through individual experience.[85] Indeed, in mainstream public schools, skills-based curricula were popular due to their ease of implementation and closer alignment with wartime objectives. Wartime opportunities for implementing the progressive curricula espoused by liberal educators were limited, as they required highly trained personnel in the midst of a nationwide teacher shortage.[86]

The Stanford curriculum had important implications for teacher engagement. Implementing the curriculum required a greater degree of teacher participation and decision-making, as it had to be adapted to the individual community and students.[87] Rather than receiving pedagogical instructions straight from administrators, teachers would have greater autonomy in directing their classes. Such possibilities must have been highly attractive to white women like Helen Amerman Manning, who, decades later, recalled the excitement of going to a new school system built from scratch, "with all the best practices, no traditions to hamper us."[88] Teachers were also expected to participate actively in the daily activities of the center and to integrate themselves into camp life.[89] At Minidoka, for example, white teachers were encouraged to join community-wide activities such as churches or the mass choir, and orientation materials urged teachers at Poston to engage with various community programs and offer their "friendly cooperation."[90] The visibility of white women teachers in the camp community thus extended beyond the walls of the schoolhouse as they took on multiple roles.

Though Hanna's curriculum was distributed to all relocation centers, it was not universally adopted. The "community school" model was successfully implemented at Minidoka, for example, where the high school principal had helped to develop the curriculum in Hanna's graduate seminar.[91] Administrators at other projects, however, felt that the curriculum deviated too greatly from state requirements.[92] A number of teachers—particularly those who had come from rural areas—were also skeptical of progressive pedagogy or lacked adequate training to teach in such a fashion.[93] However camp schools differed in their methods—whether they were traditional, progressive, or somewhere in between—they nonetheless shared a common and intensified emphasis on civic principles and American ideals, institutions, and practices. According to "Suggestions for Curriculum," a document circulated in July of 1942, the unifying idea behind all instruction was democratic citizenship and the democratic way of life.[94] And while project schools sought to obey local state accreditation requirements, they were also influenced by curricular objectives distributed by the federal government itself.

The ability to speak, read, and write English became the key measure of Americanization in the camps. In the summary report for education at Granada, evaluations for each grade level assessed the students according to their proficiency in English, in line with the aim to "increase the vocabulary of English words by providing special opportunities […] to off-set the extensive use of Japanese in the community."[95] Camp life was construed as deviant and

83 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, September 29, 1942.
84 Paul R. Hanna, *Proposed Curriculum Procedures for Japanese Relocation Centers,* Palo Alto: Stanford University, 1942, Helen Amerman Manning Collection; Catherine L. Cullen, "The Education of Japanese-Americans, 1942-1946: The Fate of Democratic Curriculum Reform," *American Educational History Journal* 38, no. 1 (2011): 201.
85 Cullen, "Education of Japanese-Americans," 209.
86 Giordano, *Wartime Schools*, xxii.
87 Cullen, "Education of Japanese-Americans," 213.
88 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito.
89 Cullen, "Education of Japanese-Americans," 201.
90 Helen Amerman Manning, interviewed by Alice Ito; "We Introduce the Japanese," Poston Relocation Center, War Relocation Authority, Box 1, Folder 2, Mary Buford Courage Papers.
91 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, September 29, 1942.
92 Cullen, "Education of Japanese-Americans," 206.
93 James, *Exile Within*, 56.
94 Hirabayashi, "Afterword," in *Through Innocent Eyes*, 95–96.
95 "Summary of the Educational Program of the Amache Elementary School."

atypical by education administrators, who believed that Japanese American students would benefit from relocation to a "typical American community" in which they might have a "normal home life again." Moreover, the blend of English and Japanese spoken in the camps was interpreted as a problem of "conflicting cultural patterns," which could be addressed through formal schooling.[96] Such assumptions of cultural pathology failed to acknowledge the critical role of the federal government in the removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans in highly concentrated, administered communities. From pedagogical reports, we can discern how language was used as a proxy for culture, which in turn was conflated with racial identity. In the project schools, classes were conducted entirely in English by both white and Japanese American teachers, a requirement that the War Relocation Authority deliberately contrasted with the students' previous educational background. As one administrator reported:

> Many of the children come from homes where English is imperfectly spoken or spoken not at all. While a majority speak some English, it is obvious that the others labor under difficulties to which most Caucasian children are immune. Because many attended Japanese schools as well as American schools, Japanese-American children have an advantage over Caucasian children, accredited as they are with more school classes which gives intellectual development a broader sweep. By the same token, a handicap is induced in having to speak two languages, neither of which are thoroughly mastered, and by a certain frustration in trying to assimilate two entirely dissimilar cultural ideologies.[97]

Not only does the passage above reinforce the image of the tragic young Nisei caught between two ostensibly inassimilable cultures, it also constructs an ideological view of whiteness that erases the distinctions of ethnic identity. As Zoë Burkholder has described, the understanding of race in American educational discourse underwent a paradigmatic shift during World War II, during which teachers revised their language to incorporate a number of previously racialized ethnic minorities into the overarching category of "Caucasian."[98] At the same time, other minority groups were constructed as culturally inferior or inassimilable. Unlike Japanese American children, Caucasian children are depicted as inherently "immune" to the challenges of acculturation, having a natural facility for the English language despite whatever immigrant backgrounds they might come from. The one so-called "advantage" of the Japanese community—namely, its emphasis on education and intellectual development—is nevertheless transformed into an ironic "handicap" because its energies are misdirected from a pure embrace of Americanization. The passage thus undercuts the cultural value of Japanese language schools, which sought to preserve Japanese identity in the second generation and to counter the social influences of Christian churches and the public school system. Such rhetoric adopted a benevolent stance toward the Japanese American students, yet it also engaged in acts of cultural erasure and identified Japanese Americans as the source of their own problems.

Many administrators expressed concern about the effects of isolation on Japanese American students and sought to prepare them for life on the "outside," in a postwar American society. Miles E. Cary, the director of education at Poston, wrote in a camp publication that the teaching staff's primary goal was to prepare students for "return to the normal ways of living."[99] These attitudes encompassed both students and their parents, especially toward the end of the war. The WRA expected camp schools to provide incentives to relocation by introducing parents to various types of community participation through parent-teacher organizations.[100] These organizations also sponsored English classes for parents and sought to offer parents an opportunity to "understand the American school system, the needs of the child, and the importance of having the child properly oriented into the school."[101] Again, such attitudes expressed an essential benevolence toward Japanese families and, rather than advocating for racial exclusion, sought to integrate them into the "normal" American way of life. Yet, they also tended to ignore the history of racial exclusion that had contributed to incarceration in the first place. The state, through the WRA and camp educational institutions, also attempted to intervene in the private relations of the Japanese American family and to reorient parents' attitudes toward correct understandings of child upbringing and

96 "Summary of the Educational Program of the Amache Elementary School."
97 Cook, "Little Black School House.
98 Zoe Burkholder, "From 'Wops and Dagoes and Hunkies' to 'Caucasian': Changing Racial Discourse in American Classrooms during World War II," *History of Education Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2010): 327.
99 *Poston Notes and Activities*, April 1943, Box 1, Folder 1, Mary Buford Courage Papers.
100 "Education Program in War Relocation Centers," 2.
101 "Education Program in War Relocation Centers," 9.

development. In place of parental authority, the teacher herself was expected to transmit democratic principles through her language and behavior in the classroom. As the Minidoka teacher's handbook put it, "The story you read, your pleasant 'Good-morning,' your smile or your frown, your attitude toward the fisticuffs of little boys—these are evidences of democracy in action."[102]

Teaching Across a Divide

However, white women teachers themselves had complex motives that were sometimes at odds with those of the War Relocation Authority, and their actions did not always reinforce the state's policy of assimilating the Japanese community into a democratic society. Many teachers developed an ambivalent attitude toward the prescriptions of their jobs, made more complex by the intimate yet unequal relationships they forged with their Japanese American students. Official administrative policies, sent down from Washington, did not translate in a uniform or straightforward manner to the local experiences of individual teachers. In this section, I explore key ways in which the wartime climate and pedagogic principles of the WRA constrained interactions between teachers and students in the classroom.

While some white women who taught in the camps had previously interacted with the Japanese community either in Japan or the United States, others had never encountered a person of Japanese descent. The teachers' orientation handout at Poston anticipated their bewilderment, predicting: "You will find yourself whispering, 'What a strange world! All these people look so distressingly alike […] I wonder how much of what the newspaper said is true. Can it be that their thinking is as much alike as their appearance?'" The pamphlet assured the new teacher recruits that, in time, the Japanese residents' facial features and "uniformly black hair and eyes" would no longer be a "stumbling block to recognition."[103] These orientation materials, in seeking to familiarize the exotic, nevertheless reinforced a sense of physical difference and its spurious connection with psychology. Yet its attitude was probably not far off from those of many white women who arrived in the camps. In her diary, Lucille Reed wrote of the disorientation she felt on her first day of school at Poston, in a bare room with "only crude benches and tables too large and 65 little brown children looking up into my face saying, 'good morning, teacher.'"[104] For teachers like Reed, being able to productively engage with their pupils would require them to overcome the significant cultural work done by mainstream media and wartime propaganda in racializing Japanese Americans.

Some teachers found it difficult to set aside their own racial presumptions. Betty Morita Shibayama shared a memory of one teacher at Minidoka, who would nearly utter the term "Japs" before remembering that she was standing in a room full of Japanese American students. "You knew she was going to say 'Japs,' but she would add '-anese,'" Shibayama recalled. On her first day of school, Lucille Reed met a young Japanese American boy who enjoyed playing airplane. "You spread out your wings," the child explained, "and you fly over the ditch and drop bombs on the *bad* Japanese." Reed later learned that the boy's name was Jimmy, not Hiroshi, as she had mistakenly believed. "You see, he wasn't Japanese in his own mind. He was an American," Reed commented in her diary.[105] That she found significance in Jimmy's self-proclamation of American-ness highlights the extent to which she found it unnatural—indeed, she seems to have had more difficulty accepting it than Jimmy himself.

Despite these barriers to racial understanding, recollections of camp indicate that a host of white teachers and their Japanese American students felt real affection for each other. For example, Bo T. Sakaguchi recalled a number of teachers whom he described as "kind and caring and generous," including Janet Olinsi Goldberg, who encouraged him to continue to study hard in the camp.[106] Another teacher, Miss Peterson, invited students to her apartment after school to learn crafts; after she left, it was rumored that she had gotten in trouble with the administration for being too personal with the students.[107] The homes of Martha Hays and Edith Waterman provided similar refuges for their students after hours.[108] Elaine Clary Stanley, who taught at Manzanar, kept in touch with her student, Kazi, for decades after the war. They were still in contact as of August 2010.[109] These teachers, among others, were remembered fondly by their students.

102 *Elementary Teachers' Handbook,* Minidoka Project Schools.
103 "We Introduce the Japanese."
104 Reed, "Teacher's Diary."
105 Reed, "Teacher's Diary."
106 Bo T. Sakaguchi, interviewed by John Allen, November 6, 2002, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
107 Gloria Toshiko Imagire, interviewed by Richard Potashin, October 17, 2008, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
108 James, *Exile Within*, 53.
109 Elaine Clary Stanley, interviewed by Richard Potashin.

Moreover, empathetic white teachers who were cognizant of their student's unusual circumstances felt considerable unease about nationalistic displays in the classroom. Eleanor Gerard Sekerak, a high school teacher at Topaz, recalled: "As I faced my first day I wondered how I could teach American government and democratic principles while we sat in classrooms behind barbed wire!"[110] The ambivalence of teachers like Sekerak did not go unnoticed by their older students. In his cartoons about life at Poston, Jack Matsuoka remarked that the Pledge of Allegiance "somehow sounded hollow," and "even the teacher's voice trailed off to a murmur at the part about liberty and justice for all." In the accompanying illustration, the white woman teacher raises her eyes uncertainly to the ceiling, while her young pupils enthusiastically recite the pledge.[111]

Nevertheless, such ruminations on democracy sometimes met with important limitations. In September of 1942, Lucille Reed recorded the following exchange in her diary:

> Millicent Ogawa is a very beautiful Japanese child [...] Today she came up to me and said, "Where do you live, teacher?"
>
> "Up by the post office," I replied.
>
> "Oh, you live in a white house. In those white houses."
>
> "No, in a black house just like you."
>
> "Who lives in the white houses, teacher?"
>
> "Some of the Caucasians." I answered thoughtless—
>
> "What are Caucasians? Am I a Caucasian? What am I, teacher?"
>
> "You are a Japanese. Japanese are brown people."
>
> "Why do Caucasians live in white houses? Just because they are white? Half dirt, half grass. Half white houses, half black houses. That's cheating teacher."
>
> What could I say! We flatter ourselves that we have democracy.[112]

In this conversation, we witness the child, Millicent Ogawa, grappling with the stark difference in material circumstances between the white and Japanese residents of the camp. Despite Reed's clear affection for Millicent and the fact that she herself does not live in one of the "white houses," she is not quite able to transcend or even adequately address that social division. On the contrary, Reed reinforces Millicent's awareness of difference by performing as an agent of racialization when she informs the child that she is Japanese, rather than Caucasian. During the exchange, Reed not only re-inscribes racial definitions on the basis of skin tone, but also associates them with powerful rules of racial behavior, which include physical segregation. Though Reed knows she has been somehow "thoughtless" in ascribing the white houses to the Caucasian residents, she does not acknowledge her own mobility in deciding where to live in camp. In an important moment of self-awareness, Reed regards this encounter as a challenge to her understanding of American democracy. What it also demonstrates, however, is the school's power as a racializing institution. For Millicent, the broader project of acculturation is accompanied by an awareness and reminder of her ascribed racial identity.

In addition, white women who felt genuine fondness for Japanese Americans did not always relinquish their belief in the value of civic acculturation; indeed, Americanization provided the terms by which they expressed their affection. Describing an education group party, Helen Amerman Manning wrote: "I never expected that I would be dancing with Japanese people as naturally and unconcernedly! There are such fine young people here that we are still marveling at the way they have overcome all handicaps in Americanizing themselves."[113] Later, she said of a young Nisei man who was leaving camp for New York: "He is a prince—very Americanized."[114] Though Manning urged her family to welcome him as a visitor into their home, that warm acceptance was conditioned upon the young man's embrace of mainstream American values.

Even when white teachers were sympathetic to their students' situations, they also expected them to rise above the consequences of racial discrimination—to perform, perhaps, as early representatives of the model minority. At Amache Elementary School, teachers felt that "much had been accomplished through democratic procedures and practices to combat bitterness" among the student body.[115] Helen Amerman Manning was particularly

110 Eleanor Gerard Sekerak, quoted in Tunnell and Chilcoat, *Children of Topaz*, 19.
111 Jack Matsuoka, *Camp II, Block 211: Daily Life in an Internment Camp* (San Francisco: Japan Publications, 1974).
112 Reed, "Teacher's Diary."
113 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, November 16, 1942, ddr-densho-171-8, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
114 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, December 16, 1942, ddr-densho-171-13, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
115 "Summary of the Educational Program of the Amache Elementary School," 30.

proud of one "thrilling case" she worked with, a teenager whose father had been arrested after Pearl Harbor. The boy had few friends in camp and "could see no future outside in a world of enemies." What Manning emphasized, however, was the "thrill of having 'salvaged' him from quitting and being lost to bitterness."[116] Though she planned to take concrete steps on the boy's behalf, such as arranging for him to visit the guidance counselor's office, the crux of the interaction was about changing the boy's emotional state rather than his material circumstances. Indeed, the language in which Manning described the exchange—a "case" and a "spiritual experience"—illustrates her understanding of the boy's situation as a specific pathology that he could nevertheless transcend with her enlightened guidance. In her letters, moreover, she tended to highlight the students she found to be exceptional representatives of their community. One such favorite was a young boy whose vocal talent had the potential to make him the "Marian Anderson or Paul Robeson of his race." These were the students who, she believed, deserved additional attention and could potentially earn a college scholarship.[117]

It is also important to consider the continuity between camp schools and earlier programs of progressive education for indigenous children. As Thomas James has noted, Lucy W. Adams, the first acting head of the Education Section of the WRA, had directed the Navajo reservation school system in the late 1930s. Indeed, the Indian Service staff in the WRA's San Francisco Office regarded Japanese American incarcerees as another group of people subject to and dependent on federal authority, like the Native American population.[118] Moreover, assimilation and removal policies had historically been justified by the argument that isolating indigenous children from their families would have a civilizing effect, and, in particular, they had relied on the so-called maternal influences of white women.[119] The legacy of such policies is suggested, for example, in Helen Amerman Manning's use of the phrase "four wild Indians" to describe a group of Japanese American trouble-makers in her class, whom she had managed to discipline.[120]

Tellingly, moments of resistance could, and did, occur in the classroom. Jack Matsuoka recalled that, in high school, United States History was a favorite class of his: "We students were always ready to pounce on the teacher's most casual remarks about liberty, freedom, and equality."[121] In another instance, Thomas Shigekuni got into a confrontation with his homeroom teacher, Margaret Hopcraft. The teacher had heard him reciting his own pledge of allegiance—"With liberty and justice for all but us in camp"—and sent him to the principal's office. According to Shigekuni, Hopcraft had insisted, "Thomas, you don't understand. We're trying to help you."[122] Although white women teachers claimed the role of benevolent cultural guides in these situations, their students challenged those representations. Such teachers sometimes interpreted student resistance as a serious rebuff of their sincere efforts in the classroom. For example, Henry Mitayake recalled a thirteen-page civics paper he once wrote about his frustrations with incarceration and American democracy. The teacher—who was popular among the students—called him in after class and expressed her disappointment, saying she had expected him to empathize with the principles taught in the class; instead, it seemed that he was "trying to completely upturn this whole thing that we're trying to educate you on." Mitayake refused to rewrite the paper, despite pleading from the principal, and he subsequently received an F and was kicked out of school.[123]

Indeed, for white women who taught in camp schools, their students' acts of resistance could take on heightened significance. An education report from Tule Lake insisted that a teacher must be able to treat people of Japanese ancestry with kindness and tolerance, even if she had a husband or brother fighting in the South Pacific. Nonetheless, she must also "be expectant of antagonism and open revolt" from students sympathetic with the enemy nation.[124] While it is unclear whether a significant number of white teachers actually harbored such suspicions, they nonetheless navigated a political climate hostile to people of Japanese descent. Wartime circumstances had brought together two groups of people—white women teachers and their Japanese American pupils—who found numerous ways toa engage with each other in warm and productive ways. Yet, that relationship remained always an

116 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, December 16, 1942.
117 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, March 11, 1943, ddr-densho-171-17, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.
118 James, *Exile Within*, 37.
119 Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), xxxi.
120 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, December 16, 1942.
121 Matsuoka, *Daily Life*.
122 Thomas Shigekuni, interviewed by Martha Nakagawa, August 31, 2010, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive.
123 Henry Mitayake, interviewed by Tom Ikeda.
124 Cook, "Little Black School House."

unequal one, constrained by deeply ingrained understandings of race and gender and the demands of democratic participation.

