The McNair Scholars Research Journal is the official annual publication of the McNair Scholars Program at Boise State University. The McNair Scholars Program is housed in the Center for Multicultural and Educational Opportunities within the College of Education. The program is funded by a $225,000 Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program grant from the US Department of Education.
MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BOB KUSTRA

It is with real pleasure that I write to introduce this twelfth volume of the McNair Scholars Research Journal. The papers contained in this year’s journal represent a breadth of scholarship that encompasses some of the best of what Boise State University has to offer. All of us at Boise State, but especially the scholars’ faculty mentors and the McNair Program staff are very proud of this work.

Congratulations to all of the 2016 McNair Scholars for your achievements over the past year. In particular, I want to acknowledge the hard work and accomplishments of the senior Scholars whose research is represented in the papers in this publication. McNair scholars work with faculty mentors who are committed to the rigors of scholarship—a working relationship that both students and faculty describe as unique and beneficial. I also want to recognize and thank all of the faculty mentors who have worked with our McNair Scholars. It is your patience, guidance, and encouragement that facilitates the transformation of these students into scholars.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program honors the memory and achievement of the late Dr. Ronald E. McNair, a physicist and NASA astronaut. Its goal is to encourage undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds to emulate the academic and professional accomplishments of Dr. McNair by facilitating their pursuit of doctoral degrees and academic careers in teaching and research. The McNair Scholars Research Journal is evidence that the McNair Program provides a valuable opportunity for participants to explore research on significant issues. By being provided access to conferences and graduate schools they are given multiple opportunities to present their research and meet doctoral faculty. This formula has proven very successful for a vast majority of those who have participated in McNair since it began on our campus in 2003.

The research presented in this journal signals the arrival of new and rising scholars who will carry their talents, enthusiasm, and hard work ahead into graduate programs here and across the country. I hope that you will continue to aspire, achieve, and pursue your dreams.

Again, congratulations and best wishes,

Bob Kustra
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are very happy to be publishing our twelfth volume of the Boise State McNair Scholars Research Journal. The papers presented here are the outcome of the McNair Scholars’ research projects conducted during their participation in the program and demonstrate the variety of excellent undergraduate research that can be produced when students are provided meaningful support through many collaborative efforts. This would not be possible without the dedicated support of faculty mentors who supervise and guide our scholars through their research endeavors.

This journal is the culmination of the research component of the McNair Scholars Program. By engaging in undergraduate research these scholars have developed important analytical and methodological skills, academic sophistication, and confidence that will aid in their success in graduate school. This journal also provides them an opportunity to have their research published and gain an early understanding of the importance of disseminating their work for others to utilize and of the role publishing may play in their future careers.

Maintaining a high standard of excellence throughout this process, these McNair Scholars have become capable researchers and have clearly demonstrated their readiness to engage in the demands of research at the graduate school level. To each of them we would like to send a sincere thank you for making the choice to become a part of the McNair Scholars Program. Please remember that you share a tremendous bond with all the McNair Scholars who have engaged in this process in the past and we look forward to seeing your future engagement with those who will follow in your footsteps. It is appropriate that your efforts culminate in the recognition of your work through this journal.

We would like to also extend our deepest gratitude to the many faculty mentors who have guided and supported McNair Scholars throughout the life of our program. You have been instrumental in providing a solid research foundation giving each the ability to enter graduate school with confidence.

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<td>Abraham Calderon</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>Jesus Caloca</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>University of Maryland, College Park</td>
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Gregory Martinez – Interim Director, Center for Multicultural & Educational Opportunities
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The Relationship between E-cigarette Use and Tobacco Status among Youth in Public Health Tobacco Cessation Programs

Sophia Brasil: McNair Scholar

Dr. Janet Reis and Lisa MacKenzie: Mentors

Health Sciences

Abstract

E-cigarette use is an emerging and fast-growing trend particularly among youth and young adults that has not been thoroughly researched in terms of quit rates and abstinence rates. The objective of this research was to determine whether there is an association between e-cigarette use and cessation rates of youth in tobacco cessation programs. This research, compiled in Fiscal Year 2015, analyzes quantitative evaluation data gathered from statewide public health tobacco cessation programs in Idaho in order to explore the relationship between e-cigarette use and quit rates. This research evaluates data from participants of tobacco cessation programs (N=2127) and the association between youth e-cigarette use and tobacco status at the end of the program. The research was conducted using SPSS to analyze tobacco cessation outcomes by age group and e-cigarette use. Chi square analysis was conducted between e-cigarette use and the tobacco status of youth and adults. Results showed significant associations between tobacco status by age group as well as by youth e-cigarette use. The data shows that e-cigarettes show promising potential for use as a cessation tool among participants attempting to quit tobacco use. Understanding behaviors in electronic cigarette use is important to implementing changes in clean indoor air policies, understanding the best practices for effective tobacco cessation in order to improve quit and abstinence rates, and advancing accurate perceptions on the safety of e-cigarette use for all users.

Background

The popularity of electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) is increasing rapidly, particularly among youth and young adults. Increases in use are due, in part, to heavy advertising and marketing directed toward this population (Kalkhoran, Grana, Torsten, & Ling, 2015; Cooper, Case, & Loukas, 2015). Studies show that not only are e-cigs more likely to be used by younger individuals, but young adults are primarily attracted to them because of their potential for both reduced tobacco use and safer smoking experiences (Cooper et al., 2015). People in general perceive e-cigarettes as a safer and more effective way to aid their attempts to quit smoking despite a lack of research (Baeza-Loya et al., 2014). In order to best address the needs of individuals who wish to quit the use of tobacco and understand the implications of e-cigarettes on youth and young adults (who are the primary users of e-cigarettes), it is imperative to further explore the relationship between tobacco cessation and e-cigarette use in youth.

To date, there have been only two randomized controlled trials on the relationship between e-cigarettes and tobacco quit rates (Caponnetto et al., 2013; Bullen et al., 2013). These experiments showed e-cigarettes have the potential to be a successful tool in helping smokers increase their quit rates and reduce tobacco consumption when compared to control groups. A study carried out in Hawaii by Pokhrel, Fagan, Little, Kawamoto, and Herzog (2013) found that e-cigarettes may potentially be better suited to assist cessation attempts as opposed to alternative cessation methods because, although they deliver nicotine in the same way that a nicotine patch or prescription cessation medication would, they closely resemble the experience of smoking a traditional cigarette. In contrast, a study carried out by Christensen, Welch, and Faseru (2014) concluded that although the quit attempts were more common among e-cigarette users, e-cigarette use is negatively associated with long-term abstinence rates. These studies produce a similar conclusion that although the effect of e-cigarettes on long-term tobacco abstinence is not promising, it is evident that e-cigarettes do have the potential to aid quit rates and reduction rates in the short term.

Due to issues relating to privacy, IRB requirements, and availability for follow-up, there are currently no experiments or studies addressing the relationship between youth tobacco cessation and e-cigarette use (Curry et al., 2007). In the United States, almost 90% of smokers had begun smoking in their youth (CDC, 2013). A 2012 National Youth Tobacco Survey uncovered that nearly 7% of middle school children and over 23% of high school students were currently using tobacco products (CDC, 2013). Although the youth tobacco use rate is declining, the
prevalence of alternative cigarette products by youth is increasing (Tworek et al., 2014). Effective evidence-based programs for youth that take into account the effect of e-cigarettes are desperately needed (Tworek et al., 2014).

**Methods**

**Data Collection**

The Millennium Tobacco Cessation Program is a counseling program that has been offered in Idaho for the past 15 years. In 2015, 2,127 individuals participated in one of these tobacco cessation programs across the 44 counties in Idaho. The program is mandated to meet best practices of tobacco cessation as is evident from published literature. The program components consist of addiction counseling, consequences of addiction and tobacco use, and quit techniques. Upon entering the program, participants completed a survey of demographic information and their tobacco use, e-cigarette use, and quit attempt history. At the end of each program, the tobacco status of each participant was recorded by the instructor.

**Participants**

Of these participants, 960 (45%) were youth under age 18; 838 (40%) were adults age 18 and older; and 333 (16%) were pregnant women. Among the total 2,127 participants, 1,077 were female and 1,050 were male.