Conclusion

Ultimately, many of the white women who took on positions as teachers for the War Relocation Authority—including those who did so out of altruistic yearnings—suffered disappointment. They worked under adverse conditions in the schools, faced with inadequate facilities, a lack of supplies, and overcrowded classrooms. Indeed, teachers could have as many as 60 students to a class, though 30 was the limit in most accredited high schools.[125] According to an education report at Tule Lake, the teachers who volunteered out of sympathy for displaced Japanese American children were the most likely to grow disillusioned; in fact, they experienced the greatest loss of personnel. Other women, who saw teaching as an opportunity for adventure or greater freedom, also grew weary of the adverse conditions and eventually left for other jobs.[126] The Japanese American families that they left behind in the camps lacked the same physical mobility and opportunities to escape their surroundings.

White women like Martha Shoaf, Elaine Clary Stanley, and Helen Amerman Manning were eager to serve as teachers in the camp schools, and many developed genuinely caring relationships with Japanese American students. Some teachers were ambivalent toward, or even critical of, the official aims of the War Relocation Authority—especially toward the end of the wartime incarceration, when frustrations about the teacher shortage and "high-handed" WRA policy continued to mount.[127] However, these teachers were also closely tied with, and even dependent upon, the WRA for their livelihood. Ultimately, they continued to operate within a broader, racially driven project of assimilation, and their classrooms served as sites of both acculturation and racialization.

Rather than being straightforwardly racist or anti-racist, the attitudes, behaviors, and recollections of white women who taught in camp were complex and sometimes contradictory, shaped by the nuances of both race and gender. And in the decades after the war, their Japanese American students and colleagues would remember them in a variety of ways—some good, some bad. Perhaps one of the more poignant assessments comes from Margie Y. Wong, who attended school at Manzanar as a child. Looking back, Wong suggested that her white teachers "had to have that special feeling to go into camp to teach the so-called 'enemies,'" like herself and her fellow classmates. "So they—I thought they were special."[128] Whatever their motivations, and however successfully they were able to overcome the racial barriers between themselves and their students, these teachers had, indeed, chosen a fraught and distinctive path.

125 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, April 10, 1943, ddr-densho-171-20, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.

126 "Education Program in the Tule Lake Center of the War Relocation Authority," Community Management and Education, Tule Lake, Box 98, Reel 114, Records of the War Relocation Authority, 1942–1946: Field Basic Documentation.

127 Letter from Helen Amerman Manning to her family, August 5, 1945, ddr-densho-171-76, Helen Amerman Manning Collection.

128 Margie Y. Wong, interviewed by Richard Potashin, January 21, 2011, Manzanar National Historic Site Collection, Densho Digital Archive.

Hidden in Oral Histories

Black Female Mobilization Before the Civil Rights Movement

By MIKAELA GERWIN, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

On March 26, 1918, Texas became the second Southern state to enfranchise women, albeit only in presidential primary elections and nominating conventions.[1] This statewide change produced a moment of racial reckoning in Kingsville, Texas when local black women directly demanded enfranchisement from their county's white registrar. This confrontation helped ignite the civic psyche of a black Kingsville schoolteacher named Christina Adair.

In 1912, Kingsville, Texas, was a sleepy railroad town of about 4,000 people. By 1930 it had grown to almost 7,000. A large proportion of the population of Kingsville was African American. In 1912, around 530 black men and women called Kingsville their home.[2] Like many Southern towns, Kingsville was extremely segregated. As Christina Adair said of Kingsville in a 1977 oral history, "the little town was populated according to race. It had what they called Negro Town, White Town and Mexican Town. And it looked like never the twain shall meet."[3]

The Kingsville community of black women joined white Kingsville suffragists almost accidentally, out of a direct desire to fix local problems rather than an awareness of larger political issues such as suffrage. After Adair witnessed "one of my teenage boys, Sunday school boys," walking out of a notorious gambling house, she and other black women decided to enlist the help of "white women who have sons and daughters" to shut down the establishment. Together, they formed an "Interracial Mothers Club" and forced the Kingsville sheriff to "go and nail up the building himself."[4] Through a mutual concern for both black and white youth, these women accessed a shared identity more powerful than woman: *mother*.[5] By working with the white mothers, black women were able to use the power of "group action" to address their problems.[6]

The trust built between these African American and white mothers of Kingsville manifested itself in political organization for female suffrage, and later, in attempts to vote. As Adair recounted, "these [white] women told us about…a bill where women would be able to vote like men. Well, we still didn't know that didn't mean us, but we helped make contacts and excited public opinion and worked on people about it. And the bill did pass."[7] Adair and her fellow black friends were inspired to take part in the suffrage movement by their alliance with white women. They had been politicized by their success with the gambling house. Their victory in civic society expanded their own understanding of the political access they could claim as black women in early twentieth-century Kingsville, Texas.

Adair and her fellow black women tried to vote, to exercise the very right they had worked to achieve. When they proceeded to the precinct to cast their votes in the July primary election of 1918, white Kingsville officials prevented them:

> And we dressed up and went to vote and when we got down there, well we couldn't vote… So finally, one woman, a Mrs. Simmons said, 'Are you saying

1 Hanes Walton Jr, Sherman Puckett, and Donald Deskins, *An African American Electorate* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2012), Table 20.7; Austin History Center, "*Primary Suffrage in* Texa",rojecttoryrecting their classrildren ed at the postcolonial political order. It man. All the white womanraped and murdered by s,",rojecttoryrecting their classrildren ed at the postcolonial political order. It man. All the white womanraped and murdered by ",rojecttoryrecting their classrildren ed at the postcolonial political order. It man. All the white womanraped and murdered by " accessed December 21, 2017, http://library.austintexas.gov/ahc/primary-suffrage-texas-353750.

2 George Coalson, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Kingsville, TX," http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdk02, accessed December 18, 2017; Sterling Bass, *History of Kleberg County* (M.A. thesis, University of Texas, 1931), 1, 4.

3 Ruth Edmonds Hill, ed., *The Black Women Oral History Project* (Westport, CT: Meckler, 1991), 58.

4 Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project*, 59.

5 In a sense, Adair and this biracial coalition of mothers acted out the early American ideology of "Republican Motherhood," in which women played political roles by raising virtuous sons, young men who were not to be exposed to gambling houses. The women stepped outside of the traditional female domain and were communally justified in their participation in civic culture because as mothers they were uniquely suited to advocate politically for the purity of their sons. Linda Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment-An American Perspective," *American Quarterly 28* (1976): 204–205.

6 Civil rights activist Ella Baker emphasized "group action" when organizing towns of Southern black men and women in the late 1920s and 1930s: "The major job was getting people to understand that they had something within their power that they could use…and how group action could counter violence." Ella Baker interviewed by Gerda Lerner, *Black Women in White America* (New York City: Random House, 1972), 347.

7 Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project,* 59.

> that we can't vote because we're Negroes?" And he [the registrar] said, "Yes, Negros don't vote in primary in Texas.[8]

Adair and the other black women solemnly trudged away from the polling place. In this moment, the political engagement that had begun with motherhood-based organizing and evolved to suffrage work became explicitly racial as Adair and her friends were forced to confront the reality that as African Americans living in the South, traditional electoral politics were withheld from them.

However, the blatant denial of their political rights was a motivating push to organize for racial justice rather than a discouraging defeat. Adair recalled that she and her companions were hurt by this incident, yet not "sorry we were Negros, it made us realize that we all the more had to do something that would break these discriminations."[9] This detailed account of a small moment in the summer of 1918 between black women and a white registrar highlights many of the routines these oppositional characters would repeat as black women continued to approach the Southern polls. This specific experience with the combined sexism and racism of white officials was a catalyst for Adair, just as similar encounters would be for many other women.[10] Inspired in part by the event, Adair spent the rest of her life working for black civic organizations such as the NAACP and the United Methodist Church.[11]

Yet as historically revealing—and clearly impactful for Adair—as this incident was, it cannot be found among the pages of an organization's records or in the local newspaper. Their names would not even be in the Kingsville, Texas voter registration book from 1918. In terms of traditional political impact this episode yielded nothing: the black women were not allowed to vote. No one was arrested, no policy was changed. Christina Adair did not became a Rosa Parks. Thus, traditional historical documents rendered this moment and these political black women of Kingsville, Texas invisible. The evolution of the political engagement of Adair and her black friends in 1918—maternal activism to enfranchisement mobilization to pushback against white supremacist structures—can only be gleaned from a passing, four-paragraph story in a 53-page transcript of an oral history given by Christina Adair in 1977.[12] In these short recollections, embedded amongst later oral histories such as Adair's, are the outlines of a different African American civil rights story, one of individual moments of female politicization and activism long before the era of the traditional Civil Rights Movement.

The lessons of political organizing these Southern black women learned, this change of political possibility, and their moment of direct confrontation with white authority took place nearly four decades prior to the established historical time period of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet as definitive assertions of black, Southern, and female civil rights, these incidents nonetheless impacted the lives, community, and children of Adair and her friends. Perhaps their grandchildren, the next generation who came of age during the era of the traditional Civil Rights Movement, grew up hearing renditions of this story recounted by their grandmothers. Maybe, as young African American men and women, these grandchildren approached similar Texan registration sites as part of an organized effort in the 1950s or 1960s to mass register. Oral histories such as Christina Adair's suggest a history hidden from written sources, namely a history of African American female social mobilization throughout the early twentieth century, that, although neither significant in numbers nor successful in electing candidates, played an important role in gradually transforming the political consciousness of African Americans.

Two years after Adair and her black female neighbors demanded their right to vote, the states finally ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. Women across the country legally claimed the right to suffrage. As a consequential political movement in American history, there is ample scholarship on this moment and the experiences of suffragists who organized to obtain the vote. However, after the Nineteenth Amendment, feminist literature on female, especially black, involvement in electoral politics largely receded into a 20-year hiatus. Much of the literature on suffragists contains a short epilogue detailing the impact

8 Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project*, 60.

9 Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project*, 60.

10 The black feminist theorist bell hooks promoted scholarly recognition of both the sexism *and* racism black women faced. She wrote about their intersectionality: "The assumption that we can divorce the issue of race from sex or sex from race has so clouded the vision of American thinkers…we cannot form an accurate picture of the status of black women by simply focusing on racial hierarchies." bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman* (New York: South End Press, 1981), 12.

11 Adair also became a precinct officer, the official responsible for proper and orderly voting in local precincts. Ruth Edmonds Hill and Patricia Miller King, *Guide to The Black Women Oral History Project* (Westport, CT: Meckler, 1991), 2–4.

12 The majority of oral histories such as Adair's were created during the 1970s, shortly after the Civil Rights Movement, through an urgent push by elite institutions such as Duke University, The Library of Congress, and The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University to record the individuals whose demands for social justice set the Civil Rights Movement into motion.

of female suffrage.[13] Scholars concluded any comprehensive chronicle of the Suffrage Movement with the 1920 passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and occasionally the presidential election of that same year.[14] The mass disenfranchisement by white registrars of the black Southern women who tried to vote both in the 1920 election and in subsequent elections is rarely mentioned in these works or treated with historical scrutiny. This is a mistake.

One reason why traditional scholars disregarded the civic activity of African American women in the pre-Civil Rights era was because academia has largely circumscribed the entirety of politics to formal political processes and thus only researched conventional political actions, such as successful voting, where black women were rarely found.[15] However, that black women did not typically operate within the confines of the formal political system does not negate the often intensely political character of their lives. These women had anti-hierarchical and anti-bureaucratic tendencies that led them to act politically in their own communal spaces, outside of mainstream political systems.[16]

In this paper, I shed light on some of these unconventional, yet deeply political activities African American women modeled while they attempted to take part in electoral politics. I follow the lead of more recent feminist scholars who have pushed to demonstrate a complicated black female engagement with politics that existed outside of typical political institutions. These scholars have depicted black women's continuous relationship with politics that, despite being limited by the unique legal and social status conferred by the double burden of gender and racial discrimination, was nonetheless extremely important to them.[17]

I used a variety of primary sources to understand the experiences of black, Southern African American women voting. As Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore wrote regarding her research for *Gender and Jim Crow, "*I believed no truth and took no evidence at face value. Fiction in the archives? What else?"[18] Following Gilmore, I examined white archival sources through a critical lens. I relied on the records of large organizations such as the NAACP to demonstrate the daily strategic decisions made to advance and document the causes of black female and male enfranchisement. I also depended on newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Defender, The Daily Worker* and the NAACP's *The Crisis*.[19] Local papers such as *The Savannah Tribune* or *The Charlotte Observer* as well as U.S Census and voting data, provided further context. However, these documents and data rarely revealed the continued efforts of African American Southern women from the 1920s through 1940s to resist the amalgamation of powerful white forces which sought to prevent their enfranchisement and silence their political voices. For a record of this, I turned to oral histories.

This paper is largely based upon these histories, though they can be rife with sensationalized, selective, and romanticized recollections of the past.[20] Notwithstanding, oral histories offer distinct insights into the life under Jim

13 Initial academic consensus on the impact of the Nineteenth Amendment was that female enfranchisement substantially altered neither the content of American politics nor the lives of American women. However, influenced by second-wave feminist historiographical theory, later scholars argued that female voters were neither as apathetic nor as identical to their husbands as previously claimed. See Stuart A. Rice and Malcolm M. Willey, "American Women's Ineffective Use of the Vote," *Current History* 20 (1924): 641–47; Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" American Historical Review 64 (1959): 833-51; Estelle Freedman. "The New Woman: Changing Views of Women in the 1920s," *The Journal of American History* 61, no. 2 (1974): 372–93; Sara Alpern and Dale Baum, "Female Ballots: The Impact of the Nineteenth Amendment," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 16, no. 1 (1985): 43–67.

14 The titles of many of these works demonstrate this tendency to completely conclude scholarship on female suffrage and struggles to earn the vote in 1920: Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman*
Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965); Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Suzanna M. Marilley. *Women Suffrage and the Origins of Liberal Feminism in the United States, 1820-1920 (*Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). Other works that also end in 1920: Eleanor Flexner and Ellen Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Andrew Sinclair, *The Better Half: The Emancipation of the American Woman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Sara Hunter Graham, *Woman Suffrage and The New Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

15 Jewel Prestage, "In Quest of African American Political Women," *American Academy of Political and Social Science* 515 (1991): 89; Elsa Barkley Brown, *To Catch the Vision of Freedom* in *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, eds. Ann Dexter Gordon, and Bettye Collier-Thomas (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 86.

16 Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 3-9, 274-276.

17 These scholars include Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham and Bettye Collier-Thomas, who established the black church as a powerful institution for female political mobilization, and Stephanie Shaw and Jacqueline Jones, who showed the act of labor to be politicizing for black women. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Bettye Collier-Thomas, *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and their Sermons, 1850–1979* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1998); Stephanie J. Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

18 Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), xvi.

19 Particularly *Crisis,* vol. 10 published on August 1915, an edition completely devoted to the issue of votes for women. I also examined the politics section of *Crisis* from the monthly editions of 1915-1940, to find records of black women attempting to vote.

20 Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 2.

Crow.[21] They are especially useful for illuminating that during the Jim Crow era, Southern white supremacy was in part maintained through prejudicial *customs*, not codified law. That is, unwritten etiquette that for instance, mandated that blacks cede the right-of-way to white drivers or enter a white person's house through the back door, are uniquely revealed in oral history.[22] Likewise, it was primarily in oral histories that I found the day-to-day displays of defiance and collective protests against Jim Crow etiquette that black Southern women performed in their local communities, decades prior to the outset of the Civil Rights Movement as traditionally understood.[23] As personal narratives, oral histories allowed me to understand the grassroots activism championed by these often-overlooked women. Uniquely, they revealed moments of opposition that cannot be found in traditional written sources. The experiences of black women in this period were rarely granted attention, whether in media, politics, popular culture or academic study of their time. Thus, memories from this generation of African Americans, especially black women, open a window into a poorly documented past.[24]

Although there is a wide range of oral histories documenting the later Civil Rights Movement, very few of these oral histories touch on the political awakening of black, Southern woman during earlier decades.[25] This is in part due to the infrequency with which African American men and especially women, attempted to vote from the 1920s to 1950s.[26] The lack of black female testimonies about voting can also be attributed to the local nature of these incidents that rendered them less likely to be recorded by national research libraries.[27] Thus, the stories I included in this paper are largely all the relevant oral histories I was able to uncover. Due to the paucity of the sources, this paper jumps through decades and states. It is best read as a collection of many local stories linked together by this common pursuit of political rights.

Like Christina Adair, other black female leaders in the Civil Rights Movement attributed their later activism to these earlier instances of political awakening. Woven together, these oral histories reveal the powerful, local actions of black women that common depictions of the 20th-century African American struggle for civil rights fail to include. As Charles Payne wrote in *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* "We know beyond dispute that women were frequently the dominant force in the movement. Their historical invisibility is perhaps the most compelling example of the way our shared images of the movement distort and confuse the historical reality."[28]

They Existed: Black Women as Voters Before the Nineteenth Amendment

Adair and her neighbors in Kingsville, Texas, were neither the first nor the only African American women to demand their right to vote in the years prior to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. To understand the experiences and context of black women who attempted to vote after the Nineteenth Amendment, I will provide a brief overview of their precursors. Before the Nineteenth Amendment, some states allowed for women to vote in school board elections, as women, "Republican Mothers,"[29] were the primary caretakers and thus clearly had a stake in the education their children would receive.[30] For example, black female leader Josephine Ruffin boasted in a 1915 Crisis magazine article titled *TRUST THE WOMEN!* that "in Massachusetts for forty years and more...I have voted forty-one times under the school suffrage laws." Ruffin recognized the importance of African-American female votes as an uplifting force for the entire race. In her article, she attested to this effect of black voting in her state of Massachusetts, proclaiming that "the success of this movement for equality of the sexes means more progress

21 Raymond Gavins, "Fear, Hope and Struggle," in *Democracy Betrayed,* eds. David Cecelski and Timothy Tyson (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 186; Jonathon Holloway, *Jim Cross Wisdom: Memory and Identity in Black America since 1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 3.

22 Jerold Packard, *American Nightmare: The History of Jim Crow* (New York: St. Martins Griffin, 2002), 84-93, 163, 167.

23 Although I have combined them in this paper, these distinct oral histories remain undoubtedly fragmented as short remarks that I excavated from long interviews primarily about the Civil Right Movement.

24 For insight on how memory, through the telling of oral histories, provides a unique view into the Jim Crow South, see Holloway, *Jim Cross Wisdom*.

25 The task of unearthing these specific stories about electoral politics required me to listen to or read through a plethora of more general oral histories. Furthermore, as they figured in continuous narrations reflecting interviewees' streams of consciousness, it was often quite difficult to temporally situate these anecdotes about voting. It was frequently unclear when exactly the acts of resistance these women described so earnestly had taken place. I typically had to use historical clues embedded in their stories to firmly root their activism in a particular decade. See footnote 87 for an example of my process for reconstructing historical events from the oral histories.

26 For example, in Louisiana in 1940, there were only 886 African Americans registered to vote, although the adult African American population of the state was 473,562. (Prestage, "In Quest of African American Political Women," 95). From a largely male population as small as this, my task was to find the recorded stories of females who were either included in this number of registered voters or who had advocated to be. Clearly this proved to be an exercise in finding a needle in a haystack and thus when I located a relevant oral history story, I tended to include it.

27 Undoubtedly, there were black women from municipalities across the country who also attempted to register or vote, yet whose stories were never formally documented.

28 Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* 276.

29 Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment-An American Perspective."

30 Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate*, Table 20.6.

toward equality of the races."[31]

Beginning with the territory of Wyoming in 1869, in the five decades before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment 21 states and territories fully enfranchised all women, both African American and white.[32] During this period the story of African American women voting truly began.[33] Before the Nineteenth Amendment, enfranchisement of women was limited to a handful of locales largely consisting of Western territories that had been recently admitted to the Union, such as Colorado, Utah or Arizona. No former Confederate or border states fully enfranchised women until forced to do so by the Nineteenth Amendment. Southern legislators viewed any expansion of suffrage, including to white women, as a step towards granting enfranchisement and political power to blacks.[34] Many Southern politicians worried it would not be politically, or ethically, palatable to disenfranchise African American women with the often-violent methods they used against African American men. As Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi complained, "We aren't afraid to maul a black man over the head if he dares to vote, but we can't treat women, even black women, that way. No, we'll allow no women suffrage."[35] For perhaps less violent reasons, Eastern states likewise did not grant female enfranchisement. Until 1920, New York was the only Eastern state where women could vote in all elections.[36]

Politicians in Western states freely enfranchised both black and white women as they were far less concerned by the possibility of African American inclusion in politics. They had neither the legacy of the Civil War nor large black populations to contend with. With as few as 209 African American women living in Utah in 1895, the year women were enfranchised in Utah, or 109 in Idaho in 1896, these women lived in tight-knit, insular communities of African Americans who had largely achieved equal social positions to white settlers.[37] Furthermore, some historians have argued that women had an elevated independent status out West because of the egalitarian, raw democratic influences of frontier life and extremely skewed male to female ratios.[38] This unique stature of women in the West likely accelerated their enfranchisement.[39] Perhaps overlooked due to their tiny numbers, and without serious opposition from their white neighbors, black women in these Western states were able to zealously organize for—and exercise—their right to vote.

As was true of black women voting in the South decades later, the relatively small numbers of black, Western women mattered less than their presence and their desire to take part in the formal political process of voting. Enfranchised African American women in Colorado exemplified this desire. When Colorado gained statehood in 1876, female petitions for the vote were initially rejected for racist reasons similar to those raised in the South, such as the dangers of granting enfranchisement to "Negro wenches" and Chinese women. Yet in 1893 Republican, Populist, and Prohibitionist parties banded together and created a coalition to pass the law for full female enfranchisement.[40] At 3,058, Colorado had a far larger population of African-American women than any other Western state.[41] In this state, black women were influenced by acquiring the vote to integrate political discourse into their daily lives.

Beyond merely exercising their right to vote, black women in Colorado were politicized and personally empowered by the process of claiming their suffrage. Black journalist Elizabeth Ensley described this phenomenon in the first newspaper published by and for black women, *The Women's Era*. Writing about her community of black women during the presidential election of 1894 she explained:

> All voted, those who had protested against having the ballot thrust upon them and those who had hitherto taken no interest in politics. They electioneered, they drove from house to house bringing voters to the

31 Josephine Ruffin, "TRUST THE WOMEN," *The Crisis,* August 1915, 188.

32 Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York City: Basic Books, 2009), 390; Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate*, Table 20.4.

33 While beyond the scope of this paper, black women, "free women of color," voted in Colonial Virginia and Antebellum New Jersey. Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate,* 3-7, Table 20.3.

34 Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow (*Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 209-210; Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, 195.

35 Keyssar, *The Right to Vote,* 210; Majorie Wheeler*, New Women of the New South* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 17; Carrie Catt and Nettie Shuler, *Women Suffrage and Politics*: *The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1970), 89.

36 Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate,* Table 20.4.

37 Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate*, Table 20.4.

38 As Walter Webb proclaimed in his classic description of American frontier life, *The Great Plains:* "Why the men of the West were the first to grant the women the franchise…population was sparse and women comparatively scare and remarkably self-reliant." He conjectured that it was ultimately "the spirit of the Great Plains which made men democratic in deed and in truth" that "gave women the ballot." Walter Webb, *The Great Plains* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1931), 505.

39 Richard J. Evans, *The Feminists (*London: Croom Helm, 1977), 26-27; Beverly Beeton, *Women Vote in the West: The Women Suffrage Movement 1869-96* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986), 1-7, 15-19, 31-48, 111-113, 127-130; Alan Grimes, *The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 3-25.

40 Beverly Beeton, "*How the West Was Won for Woman Suffrage,*" in *One Woman One Vote*, ed. Marjorie Wheeler (Troutdale: 1995), 109-11.

41 Walton Jr, Puckett, and Deskins, *An African American Electorate*, Table 20.4.

> polls… Lessons learned from the election and campaign preceding it: 1. Women will study politics. Proven by the great number of political study clubs formed during the past year…Politics was the theme of discussion morning, noon and night. The women talked politics over their sewing, their dish-washing, and during their social calls. Politics has made them read and think more, and in new and different lines. Some of the women are getting these economic questions drilled into their heads in a way that would astonish you, and when the mothers understand these things it is going to make a vast difference, for they will teach them to the children. 2. Women will vote. The women of Colorado have demonstrated that conclusively.[42]

Over two decades before the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, these black women of Colorado exemplified the politicization of earning the right to vote. Voting drew an increasing number of women into the wider orbit of formal political participation; it led woman to feel ownership over electoral politics. Furthermore, while after enfranchisement these black women gained a new intellectual independence and entered the realm of political engagement, they still maintained a commitment to their domestic duties. Earning the vote provided the basis for women to "read and think more," however these powerful political colloquies could take place "over their sewing, their dish-washing." The black women of Colorado were able to successfully integrate the political into the personal.[43] Enfranchisement invited a new citizen, a black woman, to the civic discourse and the black women of Colorado continued their engagement with the electoral process. In fact, Helen Woodbury, an early twentieth century economist, found in a 1906 investigation of women's suffrage in Colorado that more black women voted than white women in the Denver elections of 1906, relative to their total racial populations.[44] As we have seen, even before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment black women demonstrated their eagerness to be dynamic participants in both traditional electoral politics and the intellectual discourse generated by that very act of voting. From Colorado to Massachusetts, from presidential elections to those of local schoolboards, by 1920 there was a small yet significant precedent for African American women contributing their votes and voices to upholding American democratic integrity.

Demanding Democracy: African American Women Voting in the 1920 Election

With the 1920 passage of the Nineteenth Amendment female citizens across the United States were finally granted the right to vote. A national desire to witness women registering for the first time led to documentation in both newspapers and reports by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) of the standoffs between registrars and African American women in the South. In the 1920 election, black women were especially eager to finally take part in the electoral process. One observer in Jacksonville, Florida, described black women waiting to register in late September 1920, a mere month after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment: "they began to arrive at 8 o'clock and many of them sat down on the curbing to rest, so many hours were they in line…Some went with babies in their arms and others took their lunches."[45] All over the country African American women rushed to register, only to be consistently denied the use of their political voice at the hands of white registrars. For instance, according to the United States Census of 1920, there were 292,551 African American women eligible (by the Nineteenth Amendment) to vote in the state of Georgia. Yet, based on NAACP records, only 3,418 of those African American women from Georgia were able to actually register to vote. This means that a mere 1.2 percent of potential African American female voters succeeded in registering. In Americus, Georgia, 250 black women attempted to vote, yet all of them were denied, while in the 1st district of Atlanta only eight women successfully registered.[46] As these figures reveal, in the South especially, white registrars sent black women away from the polls alongside black husbands and fathers whose Fifteenth Amendment rights had long been denied.[47] Notably, these accounts demonstrated the refusal of white officials across the South even to register African Americans, let alone permit them to cast their vote.

42 Elizabeth Ensley, "Election Day", *Women's Era* 1, no. 9, December 1894.

43 It is important to note that, as with much suffrage activity, the black women Enlsey described were likely wealthy and not working-class women. They had the time and resources to "electioneer" and "drive from house to house bringing voters to the polls."

44 In this election, 45.2 percent of the black votes were cast by women, while 42.6 percent of the white votes were cast by women. Helen Woodbury, *Equal Suffrage: The Results of an Investigation in Colorado* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1909), 107, 117.

45 "7,502 Women Registered in the City," *The Florida Times-Union, (Jacksonville),* September 28, 1920.

46 Hanes Walton Jr, Sherman C. Pukett, and Donald R. Deskins, *The African American Electorate: A Statistical History,* Table 20.11.

47 Addie Hunton, et al., "Hampton" & "General Statements," October 25th, 1920, Part 4, *African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP, Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284; "Check Negro Women in Rush to Register," *The New York Times*, September 20, 1920, 16; Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 159-167.

For black men and women alike, voter registration in much of the South was an intricate, intensely partisan, and occasionally violent process that typically prevented, rather than facilitated, the act of voting itself.[48] Any voter—white or black—attempting to register in the landscape of nineteen-twenty American South faced numerous restrictions that varied immensely from state to state and even county to county. These restrictions straddled the fine line between codified law and understood custom that comprised Jim Crow. They were carried out in a unique fashion by each registrar, a "guardian of racial supremacy and party success," across the country.[49] In the 1920 election black women knew to expect these restrictions and consequently prepared themselves. As Addie Hunton, the NAACP Field Secretary, documented after an interview with a black Virginian woman, "she slept with her [voting] application form…for a week—studying it the last thing at night and first thing the morning."[50]

"I could kill the clerk who questioned me; I could kill his wife and children," a black woman spitefully proclaimed to Hunton after she was turned away from voting registration in Hampton, Virginia.[51] She was not alone. No amount of preparation by black Southern women could ensure white Southern registrars would endorse African American Nineteenth Amendment rights. One after another, registrars and circuit clerks kept black southern women away from registration by whatever means they could. These tactics in the 1920 election were meticulously documented by newspapers across the country and an NAACP special investigation led by Hunton. Although reporters and the NAACP recorded the egregious methods of registrars only in this 1920 election, in the decades following, as evident from oral histories, registrars continued to employ similarly devious tactics to block black Southern women from voting.

In the 1920 election, white officials used a wide variety of creative, surprisingly non-confrontational, and even amusing tactics to prevent black female enfranchisement. For instance, in Columbia, South Carolina, where black women outnumbered black men and were "accordingly the largest [voting] class in the state," registrars initially were caught off guard by the "many colored women, bright and intelligent" who appeared by the hundreds. They reacted by calling for "white people [to register] first" and keeping black women "standing for hours while they registered every white person in sight."[52] 24-year-old Lucille Wheelock was a graduate of Hartshorn College, a college for local black women, and a public-school teacher when she went to register in Phoebus, Virginia. She was handed a paper with two typewritten questions, "What is a Democracy?" and "What is a Republic?". When Wheelock surprisingly answered those to the satisfaction of registrar, she was promptly quizzed for 45 minutes on archaic voting procedures only to be told she had not passed and consequently could not register. After this experience Lucille Wheelock told the NAACP's Hunton, that she was simply "too humiliated to return" and would not make another attempt at voting.[53] Others shared Wheelock's shame. *The Independent*, a local newspaper from Elizabeth City, North Carolina, observed, "Many colored women educationally qualified would not apply for registration, preferring disfranchisement to the humiliation of examination by hostile registrars."[54]

Other women testified to the heads of their local NAACP chapters that registrars simply rejected any claims by black women to enfranchisement. In New Bern, North Carolina, a black woman named Clara Mann was asked by the register to read and then write the entire constitution of North Carolina "by heart". When Mann indignantly objected to this, the registrar admitted that "because she belonged to the Negro Race she could not register" even "if she was the President of Yale."[55] In Birmingham, Alabama, a schoolteacher answered intricate questions about habeas corpus law only to then have an official tear up her registration card and throw it in her face.[56] In Jefferson County, Alabama, black women were forced to fill

48 Raymond Gavins, "*Fear, Hope and Struggle"* in *Democracy Betrayed,* eds. David Cecelski and Timothy Tyson (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 188-190; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town,* 4th ed. (London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 205-206, 211-212, 215, 335; Jerold Packard, *American Nightmare: The History of Jim Crow* (New York: St. Martins Griffin, 2002), 67-69, 85.

49 William Pickens, "The Women Voter Hits the Color Line," *The Nation*, October 6, 1920, 372.

50 Addie Hunton's Report on Voting in Phoebus, Virginia, NAACP Field Secretary, in *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP, Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284, 11.

51 Chairman of the NAACP, Mary Ovington, to Mrs. Robert Bruere, December 3rd 1920, in *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, National Woman's Party and Voting Rights,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-384, 9.

52 William Pickens, "The Women Voter Hits the Color Line," *The Nation*, October 6, 1920, 372.

53 Addie Hunton's Report on Voting in Phoebus, Virgina, NAACP Field Secretary, in *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284, 5.

54 "1,000 Women in County Register", *The Independent,* October 29, 1920, 7.

55 Dr. William Mann to the NAACP Headquarters, November 6th 1920 in *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284, 28.

56 Mr. Kingsley to the NAACP Headquarters, November 9th 1920 in *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284, 38.

out forms to prove they owned Naturalization Papers and then told their voting certificates would be mailed to them. These women never received any such papers, so were ultimately unable to vote.[57]

National newspapers reported on white registrars' refusal to allow black women voting rights by simply stating the facts of the showdowns between officials and African American women. None of the articles interviewed a single black woman; no reporter actually asked a black woman what her motivations were for approaching the Southern polls or how she felt about the blatant denial of her rights.[58] Only the NAACP's Addie Hunton recorded how black Southern women prepared for the vote and how they felt about the subsequent rejection.

In 1921 Hunton presented this carefully researched, alarming report on female black disenfranchisement to her New York City colleagues at the national NAACP headquarters. However, her report prompted no significant response perhaps because during this period the organization shifted attention from documenting standoffs at the polls to gradually challenging issues such as poll taxes, lynching, and segregation in courts.[59] As the NAACP continued this national legal focus (led primarily by white constitutional lawyers) throughout the decade, the organization felt increasingly irrelevant to the black Southerners who asserted their citizenship right through local, face-to-face confrontations with municipal officials.[60] Oral histories, rather than written sources such as NAACP records, offer unique testimony to these continuous efforts of black women from the 1920s through 1940s to combat the humiliation and inequalities of the Jim Crow South.