**Definitions**

Completion of the tobacco cessation program was defined as having completed four sessions. Quit attempt was defined as having abstained from tobacco for at least 48 consecutive hours. Cessation was self-reported by the participant and confirmed by the program instructor.

Tobacco status reduction was defined as using less tobacco than at the start of the program, but still currently using tobacco.

**Analysis**

Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Analysis was performed on youth participant’s tobacco use, e-cigarette use, and tobacco status at the end of the program. Crosstabs were compared for youth and e-cigarette use, youth and tobacco status, as well as e-cigarette use and tobacco status. Crosstab statistics were chi-square and uncertainty coefficient. Graphs were constructed using ChartBuilder for youth participants who did not use e-cigarettes as well as for youth who did use e-cigarettes, and data was clustered by participant tobacco status to compare the outcomes of the two groups.

**Results**

*E-cigarette users.* Out of the 2,127 total participants, 1,363 reported current or past use of e-cigarettes. A total of 743 (54.5%) of e-cigarette users were youth under age 18 at the beginning of their tobacco cessation program. An additional 299 (21.9%) e-cigarette users were in the 18-24 age group at the start of the program. Only 316 (23.2%) of the e-cigarette users were older than 24 years of age at the start of the cessation program.

*Youth and smoking status.* Smoking status was analyzed in comparison to youth participants. There were a total of 998 youth with a reported smoking status at the end of the tobacco cessation program. In total, 414 (41.5%) of those youth quit tobacco use. Additionally, 287 (28.8%) youth reduced their tobacco use, and 142 (14.2%) youth made no change in their tobacco status. Two-sided chi-square analysis was performed showing a significant association for these variables with P = .00, Chi-Square = 102.69.
Table 1: Participant Tobacco Status by Age Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tobacco Status at End of Program</th>
<th>Quit</th>
<th>Reduced</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>414 (41.5%)</td>
<td>287 (28.8%)</td>
<td>142 (14.3%)</td>
<td>155 (15.5%)</td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>245 (21.7%)</td>
<td>376 (33.3%)</td>
<td>249 (22.1%)</td>
<td>258 (22.8%)</td>
<td>1128</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**P = .00, Chi-Square = 102.69, two-tailed chi-square test.

Figure 1: Youth e-cigarette and tobacco use. A sum of 630 youth participants reported past or current e-cigarette use and also reported their smoking/tobacco status. Youth e-cigarette users were found to have a 47.78% quit rate at the end of the tobacco cessation program with 301 participants quitting tobacco use. This participant group also had a 36.67% reduction rate with 231 reducing tobacco use. A total of 98 (15.56%) experienced no change in tobacco use by the end of the program.
Figure 2: Youth and tobacco use without e-cigarettes. A sum of 79 youth participants reported never having used e-cigarettes and reported their smoking/tobacco status. Youth e-cigarette users with no past or current e-cigarette use were found to have a 43.04% quit rate at the end of the tobacco cessation program with 34 participants quitting tobacco use. This participant group also had a 24.05% reduction rate with 19 reducing tobacco use. A total of 26 (32.91%) experienced no change in tobacco use by the end of the program.
Figure 3: Youth tobacco status by e-cigarette use. Among the 998 youth participants, 116 did not report whether they had used any e-cigarettes. Out of the remaining 882 youth, 752 reported e-cigarette use. There were 301 (47.8%) of these youth who quit tobacco use at the end of the program. Another 231 (36.7%) reduced their amount of tobacco consumed, and 98 (15.6%) did not experience any changes. Out of the 90 youth participants who had never used e-cigs, 34 (43%) quit tobacco use, 19 (24%) reduced their consumption of tobacco, and 26 (32.9%) did not change their tobacco status. Youth smoking status and e-cigarette use was found to have a significant relationship with $P = .001$, Chi-Square $= 23.85$. 

![Bar chart showing youth smoking status by e-cigarette use](chart.png)
Table 2: Youth Tobacco Status by E-cigarette Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-cigarette Use?</th>
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<th>Reduced</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>301 (40%)</td>
<td>231 (30.7%)</td>
<td>98 (13%)</td>
<td>122 (16.2%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>34 (37.8%)</td>
<td>19 (21.1%)</td>
<td>26 (28.9%)</td>
<td>11 (12.2%)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P = .001, Chi-Square = 23.85, two-tailed chi-square test.

Conclusions

This research proved consistent with the literature in the area of youth electronic cigarette use. Youth and young adults accounted for 76.4% of e-cigarette users, and the majority of youth (74.5%) reported use of e-cigarettes. Overall, youth had higher quit rates than adults across all categories. Youth who used e-cigarettes had higher quit rates (47.8% compared to 43.04%) and reduction rates (36.7% compared to 24.05%). In contrast, youth who did not use e-cigarettes had higher rates of no change in their tobacco status (32.9% compared to 15.6%). These results show youth who use e-cigarettes have a higher likelihood of quitting tobacco use than youth who do not use e-cigarettes. Also, these results show that youth who had never used e-cigarettes were more likely to experience no change or reduction in their tobacco use by the end of the tobacco cessation program when compared with youth who had a history of e-cigarette use.

Although these results show a relationship between e-cigarette use and higher quit and reduction rates, the long-term follow-up status of participants was not analyzed in this study. In addition, the ambiguity of the health impact on individuals suggests e-cigarette use as a cessation aid should be closely supervised. E-cigarettes should not be recommended for recreational use until their long-term effects are more wholly understood. However, their use as a cessation aid for tobacco users who are attempting to quit shows promising results.

This brief analysis includes limitations relating to the surveys and participant response. E-cigarette use is broadly defined as ever having used e-cigarettes and does not differentiate between past or current usage, minimal to frequent use, or use as a cessation aid versus recreationally. In addition, e-cigarette use and amount of tobacco consumed is self-reported by the participant. This leaves room for possible response bias in survey data.

These findings are important to inferring the impact that e-cigarettes have on tobacco cessation participants and continued studies will be needed in this area. Understanding behaviors in e-cigarette use is important to implementing changes in clean indoor air policies, understanding the best practices for effective tobacco cessation in order to improve quit and abstinence rates, and advancing accurate perceptions on the safety of e-cigarette use for all users.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for those people who offered me their valuable support and guidance. My mentors Dr. Janet Reis and Lisa MacKenzie, as well as Dr. Ed Baker, were extremely supportive and generously dedicated much of their time and attention to ensuring my success throughout this process. In addition, the McNair community was an essential aspect in providing me aid, opportunities, and encouragement during the past two years. I am extremely grateful to everyone who has gone out of their way to assist me.
References


Mythbusting the Common Cold and Flu

Matthew Dillon: McNair Scholar

Dr. Cheryl Jorcyk: Mentor

Biological Science

Abstract

As we have created vaccines for many contagious pathogens in the last 100 years, the flu and cold still lack a “cure.” There are many things people do to try to get over the cold and flu from homeopathic remedies to the flu vaccine. While nothing can prevent the cold or flu, there are ways we can mitigate our chances of getting these viruses. By doing what we can to avoid getting these illnesses, we are also helping prevent the spread of the viruses to others. In the end, this is our best course of action until a vaccine that fully prevents these viruses from infecting us is found.

Introduction

Over the last 50 years, humans have achieved things unheard of outside of comic books and science fiction. Whether it is a mobile phone with no cord attached or a watch you can use for communication, we have done it and more. However, even though we constantly develop new gadgets for convenience and quality of life, we have yet to find a vaccine or “cure” for our common cold and flu viruses. When the flu season emerges, people become afraid of physical contact and try what they can to avoid catching the “bug.”

Key points ahead:

● How the cold and flu viruses work and how to distinguish between the two.
● What remedies do and do not work.
● Can we prevent a flu or cold?
● Vaccines: What are they and can they give you the flu?
● Vaccines: Should you or should you not get vaccinated?

The Differences between a Cold and the Flu

The common cold, unlike the flu, is much milder with little more than a cough, runny nose, congestion, and a sore throat that goes away after about a week. A cold can be caused by many different viruses, but the symptoms remain the same with slight deviations. While a cold is mild, the flu can be dangerous and much more taxing on the body. Flu symptoms that differ from cold symptoms are fever, muscle fatigue/soreness, and headaches. Other forms of viruses, such as the swine flu, can cause vomiting or diarrhea, which in turn causes dehydration.