Human Catalysts: African American Female Activists Before the Civil Rights Movement

> [T]he human catalysts of the movement, the people who really gave direction to the movement's organizing work…were not those whom most scholarship on the movement identifies as the "leaders." Instead, in any list, long or short, of the activists who had the greatest personal impact upon the course of the southern movement, the vast majority of names will be ones that are unfamiliar to most readers.[61]

As the African American female demand for the vote was deeply rooted in women's social networks and inner friendships, a single strong-minded woman, just such a "human catalyst," had the mobilizing capacity to enlist fellow women to the enfranchisement cause. Once this individual became politically involved, the strength of her ties within her social network naturally drew in other members.[62] In the quest to claim enfranchisement as both women and blacks, personal relationships and encouragement, more than specific political ideology, were able to motivate black women across the South and bring them to the polls. Kathleen Adams recalled growing up as a small child in Atlanta, Georgia during the turn of the century and watching a black female graduate of Atlanta University, Lavinia Wimbish, "assisting at the polls."[63] Adams recounted Wimbish's political impact in motivating black women in Atlanta to vote, "When you saw Miss. Lavinia coming, you knew what her subject was going to be—'We've got to get to the polls and vote. We'll never be able to accomplish anything without the vote.'" Wimbish showed—and spread—an unabashed commitment to the importance of black female inclusion in electoral politics. She inspired black women to such an extent that according to Adams, her rallying cry of "We'll never be able to accomplish anything without the vote", became a "slogan in Atlanta right straight on down through the years to… now."[64]

Amelia Boynton Robinson remembered her mother, Anna Platts, physically taking women to vote in Savannah, Georgia, right after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. "My mother was a politician also though she was a dressmaker and she had a horse and buggy and when women's rights became a reality she said

57 Charles McPherson to the NAACP Headquarters, November 9th, 1920 *Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284, 41; After the 1920 election, Jefferson County, Alabama continued this chicanery, claiming to have sent registration certificates that never actually arrived, for the next nineteen years. Finally, in 1939 the NAACP sued the Board of Registrars in six separate cases and elicited federal intervention from the newly founded Civil Liberties Bureau. Augusta Strong, "3,000 Ignore Buffs of Alabama Poll Bosses" *The Chicago Defender,* October 28, 1939, 2.

58 That is, not in any articles I found documenting the 1920 election.

59 Claudrena Harold, *New Negro Politics in the Jim Crow South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2016), 50-51; Charles Kellog, *NAACP: A History of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 207-230; Keyssar, *The Right To Vote,* 236-237, 258.

60 Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), 87.

61 David Garrow, "Commentary," in *The Civil Rights Movement in America*, ed. Charles Engel (Oxford: University of Mississippi, 1986), 57.

62 Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* 274.

63 Atlanta University, *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Atlanta University* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press,1890), 38; Kathleen Reddings Adams, interviewed by Gay Francine Banks, Spring 1977, *Black Women Oral History Project,* Harvard University, 33.

64 Kathleen Reddings Adams, interviewed by Gay Francine Banks, Spring 1977, *Black Women Oral History Project,* Harvard University, 33.

'I'm going around and get the women'…wherever there were women that she knew about and I would knock on the doors rang the doorbells we would get the women out we would take them to the polls."[65] Robinson's recollection of her mother portrayed a woman who married the political and the professional. As a community dressmaker Platts was located in the heart of black female social circles.[66] She knew these women on an intimate basis, had perhaps shared conversations about local gossip or the women's suffrage movement as she pinned fabric on them in her living room. Platts utilized her resources as a dressmaker, both her friendships with black women and her horse and buggy (which she owned presumably for professional trips), to bring what appears to have been tens of women to vote. Anna Platts was an example of a single woman creating a grassroots mobilization literally door to door. This was no spontaneous act, rather an independently orchestrated plan to ensure black women in Savannah had a means of accessing the polls.

This story further illustrates the need to look beyond documentary histories, into oral accounts, to truly understand the specific political strategies black women employed decades before the Civil Rights Movement. As Robinson recounted, Anna Platts did not organize the women of her community through a formal black women's club. There was most likely no written record of the women she brought to the polls. After all, these were her friends, "women that she knew about," so Platts had no need to compile a list of them. Without Robinson's testimony, Anna Platts' political organizing would have conceivably been lost to time. Moreover, Robinson recalled this memory of her mother in response to a question about the role of women in the Civil Rights movement. Robinson answered, "Well before I can get to that," and proceeded to tell the story of her mother's activism.[67] This anecdote was a brief reminiscence buried in an hour-long interview about the Civil Rights Movement. Robinson connected any mention of women in the Civil Rights Movement to this moment decades earlier with her mother. As someone who lived through both eras, Robinson felt that these two parts of her life were inherently intertwined. Her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement was a continuation of that day ringing doorbells in Savannah, Georgia, a day that "was the first thing I heard of or even knew anything about voting."[68] Through personal narrations, oral histories trace how seemingly distinct social movements, such as the Suffrage and the Civil Rights Movements, can be for an individual a single stream of continuous activism throughout his or her life.

In 1918, when they went to vote, Christina Adair and her fellow women "dressed up". Around 25 years later, before attempting to register in Halifax County, North Carolina, Florenza Grant's husband asked her, "Flo, will you get dressed? Look nice now…to register."[69] This aesthetic choice that accompanied voting was prevalent throughout many of the oral histories. The act of registering or voting itself was an auspicious public occasion, one that required fancy clothing. Furthermore, the moment in which a black woman walked into a white registrar's office and dared fulfill her legal right was also an undertaking that disrupted the white ruling order.[70] Participation in civil defiance such as this necessitated the black woman present herself well. A put-together, manicured appearance cultivated an important overtone to the interaction. Through their polished exteriors, black woman demanded they be taken seriously as citizens and recognized as members of the middle class. Their mode of dress outwardly manifested of their inner desire for respectability and legitimacy. This practice of dressing with special care for moments of confrontation with white supremacist structures continued during the Civil Rights Movement. During the sit-ins, marches and boycotts of the movement, "Sunday Best" attire was mandatory. By "dressing up" black women asserted their femininity and middle-class status, and thus during the Civil Rights Movement both discouraged white violence against them and projected wholesome appearances for the news cameras.[71]

African American women rarely approached the polls or spoke to the white registrar alone. In many of the accounts from the 1920 election, coalitions of wom-

65 Amelia Boynton Robinson, interviewed by Carolyn Fennell, April 2015, Orlando, Florida, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iv--DXyYkYM, 45.25-46:10.

66 For a discussion of the social status and role of dressmakers in American towns in the early 20th century, see Jean Louise Parsons, "Dressmakers: Transitions in the Urban Production of Custom-Made Clothing, 1880-1920" (College Park: University of Maryland Dissertation, 1998), 186-194.

67 Amelia Boynton Robinson, interviewed by Carolyn Fennell, April 2015, Orlando, Florida, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iv--DXyYkYM, 45.00.

68 Robinson, interviewed by Carolyn Fennell, 46:19-46:27.

69 Florenza M. Grant, interviewed by Sonya Ramsey, June 27, 1993, Tillery, North Carolina; *Behind the Veil: Documenting African American Life in the Jim Crow South,* Duke University, 53.

70 Yale psychologist John Dollard's 1937 exposition of social patterns in an anonymous Southern town, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, helped me a great deal to picture life in a Southern, Jim Crow town during this period. John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town,* 213.

71 Marissa Chapell, Jenny Hutchinson, Brian War, "Dress Modestly, Neatly…As If You Were Going to Church: Respectability, Glass and Gender in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement," in *Gender In the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Marissa Chapell (New York: Garland, 1999), 69-72; Cynthia Flemming, *Soon We Will Not Cry* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 47, 113.

en, clusters of female friends, registered together. [72] This phenomenon persisted for decades. Black women's social connections to their families and to each other gave them the courage and care they needed to demand their voting rights. A teacher named Elizabeth Carlett described how in the 1930s a colleague at her Durham, North Carolina school, took "a car full of teachers to vote and would bring them back and take another carload of teachers to vote and so forth."[73] Other African Americans recalled approaching the Southern polls in the 1930s and 1940s with their spouses, parents, or family friends. As Reverend Gardner Taylor of Baton Rouge, Louisiana explained, "I remember going to the fire station not too far from my home. Both of us Laura [Bell Scott, his wife] and I went together. And the misgivings, the uncertainty, maybe the fear of what was gonna happen."[74] Interior designer, Zonia Way reminisced about her father "taking me to the polls, I was twenty-one" and how he said, "Zonia, you're old enough to now…So that's what I want you to do every year, you vote."[75] Mahlon Puryear also recalled a traditional twenty-first birthday mandatory march to the polls in Winston, North Carolina: "The first time I registered in North Carolina, Papa carried, he carried us to register on our twenty-first birthday."[76] Essie Alexander remembered her trouble encouraging black women outside of her family to register in Carroll County, Mississippi: "I had a time trying to get the other women to go. We went together to register and to vote. I went with my cousin's wife and one or two other ladies to Carrollton."[77]

All over the South, African Americans built lasting social movements by creating networks of trust and solidarity strong enough to outweigh the terrifying and persistent structures of political domination. It was the familial relationships, often these coming-of-age moments between father and daughter, or the connections between groups of women who approached the polls together, that allowed these ordinary people to risk engagement in politics.[78] These small private moments shared between colleagues, family members or good friends rarely appear among the pages of written histories. However, oral histories in which individuals have the opportunity to recount the intimate details of their lives are uniquely situated to reveal these personal, truly political occasions of black female voter registration.

As shown in the oral histories above, from the 1920s through the 1940s, black women mobilized to register by informal ties and acted as (or responded to) independent leaders. However, black women also turned to official associations for structure and guaranteed support of political activism. They were not the only ones seeking organizational affiliations during the interwar period. In fact, the "greatest extent of associational activity in the whole history of American women" took place in this era after women were granted the right to vote and before a substantial proportion of them entered the work force.[79] As a resounding voice for black women in the Suffrage Movement in years prior, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) remained the primary outlet for black female political mobilization after the Nineteenth Amendment. [80] The NACW facilitated the creation of thousands of black women's clubs across 41 states and united these clubs with a broad common vision of racial uplift that encompassed (yet did not necessarily focus on) electoral politics. [81] For example, in West Virginia, the letters female clubwomen wrote encouraging black women to vote were sent to both the women themselves and to various local churches. These West Virginian clubwomen also engaged their fellow voters through an anonymous question box to identify salient political topics. [82]

72 "7,502 Women Registered in the City," *The Florida Times-Union, (Jacksonville); Papers of the NAACP, Part 04: Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950, African American Voting, Disenfranchisement, and Oklahoma Grandfather Clause,* NAACP Library of Congress, Folder I-C-284.

73 Elizabeth Catlett (The HistoryMakers A2005.170), interviewed by Shawn Wilson, July 26, 2005, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*. Session 1, tape 6, story 1.

74 Reverend Gardner Taylor (The HistoryMakers A2002.006), interviewed by Larry Crowe, March 5, 2002, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*. Session 1, tape 3, story 8.

75 Zonia T. Way (The HistoryMakers A2006.170), interviewed by Larry Crowe, December 14, 2006, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*. Session 1, tape 4, story 7.

76 Mahlon Puryear (The HistoryMakers A2003.268), interviewed by Larry Crowe, November 15, 2003, The HistoryMakers Digital Archive. Session 1, tape 2, story 3.

77 Essie Mae Alexander, interviewed by Paul Ortiz, August 10, 1995, Greenwood, Mississippi, *Behind the Veil: Documenting African American Life in the Jim Crow South, Duke University*, found in Annie Valk and Leslie Brown, *Living with Jim Crow: African American Women and Memories of the Segregated South* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 152.

78 Paul Ortiz reached similar conclusions about the importance of African American solidarity to overcome political systems. Paul Ortiz, "Eat Your Bread, Without Butter, But Pay Your Poll Tax", in *Time Longer than Rope*, ed. Charles Payne (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 216.

79 Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 97.

80 Founded in 1895 with Mary Church Terrell as president, the NACW emerged in reaction to the evident racism of the mainstream white suffrage movement. See Evelyn Higginbotham, "Clubwomen and Electoral Politics," in *African American Women and the Vote: 1837-1965*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 140, 142; Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*, 81, 88, 132-135; Lerner, *Black Women in White America,* 436-37, 444-447.

81 The organization of black women into clubs to promote various civic causes, among them voting, was largely rooted in Progressive Era attempts by black elites, driven by "a sense of righteous indignation" to transform the black lower-class into upright members of society. See Talitha L. LeFlouria, *Chained in Silence: Black Women and Convict Labor in the New South* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2015), 56; Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapell Hill: UNC Press, 2005), 76-107; Anne Knupfer, *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-Of-The-Century Chicago* (New York: NYU Press, 1996).

82 Evelyn Higginbotham, "Clubwomen and Electoral Politics" in *African American Women and the Vote: 1837-1965*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (Amherst: University of Massachusetts

Other national civic organizations for black women similar to the NACW allowed individual clubs to set their own agendas. For instance, of Memphis, Tennessee in the 1930s, Imogene Wilson recounted "the emphasis of the National Council of Negro Women [in Memphis] escalated into a voter rights kind of this…voter education. Civic kinds of things. Organize. Showing them how to organize for political purposes."[83] Lottie Watkins, described the role of mixed gender neighborhood clubs in "helping with voting strategies" during the mid 1940s. Watkins was the first female African American real estate agent in Atlanta. Undoubtedly influenced by her experiences and contacts from voter registration in the 1940s, she was later active in the Civil Rights Movement and became a Congresswoman.[84] Watkins recalled how club "men and women was able to knock on all those doors talk to those people…and see how many registered voters was there and where we had to work."[85] Organizations brought order and discipline. By connecting African American women (and men) to their black compatriots across the country, national associations added a sense of a larger purpose to the vote itself and gave black communities the hope that collectively they would be able to affect electoral politics.

Despite the unity engendered by collective political organizing, black Southerners regularly perceived the act of voting (or lack thereof) as a reminder of their individual social standings. During this period, Southern African American voting as a public display of white-sanctioned enfranchisement often amounted to a status symbol rather than simply a successful expression of political will. Christina Adair described her anger at the disenfranchisement of middle class black women in the 1930s alongside "the gullible Negro, the ignorant Negro, and the illiterate Negro."[86] At the polls in Houston, Texas, Adair was reduced to the same level, the same treatment, as a person she perceived to be far below her.[87]

A wealthy and educated black woman, Adair existed in the upper echelons of her insular black community. Once she stepped out of that world and interacted with white institutions, she was often instantly stripped of this upper-class identity. Just as disenfranchisement reduced Adair's social standing, a successfully cast vote could restore that identity to her. In 1937, sociologist John Dollard described the tendency of Southern communities to only bestow voting privileges on African Americans who were "well known as 'good Negros'."[88] By virtue of their womanhood, even privileged black women like Adair had trouble receiving the commendation of the "good Negro" that was often necessary for white registrars to allow African Americans voting rights.[89]

Black political scientist Ralph Bunche's investigation of African American political life during the Great Depression, *The Political Status of the Negro in the Age of FDR*, also detailed this belief shared by both African Americans and whites that only "intelligent" African Americans should vote. [90] The chairman of registrars in Dougherty County, Georgia proudly disclosed that their county had "a good nigger vote" of "property owners and taxpayers". He explained how his registrars prevented even these African Americans from ever voting in primary elections, however gave "the good ones a chance to show the white people…by registering and voting for president."[91] The African American men Bunche interviewed spoke of the added social status voting granted African Americans.[92] As one black man from Huntsville, Alabama divulged to Bunche, "people treat you different when you vote…

Press, 1997), 140, 142.

83 Imogene Wilson, interviewed by Mausiki Stacey Scales, July 5, 1995, Memphis, Tennessee, *Behind the Veil: Documenting African American Life in the Jim Crow South,* Duke University, 42.

84 The Honorable Lottie Watkins (The HistoryMakers A2006.037), interviewed by Evelyn Pounds, March 16, 2006, The HistoryMakers Digital Archive. Biography.

85 I was able to date this description in the mid-40s because Watkins mentioned organizing with Clarence Bacote, "Bacote (Clarence Bacote) could go through his chart." Clarence Bacote chaired the Atlanta All-Citzens Registration Committee (ACRC), founded right after the 1945 federal district court case, *King vs. Chapmen*, which declared Georgia's white primary laws to be unconstitutional. In less than five months, in same year, Bacote spearheaded a massive voting registration effort, the mobilization Watkins described, that increased the number of black voters in Atlanta from 6,976 to 21,244. The Honorable Lottie Watkins (The HistoryMakers A2006.037), interviewed by Evelyn Pounds, March 16, 2006, The HistoryMakers Digital Archive, Session 1, tape 3, story 1; Walton Jr., Puckett, and Deskins, *The African American Electorate: A Statistical History*; Louis Williams, "Clarence Bacote," *Historians and Organization,* accessed December 15th, 2017, http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/clarence-bacote-1906-1981.

86 Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project,* 73.

87 In the 1920s, Adair and her family moved from Kingsville to Houston, Texas for her husband's railroad management work. Hill, *Black Women Oral History Project*, 61.

88 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town,* 211.

89 Dollard also alluded to the general sense of anger middle class black women felt at various white methods used to demean them despite their high status in their own communities. "Failure to use the title Mrs. for Middle Class Negro women is a particular sore point. There seems to be a vague feeling that middle class negro women deserve this title and they certainly feel so themselves…custom is strict in refusing it…negro women, regardless of education or status in their own group, shall be addressed by their first names by any and all whites." Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 181.

90 See chapters 12 and 13 titled "The Negro At the Polls" (in the Inner and Outer South respectively). Ralph Bunche, *The Political Status of the Negro in the Age of FDR* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 484-472.

91 Bunche, *Political Status of the Negro*, 407.

92 Bunche, *Political Status of the Negro*, 389-419.

they treat me too nice sometimes."[93] Although a very rich source, Bunche's work focused almost entirely on the political status of black men and thus provides another example of the need to examine oral histories for parallel political experiences of black women during this period.[94]

During this Great Depression era, blacks were not the only Americans whose social standing mirrored their enfranchisement. Beginning in 1929, the economic devastation of the Great Depression converted millions of laborers into relief recipients. Consequently, many of these citizens relied on President Roosevelt's New Deal programs to subsist. Some Republicans believed that all relief receipts would unquestionably vote Democrat to ensure tax dollars continued paying for their sustenance. Amid accusations that President Roosevelt was a conniving politician who used federal funds to buy votes, in fall of 1934 twelve states took steps to strip relief recipients of the vote and thus prevent mass political support for Democrats.[95]

At a press conference on October 17, 1934, President Roosevelt called this "a thoroughly un-American procedure" and assured the public that "men out of work" could not "be denied the privilege of voting."[96] Just over two years later, on the eve of his second presidential election and amid the ongoing economic crisis, Roosevelt gave a public speech in which he summarized the history of American disenfranchisement and emphasized that "today you have a different situation."[97] Beyond merely extolling the virtues of American universal suffrage, with these words Roosevelt demonstrated the divided national attitudes toward disenfranchisement that existed during the Great Depression.

This powerful presidential praise—and public American discussion—of enfranchisement must have excited African American political activists across the country. But the racial implications of this moment could not have been lost on them. For decades, the South had blatantly denied voting rights based on race, yet when politicians attempted to overtly deny white Americans voting rights based on economic and social status, the President himself responded forcefully.[98] Despite having received seventy to eighty percent of the black vote, this was typical of President Roosevelt's attitude towards Southern discrimination against African Americans.[99] As he was dependent on a few Southern white Democrats who chaired economic congressional committees that were crucial to his New Deal polices, President Roosevelt tactfully chose not to publicly endorse Southern black civil rights.[100]

Roosevelt is not mentioned at all in the accounts of small-scale political mobilizations undertaken—and recounted decades later—by Evangeline Hall Bradenton and Amelia Boynton Robinson. Robinson and Bradenton, who lived in Florida and Alabama respectively during Roosevelt's presidency, exemplify those black Southern women whose higher social status and education cultivated in them a belief in the importance of enfranchisement. President Roosevelt must have seemed very far away when Robinson and Bradenton explained powerful notions of American citizenship to poorer African Americans in their communities as they helped them register. Evangeline Hall Bradenton recounted teaching poorer blacks in Bradenton, Florida of the 1940s, a place she referred to as "City of Hate,"[101] how to "handle a ballot." She explained, "I registered many a people…I say [to them], 'That's all you got anybody wants to vote. If you don't vote, just hang it up honey.'"[102] Likewise in the 1930s through 1940s Amelia Boynton Robinson registered poor black male and female farmers in the countryside of Selma, Alabama.[103] She told the groups of black agricultural workers, "you are not a first-class citizen, you are chattel unless…you fill out these applications and try to register so you can vote."[104] To these rural African Americans, Robinson emphasized the importance of citizenship, articulating:

> [Y]ou've got to be a citizen, you've lived here in the United States of America and your fathers and grandfathers have lived here and you can't vote… we're going to teach you…how to realize what

93 Bunche, *Political Status of the Negro*, 398.

94 For example, the index of Bunche's 642-page report lists a mere six entries under "Women Voters".

95 Keyssar, *The Right to Vote,* 237-244; "Any Voter on Relief Roll Can Vote, Says President," *The New York Times,* October 18, 1934, 17.

96 "Any Voter on Relief Roll Can Vote, Says President," *The New York Times,* 17.

97 "Roosevelt Talks At Poughkeepsie," *The New York Times,* November 3, 1936, 5.

98 Although attempts to prevent "an army of dependents" from voting had deep historical roots in both eighteenth-century British law and nineteenth-century American political efforts to limit Populism, this revived effort to disenfranchise the poor was never as explicit, nationally debated, or relevant to American citizens as it was during this moment in the thirties. Keyssar, *The Right to Vote,* 10-11, 46-51, 239-241.

99 Marianna Davis, *Contributions of Black Women to America* (Columbia, SC: Kenday Press, 1982), 112.

100 Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow,* 165.

101 Evangeline Hall (The HistoryMakers A2002.056), interviewed by Samuel Adams, April 24, 2002, The HistoryMakers Digital Archive. Session 1, tape 2, story 2.

102 Evangeline Hall (The HistoryMakers A2002.056), interviewed by Samuel Adams, April 24, 2002, The HistoryMakers Digital Archive. Session 1, tape 3, story 7.

103 She later testified about her work in front of the United States Commission on Civil Rights. "Hearings Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Voting", U.S Commission on Civil Rights (Montgomery: Alabama, 1958), 212-222.

104 Amelia Boynton Robinson, "Working for Civil Liberties," interviewed by Library of Congress https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLCwE4GdJdVRKryt3T56nmt-2pqSXLm8xKW&time_continue=3&v=EqPfbTYKOc0, 5:29-5:41.

politics really are and what democracy really is and you are going to register and vote.[105]

Although for the majority of American history the right to vote was not universal,[106] central to America's national mythology was the self-image of a government "of the people, by the people and for the people."[107] American citizenship was both a legal status and an identity. American citizens were legally entitled to American passports, federal benefits, and participation in electoral politics. As an identity, American citizenship was far more complicated, but at minimum conferred a sense of personal, historical, and political belonging. This belonging and an understanding of what politics and democracy "really are," were what Robinson, herself a recently enfranchised black woman, encouraged poor Southern African American men and women to claim in the 1930s and 1940s.

The names of the black men and women Bradenton and Robinson helped register could conceivably be found in a voter registration book. However, these recorded names would not disclose the manner by which these African Americans succeeded in registering: neither Bradenton's nor Robinson's self-motivated, neighborly, and class-based attempts at empowerment were documented in writing. The political contributions and civil rights organization of black women such as Bradenton and Robinson in the 1930s and 1940s South are revealed in short anecdotes from oral histories that focus primarily on the Civil Rights Movement. As Jacqueline Jones noted, "black women's work in the 1930s took place within a matrix of federal action, class-based and black political activism, neighborly cooperation and personal initiative."[108] Bradenton's and Robinson's oral histories reveal that during this period black women applied similar strategies and networks employed for organizing female labor to mobilizing voters.

Although most black female attempts to claim suffrage took place in relatively small and personal interactions with white registrars, some African American women embarked on a more confrontational approach to demanding their rights. The accounts of these antagonistic black women can be found in traditional historical sources such as newspapers. These women fought exclusion from electoral politics with overt acts of resistance and thus made national headlines, ensuring their political legacy would be documented. For instance, in January 1926, Indiana Little, a black teacher from Birmingham, strode to the entrance of the local courthouse. With a group of over 1,000 of her black community members, mostly women, behind her, she led rousing calls demanding an end to black disenfranchisement. Little attempted to register and gave the clerks "a piece of her mind", when they stopped her. Little was arrested along with many of her compatriots and was initially charged with vagrancy that was later changed to "disorderly conduct." This event appeared in newspapers across the country and subsequently sparked national debates over black disenfranchisement in the South.[109]

Black women's political activity also sometimes filtered into headlines when they organized on a local level in parallel with their national political moment. On April 1, 1935, the Supreme Court declared in *Norris v. Alabama,* the landmark case on the Scottsboro Boys, that the systematic exclusion of African Americans from Alabama juries was unconstitutional.[110] Consequently, in front page appeal in the *Daily Worker*, the most widely circulated national Communist newspaper of the time, the International Labor Defense (ILD) (a Communist legal advocacy organization that just had defended the Scottsboro Boys in court) called on blacks to assert their right "to sit on juries and to vote."[111] With this uncompromising attitude the ILD built on the national African American political momentum the Scottsboro case had achieved and specifically rallied blacks to agitate for their rights.[112] Later in April, "a group of Negro women workers" from Alabama followed this battle cry and demanded their rights be upheld "in accordance with the recent Scottsboro decision." These black women marched to the "Jefferson County Court," and commanded white officials to grant them both their enfranchisement and their names on jury rolls. Although they were denied these rights, these anonymous African American women left a traceable mark in the historical

105 Amelia Boynton Robinson, "Amelia Boynton Robinson discusses the Civil Rights Movement," interview by Pat Wallace, Tuskegee Virtual TV, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViBIqeEYqgQ, 19:20-19:55.

106 Whether as paupers, immigrants, felons, women or African-Americans, American citizens throughout the centuries have lived their lives without the ability to participate in the electoral process. See Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*.

107 Abraham Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address,* http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm.

108 Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow,* 166.

109 Robin Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1990), 9, 213; Joseph Brittain, "Some Reflections on Negro Suffrage and Politics in Alabama-Past and Present," *The Journal of Negro History* 47 (1962): 128; "Rebel Copperheads of the South Continue to Disfranchise Voters", *The Topeka Plaindealer,* February 19, 1926, 1; "Registration of Negro Voters Causes Storm," *The Charlotte Observer,* January 18, 1926.

110 Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe,* 123.

111 Anna Damon, "I.L.D Hails Triumph," *The Daily Worker,* April 2, 1935, 1-2.

112 Sullivan, *Days of Hope,* 88.

record. Their commitment to see the Supreme Court decision carried out locally was documented in the *Daily Worker*.[113]

The Vital Momentum: Conclusion

Through an amalgamation of written documents and oral histories, this paper has examined a chapter of the long history of black women voting—and not voting—in America. The African American women who attempted to vote in the South from the 1920s through 1940s were the predecessors of activists in the era traditionally thought of as the Civil Rights Movement, or themselves remained activists in this period. They attempted to register decades before the better-known campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s, and thus laid the groundwork for—and were often later on the frontlines of—the crucial mobilization efforts of black Southern women in those years. As Andrew Young, the executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), powerfully articulated, "It was women going door to door, speaking with their neighbors, meeting in voter-registration classes…that gave the vital momentum and energy to the movement."[114] Recognition of the continuous black female fight against the perpetuating forces of Southern injustice endows us with new insights into the many drivers of gradual social change.[115] Their experiences from the 1920s through 1940s help elucidate how the later Civil Rights Movement was truly mobilized on a grassroots level in the South and was not just carried out by political and religious leaders who welcomed the aid of Northern college students.

However, beyond merely viewing black women as precursors to the official Civil Rights Movement, this paper has followed the relatively recent historiographical push, led by Jacquelyn Hall, to recognize a "long civil rights movement."[116] Through the brief testimonies found in longer oral histories given by black women about the Civil Rights Movement, I have expanded the temporal boundaries of the African American push for civil rights beyond the standard 1954-1968 era. Recognizing black women in the 1920s through 1940s as key players in the "long civil rights movement" encourages historians to widen their perspectives and include in the civil rights movement new organizations, such as the local branch of a national black women's club that Imogene Wilson belonged to in Memphis, and individuals, like Anna, who have previously been overlooked.[117] This temporal redefinition is an important analytical tool that was aided immensely by the stories embedded in oral histories.

Since African American women's civic involvement took the form of actions beyond or in opposition to traditional political behaviors, oral history as a method of examining lived experiences is uniquely poised to reveal their impact. Just as Addie Hunton's interviews with African American women revealed their personal feelings about the 1920 election, it was in oral histories that I found the lasting impact of these encounters between black women and white registrars. The oral histories give us unique access to many kinds of episodes: Lucille Wheeler never attempted to register again after her attempt failed; defiant women like Clara Mann voiced objections and were energized to mobilize the women in their own towns or to become a registrars themselves; the Jefferson County women filled out forms to prove they were "naturalized" in the U.S and then sat at home endlessly waiting for the registration certificates that would never arrive, thinking deeply about their own claims to citizenship; and the list goes on. The 1920 election largely marked an end to the written history on African American women who waged an assault against the Southern white supremacist system through their quest for inclusion in electoral politics. Thus, black female oral histories are crucial sources for recapturing black women's continuous efforts throughout the following three decades to vote and change the political consciousness of their communities.

Focused on African American female voting in the 1920s through 1940s, this paper did not delve into many of the crucial national changes that impacted the African American community during this period. I did not mention the geopolitics that influenced African Americans such as the two world wars or the rise of an international Communist movement with the Soviet Union at its helm.[118] I did not even allude to the Great Migration, in which millions of African Americans moved from the rural South to the urban North and Midwest in the interwar period. I also only briefly referenced the radical realignment of African American political allegiance in 1932, namely the widespread black political shift that FDR's election

113 "Negro Women Demand Place On Jury Lists," *The Daily Worker,* April 25, 1935, 3.
114 Andrew Young quoted in Mary King, *Freedom Song* (New York: William Morrow, 1987), 469-470.
115 Glenda Gilmore, *Defying Dixie* (New York: W.W Norton Company, 2008), 9.
116 Jacquelyn Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1233-263.
117 Anne Stefani, *Unlikely Dissenters* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015), 5.
118 See Susan Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

inspired, from the Republican, "Abe Lincoln's", Party to the Democratic Party. However vital to understanding the events that impacted African Americans during this time, these historical phenomena are less relevant to this paper's story about black female activism in local communities and social networks that spanned across different eras. For instance, in the oral histories, black women such as Christina Adair and Essie Alexander did not discuss a desire to vote for a particular candidate such as FDR. Rather, these women sought the right to vote at all. They fought for the simple ability to write the name of a political candidate on a slip of paper and place it in a ballot box, while looking straight into the eyes of their local registrar, a governmental official who personified one of the many white supremacist structures that constrained these women. In that sense, this paper deals with a history that although political, was affected more by local cultural or social relationships and trends than the influence of global or national political currents.

Through engagement with oral histories of Southern black women, this paper demonstrated black female activists' persistence and commitment to enfranchisement, despite obstacles white municipal officials, employers, and citizens placed in their way. This paper illuminated a small yet persistent movement carried out by black Southern women who did not always succeed in registering people, but who nonetheless continued mobilizing and returning to the polls.

Decades before the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, African American women, primarily in the West, documented and celebrated their voting rights. After the Nineteenth Amendment, African American women rushed to vote alongside millions of white women. Southern black women expressed dismay at the ridiculous yet effective tactics white registrars used to defeat black female attempts at voting. Yet, in small acts of political resistance over the following decades, Southern black women gradually found ways to confront the repressive, white supremacist powers of their local municipalities and in doing so, helped alter the collective political imagination of black men and women across the country.

The Business of Freedom

The Impact of Opportunism on U.S. Immigration Detention

for Poppa - the greatest humanitarian I have ever known

By LYDIA MAHER, UC BERKELEY

In July 1981, Ronald Reagan proclaimed, "Our nation is a nation of immigrants. More than any other country, our strength comes from our own immigrant heritage and our capacity to welcome those from other lands… We shall… continue to share in the responsibility of welcoming and resettling those who flee oppression."[1] Yet by the mid-1980s, refugees were deported by the thousand, and immigrant detention was cemented as a mass immigration strategy for the first time in US history.[2] This strategy has continued uninterrupted, and today immigration detainees represent the fastest growing segment of the jail population in the United States.[3] The timing of the policy's introduction was unexpected: although there was a greater influx of Cubans to the US in the 1980s than previously seen in the 20th century, overall immigration was growing at a constant rate and did not spike until the 1990s. This paper aims to further examine the policy's origins and to determine why immigrant detention centers were introduced in 1981.[4] By looking at the causes of the policy's introduction, its initial implementation, and the transformation in scale of immigrant detention, this study concludes that detention in the 1980s operated more as a strategy for political leverage than as a deliberate means of controlling the flow of immigration. While detention was subsequently expanded through new mechanisms like privatization, the core justification behind it—the pervasive belief that refugees are dangerous and illegitimate—remained the same. This idea was not based on true events or statistics, but was fabricated in order to further political goals.

I will first examine the Mariel Boatlift, an influx of 125,000 Cubans to Florida in 1980. Commonly acknowledged as the catalyst for the introduction of immigrant detention centers, the Mariel Boatlift created national panic over immigration and cast the Mariels as some of the most despised immigrants in American history. Although the Boatlift only lasted seven months, it played a significant role in corroding public opinion about refugees and produced repercussions that lasted throughout the 1980s. The processing centers housing these refugees and the riots resulting from them only further worsened public sentiment.[5] This negativity subsequently enabled the implementation of universal detention for Haitian refugees, which is the second topic of this paper. Haitians have consistently suffered poor treatment throughout U.S. immigration history. Before 1981, however, they had never been detained comprehensively. The third section of this paper details Haitians' historic discrimination and how it led them to be the first uniformly detained group in America. Finally, this paper examines the factors enabling detention to grow into its current form.

In this highly politicized sphere, it is important to define our terms. "Immigrant detention," "refugee," and "illegitimate" are terms central to this argument. As used in this essay:

- *Immigrant detention* is the apprehension of immigrants upon their entering a country. It is not necessarily performed as a response to illegal activities, and, as I will argue, is often performed for political benefit to the State.[6]
- *Refugees* are a class of immigrants seeking extra-national protection from a "well-founded fear" of persecution.[7]
- *Illegitimacy* in this paper is meant to indicate

1 Ronald Reagan, "Statement on United States Immigration and Refugee Policy," July 30, 1981, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?/pid=44128.

2 Earlier immigration ports such as Angel Island and Ellis Island doubled as detention centers, but not on this scale. See Jana K. Lipman, "The Fish Trusts the Water, and It Is in the Water That It Is Cooked: The Caribbean Origins of the Krome Detention Center", *Radical History Review* 2013, no. 115 (January 1, 2013): 115–41.

3 Miller, Teresa A. "The Impact of Mass Incarceration on Immigration Policy in Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Incarceration", ed. Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind. New York: 2002, 214.

4 In 1981, immigration detention centers were introduced on a large scale for the first time. However, Ellis Island had detained some immigrants prior to this year. Therefore, this paper does occasionally, for accuracy, refer to the "re-introduction" of detention. This is just a technical detail though—for most applicable purposes the Mariel Boatlift is the beginning of the detention narrative.

5 Mark S. Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones: The Imprisonment and Uprising of the Mariel Boat People* (Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1995): 56.

6 To see more on the shift in the 1980s to using immigration as an immediate response and as a deterrent to illegal immigration, see Faiza W. Sayed, "Challenging Detention: Why Immigrant Detainees Receive Less Process Than 'Enemy Combatants and Why They Deserve More," *Columbia Law Review* 111 (2011): 1833-1877.

7 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, article 1A(2): "[A]ny person who: owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail

> the quality of being against socially accepted standards but not in direct contradiction with the law.[8]

It is important to note that these terms have slightly different meanings in contemporary usage.
For example, immigrant detention today generally tends to be rationalized in terms of the suspicion of criminal activity.[9] However, in the 1980s context of universal detention only for certain groups, the given definition is much more appropriate.