Cold
● Cough
● Runny Nose
● Sore throat
● Congestion
Flu
● Fever
● Headaches
● Muscle Fatigue
● Vomiting (Dependent on flu virus contracted)
● Diarrhea (Dependent on flu virus contracted)
● Plus Aforementioned Cold Symptoms

Are There Any Remedies Worth the Money?

There are many remedies out there that claim they can “cure” the flu or cold, or, at the very least, shorten it. Many of these touted are ginseng, garlic, Vitamin D, and Echinacea. However, none have shown a clinical significance in helping reduce symptoms (1). While the flu and cold themselves normally do not last long, advertisements with shorter flu/cold symptoms pull people in. Many claims on the popularly touted power of Vitamin C for a cold or flu are not backed up with evidence. Studies of over 3,000 individuals have shown Vitamin C does not help with your cold or flu.

Airborne

One of the most famous remedies for colds today is Airborne. It has a whopping 1 gram or 1000 milligrams of Vitamin C in each pill. According to its label, that is 1,667% more than your daily needed amounts of Vitamin C. What they fail to tell you is that in such large concentrations, your body’s ability to absorb Vitamin C decreases, so half of it gets flushed out of your system. They also leave out that unless you have a deficiency in Vitamin C or are under constant physical stress, such as soldiers, marathon runners, or skiers in extreme cold (3), it has no clinical benefits for your cold. So unless you have a deficiency in Vitamin C or an unhealthy diet that does not provide you with Vitamin C, Airborne is not worth your money.

Zinc and honey

Out of all of the non-traditional treatments for the cold, such as cold medicine and aspirin, zinc as an oral supplement may be a great way to lower how often you get a cold over a year and the severity of the cold in adults. Honey, on the other hand, is beneficial at bedtime for children to help with their coughs (1). Recommended night time doses of honey are 1-2 tablespoons. While studies have shown some benefit with zinc and honey, further research is needed to figure out what it is they are doing to help.

What Preventative Measures Can We Take to Fight the Cold and Flu?

For many the best way to mitigate getting the cold and flu is simple.

● Wash your hands especially around work, public places, and home with children.
● Keep your mouth covered when you cough/sneeze.
● Keeping a healthy diet and exercising always helps keep your body in fighting shape against these viruses.

Vaccines: What Are They and Can They Make You Ill?

One of the things that many people believe about the flu shot is that it can give you the flu. This is a common misconception and is understandable when you do not get much information about it from your doctor or are given a poor explanation. One way that a flu vaccine is created is with parts of flu viruses that research predicts to be the most common for the flu season (2). These “parts” cannot replicate and cause the virus to invade its host
like a full virus can, but these parts of the virus present little keys to our immune systems locks that activate our immune system. Once our immune system is activated, it builds up its defenses for these keys that a full flu virus will have and will be more active in protecting us from getting the flu.

**Should You Get the Flu Shot?**

For many, the flu shot is a dreadful necessity because their doctor or nurse tells them so. Since there are concerns with the flu shot, what benefit does getting “the shot” have? While the Center for Disease Control (CDC) believes every able body should now get the flu shot, many do not because they are young, healthy, and do not get sick often. The flu shot was standard for the elderly and young children, but the guidelines were changed in 2010 to include everyone six months of age and older (4). This was changed because even a young, healthy adult, who can fight the flu better than older or younger people, cannot stop accidentally spreading the virus to others who are not as healthy or have greater risks of catching the flu due to health issues. So the best reason for a flu shot even when we are young and healthy is to help others who are more susceptible to getting the flu. A study in 2010 was conducted to help prevent newborns six months and younger from getting the flu. In their study, they vaccinated pregnant women with the flu shot and hoped it would help pass resistance to their unborn children. The vaccination prevented 91% more infants from being hospitalized due to the flu than with mothers not vaccinated (5). Just as in the smallpox or polio vaccinations, the more people protected, the harder it is to transmit or contract the flu. This is something I believe we should all do, not only for ourselves but for our family members and loved ones.

**Citations**

It’s in Your Genes

Cody Gowan: McNair Scholar
Biological Science

Abstract

There’s a vast misunderstanding of how cells function amongst the general public. Many people understand that our genes are what make us who we are. However, many people don’t understand how. Proteins are the functional units of the cell that allow the genome to express itself. The Central Dogma of biology is that DNA is transcribed to messenger RNA and then translated to protein, and everything about our physical being is a result of how proteins function—from the color of our eyes to life-threatening diseases that we endure, such as cancer. It is this idea (that the function of proteins is what determines our biological fate) that I believe is important for the general public to understand in regards to how they view their health and well-being.

At some point in our lives, we have probably all asked the question, why do I look the way I do? Why are my eyes blue? Why is my hair brown? Why am I so short or tall? Typically, the answer is “because of your genes.” And as a matter of fact, everything about our bodies is the result of our genes—we are the result of the DNA inside every cell in our bodies. However, that’s not the full story. What must be discussed is how cells function as a result of the DNA stored inside their nucleus. What often goes unnoticed is that in order for cells to function they must make proteins, and the proteins that cells make is determined by their DNA. Thus, it is safe to say that DNA stores genetic information (i.e., it is the genetic code) while proteins display said information. In this article, I am going to discuss how this process (going from DNA to protein) works, what can go wrong during this process, and some possible outcomes.

How does DNA make us who we are? It is known that every single cell in our bodies has its own copy of DNA, and each cell has a way of expressing the genes that the DNA encodes via proteins. This is called the “Central Dogma” of Biology. In the nucleus, a gene on a segment of DNA is transcribed into messenger RNA (mRNA) and
then that mRNA leaves the nucleus and flows into the cytoplasm (the space outside the nucleus) where it is translated into protein via ribosomes (figure 1). Proteins function in many different ways, such as catalyzing metabolic reactions, responding to stimuli, and transporting molecules from one location of the cell to another.

Let us use eye color as an example. One’s eye color is the result of how much melanin the melanocytes in the eye produce. The amount of melanin produced is largely dependent upon one thing—the proper functioning of the proteins that are responsible for melanin production. Here’s how it works: melanin is made up of long chains of the amino acid tyrosine, and this stringing together of tyrosines takes place in special compartments of melanocytes called “melanosomes.” As long as tyrosine makes it into the melanosomes, the correct amount of melanin will be produced and the result will be brown eyes (yes, brown eyes are normal). But what if the correct amount of tyrosine doesn’t make it to the melanosomes? What if the protein that’s responsible for tyrosine shipment is defective? Well, it turns out that the protein OCA2 is responsible for distributing tyrosine to the melanosomes, and when it is defective, the result is less melanin production and thus blue eyes [1]. That’s right; you do not have a “blue eye” or “brown eye” gene. You have an OCA2 gene that produces a functional or dysfunctional protein which effects melanin production. If you have blue eyes you are the result of a genetic mutation. How cool is that?

Figure 2. Normal red blood cell versus sickle cell anemia

Not all genetic mutations are harmless, however. Many diseases are the result of simple genetic mutations that produce dysfunctional proteins. A good example of this is sickle cell anemia. Sickle cell anemia is a disease that causes one’s red blood cells to be misshaped. Instead of the normal round shape of red blood cells found in individuals without sickle cell anemia, people with sickle cell have sickle-shaped red blood cells (figure 2). The sickle shaped red blood cells are prone to clogging in the capillaries of the circulatory system, which can result in the blocking of circulation and even organ damage [2]. Sickle cell anemia is the result of a dysfunctional protein called hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is the protein found in red blood cells responsible for oxygen transport. In people with sickle cell anemia, their hemoglobin is misshaped when it is not bound to oxygen, and this is what causes the red blood cells to be sickle-shaped [2].