These terms are contentious not only because of their political subject matter, but also due to the lack of existing historical literature about immigrant detention. Although many books touch upon the key events discussed in this paper, especially the Mariel Boatlift, hardly any works touch upon these events in the context of immigrant detention. This absence indicates that historians do not generally see mass immigrations in the 1980s as part of the detention narrative. When they do, such as in Michael Welch's *Detained: Immigration Laws and the Expanding I.N.S. Jail Complex*, they view detention as arising "in light of the arrival of the Mariel Cubans" and thus portray the Mariel Boatlift as an "immigration crisis." [10] This paper disputes the idea that unmanageable immigration levels forced the reintroduction of detention.

There is, however, a well-developed body of scholarship on the criminalization of immigration in the US, the differential treatment of Haitians and Cubans, and Reagan's immigration policies more broadly. Generally, immigration policy in this era is characterized as restrictive and enforcement-minded, and this paper does not challenge that characterization.[11] Nicholas Laham's *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform* effectively portrayed Reagan's overall immigration policy as an economic failure, blaming the policy's poor performance on a lack of information about immigrants. Similarly, Marco Rivera's *Decision and Structure: U.S. Refugee Policy in the Mariel Crisis* details the "overly politicized decision making" and the "restrictive, enforcement-minded approach" to events.[12] Through a closer examination of the events of 1980, this essay will add depth and nuance to our understanding of Reagan's compliance-heavy, inhibitive approach and highlight how different groups of immigrants were confined in a variety of ways.

The piece of research most pertinent to my project is Brianna Nofil's 2012 bachelor's thesis, "Detained Immigrants, Excludable Rights: The Strange Devolution of U.S. Immigration Authority, 1882-2012."[13] Nofil's work does discuss many of the same issues as this paper (for example the Mariel Boatlift, Camp Krome, and privatization) but its principal focus is on the role of government and plenary power in driving the development of detention, rather than a more detailed analysis of the events of 1980. While some of these differences can be attributed to scope (Nofil's paper covers the period 1882 to 2012), our projects diverge due to a subtle difference in motivation. Nofil's paper considers the history of immigrant detention as a systemic problem produced by plenary power, whereas I am interested in examining the short-term series of events that led to immigrant detention as we know it today. Although I agree that detention is a systemic problem arising from long-standing ideas and modes of power, I think it is still important to consider the highly contingent nature of its reintroduction and the implications this has for its continuation into the present day.

The Mariel Boatlift

"Ours is a country of refugees," President Jimmy Carter stated in May 1980, during a speech concerning the US acceptance of Cuban refugees. "We'll continue to provide an open heart and open arms to refugees seeking freedom from Communist domination and from the economic deprivation brought about by Fidel Castro and his government."[14] Between April and September of that year, some 125,000 Cubans took part in this open door policy and made the 100-mile journey from the port of Mariel, Cuba, to Key West, Florida. This mass defection heavily exceeded the original White House prediction of 10,000 Cubans refugees and caused administrative issues.[15] To process refugees in accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) set up two relocation facilities in South Florida that would later become the models for the immigrant detention system. This section aims to analyze not only who

himself of the protection of that country."

8 Winston Chou, "Seen Like a State: How Illegitimacy Shapes Terrorism Designation," *Social Forces* 94 (2016): 1129-1152.

9 This trend is mainly due to the passing of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, which broadened the usage of mandatory detention to noncitizens committing certain crimes; see Faiza W. Sayed, "Challenging Detention," 1837.

10 Michael Welch, *Detained: Immigration Laws and the Expanding I.N.S. Jail Complex* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002): 95.

11 Mario A. Rivera, *Decision and Structure: U.S. Refugee Policy in the Mariel Crisis*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 1.

12 Mario A. Rivera, *Decision and Structure: U.S. Refugee Policy in the Mariel Crisis* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 1.

13 Brianna Nofil, "Detained Immigrants, Excludable Rights: The Strange Devolution of U.S. Immigration Authority, 1882-2012" (Bachelor's thesis, Duke University, 2012).

14 "Nation: Open Heart, Open Arms", *Time Magazine*, May 19, 1980, http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,924093,00.html.

15 "Cuban Refugees", Department of State Bulletin, June 1980, 68.

was coming into Florida at this time and why, but, more importantly, how the Mariel Boatlift affected the US population on a wider scale. After all, the number of immigrants relative to the size of the population in America was no greater than it had been in the 1950s, when Ellis Island was shut down and the economy was booming.[16] In the 1980s, however, this same level of immigration was seen as unmanageable and a cause of many of the economic problems of the time. This contradiction suggests that public perception was the key factor shaping Mariel Boatlift policy, not, as traditionally believed, economic necessity.

On April 20, 1980, Fidel Castro declared that Cubans wishing to emigrate to the US were free to do so by boat from Mariel.[17] During the months leading up to Castro's announcement, there had been growing political dissatisfaction and hence a marked increase in attempts to leave Cuba. When 10,000 desperate would-be migrants occupied the Peruvian embassy in early April, it was clear that the situation was no longer sustainable.[18] Castro, embarrassed by this blatant international show of unpopularity, attempted to turn the events to his favor by allowing the "Cuban Overseas Community" to come by boat and pick up refugees and family members.[19] Within three days of Castro's announcement, 280 Cuban refugees arrived in Key West, and 68 in Miami.[20]

US refugee policy, however, was not designed to cater to such a sudden influx of refugees. Earlier in 1980, the Cuban government had been frustrated by the US's inability to prevent certain naval hijackings and had threatened to initiate another mass immigration similar to the 1965 Camarioca Boatlift. This threat triggered the American passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, which raised the annual refugee admissions limit from 17,400 to 50,000 for three years.[21] But with over 280 refugees arriving in a single day (equivalent to over 100,000 annually), it quickly became clear that these preparations would not be adequate.[22] On April 26, a meeting was held among senior representatives of US federal agencies, and it was determined that the boatlift had to be stopped. However, Carter was hesitant to engage Cuba in bilateral negotiations on immigration out of fears that other Cold War-related issues would be discussed. Thus, the administration entered a deadlock, and, by the second week of May, the number of daily arrivals exceeded 3,500.[23]

In response to the flood of immigrants, President Carter announced on May 14 a five-point program for halting Cuban emigration.[24] As part of this program, Cubans landing in Florida would no longer be considered as refugees but as applicants for asylum, and the 1980 Refugee Act would no longer apply to them.[25] Other points of the program included: implementing an airlift and sealift for "qualified" candidates, opening a family registration center in Miami, urging boats to return from Cuba without additional passengers (in partnership with the Coast Guard), and commencing exclusion proceedings against any 'criminals' (a designation over which Castro held primary authority) shipped over from Cuba. In short, Carter was no longer simply denying asylum to arriving refugees; he was now preventing undesired refugees from even reaching US shores.

Despite Carter's best attempts, the flow of Cuban refugees continued, and it was not until September 26 that the boatlift was proclaimed to be officially over. Once again, it was Castro who dictated the speed and course of events; only after he ordered "all remaining boats in the port of Mariel, Cuba, to return to the United States without refugees" did the White House make any official statements.[26] This 159-day exodus ultimately left a significant stain on Carter's presidency. Castro's control of events made Carter appear inept and unable to prevent unwanted peoples from entering America. In combination with the Iranian hostage crisis and the general Cold War paranoia that still gripped most of the American populace at this time, Carter's perceived mismanagement of the Mariel Boatlift made him particularly unpopular. A Roper Poll in October 1980 showed that 91 percent of people wanted the federal government to "make an all-out effort against illegal entry into the U.S.", while the Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs at the time, Jack H. Watson Jr., described the boatlift as "politically…[a] no

16 Alex Larzelere, *The 1980 Cuban Boatlift* (Washington D.C., National Defense University Press, 1988): 142.
17 David Card, "The Impact of the Mariel Boatlift on the Miami Labor Market" (Cambridge: Natural Bureau of Economic Research, 1989): 2.
18 Felix Roberto Masud-Piloto, *With Open Arms: Cuban Migration to the United States* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1988): 79.
19 Larzelere, *Cuban Boatlift*, 121.
20 Larzelere, *Cuban Boatlift,* 143.
21 Maurice A Roberts, "The U.S. and Refugees: The Refugee Act of 1980." *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 12 (1982): 5.
22 Maurice A Roberts, "Refugee Act of 1980," 120.
23 Maurice A Roberts, "Refugee Act of 1980," 274.
24 Maurice A Roberts, "Refugee Act of 1980," 276.
25 Maurice A Roberts, "Refugee Act of 1980," 282.
26 Maurice A Roberts, "Refugee Act of 1980," 360.

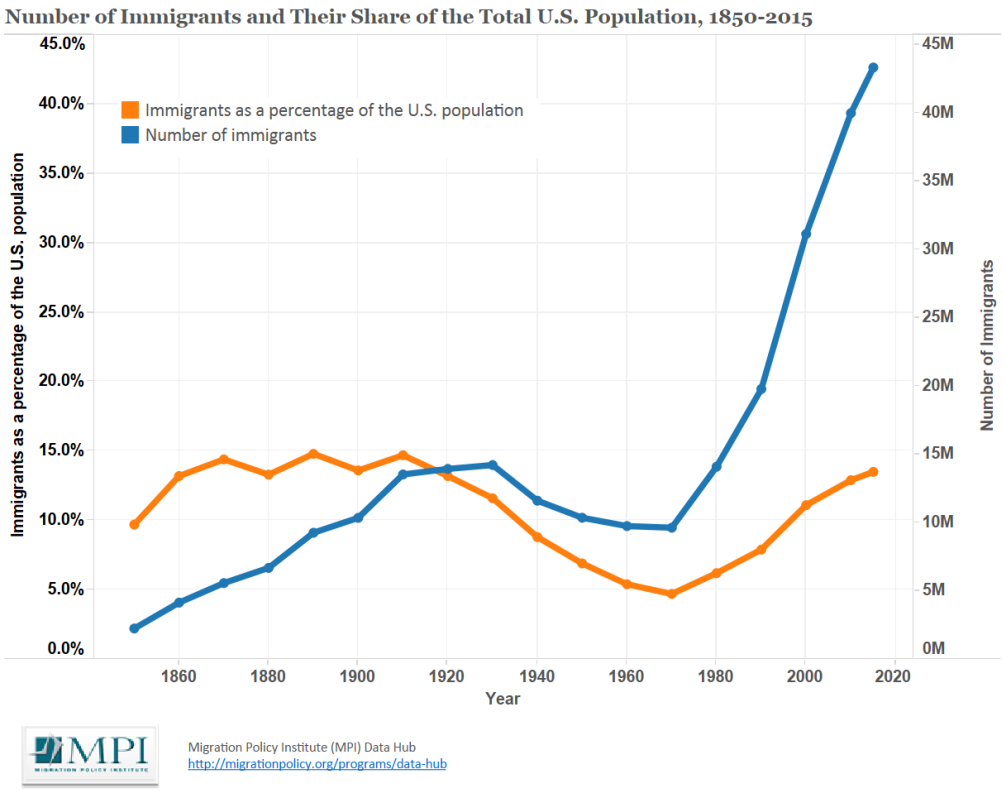


Figure 1: Immigration Trends 1860-2020
Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2015 American Community Surveys (ACS), and 1970, 1990, and 2000 Decennial Census

win situation" for the President.[27] Altogether, this unpopularity contributed to Carter's landslide defeat in the 1980 presidential election.

Why exactly was this policy so unpopular? After all, many contend that the United States' ability to embrace immigrants is one of its defining characteristics.[28] It would be reasonable to suspect that the general American population was not concerned with immigrants per se, but simply with the sheer number of people who were arriving. Interestingly, however, the data does not support such a hypothesis.

From 1970 to 1990, there was a clear increase in the number of immigrants to the United States, but this increase occurred mainly in the years prior to the 1980 Mariel Boatlift. Looking at the percentage change in rates of immigrants per 1,000 US residents, we see that although there was no change from 1970 to 1975, there was an increase of 28 percent between 1975 and 1980.[29] Examining the years individually, though, we see that the highest rate of immigrants per U.S. resident between 1970 and 1985 was in 1978, with 2.8 immigrants per 1,000 U.S. residents. In this same period, the highest year-on-year increases in immigration rates were in 1978, 1977, and 1980 with increases of 30%, 16% and 15% respectively.[30] Arguably, these are only single year increases, which are liable to random year-on-year variations and are not necessarily indicative of wider trends. However, if the Mariel Boatlift was indeed an immigration crisis—as it was portrayed—1980 *should* have been an anomaly. Therefore, the fact that it does not have the highest year-on-year increase nor the highest rate of immigrants in the fifteen-year period indicates that the 1980 growth in immigrant rates was not anomalous. Even if we analyze the three-year rolling averages, we see that the average annual rate of growth between 1976 and 1978 was more than double that between 1978 and 1980.[31] The 1980 annual increase may have been the third highest at 15.4%, but it was certainly not the highest in the period. In fact, the growth prior to 1980, which had nothing to do with Cuban refugees, was much more rapid. Therefore, while there was undeniably

27 Nicholas Laham, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2000): 42; Larzelere, "Cuban Boatlift", 237.
28 For more on mass immigration as the defining characteristic of US history, see Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted; the Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951).
29 Calculations derived from figures obtained from the Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1970-1990.
30 Calculations derived from figures obtained from the Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1970-1990.
31 The rates are 16.4% for 1976-78 and 7.5% for 1978-80.

a relative increase in immigrants in 1980, it was not a sudden, drastic influx, but a continuation of existing trends in the 1970s. Figure 1 shows the linear nature of this rate of change.

While the rate of immigration growth may not have changed drastically from year to year, it is still important to consider the impact of a decade of increasing immigration. Even though there was not a sudden explosion in immigration in the 1980s, immigration to the United States had been on the rise for nearly a decade. It was this long-term growth that may have concerned much of the American population rather than any sharp spike in the number of immigrants into the country during any given year. In the 1980s, the number of immigrants relative to the population did not dramatically change and was as high as it had been in the 1950s (which in turn was not even close to what it had been pre-WWI). Therefore, while immigration was on the rise, it was still below previous levels in terms of percent relative to the US resident population. The government was dealing with levels of immigration less than or equal to those it had previously managed.

Furthermore, the 125,000 Cubans who came over in 1980 constituted less than 1 percent of immigrants living in America that year.[32] Cuban refugee admissions were abnormally high, but in the wider context of American immigration, they were nothing more than a drop in the ocean. Suggestions that Cuban refugees were flooding America ignored both the broader trends in immigration rates in the 1970s as well as the relatively small proportion of Cubans in the American immigrant population.

Another possible explanation for the unpopularity of the Mariel Boatlift is that the public was concerned with the purported criminality of the migrants. Due to the political situation, Cuban migrants overwhelmingly belonged to a subset of the Cuban population that was either radically opposed to Castro and had voluntarily left, or Cubans who had previously been imprisoned and were hence forced to leave.[33] Thus, Cubans were mainly expelled for disagreeing with Castro. However, Castro purposely disseminated and exaggerated ideas involving Cuban immigrant criminality in order to challenge the legitimacy of his political opponents in Cuba. This purported criminality lacked empirical grounds: official INS relocation figures show that less than one percent of the Mariel Cubans who came to the US were found to have "significant criminal histories."[34] To put this into perspective, in that same year, about six percent of U.S. residents committed a major-index crime (such as arson, rape, or homicide). From a more long-term viewpoint, about 97 percent of the Mariel Cubans were law-abiding citizens after resettlement.[35]

Most Cuban refugees immigrating into the United States in 1980 were political dissidents, not criminals. Although the exact figures are disputed, Larzelere estimates that "71 percent were urban blue-collar workers, craftsmen, machine and transport operators, and laborers"—all generally well-regarded professions.[36] Similarly, Portes, Clark, and Manning estimate that 80 percent of Cubans emigrating to Miami did so for political reasons.

While political dissatisfaction motivated many of the refugees, it was certainly not the only reason for leaving. Socioeconomic factors were also instrumental in shaping their decision to migrate. By 1979, the unemployment rate had shot up to 5.4 percent (from a post-revolution low of 1.3 percent in 1959). Castro had introduced a rationing system so strict that only children under 10 years of age could drink milk, and Cuban debt totaled almost 3.3 billion dollars (the highest in the following five-year period).[37] This economic situation was further exacerbated by a blue mold epidemic that destroyed almost the entirety of the tobacco and coffee crops of 1979. A quarter of the sugar crop was also destroyed by blight that year—a massive loss considering sugar had accounted for 86% of exports in 1976.[38] All three of Cuba's major exports were thus adversely affected in a single year. For the Cuban plantation-based economy, which was insufficiently diversified, this was particularly threatening to economic stability.[39]

The economic situation was so poor that ordinary citizens struggled to meet their basic daily needs. Juan F. Diaz, an exile who came to Key West on the Sun Hippie boat, recalls: "I knew that the day I was able to eat an apple, it would represent a day of freedom."[40] For this

32 Calculations for the above percentage are based on a total of 14,079,900 immigrants living in America in 1980, per MPI data above.
33 While the public may have agreed with the anti-Castro sentiment, they are still likely to have distrusted all types of 'radicals'.
34 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones,* 59.
35 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones,* 77.
36 Larzelere, *Cuban Boatlift*, 221.
37 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones,* 45-46; Richard Turits, "Trade, Debt, and the Cuban Economy," *World Development* 15 (1987): 164.
38 David Lehmann, "The Cuban Economy in 1978," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 3 (1979): 323.
39 Lehmann, "Cuban Economy," 323.
40 "El Mariel: Boat and Passenger Records", MiamiHerald.com, http://pubsys.miamiherald.com/cgi-bin/mariel/memories/0#storylink=cpy.

reason, even though most refugees classified themselves as 'political refugees,' socio-economic factors as well as political ones motivated their decisions to emigrate from Cuba. These causes of emigration were well-known internationally and were likely somewhat to blame for nativist economic fears in the US, to which this essay will now turn.