Another example of a disease that is a result of a defective gene is cancer. Now, before I continue I want to clarify that cancer is a very complicated disease, and by no means am I trying to make it sound simple, or to oversimplify my explanation of it. There is, however, a gene that is defective in more than 50% of cancers called “p53.” Cancer is a disease that results in the uncontrolled proliferation of cells, which are more commonly referred to as “tumors.” Normally, cells proliferate in a highly controlled manner, and therefore do not cause tumors. This process is controlled by “tumor suppressor” proteins. That is exactly what p53 is.
In order for cells to proliferate, they have to go through what is called the cell cycle, which is a series of events that take place in a cell leading to its division and duplication of its DNA to produce two cells. P53 regulates the cell cycle in order to avoid the uncontrolled growth of the cell. This is how it works: in a normal cell, p53 is inactivated. However, in response to cellular stress, such as DNA damage, p53 becomes activated and does one of two things: 1) halts the cell cycle in order to repair the damaged DNA or 2) causes the cell to undergo apoptosis (cell death) in order to eliminate the damaged cell (figure 3) [3]. When p53 is dysfunctional, however, the cell cycle becomes uncontrolled and ultimately results in cancer. Once again, this is not always the case in cancer and there are many other factors that are involved in cancer progression. This is just a simple example of a dysfunctional protein that can result in a life-threatening disease, such as cancer.

There is one thing that I hope I have made clear: every protein has a segment of DNA (a gene) that transcribes it, and ultimately, it is how proteins function that determines our physical state, from our eye color to the diseases we are susceptible to. So hopefully next time you wonder about your physical being, you will be able to appreciate the beautiful complexity behind what makes you, you. Or even better, the next time a child asks you why they are the way that they are, you can give them a more detailed and accurate answer, not a superficial one like, “because of your genes.”

References

Agitated to Clean: How the Washing Machine Changed Life for the American Woman

Cassie Green: McNair Scholar

Dr. Leslie Madsen-Brooks: Mentor

History

Abstract

For most historians there exists a minimal understanding of women’s domestic life in the past. This project explores the tools used for washing clothing and provides insight into the lives of the individuals who used them, and how the evolution of these tools changed their way of life. Using a method based on the works of Jules David Prown, an interpretive analysis is being completed for multiple artifacts selected from the Idaho State Historical Society’s collection. The steps of this method include a thorough description of the artifact, making deductions about the artifact based on the description, as well as creating and testing hypotheses about what the artifact signifies. In addition to focusing on the specific artifacts, advertisements for these items are being analyzed to determine how these products were marketed to these women; this will assist in determining the comfort levels individuals had with newer methods of washing, and reveal the proposed benefits of transitioning to new machinery. The overall purpose of this research is to ignite an interest in the history of domestic women, as well as promote the preservation of the artifacts they used on a regular basis.

Introduction

The individuals that fill the role of homemaker in American homes over the past couple centuries have been largely ignored, with their work being seen as low status, low security, and a low power job. In the book Homemakers: The Forgotten Workers, Rae Andre discusses how the job of caring for children and the home is thought to be a priceless contribution to the family, yet there are a lack of benefits being extended to this group, which is comprised mainly of women. This could be because “homemaking and domestic culture have traditionally been disdained or overlooked by historians in inverse proportion to their glorification in popular literature. Decades of scholarship, following prevailing attitudes in our society, have placed a higher value on customary male activities than on customary female activities.”

These activities were hardly static, and “as the site of male labor shifted from the homestead to stores, factories, and offices, the house became the place for another kind of work—specialized domestic work—women’s work.” This so called “women’s work” was never ending: “every household was then a long term storehouse and a large-scale processing plant that required constant labor almost around the clock.” This need for constant labor led to the technological advances within the 19th and 20th centuries, specifically the invention of the electric washing machine. For women “the household inventions did produce a higher standard of living and a wide range of technological possibilities by the end of the 19th century.”

One of the main responsibilities of a homemaker, then and today, was the care and cleaning of the clothes worn by the family. “Doing laundry was their most backbreaking and time consuming chore, especially since it took at least two days every week. But even more than time, it was the lack of water and the sheer bulk of farm dirt in clothes that made the job so onerous.”

5 Hoy, Chasing Dirt, 158.
In 1981, a national oral history program began, and many women shared their memories, both of managing their own households and the work done by their mothers. Several participants commented specifically on laundry. Jane Morgan, a participant from Mississippi, recalled: “My mother used a scrub board and three big tubs of water to do the washing with. I’m talking about a zinc tub of well water that we had drawn from the well and heated in a wash pot. Of course wash day was an all-day affair, usually on Monday.”

According to Kathleen M. Brown in her book *Foul Bodies*, “doing laundry on Monday permitted the women to schedule their most strenuous day of labor immediately after a day of rest.” In addition, Sunday meals usually consisted of a large spread, allowing for easy leftovers on Monday and more time to devote to the task of laundry. Prior to the use of the washing machine, clothing was often washed outdoors, in tubs of water that were hauled from a spring or well and heated over a fire. The work consisted of scrubbing out dirt, wringing out the clothing, then hanging it on the line to dry. This was no easy task.

The washing machine changed the method of cleaning. Jessie Halsell of New Mexico stated:

“I believe our son was about six months old when we got our first washing machine—a gasoline motor. It was something to own the first washing machine in that little community. A number of people come [sic] in to see it work—to see if it would work. Frankly I hoped it would, and it did. What a blessing for someone to have. Of course, we had no running water. The water still had to be warmed in the big old black wash pot outside and carried in in a bucket. But, oh, we was [sic] glad to do that. I got loose from that old washboard.”

Early washing machines were marketed and thus viewed as a tool that would radically diminish the work being done by women in the home. No longer were they required to spend their Mondays scrubbing laundry up and down the washboard. A machine could now do it for them. Oral histories can provide insights into the lives of these women, but additional sources, including material culture and advertisements, can expand on those insights. This allows a better understanding of the habits and beliefs surrounding washing machines and their addition to the home.

**Methods**

So how can the lives of these women, many long gone, be examined and appreciated? Material culture can fill the void and provide an opportunity to better understand the lives of these women from the 19th and 20th centuries. Jules David Prown states in his article “The Truth of Material Culture: History or Fiction?” that “the study of material culture is the study of material to understand culture, to discover the beliefs—the values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time.” Information about these forgotten women is revealed through the process of choosing a specific category of material culture and focusing on how it was used and what role it played in the lives of the homemakers. In addition to bringing a greater understanding to the lives of these women, studying particular material culture can bring value to the items by placing them within a historical context and showing what an item suggests about the world it resides within. Haltman writes:

“It begins with the premise that in objects there can be read essential evidence of unconscious as well as conscious attitudes and beliefs, some specific to those object’s original makers and users as individuals, others latent in the larger cultural milieus in which those objects circulated. Our focus tends to be more on user interface, on the ways embedded meanings are actualized through use. Material culture, in this view of it, is consequently less an explanatory than an exploratory practice.”

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8 Arnold, *Voices of American Homemakers*, 166.
10 Ibid., 13.
A number of washing machines from the collection at the Idaho State Historical Society were examined using this method of studying material culture. First, each item was described in thorough detail looking at all aspects, material, spatial, and temporal. For example, when inspecting the washboard, it was discovered that there was a significant amount of wear on the top left side. This element in the description led to deductions about what might have caused this to occur. Was it something that was originally in the wood before the item was created? Was the item stored in a location where something else was constantly rubbing on the side? Or more likely, was the worn spot the result of an individual bracing the board with her hand while scrubbing clothes up and down on a weekly basis?

The next step in the process is to form speculations about what the item signified and how it fit within the culture in which it existed. These include ideas about who was using the board and what she thought about the item. Was she grateful for the tool or was there hope for a better alternative? Was a better tool available but outside of her fiscal reach, leading her to make do with what she had? These questions then led to written sources to determine if the ideas that were proposed could be correct. These written sources included the previously mentioned advertisements and oral histories.

**Artifacts**

This article will discuss three artifacts in detail: a washboard (accession # 1959.214.0000), an Automatic Washer Electric and Power machine (accession # 1970.019.0001), and a Bendix Automatic Home Washer (accession # 1991.065.0000). These artifacts are all part of the collection at the Idaho State Historical Society.