Generally, it has been assumed that the large influx of Cubans in this period negatively impacted the Miami labor market. However, research from the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) has shown "no indication of any short- or longer-term effect of the Mariel immigration on the wages or unemployment rates of non-Cubans in Miami."[41] While it is true that the unemployment rate in Miami did increase from 5 percent in April 1980 to 7.1 percent in July 1980, state and national rates followed a similar pattern. As a result, this change cannot necessarily be attributed to the boatlift.

Unfortunately, the actual economic effect of Cuban immigration was not known at the time and contemporary perceptions of the situation were quite negative. Even before the Mariel Boatlift, a *New York Times* article published in March 1980 proclaimed that "refugee problems have become a chronic feature of our world."[42] With crises occurring across Central America as well, many Americans began to experience "compassion fatigue."[43] The INS was aware of public sentiment and used it to their advantage. Employing a variety of images, inaccurate factual assertions, and symbolic references, the INS portrayed Mariel Cubans as brutish, un-American criminals, transforming them into some of the of the most "despised immigrants in the history of the United States."[44] This reputation has survived even today. In June 2016, an article entitled "A Cuban Crime Story" was published by an organization labeling themselves 'Observers of Homeland Security' and described the history of Miami Cocaine Wars: "These Cuban hardened criminals called 'Mariels' found themselves at home in the violence-ridden streets of Miami and were a natural fit to serve as enforcers of the Colombian drug cartels in what would come to be known as the Cocaine Wars."[45] This portrayal gave the INS the authority to undertake a moral crusade and rapidly expand throughout the 1980s. The expansion manifested in a budget allocation of $1.6 billion in 1986 (compared to the mere $900 million allocated prior to the Freedom Flotilla).[46]

Such successful propaganda meant that by the time Ronald Reagan became president in early 1981, the general public supported an immigration crackdown. Ever the populist, Reagan made a 'Statement on United States Immigration and Refugee Policy' six months into his term, announcing that "we must ensure adequate legal authority to establish control over immigration."[47] Although this rhetoric proved popular, it did not align with the recommendations of the Cuban-Haitian Task Force, which was established in July 1980. As discussed above, although many more Cubans immigrated to South Florida that year than in the years prior, overall immigration figures had not suddenly inflated, but had continued to follow an upward linear trend. The number of immigrants relative to the size of the population also remained the same as it had been since the 1950s. Even with the influx of refugees in South Florida, the local economy was no worse than the national average, which had declined for reasons other than immigration.[48] Therefore, this perceived need to clamp down on immigration was not due to the arrival of Mariels in Key West, but to the public fear that these arrivals might lead to social and economic instability. It was an illusion based on the public conception that immigrants were dangerous and illegitimate.

In sum, even though the Mariel Boatlift only directly involved Cuban immigrants, the fears resulting from the Mariel Boatlift worsened public opinion concerning *all* immigrant groups. Through fearmongering, politicians were effectively given a blank check to implement any immigration strategies they deemed necessary (or politically expedient). In this political climate, the extension of processing centers to Haitian refugees and their subsequent detention required little justification.

Processing Centers

Processing centers operating during the Mariel Boatlift were much more akin to federal prisons than the administrative establishments they claimed to be. Despite being designed to aid INS officials with processing refugees, their haphazard execution led to the frequent long-term detention of refugees without proper cause or proce-

41 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones,* 75; Card, "Miami Labor Market," 4.
42 "Carter Signs Bill on Refugee Entry," *New York Times*, March 17 1980, https://www.nytimes.com/1980/03/18/archives/carter-signs-bill-on-refugee-entry.html.
43 María Cristina García, *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006): 86.
44 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones,* 76.
45 WeSeeHSE, "A Cuban Crime Story," Homeland Security, June 8, 2016, https://medium.com/homeland-security/a-cuban-crime-story-e22310b5d6ce.
46 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 80.
47 Ronald Reagan, "Statement on United States Immigration and Refugee Policy," July 30, 1981, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?/pid=44128.
48 Card, "Miami Labour Market", 249.

dure. What is more, the centers were subject to little legal oversight. They housed refugees in terrible conditions and had a high rate of transferral to penitentiaries. Such conduct set a standard for how refugees could be treated in America and made the eventual mandatory detainment of Haitians in 1981 seem acceptable. In this section, I will analyze the beginnings of the processing centers, their day-to-day functioning, and how their closure contributed to the re-introduction of detention centers.

In anticipation of the influx of refugees, the 1980 Refugee Act created stricter standards for refugee admission. Although this was beneficial from the point of view of controlling refugee arrivals, the policy hindered the rapid and efficient processing of large numbers of refugee applications. Since as early as February 1980, the CIA was aware that Cuba was considering reopening the port of Camarioca and initiating another mass exodus, as it had in 1965.[49] During the previous exodus, the US government had been unable to define quotas and had been forced to manage the influx on an impromptu basis, without any real system. The 1980 Refugee Act was thus intended to "provide a permanent and systematic procedure for the admission to this country of special humanitarian concern to the US."[50] Although the Refugee Act established a systematic approach for dealing with large influxes of refugees, its allotted quotas were not commensurate with the situation on the ground. In the Cuban case, a yearly quota of 19,500 refugees was fixed, which only covered roughly one-sixth of the eventual total.[51] Furthermore, the Act mandated certain reporting and administrative standards that were impractical given the scale of the exodus. Altogether, the unsuitable quotas and bureaucratic requirements caused a backlog in refugee administration, which was especially pronounced in the case of Haitian refugees.

To deal with this backlog, the Carter administration set up a series of processing centers and emergency shelters. The Orange Bowl stadium in Miami was prepared as a shelter on May 2.[52] However, it provided less than adequate accommodation to the refugees housed in it. Tents were assembled all over the stadium, making it appear more like a camping ground than a bona fide shelter. The first formal relocation camp was set up shortly after, at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, and it was filled within six days. Then, on May 8, Fort Chaffee was opened in Arkansas. It also reached capacity in under a week. Consequently, two more processing centers were set up, one in Pennsylvania and one in Wisconsin. Many of these processing centers were only open for a short time, as the Cuban-Haitian Task Force made the decision to consolidate all the refugees at Fort Chaffee in September, 1980.[53]

None of the refugees held in these centers had a significant criminal history, though the media portrayed them as felonious individuals (those who committed crimes were not accepted for asylum). Half of Mariels entering the US were put in direct family placement, while the rest were randomly dispersed amongst the processing centers detailed above.[54] To have been imprisoned for more than fifteen days in Cuba was considered significant to the U.S. officials in their initial screening, even if this was due to a refusal to join the military or to "volunteer" for government projects.[55] Therefore, even minor offenses would significantly lower one's chance for asylum.

Conditions in the processing centers were deplorable and would have been considered illegal if US citizens had been subjected to them. In Edwidge Danticat's non-fictional account *Brother, I'm Dying,* she details the conditions in Camp Krome, where her uncle was kept. They were sometimes beaten, identified by the vessels they had come on rather than by name, and given "food that rather than nourish them, punished them, gave them diarrhea and made them vomit."[56] Similarly, Raul Quevedo, reflecting on his journey to Fort Chaffee, remarked "I was shocked when the cop responded to my tales of crimes against Castro by giving me a ticket to hell, Fort Chaffee, where I spent the most confusing and miserable eight months of my life."[57]

Many riots broke out because of these conditions, which led the administration to shut down the centers as quickly as possible, for fear of bad publicity. The Fort Chaffee Incident, which began on May 26 1980, is a well-known example of such protests. What started as a peaceful protest with two hundred Cubans merely walking out of an unlocked gate at the camp developed into a full-blown rampage by June 6. Mariels burned five wood-

49 Larzelere, "Cuban Boatlift," 119.
50 *Refugee Act of 1980*, Public Law 96-212, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 94 (1980): 1.
51 Masud-Piloto, *With Open Arms,* 84.
52 Jana K. Lipman, "The Fish Trusts the Water, and It Is in the Water That It Is Cooked," 120.
53 Brianna Nofil, "Detained Immigrants, Excludable Rights: The Strange Devolution of US Immigration Authority, 1882-2012," 69.
54 U.S. Department of State, "A Report of the Cuban-Haitian Task Force", Cuban-Haitian Task Force, December 1, 1980, 75.
55 Rivera, "Decision and Structure," 133.
56 Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007): 212.
57 Masud-Piloto, *With Open Arms*, 101.

en army buildings and stormed the front gates of a nearby military base.[58] One Cuban refugee died from injuries obtained during the Fort Chaffee Incident, while another forty Cuban refugees and fifteen Arkansas State troopers were seriously wounded.[59]

President Carter's short-term response to this incident played on the well-propagandized narrative of Mariels as dangerous criminals. Instead of acknowledging poor camp conditions, the Carter Administration used this incident as an excuse to further discuss the supposedly destructive nature of the Mariels. Jody Powell, the White House Press Secretary at the time, stated on June 7 that "some hardened criminals exported to the United States by Fidel Castro" were responsible for the incident.[60] Security measures inside all the camps were heightened and 3,700 troopers were sent to stand guard outside Fort Chaffee and Fort Indiatown Gap.[61] From a long-term perspective though, this incident actually caused the government to lower their relocation standards for Mariel refugees in order to target those most likely to be felons. Full medical examinations were dispensed with and only those with a criminal history were now questioned.[62] This policy change refocused and intensified state violence upon a smaller group of immigrants.

The processing, detention and deportation of Cubans was also an increasingly expensive affair and one which the federal government did not want to commit to indefinitely. Even before the Eglin Air Force Base was set up, President Carter authorized $10 million to house, feed, and care for the refugees.[63] The expense of detaining some 1,769 suspected felons—in no way a small fee—was initially borne entirely by the federal government.

Altogether, the bad publicity, lowered relocation standards, and cost of detainment meant that by October 1980, most Mariels contained in relocation camps had been released. However, the releases did not extend to all Mariels, and in 1997, seventeen years after their arrival, more than a thousand Mariels were still behind bars.[64] The 1987 Cuban Review Plan reevaluated the potential of the 1,300 remaining Mariels housed at the Atlanta federal penitentiary for placement in halfway houses or with community sponsors.[65] This was a slow process, though, and it took many months before all the 880 detainees who were ultimately approved were released. Furthermore, because only 68% of the Atlanta detainees were released, many Mariels were still left in limbo.

Processing centers had, from the start, been notorious for the poor treatment and indefinite detainment of refugees.However, when refugees who were considered politically threatening began to arrive from Haiti, their treatment dramatically worsened. Detention became mandatory for all Haitians, regardless of their criminal status or their capacity to enhance public life. Therefore, while the Mariel Boatlift provided the justification for detention, processing centers provided the infrastructure and made the detention process more acceptable to the general public. They also effectively dehumanized the immigrant, paving the way for the extension of detention networks with poor living conditions and unconstitutional bureaucratic processes.

The Discriminatory Treatment of Haitians

Haitians have had a history of poor treatment by the American government. Throughout the twentieth century, they were consistently refused entry into the United States and, if admitted into the country, were denied basic human rights. This treatment reached newly inhumane levels in the 1980s. In 1971, Jean-Claude Duvalier assumed power of Haiti, continuing the extremely violent and repressive regime that his father had established in 1957. Under his leadership, a turbulent political situation emerged that lasted for most of the second half of the twentieth century. This turbulence culminated in an attempted coup in 1978 which, combined with the worsening economic situation, made living in Haiti almost unbearable for victims of the regime by the early 1980s. Still, the United States refused to allow Haitian political refugees to enter the country for most of the 1980s.

Given the treatment of Mariels described previously, this may seem unsurprising. After all, public opinion towards most immigrant groups at this time was negative; it was not exclusively Haitians who were being discriminated against. However, Haitians were the only group to be denied asylum *without exception* in 1980. More-

58 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 56.
59 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 56.
60 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 56.
61 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 56.
62 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 56.
63 Larzelere, *Cuban Boatlift*, 377.
64 Welch, *Detained*, 97.
65 Hamm, *The Abandoned Ones*, 101.

over, Haitians were the first group of asylum seekers to be systematically detained in America.[66] As Donald Payne, a representative for the President of the National Council of Churches, proclaimed: "There are few more shameful episodes in our immigration history than the treatment given Haitians in 1981 and 1982." [67]

The mandatory detention of Haitians implemented in 1981 must be considered in light of the much larger numbers of other immigrants arriving in the 1980s. Less than 50,000 Haitians attempted entry over the whole decade, far fewer than most other Caribbean groups. In fact, over twice as many Cubans arrived in 1980 as did Haitians in that entire decade.[68] With Cubans arriving in numbers so significantly larger than Haitians, the exceedingly harsh treatment dealt to Haitians is both striking and surprising. This section examines the treatment of Haitian refugees, how it contrasted to the Cuban experience, and the reasons for such differing treatments.

Whereas Cuban refugees had always been admitted to America and were often aided by the US government, Haitians had a long history of being refused entry into the United States.[69] In September 1963, 23 Haitian refugees arrived to the United States and applied for political asylum. Every single application was denied, and every single Haitian was deported.[70] This was not a one-off incident, but a consistent pattern throughout the twentieth century. Seventeen years after the episode in 1963, 4,000 Haitians requested political asylum and were once again uniformly denied.[71] Even after an aborted election ending in bloodbath in Haiti in 1987, the INS still refused to grant asylum to any Haitians.[72]

Cubans had better admission rates than not only Haitians, but many other Caribbean nations as well (in 1981, only 2 out of 5,570 Salvadorans who applied for asylum were granted it).[73] Despite this discrimination against Carribean applicants, they were not barred from entering America. Haitians were the only group to be interdicted at sea and returned home.[74] Thus, a sort of hierarchy emerged wherein Cubans were allowed into the country, Caribbeans were discouraged, and Haitians were completely banned. Although many background factors contributed to the emergence of this hierarchy, most of the difference in treatment had to do with political ideology. In the 1980s, the Cold War had a considerable impact on international relations. The fact that Cuba was the closest Communist state geographically to America meant that accepting Cuban refugees had particular rhetorical appeal: the more Cuban refugees that America accepted, the more they could evidence the supposed immoral and oppressive nature of Communism.[75] On the other hand, acceptance of refugees from non-Communist countries not directly opposed to America did not make for such effective propaganda. In countries such as Haiti where America funded the regime, the admission of refugees could actually lead to a loss in moral authority.

El Salvador exemplifies America's treatment of many non-Communist nations and reveals the general impunity enjoyed by the Cold War American state. The United States had provided six billion dollars in economic and military aid to El Salvador and supported a regime that killed thousands of civilians and committed indescribable atrocities, leaving thousands homeless. The 1981 El Mozote massacre is one of many such atrocities: 936 Salvadorian civilians were killed, over half of whom were under the age of 14. [76] Yet less than three percent of Salvadoran asylum requests were approved in 1984. In comparison, in the same year, the approval rate for Iranians was 60 percent, 40 percent for Afghans fleeing the Soviet invasion, and 32 percent for Poles. [77] The administration was not only unwilling to admit partial responsibility for the destruction of many Caribbean countries, but was also unwilling to accept innocent civilians attempting to flee the countries they had helped destabilize. After all, doing so would imply the United States' support of regimes diametrically opposed to its founding. The universal rejection of Haitians was not based on ill-founded fear of political persecution. In June 1980, a report was produced by the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights

66 Gilburt Loescher and John Scanlan,"Human Rights, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Haitian Refugees," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 26 (1984): 313-56.
67 Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, Ninety-Eighth Congress Second Session on H.R. 4853 Cuban/Haitian Adjustment, 58.
68 Malissia Lennox, "Refugees, Racism, and Reparations: A Critique of the United States' Haitian Immigration Policy," *Stanford Law Review* 45 (1993): 704.
69 Consider, for example, the 1965 Camarioca boatlift, in which U.S. commercial aircraft flew refugees in.
70 Cheryl Little, "InterGroup Coalitions and Immigration Politics: The Haitian Experience in Florida," *University of Miami Law Review* 53 (1998): 717.
71 Little, "InterGroup Coalitions and Immigration Politics," 718.
72 Little, "InterGroup Coalitions and Immigration Politics," 717.
73 Loescher and Scanlan, "Human Rights, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Haitian Refugees," 345.
74 Loescher and Scanlan, "Human Rights, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Haitian Refugees," 345.
75 This is directly acknowledged in the Refugee Act of 1979: Hearings before the Subcommittee, https://archive.org/details/refugeeactof197900unit.
76 Garcia, *Seeking Refuge*, 24-26.
77 Susan Gzech, "Central Americans and Asylum Policy in the Reagan Era,"
http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-americans-and-asylum-policy-reagan-era.

to the Organization of American States on human rights conditions in Haiti. The Committee concluded that "the current situation in Haiti reveals a consistent pattern of gross violations of basic human rights." [78] These violations included frequent detention without trial, denial of basic rights of due process, and President Duvalier's suspension of clauses of the constitution protecting individual rights. The 1980 Refugee Act defined a refugee as "any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion…"[79] With these aggressive violations of human rights corroborated by the international community at large, it is clear that almost every Haitian had a "well-founded fear of persecution" and met the necessary criteria to be considered a refugee. Nevertheless, not a single Haitian was found deserving of political asylum.

This blanket refusal accorded with official federal policy. Known as the 'Haitian Program,' US government agencies such as the INS intentionally and systematically denied Haitian claims for asylum as quickly as possible. [80] Some agencies claimed this was due to the 'flood' of Haitians to South Florida in 1980, which supposedly caused a buildup of 7,000 Haitian applications and prevented new requests from being processed. In reality though, this backlog had been steadily growing during the prior decade, as the INS continually neglected Haitian asylum requests motivated by human right violations. Far more Cubans than Haitians arrived in South Florida in 1980, yet the INS still proved capable of processing the Cuban applications. Some officials, such as Alan C. Nelson, an INS Commissioner, completely denied the existence of the program: "...I can say as a matter of fact, there has not been discrimination against the Haitians as a matter of legislative policy."[81] Interestingly, Nelson did not claim that there was not discrimination against the Haitians, simply that it was not codified.