![Figure 1. Idaho State Historical Society](image)

Cassie Green, photographer
To understand the significance of advanced technology for clothes washing, a starting point must be established. This was done by examining a washboard that would have been used prior to more advanced machinery. The washboard is rectangular in shape, with legs that extend down. Measuring 18 inches high and 9 inches across, the construction is simple and designed for utility, possibly homemade. A corrugated metal plate is fitted on the front with a dull and scratched appearance, an additional wood piece is in place behind the plate for support. The piece is held together by metal nails. There are several flaws in the construction causing gaps between the wood pieces. Additionally, the wood was not sanded to be smooth. The wood is slightly bowed in places, possibly due to continued use in water over the years. The metal plate was not perfectly flat against the wood, and this allowed for some give and take as the user pressed the clothing up and down the plate. The bottom left corner shown in fig. 2 shows the imprint of the metal ridges on the wood. This provides evidence of the force being exerted during use.

While this tool required a substantial amount of energy to operate, it was fairly small and did not take up a large amount of storage space. It would be relatively simple to learn to use, and the modest design would have made it possible to build one at home, making it an affordable tool.
Figure 3. Idaho State Historical Society
Cassie Green, photographer

Figure 4. Idaho State Historical Society
Cassie Green, photographer
The Automatic Washer Electric and Power Machine, model 4, was built by the Automatic Electric Washer Co. in Newton, Iowa, circa 1915. The design features a wooden barrel sitting on top of a metal cart. The sides of the cart move up and create a tabletop next to the barrel. The cart is able to be easily moved due to a wheel base. The barrel is approximately 21 inches across and 15 inches high with metal rings around the top and bottom.
Advertisements suggest a tub capacity of eight sheets.) The lid swings up and opens to one side revealing a dolly mechanism attached to the lid (fig. 4). “A dolly is comprised of a wooden stick or mallet with an attached cluster of legs or pegs and is used to pound and grab onto and move the clothes through the water.”12 Once closed, the lid has a gear on the top that attaches to a removable arm. The arm runs down the front of the machine (seen in fig. 3) and is attached to the gear box on the underside of the cart.

The gear box contains a number of exposed rotating parts. There is an open space where the electric motor originally attached to the drive rod. An outline of the motor exists (fig. 5) in the wood as well as holes and a bolt from where it was originally bolted to the base. A small plastic white piece is screwed to the bottom side of the tub and secured the electric cord to the machine. Though this machine was electric, it would not have been plugged in to an electric socket. The technology at the time used a base similar to a light bulb that would be screwed into a light socket to provide the power. Even though the machine uses electricity, it is not designed for running water and features a water line on the side. The user would have to heat and carry water in order to wash clothing. The bottom of the barrel has a stopper that can be removed in order to drain the water after use.

Fig. 6 shows an additional arm that is running down the side of the machine. This has two distinct purposes, the first is it can be used to attach a hand crank to the washer. This enables the user to hand propel the dolly in the barrel and the wringer in the event that electricity is not available. The second function is it allows for the machine to be multifunctional. Washing women could attach various kitchen appliances, including an ice cream freezer, a food chopper, or a butter churn.

This arm also provides power to the wringer located on the top of the barrel. The wringer is sitting on top of a rotating arm that allows for the wringer to move to various locations. This movement permitted a second barrel to be placed over the lifted cart side and filled with clean water for rinsing and the clothing to be immediately placed in the wringer from either tub. The wringer includes features such as adjustable rollers for bulkier clothing and buttons and a safety release to be used in the case of entanglement. A reversible water board made it possible for the water pressed out of the clothing to flow into either the wash barrel or the rinse barrel.

![Image of a washing machine](image)

Figure 7. Idaho State Historical Society
Cassie Green, photographer

This Bendix Home Washing Machine was built in Indiana in the 1940s. The machine is rectangular in design with a metal frame that is 20 inches by 25 inches. The machine is three feet tall and sits on metal feet. Painted with a glossy white finish, there are scratches in multiple places from use over time. The top of the machine has a three-inch diameter hole to attach a vent to. On the right side of the top, is a plastic piece that flips up and allows the user to place soap in the washing machine. Inside the opening is a metal rotating piece that pushes the soap further into the machine. There is evidence of a powdered material, possibly some kind of detergent.

The front of the washer contains a small round door that swings out to the left. The door features a white frame with a glass center so the inside can be viewed. Silver colored handles on the side match the silver found on the control knobs. Inside of the door is a metal drum with small holes to allow for water flow. The drum is enamel-coated navy blue with white speckles, and there are four fins evenly spaced along the side to ensure movement of the clothing.
The top left and right corners of the machine have the control knobs. The left side has a knob with a ridged edge (fig. 9) and markings for wash, soak, spin, and rinse. The machine can be set to wash for differing time frames, which allows for a more specialized cleaning. The right side has two buttons that select the water temperature (hot, warm) and two sliding knobs that control the timing for the automatic injector for the soap.

The back of the machine features an electric two-prong plug, a hose to allow for water flow into the machine and a drain hose to empty the machine. The bottom of the front of the machine has a pull down panel that allows easy access to the machinery.

Discussion

![1860 Doty Washer Advertisement](image)

Figure 10. 1860 Doty Washer Advertisement, Lee Maxwell Collection

The notion of the washing machine caught on relatively quickly, and by the 1920s there were approximately 700 manufacturers producing a variety of machines. During this time, the number of middle-class families in America grew. This made it difficult to find cheap labor to help with washing clothing, and women in the home wanted a better way to manage this time-consuming chore. Advertisements presented the idea that a washing machine was going to take away the wash day drudgery and turn Mondays into a bright and happy day. In the advertisement for the Doty Washer (fig. 10) from 1860, there is a drastic difference between the woman using the washboard to wash her clothing and the woman using the washing machine. The woman on the left is bent over the washtub in an uncomfortable position. She appears to be exerting a tremendous amount of energy, and the viewer can feel her exhaustion and discomfort. The style of clothing that she is wearing is something that you would expect someone to wear when they are anticipating a difficult and dirty chore, and her hair is pulled back in order to keep it out of the way of her working. The basket of clothing at her feet indicates she has much more work ahead and the day is far from done. The woman on the right with the Doty machine is much more relaxed. She does not have the bent-over posture of the other woman. She is standing upright and relaxed, a similar stance to that of a mother pushing a baby buggy through the park. She is not surrounded by additional laundry because thanks to the ease of the machine, her work is almost over. Her clothing is more elegant, not something she would wear for everyday chores. Her hair is styled and she looks as though she is ready to attend a fancy event.

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The advertisement shown in fig. 11 uses similar techniques to relay the message that a washing machine can improve a woman’s life. The woman shown is relaxing in a chair, wearing a nice dress and heels, and she is smiling. The text points out that a machine not only saves time and labor but a woman’s nerves. Marketers told women that owning and using a washing machine would improve their lives in more ways than one. Other advertisements show women relaxing with their families or reading while their laundry is being cleaned.

In addition to the marketing of these machines to women, men were told that washing machines would improve their lives as well. A variety of methods were used to encourage the purchase of a washing machine. The advertisement in fig. 12 promoted the idea that a washing machine would make a wife happier and that could possibly lead to more sex, greater health, and fertility (thus the mention of the wife being pregnant). Another advertisement for the Automatic washer appealed to a sense of fairness, reminding men that they used machinery to improve the efficiency of work on the farm, and women should have that same opportunity in the home.

So the real question becomes, do these machines live up to the claims their advertisements make? Does the addition of a washing machine to the household save time and labor? Is the woman of the household able to enjoy luxuries she was not able to before?

Through the examination of the artifacts, it is obvious that the change from washboard to machine saved labor in the home. When using the washboard, the user is the source of power, and the washing relies on the energy she is expending. With the powered machines, the power is coming from an outside source, be that gasoline, electricity, etc. This is an improvement, but not in the amount of time being saved. Early machines still required a
significant amount of time to set up and run. Water had to be heated and hauled into the machine, the machine had to be started, monitored, and stopped, and the clothes had to be run through a wringer in order to remove excess water before hanging them out to dry. The Automatic Washer had a water line on the side of the barrel that would determine how much water needed to be added to the machine in order for it to run properly. After using the machine, the water would have to be drained through a small hole in the bottom of the barrel.

While the machine was in use, the exposed gear box in the bottom would create a safety hazard that would prevent a woman from walking away from the machine if she had small children in the home. In his book *Save Womens Lives: History of Washing Machines*, Lee Maxwell talks about giving tours at the Antique Washing Machine Museum in Colorado. During one of those tours he had an experience where “one gentleman demonstrated vividly how the exposed gears and chains were responsible for the loss of two fingers when he was only 18 months old. The following year he crawled under the washer again, but this time he only lost one more finger and on the other hand.”

The movement of the gears would be enticing to young children but could pose a serious risk, thus requiring mothers to stay close to the machine while in use.

The final stage of washing clothing was to run it through the wringer to remove excess water. This required the user to be at the machine for a length of time, and it was a dangerous process. As mentioned previously, early electric machines screwed into light bulb sockets, which made it difficult to stop the source of power to the machine if caught between the rollers. Some wringers would have a safety release, but this would only allow the rollers to separate; it would not cease the movement of the machine. If a user was already significantly entangled, the safety release would not provide much assistance. In his book, Maxwell recounts stories of women caught in wringers. “On one vivid occasion a lady leaned over and exposed a donut sized badly scarred bald spot right on the top of her head, caused when her hair got caught in the wringer and wouldn’t let go until she was scalped.” In 1920, the Meadows washing machine came up with a solution to this problem. In order to activate the wringer, the user had to step on a foot pedal. If the user was caught in the wringer, she would be pulled off the pedal and the wringer would stop turning. This idea was used by a number of companies, including Maytag, as late as 1983.

![Figure 13. Bendix advertisement](Pinterest.com)

The invention of more modern machinery solved these problems. Machines like the Bendix Automatic Home Washer provided opportunities to walk away from the wash process through the addition of water hookups in the back of the machine, fully enclosed mechanics, and spin cycles for drying. The Bendix machine was controlled by the knobs on the front of the machine, the clothes simply had to be placed inside, the knobs set, and the machine took care of the rest, thus producing a workless washday.

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15 Ibid., 73.
Conclusion

Women have had a complex relationship with washing machines from the time of using a washboard to the fancy mechanics that are found in the popular front loading machines of today. While the more modern styles of machinery allow for the woman to walk away and enjoy the luxuries of relaxation, this was not an option with the earlier styles, despite what the advertisements might have claimed. While early machines did save a woman from the backbreaking work of scrubbing clothes clean by hand, it was still a time consuming project that required her to spend a significant amount of time working. The promises that the advertisements were making could not be held up. A woman did not have the option of placing her clothing in a machine and walking away. She did not have the chance to sit down and relax, enjoying luxuries like reading because she needed to be next to the machine. Although she was not using manual labor to run the machine, she was still an integral part and her presence was required for the clothes to be cleaned safely.

Women wanted the luxuries being presented by the advertisements. They wanted the ability to walk away from the machine and have it still accomplish the task of cleaning clothes. Examination of the material culture shows the evolution of the machinery and the changes that occurred over time. This happened because of the desires of women demanding more. Without looking at all three pieces—oral histories, material culture, and advertisements—the history of the washing machine and the changes it brought to American women cannot be accurately understood.

Acknowledgements

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Bibliography

Abstract

Although first-generation college students (FGCS) have been entering universities in large numbers, and even with past quantitative studies to understand this demographic, a major percentage continue to drop out of college within their first two years. Past research has resulted in an overall picture of this demographic. This qualitative study explores: (1) how FGCS perceive their social identity in relation to a college community, and (2) how interacting with support programs, such as Boise State’s Student Success Program (SSP), shapes their understanding of support. In interviews with nine FGCS students, most of them did not know this first-generation label applied to them, while researchers and support programs assumed they already knew this. It was through a major event, such as failing a test, when students decided to seek help. This led to an encounter with the identity label. Perceptions about this identity label were split between positive and negative reactions. It was only after time and assistance from SSP that participants realized the significance of being an FGCS. This empowered them to continue with their education during times of hardship and/or personal turmoil.

Introduction

In the past half century, the accessibility of attending universities has increased to allow anyone—regardless of background and ethnicity—to continue to have a chance to better themselves and chase, to their abilities, the American Dream. This has led to an increased number of individuals who are the first in their families to attend a form of higher-education (Staklis, 2010). However, Engle and Tinto’s (2008) study shows these individuals are “four times more likely—26 to 7 percent—to leave higher education after the first year than [non first-generation college] students.” Therefore, first-generation college students (FGCS) have been in the center of university initiatives, government programs, such as the TRiO program (U.S. GOV, 1964; 1965), and research to assist FGCS throughout their undergraduate educations. Parscella et al. (2004) have nicely summarized the research, labeling them into three categories:

[1st] compar[ing] first-generation and other college students in terms of demographic characteristics, secondary school preparation, the college choice process, and college expectations… [2nd] describe and understand the transition from high school to postsecondary education…[and 3rd] examine[ing] their persistence in college, degree attainment, and early career labor market outcomes. (Pascarella et.al, 2004)

These three areas of study focus on quantitative research with the hope of better understanding the FGCS population, and possibly even finding ways to alleviate the hurdles FGCS must go through in order to graduate.

While there have been many strides to increase undergraduate enrollment and graduation through research and support programs specifically for this demographic, there still seems to be a problem. As higher education becomes more important, the public has taken an interest in how students are faring in traditional institutions. As recently as January 2016, the Washington Post published an article detailing how FGCS are not succeeding at college (Cardoza, 2016). Cardoza debunks the common myth that FGCS do not succeed because of financial difficulties or constraints. The main reason they fail, according to Cardoza, is due to social and cultural factors playing against these students. Research has shown that money was not the full reason for poor FGCS graduation rates and suggests other factors are involved (Thayer, 2000; Ishitani, 2006). Despite these findings, this concept of social and cultural factors playing against the students has rarely been explored.

Terenzai et al. (1996), Pascarella et al. (2004), and Gofen (2009) introduced a paradigm shift away from these three areas of studies and focused on the cognitive and psychosocial of FGCS in and out of the classroom.
compared to other students. While these and other quantitative investigations are important and can shed a great deal of light on the FGCS, the one question I always came back to was if FGCS even know of this label. As an FGCS myself, I never fully grasped this term until my accidental encounter near the end of my sophomore year. Additionally, I wondered if FGCS students know they are entitled to receive more academic support from the university than just the financial aspect provided by their scholarships and grants. I found that many research studies simply assumed that FGCS know they are FGCS. However, when looking for articles and books regarding FGCS identity, there were only a few studies on the subject; namely, Orbe (2004; 2008) and Aries and Seider (2005). Therefore, my study elucidates FGCS identity, provides a voice for the individuals who have been studied for and on, and introduces a different perspective to this dialogue.

This study tries to introduce a new perspective by asking two primary questions:

1) How do FGCS—from Boise State University’s Student Success Program (SSP) in particular—perceive their social identity in relation to a college community?
2) The second question is how does interacting with the research and support programs shape their understanding of that support?

I propose a majority of FGCS do not know the identity label of FGCS that many institutions and researchers have applied to this demographic. This results in FGCS not seeking support until an outside factor—a teacher, student, or friend—points this out for them, or the FGCS go through a major event that forces them to make the decision of whether or not to stay in college. In addition, I propose that only after finding a support system do FGCS use this support system as a means to view the college community and their place within it.

Framework

The frameworks this study will be based on are Orbe (2008), Tajfel and Turner (1978), and Granovetter (1973). The frameworks that I will be using from each of these researchers are multidimensional identity theory of first-generation college students, social identity theory, and social network ties. Although each framework is intended for a different use than the way this study utilizes them, they work together to help explain what may be going on with FGCS. For this study, I will also use Tajfel and Turner’s definition of social identity which is defined as, “part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (as cited in Ortimeier-Hooper, 2010, p. 7). This definition provides a more in-depth analysis for how individuals accept a particular identity in the first place. This is important because if an individual does not accept such an identity, even though others ascribe that identity to him or her, that identity best represents the individual’s character. The person, in this case FGCS, will have to intensively negotiate with others and themselves.