Official policy mandated different administrative classifications for Cubans and Haitians. Although Duvalier's regime was unquestionably repressive, Haitians were always admitted as "economic" refugees and never considered to be "political" refugees. Undeniably, Haiti was and remains an impoverished nation. In 1985, "90% of the population averaged less than $180 a day, far below the absolute poverty limit" and the average Haitian suffered a daily calorie deficit of 20%.[82] However, this poverty was intertwined with the political situation, and many Haitians fled for both political and economic reasons. Therefore, separate refugee groupings were not founded on genuine discrepancies, but were instead established to downplay the plight of Haitians and to enable their further mistreatment.

The blackness of Haitian immigrants led to their singularly harsh discrimination. As noted by Norman Hill, the President of the A. Philip Randolph Institute: "The Haitian refugee boat people are the first numerically significant group of black refugees ever to seek safety on our shores." [83] In this period, we see an obvious difference in rates of rejection for asylum between Caribbean refugees.[84] Although the rates were not particularly favorable for any American group, Haitians were the only subset to be refused in their entirety. This suggests that being black may have led to far worse discrimination than simply being non-white; of immigrants arriving in the U.S. in 1980, only 2.3% of Cubans were considered black compared to 96.6% of Haitians.[85] Furthermore, in *Jean v. Nelson*, it was shown that there was a less than two in ten billion chance that so many Haitians would be detained and denied parole under immigration standards applied in a racially neutral fashion.[86]

The Reagan administration was aware of the need for a passive population and stable investment climate in Haiti in order to advance neo-liberal policies and treat-

78 "Violations of Human Rights in Haiti: A Report of the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights to the Organization of American States," 43.

79 The Refugee Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42) (1988).

80 Little, "InterGroup Coalitions and Immigration Politics," 718.

81 Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, Ninety-Eighth Congress Second Session on H.R. 4853 Cuban/Haitian Adjustment, 11.

82 M.S. Hooper, National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, and Americas Watch Committee, *Duvalierism Since Duvalier* (New York: National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, 1986): 9.

83 Lennox, "Refugees, Racism, and Reparations," 68.

84 Loescher and Scanlan, "Human Rights, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Haitian Refugees," 345.

85 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Population Characteristics, United States Summary, Series PC80-1-D1-A, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1984. Table 255. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Population Characteristics, Florida, Series PC80-DO1 1, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1983. Table 196.

86 Lennox, "Refugees, Racism, and Reparations," 715.

ed Haitians accordingly.[87] This was true both in terms of U.S. foreign policy towards Haiti (where the US provided organizations such the National Governing Council with almost $400,000 worth of riot equipment to prevent popular uprising[88]) and U.S. domestic treatment of Haitian refugees. At Krome, the age of potential detainees without birth certificates or papers was determined by examination of their teeth. As described by Danticat, this was an "agonizing reminder of slavery auction blocks, where mouths were pried open to determine worth and state of health." [89] Haitians were also the only group that President Reagan authorized the Coast Guard to interdict at sea before reaching U.S. soil.[90] While US officials may have discriminated against Haitians due to their skin color, the introduction of interdiction at sea for Haitians arguably originated more out of fear of the potential organizing power of Haitians than racial bigotry. The impact of the 1905 Haitian Revolution, which established Haiti as the first Black Republic, may have influenced this intense fear of Haitian organization. Nevertheless, if US officials did not want black refugees in their country, they could have just deported them as soon as they arrived. However, the implementation of interdiction implies that the administration was not even willing to risk Haitians reaching US soil. After interception, this fear was once again replaced by racial exclusion; of the 22,940 Haitians intercepted at sea between 1981 and 1990, only eleven were considered qualified to apply for asylum.[91]

Despite official denials of anti-Haitian discrimination, the landmark Haitian Refugee Center v. Civiletti case confirmed the existence of the Haitian Program and deemed it unconstitutional. The case did not target any single decision or immigration judge, but rather the institution of "a program 'to achieve expedited mass deportation of Haitian nationals' irrespective of the merits of an individual Haitian's asylum application and without regard to the constitutional, treaty, statutory, and administrative rights of the plaintiff class." [92] As stated in the introduction of this case, these five thousand Haitians were fleeing "the most repressive government in the Americas." Thus, it was not merely a few undeserving applicants that were being denied asylum, but a whole class of people requiring protection.

Such transparent discrimination reveals US hostility towards immigrants, and especially refugees, at this time. America had suffered a recession in the late 1970s and was still recovering in the early 1980s. The uncertainty of this fragile economy did not reduce the number of immigrants hoping to relocate to the US. Nativists, who thought of immigrants as unskilled and welfare-abusing burdens, worried that this continued immigration would serve to completely destabilize an already faltering economy. For this reason, public opinion became very dismissive of potential newcomers and political popularity became contingent on strict immigration control.

In sum, immigrants were not viewed favorably by the American public and American legislators in 1980 for myriad reasons, including public fear of negative economic effects due to immigration, official unwillingness to admit support of persecutory regimes, and a constantly evolving immigration landscape. However, up until 1981, none of these reasons were enough to cause the re-introduction of detention. In May, the previously established policy of detaining only those who posed a security threat was fundamentally altered. From that point on, it was decided that all Haitians would be detained at Camp Krome on a mandatory basis.

Timing is always a factor in determining causation in history and the introduction of mandatory detention for Haitians is no exception to this rule. The fact that it was only Haitians who were singled out for this treatment might reasonably be related to their unique status as black immigrants and the exceptionally harsh discrimination that provoked. However, this fact was not new and had not led to the re-introduction of detainment before. Therefore, the re-institution of detainment centers at this specific moment evidently had other, more time-sensitive motivations.

The most notable change in circumstances in 1981 was the release of Mariel Cubans. Although the Mariel Boatlift had technically ended in October 1980, there were still thousands of Mariels awaiting hearings. Similarly, while most of the centers were closed down by October 1980, there were still 19,000 refugees consolidated at Fort Chaffee, which was not shut down until January 1982. [93] May 1981 was the first time since the beginning of the Mariel Boatlift that the administration had a break from the immigration influx. At this point, new Cubans

87 Christopher I. Clement, "Returning Aristide: The Contradictions of US Foreign Policy in Haiti," *Race & Class* 39 (1997): 24.
88 Clement, Christopher I. "Returning Aristide", 25.
89 Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying*, 212.
90 High Seas Interdiction of Illegal Aliens, Proclamation No. 4865, 3 C.F.R. 50 (1981).
91 Lennox,"Refugees, Racism, and Reparations," 704.
92 Haitian Refugee Ctr. v. Civiletti, (s.d.fla. 1980), 503 F. Supp. 442, 457 (S.D. Fla. 1980).
93 Ronald Copeland, "The Cuban Boatlift of 1980: Strategies in Federal Crisis Management," (Annals, AAPSS 467, May 1983), 139.

were no longer coming to the United States and the majority of Cuban refugees had been processed, , allowing the last center to be shut down six months later.

The Mariel Boatlift permanently altered the immigration landscape for the worse. National consensus was unanimously negative against Cuban immigrants, depicting Mariels as disease-carrying, violent, uneducated criminals.This depiction was eventually extended to immigrants as a whole. With the release of Mariels from detention, the public no longer had a target on which to concentrate its immigration fears, and Reagan no longer had any evidence that he was cracking down on immigration. Many saw the release as an explicit relaxation of policy, and historians to this day comment on the impact of this softening: "Unfortunately, the people of the United States had to pay a heavy price for the release of the Cuban criminals; society had to suffer the consequences of the crimes of the Mariels before they could be arrested and reincarcerated." [94] Whether or not these crimes actually occurred, they were to seen to have occurred, and the release of Mariels was seen as a loosening of immigration policy. The Haitians therefore provided a new target for Reagan to demonstrate he could still be tough on immigration.

Although Haitians became a new political scapegoat for Reagan, basic administrative details also influenced the nature of their detention. These included: the cost of processing immigrants rather than immediately putting them in detention, the need to minimize visibility and bad publicity, and the fact that centers for detention were already in place and running.

The introduction of mandatory detention for Haitians in May 1981 was multifaceted. The need for a passive Haitian population, the non-Communist structure of the Haitian government, and the fact that most Haitian refugees were black were all features that contributed to their detention. However, these features had existed for many years and had never previously led to their detention. The fact that Haitians arrived after a mass influx of Cubans who had received terrible publicity and heightened xenophobia in the American population was therefore significant. Additionally, the administrative advantages of compulsory detention were obvious and, based on earlier complaints expressed by the federal government concerning the financing of the Mariel Boatlift, heavily influenced the decision to enforce detainment for all Haitians. With all Haitians systematically detained with or without criminal offense, it was only a matter of time before detention became standard procedure for all immigrant populations. Furthermore, the public stopped questioning the use of detention as a means of immigration control. The public acceptance of detention allowed its expansion and meant that financial concerns, rather than the welfare of the immigrant, became the dominant driver of immigration policy.

Immigration Policy After Detention

In 2012, the United States detained an average of 33,000 individuals daily, a nearly three-fold increase from the daily amount detained in 1996.[95] The Obama administration deported 395,000 immigrants in 2009 alone and detained and deported more undocumented immigrants than any other administration in US history.[96] Immigrant detention may have begun in 1981, but it was only in 1986, with the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (known as IRCA), that detention began to take on the mass proportions seen today. This section will explain the transition from the relatively small-scale detention program implemented in 1981 to the mass confinement currently affecting hundreds of thousands of individuals. I will also discuss the role of IRCA in this transition.

Since 1981, the U.S. detention network has grown exponentially. The US now detains approximately 400,000 people each year in over 200 county jails and for-profit prisons.[97] As of 2001, more than 20,000 detainees were undocumented immigrants and as such they were subject to the criminalization process.[98] This undoubtedly has something to do with the rapid growth of the nation's foreign-born population, which grew from 4.7 percent in 1970 to 13.1 percent in 2013.[99] However, while the nation's foreign-born population nearly tripled in this forty-year period, the detainee population has increased by 550 times.[100] The growth in detention far surpasses the growth in the foreign-born population and would not seem to mimic true needs for detention.

94 Larzelere, "Cuban Boatlift," 383.
95 Furman, Epps, and Lamphear, *Detaining the Immigrant Other: Global and Transnational Issues*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 5.
96 Furman, Epps, and Lamphear, *Detaining the Immigrant Other*, 6.
97 "Immigration Detention Map & Statistics | Endisolation.", http://www.endisolation.org/resources/immigration-detention/.
98 Welch, *Detained*, 105.
99 Street et al., "Chapter 5: U.S. Foreign-Born Population Trends." *Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project*, September 28, 2015, http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/chapter-5-u-s-foreign-born-population-trends/.
100 "HAITIANS AT 2 DETENTION SITES REFUSING TO EAT AND TO TALK." *The New York Times*, December 25, 1981, http://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/25/us/haitians-at-2-detention-sites-refusing-to-eat-and-to-talk.html.

The increase in the number of detainees is compounded by a growth in the average length of detention. In 1981, the average stay in an INS detention facility was less than four days. By 1990, it had increased to 23 days and by 1992, the average was 54 days.[101] It is important to note that nearly all these averages are dragged down by the large number of one-day detentions, where refugees to be expelled are detained for one day prior to their expulsion. One-day stays occur frequently but are not true detentions, and therefore their frequent occurrence superficially lowers the average. Nevertheless, the fact remains that by 1992, the average detainee suffered two months of detainment without committing a single crime. Today, increasing numbers of detainees combined with increasing detention stays mean that there are more immigrants being detained than ever before, and they are staying in progressively poorer conditions. As the problem grows, our methods of coping are weakening.

Aside from increasing detention figures, it is important to remember that there are also 4,400 INS detainees still being detained indefinitely, due to a lack of diplomatic ties between the US and the original countries of these detainees.[102] Indefinite detention is treated almost identically to indeterminate sentencing, with one exception—in the case of indefinite detention, no crime has been committed.[103] These instances of detention are simply a result of administrative inefficiency.

Indefinite detention for immigrants may be deplorable, but it is not surprising given the inhumane origins of detention. The re-introduction of immigrant detention required a national conceptualization of detainees as less-than-human. The continuation of detention into the present day is no different; it is simply that the target of this policy have come to include many more communities. Previously, Cubans and Haitians were explicitly dehumanized. However, the influx of these particular groups was bound to stop at some point—making group-specific justification unsustainable for long-term detention projects. In this specific scenario, the detention of Haitians and Cubans had become unviable after the Mariel Boatlift was resolved.

The dehumanization of refugees was central to the continuation of detention, but it was privatization that really enabled its expansion. The first private company to receive a federal contract from the INS was the Corrections Corporation of America in 1983.[104] With this contract, a private detention center was set up in Houston in 1984. The CCA obtained two more contracts in 1985 and by 1990, it was making over $50 million annually.[105] Although the growth of privatization may have been slow (it was only during the late 90s that the CCA began to make really significant profit, breaking $400 million in 1997[106]) its decisive impact on the expansion of detention had to do with how it changed what immigrant detention represented. Through privatization, what had previously been purely a means of immigrant control and deterrence, was now also a means of profit. As of 2009, privatized detention centers comprised 12 of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's 17 largest facilities and accounted for 40% of CCA's $1.7 billion revenue.[107]

The passage of the Immigration and Reform Control Act in November 1986 gave legal expediency to this profit-seeking enterprise. Although IRCA granted amnesty to 2.7 million illegal aliens, it was actually designed as a method to deter further illegal immigration to the United States.[108] To this end, employer-sanctions (which range from fines to prison terms[109]) were imposed, amnesty qualification standards were intensified (illegal aliens now had to demonstrate that they could be financially self-sufficient and live independent of the welfare system)[110] and aliens granted amnesty were virtually ineligible for all entitlement programs for five years. The widened scope for punitive action against aliens made their detainment and deportation easier. It also led to a "widespread discrimi-

101 Welch, *Detained*, 107.

102 Welch, *Detained*, 94.

103 For more on indeterminate sentencing, see Alan Dershowitz's 1974 article: "The indeterminate sentence is not a unitary concept of precise definition. It is a continuum of devices designed to tailor punishment, particularly the duration of confinement, to the rehabilitative needs and special dangers of the particular criminal (or more realistically, the category of criminals). A sentence is more or less indeterminate to the extent that the amount of time actually to be served is decided not by the judge at the time sentence is imposed, but rather by an administrative board while the sentence is being served." Alan M. Dershowitz, "Indeterminate confinement: Letting the therapy fit the harm." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 123 (1974): 297-339, 298.

104 Philip Mattera and Mafruza Khan, *Corrections Corporation of America: A Critical Look at its First Twenty Years,* (Washington DC: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2003): 12.

105 Philip Mattera and Mafruza Khan, *Corrections Corporation of America*, 15.

106 Philip Mattera and Mafruza Khan, *Corrections Corporation of America*, 15.

107 Nofil, "Detained Immigrants, Excludable Rights", 106-7.

108 Laham, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform*, 125.

109 Bansak, Cynthia, and Steven Raphael, "Immigration Reform and the Earnings of Latino Workers: Do Employer Sanctions Cause Discrimination?" *ILR Review* 54 (2001): 276.

110 Laham, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform*, 169.

nation" against undocumented immigrants in the hiring process.[111]

Conclusion

In the orthodox narrative, immigrant detention is viewed as an unfortunate evil arising in response to crisis. This paper has disputed such ideas and aimed to determine what really accounted for the re-introduction of immigrant detention centers in 1981.

I examined the Mariel Boatlift and established that even though there was a large influx of Cubans, it was not large relative to immigration occurring nationally, nor did it produce negative economic effects (either in the long or short term). Nevertheless, due to false stereotypes of Mariels propagated by Castro and the INS, it provoked general public hysteria concerning immigration and a perceived 'immigration crisis.' These fears caused Mariels to be detained in purpose-built 'processing centers' for extended periods (up to seventeen years for some). As noted in the second section, these processing centers were mostly shut down by October 1980 as a result of poor publicity and the high operating costs paid by the federal government. However, their widespread publicization, even in this short time span, these centers had a large impact on both public opinion and congress. Consequently, by 1981, both the mentality and the infrastructure were already in place for the implementation of mandatory detention for other 'alien' groups. Haitians were the next to go under scrutiny due to a combination of long-standing discrimination and administrative convenience.

Significantly, none of the governmental actions outlined above were implemented as a direct response to influxes of immigration. Rather, these policies were executed because of the political and economic advantages they offered to the Carter and Reagan administrations. However, this was not the reasoning given for action. Instead, the administration purposely misrepresented Mariels as dangerous criminals who needed to be treated with caution. With this justification, what was first implemented as a temporary measure purported to alleviate an immigration 'crisis' became a permanent strategy for the next forty years (and counting).

The further expansion of the immigrant detention network in the 1990s and 2000s was due to privatization and the expansion of federal power through policy. Although there was a spike in immigration levels in 1990, the growth in the detention network was far greater than what would have been necessary to deal with this spike. To this day, the amount of people detained still does not reflect actual detention requirements.

To conclude, in twentieth-century America, immigrants have been continuously and systematically subjected to inhumane treatment as a matter of official policy. This has led to superfluous detention rates as well as the incarceration of innocent individuals. The practice of detaining immigrants continues to expand today, but its implementation is no less driven by opportunism than it was in 1981. By understanding the true motivation behind this policy, the American public can critically judge its legitimacy and consider whether we will continue to tolerate a policy predicated on the notion that refugees are dangerous and illegitimate.

111 Laham, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform*, 140.

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