Orbe’s (2008) framework of multidimensional identity focuses on “identity negotiation that occurs as individuals move from one culture to another.” While identity negotiation happens to everyone on a daily basis, FGCS have a more intense identity negotiation during their time at a university. Orbe suggests there are six major dialectical tensions that plays a major part in the identity negotiation of FGCS (2008):

Individual ←→ Social Identity
Similar ←→ Different
Stability ←→ Change
Certainty ←→ Uncertainty
Advantage ←→ Disadvantage
Openness ←→ Closedness

Although these tensions could be easily argued that each individual feels these particular dialectical tensions when going into any new “culture,” Orbe adds two sets of six secondary tensions that happen at home and then on campus, which he argues only happen to FGCS. These dialectical tensions are the heart of Orbe’s study. Throughout their undergraduate education he believes students are in constant movement between “experiences of stress and adaptation,” and moving from these experiences causes an “emergent identity inclusive of both new and old selves” (Orbe, 2008).

Henri Tajifel and John Turner’s (1979) theory tries to explain how individuals manage with social and organizational change, and intergroup dynamics. Tajifel and Turner’s Social Identity theory, later expanded by
Turner (1991), and used by Ortmeier-Hooper (2010), had originally three variables that help an individual process their social identity in a new community: namely, categorization, identification, and comparison. Turner (1991) added the fourth piece to the Social Identity theory as self-categorization, which is commonly accepted as a part of identification. These four variables, as explained by Ortmeier-Hooper (2010), are “interrelated, like puzzle pieces, with individuals using different components in tandem to make sense of their social identity and their place in a given community.” These “puzzle pieces” fit into Orbe’s (2008) dialectical tensions by examining how FGCS make sense of the social changes they face during their time in college. Although FGCS go “between stress and adaptation” in order to grow, this does not accelerate until a student has a new identity that consists of both “new and old selves;” rather, this moment can only move as fast as an FGCS can make sense of their new social identity and place within the college environment, which changes and grows after each year the FGCS completes (Orbe, 2008). These dialectical tensions never truly vanish, instead appearing from time to time as a representation of “imposter syndrome,” depending on the individual.

The last part of this study’s framework focuses on the community these FGCS go into, and indicates the process discussed earlier happens when FGCS start college. Granovetter’s (1973) theory focuses on two types of network ties that an individual can have, either strong or weak. What constitutes the strength of a network tie “is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie” (Granovetter, 1973). An example of a weak tie is an acquaintance that a person occasionally talks with, such as in the work place, and that is the extent of the relationship. A strong tie is a family member and good friends. However, ties can change depending how much both individuals contribute to the relationship. Granovetter suggest that changes tend to happen, not through the strong ties, but through the weak ones. These weak ties form the social bridges that make innovation and change possible. In entering this new community and beginning their first classes, they are opening themselves to numerous weak ties with little to no strong ties. This lack of familiarity in community structure and strong tie connection, I propose, is the primary catalyst to introducing them to these dialectical tensions.

James and Lesley Milroy (1985) used and adapted Granovetter’s (1973) theory for linguistic change and innovation between micro (interpersonal groups) and macro groups (the rest of society) and suggest, “weak ties are more numerous than strong ties.” They go on to mention these individuals that tend to be more mobile tend to establish a “link between each relatively cohesive group” with that individual being the person that “diffuses innovation” (Milroy & Milroy, 1985), or helps spreads innovation by relaying the innovation to the groups they are connected to. While this does make sense, this study sees FGCS having numerous weak network ties as more socially affected than affecting the individuals at college. This may cause FGCS to view themselves as outsiders. This raises the question how do FGCS integrate themselves into the college community?

**Methodology**

In order to investigate how FGCS perceive themselves in relation to the college community and their identity label (first-generation college student), I conducted one-on-one, semi-structured, thirty-minute interviews with nine Student Success Program (SSP) participants, ranging in age from 18 to 45. These studies took place one month after the end of the spring semester at a northwest metropolitan university. Students had to fulfill two stipulations to be interviewed. The first was to be part of the Student Success Program. The second requirement was to be a first-generation college student. SSP is only one program under the federal TRiO program umbrella that “offers academic assistance and encouragement for first-generation, and/or low-income and/or students with a documented disability” (Boise State University, 2015). I asked participants to self-identify their socioeconomic status and their ethnicity. My data has a range of socioeconomic populations from poverty to middle/upper socioeconomic class, with the majority identifying with the low/poverty class. The ethnicity of students was either Hispanic/Latina or Caucasian.

I structured my interviews to utilize Cameron (1992) and her colleagues’ empowerment framework. This framework uses a dialogic interview process that employs an empowering relationship to conduct research with, on, and for the participants instead of solely on or for them. Cameron et al. suggest this framework “not only benefits the researched, it benefits the researcher too;…the use of interactive and non-objectifying methods enables us to gain richer insights into subjects’ own understandings of their behavior, and to engage them in dialogue about those understandings. This, we believe, is to our mutual benefit.” Using this framework let me “exploit the potential of [my] multiple role[s], instead of …deny[ing] it” (Cameron et al., 1992). Moreover, the framework highlights switching between multiple social identities, such as researcher to FGCS to colleague, without fear of tampering with the data. This made interviews feel like more of a normal conversation with constant negotiation of power.
between the researcher and the researched. Besides helping me reflect on my own time in college as an FGCS, it also assisted participants with reflecting on their own experiences and reaffirmed their desire to finish their undergraduate education. In addition, our conversation helped them develop a firmer understanding of the support they are eligible to receive.

**Results**

Interview after interview, I started to notice similar themes with each participant’s answers, and my own regarding our understanding of the FGCS identity label, our place within the college community, and—unknowingly during that time—why we did not become statistics who dropped out of college their first year. In order to answer this question, we must first look at the identity label associated with these students.

**Identity**

*There’s an identity label for me?* At first glance, the identity label—first-generation college student—is easy to understand, especially compared to other identity labels such as nontraditional, or even underrepresented. One participant I interviewed, George1 (a Latin American), viewed the identity label as “pretty self-explanatory” compared to the underrepresented label. However, many—if not all—of my participants did not know about this identity label when they entered the university setting for the first time. The most common response when participants encountered this label can be found in participant Sally’s comment:

Sally: I never thought about it before as being a first-generation student until I started coming to Boise State.

Researcher: So, what’s one example when you started coming to Boise State?

Sally: Um. Well, mostly just like forms, like that I was asked to fill out. Like asked if there is- if- if I was and I was like, “Oh yeah, I am.”

It is with these “forms,” such as scholarships, the FASFA application, and the school’s application process, FGCS first encountered this identity label. While there have been large and small studies throughout the decades concerning this demographic, it seems researchers assume these students already know about this identity label. This is not the case with Sally’s comment and from my own personal experience. I only learned about this label through a chance encounter with the McNair Program when I went into their office to ask what the program focuses on, and whom they help.

**Positive reaction.** Once students learn about this identity label, there are various ways they view it. My participants seem to have a positive, negative, or a mixed reaction. The positive reaction can provide an immense amount of encouragement to FGCS, change their perspective of the college community and receiving support. Penny’s was the most salient example of my participants’ understanding of the identity label. Penny is a nontraditional student entering college for the second time while raising her children. After hearing how she learned about the first-generation identity label (which I will present later in the article), I asked her what she thought about being described as a first-generation college student.

Penny: Um, ((slight pause)) I...wasn’t quite sure at first. But now...I asked my mom about like ((inhales)) was there any females that ever went to...college. [...] And so, when I started looking back like generations...um...it meant more to me than just my parents not going to college. It more- It was more like I’m the first girl in my family, for generations, to go to college and ((voice is becoming shaky)) I’m going to GRADUATE this next December.

Realizing that she is the first woman in her family to attend college is still powerful hearing. This gave her the confidence and encouragement to finish college instead of dropping out like she previously did her first time attending. This identity label has transformed from a roadblock, keeping her from the college community and the

1 All participants referenced in this study have been given pseudonyms to protect their identity.
support it provides, to a banner of pride and encouragement—even during the rough times she experienced, like her father’s death. She graduated from Boise State in the winter of 2015.

Not all of my participants had such an impactful understanding as to what the FGCS identity label meant. However, it did affect them positively in some form and gave them encouragement during challenging times in their undergraduate education. This label also made them feel important and more likely to seek assistance from programs provided by the university.

**Negative reaction.** While some FGCS view this identity as positive in some degree, not all do. It seemed a large amount of my participants had a negative reaction toward this identity label believing it can add unnecessary pressure to the student because participants expressed there was an expectation pushed on them that they need to succeed which made any failed test or poorly marked assignment a major blow to their self-confidence. These setbacks on grades would even cause students to question whether they belonged in college at all. Jasmine and Becky expressed these pressures more saliently than the other participants as they discussed how they felt when they first entered Boise State.

Jasmine: Um, I think towards the beginning I, uh, I was very… I was scared. I didn’t want to fail. I didn’t want to fail my family. I wanted it, you know, you know first year people usually go crazy like, “oh new place, I’m free, you know? Let’s party. Let’s do that.” I was the complete opposite. I was like, NO, I need to get really good grades, and I wanna— I want to prove to everybody that I can do this.

Becky: I guess sometimes it makes me more intimidated, ’cause I feel like I have to impress everybody else cause I am the first one. So, I feel like everyone’s watching me. Is she going to fail? Is she going to pass? Is she going to succeed, do WELL. More or less if I’m actually gonna finish up and get a degree.

Both Jasmine and Becky’s comments have similar external motivations using fear of evaluation/failure from others to prove that they belong. Jasmine and Becky have this struggle between the individual and the community. In a culture that is based on individualism and achievement, how do we, as an individual and as a society, acknowledge the need to be individuals and do everything without help, while recognizing the need for community support and to support the community? FGCS make this tension more evident. It can be seen in both Jasmine’s comment where she does not want to fail the family since, as she mentioned earlier in the interview, they have supported her so much by helping her with paperwork and costs. Becky, on the other hand, feels pressure from the community and feels as though she is being watched. Both are trying to find their own balance to this individual/community tension we currently have in the United States. They both seem to rely on fear in order to work hard. Because of this external pressure and/or this internal fear of failure, this prevents them from seeking help because they need to prove themselves to their family, this new community, and/or to themselves that they belong in college.

This type of mentality is detrimental to their education and to their well-being by adding too much stress and anxiety. Jasmine has mentioned that she would stay up studying the night before a test to make sure she got a good grade. I have also shared both fears that Jasmine and Becky had throughout my undergraduate education, but it tended to shift between fear of failing the family and not meeting my expectations. However, I tend to have the community-centric pressure, which caused me to believe I needed to prove to myself I was capable of doing the work on my own. This caused me to reject many of the services that I did know about, like the Writing Center and Math Tutoring. My other participants have also mentioned similar reasons why they did not utilize these services. They also alluded to this being the reason why they do not attend office hours since they need to know the answer and/or know how to do a math problem before they ask their professor. It is not quite evident how FGCS arrive at this negative perception, but I propose this negative perception is one of the major reasons students drop-out of college.

**Alienation**

Referring back to Tajfel and Turner’s social identity theory (1982; later added onto by Turner, 1991), individuals need to have contact with this specific community and then, through their time spent in the new community, gauge where the other members’ roles are in this community and measure where they are within their new community. However, this contact with the FGCS community at Boise State is currently limited and this identity label is hard to encounter. Not because of lack of programs. Boise State has two programs that help students during their undergraduate education, with no expectations that the students move on to graduate school. These programs are the Student Success Program (this is a TRiO program also known as Student Support Services, or SSS)
and the First Forward Program. I will discuss these programs in more depth and the importance they have for FGCS later in the community/family section.

However, as Fischer (2007) points out, FGCS are restricted in their engagement within the college community because a majority of them live off-campus and work either part or full time. This affects FGCS negatively which may contribute to why these students drop out of college within their first two years. Kaylee told me how she felt her first weeks at Boise State when I asked her if she has ever felt out of place during her time in college:

**Kaylee:** “Um, I think just college in general for like the first two weeks… I honestly did not know what to do with myself. Because I’m.. the type of person I- like I use to never be ALONE. (deep breath) So, I was like what do I DO, and I just remember I use to sit over by the um Student Union Building outside on those benches, and I would just like watch people. And, I’m just like this is- WHY am I watching people!? WHY does it matter that they’re with a group of people and I’m not. It really doesn’t. Like I’ve really- I’ve gotten ok being by myself but the first couple of weeks I just like felt so out of place and I was like what do I do? Do I look WEIRD?

Kaylee, before arriving at college, seemed to be grounded as to who she was and how she fit in in her old community. It is widely known by researchers that FGCS choose community colleges or schools near their family over selective universities (Choy, 2001; Pascarella et al., 2004). There are various factors as to why. The main two reasons that I have read in the literature, the participant transcriptions, and data confirming the findings of previous studies is because of financial and family reasons. Of these two reasons, the most important factor, for the majority of the students I interviewed is family because their family, and the community surrounding their family, has been the primary community—or network—they have known. While family is important to non-FGCS, FGCS (as well as low-income students) tend to depend on and, in turn, support their family.

In having such a dependency on their family, once the students arrive at the new college community they have a hard time navigating the community due to upholding their previous responsibilities to their family community. In saying this, FGCS still try to be active participants within the college community, even if it is only for the duration of their classes, which may be why Kaylee and a few other participants felt alienated in some form during their early beginnings of college. However, they still need their own community that holds significance and feels familiar to them. Many of my interview participants join and rely on these programs because the community it fosters reflects the qualities of family when they encounter turbulence in life.

**College “family”/community**

Although the FGCS identity label can be a catalyst to seek assistance or a form of encouragement for FGCS, this demographic needs a community they can have as a safety net to help provide them with advice or immediate help during challenging seasons in their education. Even if they know they’re doing something for the family, that’s not enough support, and so they still need something more to substitute for that feeling of connectedness. It is still tempting to quit school to deal with the immediate problem instead of fixing the root of the problem. Astin (1984), Tinto (1997), and many more have mentioned that being part of the college community, whether it be a learning community or club, is important and helps FGCS stay in higher education to finish their degree. Yet, I feel this is only partially correct. Looking at Orbe’s (2008) dialectical tension, it seems my participants are more so at the individual side, separating themselves from the support and overall college community their first two years. What helped them was not merely being part of this general college community, but a smaller, selected community. This is where support programs play an important role.

As mentioned before, Boise State has two programs that help FGCS throughout their education. The first program is the federally funded TRiO Student Support Services, which Boise State refers to as Student Support Program (SSP), and the second is the school’s First Forward Program. The only problem concerning these programs is the most well-known program—Student Support Services—uses an application-based system. This is understood for financial reasons; however, FGCS also need to compete for these spots with other students who may or may not be first-generation but who also need the assistance. This then causes students who really need the support to be on the wayside. The other program is an open-based system; yet, since the program is still young, students and faculty rarely know it exists.

Besides the application-based system, every participant referred to the SSP program as a type of family. The concept of family and the importance of family support to student success in college has been discussed and examined in depth (Gofen, 2009). However, these studies do not thoroughly explain what is happening with FGCS
once they are in a program such as SSP. During its time of helping FGCS, SSP seems to have been a replacement for the immediate family support and/or comforting community many of these students essentially lack throughout their college education. This may be apparent to FGCS, like in Amy’s case when, during our discussion on why it is difficult to use resources provided by the university, she mentions:

**Researcher:** Yea beginning was really, -really hard- going to one of those programs.
**Amy:** Yea… Especially when…your support system like, YOUR FAMILY.. is there but they’ve never been through it. So, it’s- You kinda are on your own so it’s hard to find a group of people that… makes you feel comfortable, so…

Amy specifically points out family and difficulty to find a group she is comfortable being a part of. She later discusses how she relies on SSP for everything regarding academic and social aspects of college. This college family does not fully replace the purpose and support of the FGCS family. This could be seen in each student’s response on how they perceive the identity label: FGCS. The most salient example, again, is Penny’s response:

**Penny:** So ((breathes out and voice is back to normal)) and I look at my kids, and I’m like, I’m going to change it for my kids. Cause guess what, they’re not going to be housewives. They’re going to see their mom graduate from college. Their dad graduate from college, and so that puts my children in a higher… rate of maybe going to college themselves, and I hope they do.

Just like Penny, many of the participants had some varying degrees of duty or goals to help their family. This assisted them through their education by giving them some form of encouragement during the rough and/or lonely times. Therefore, the idea of family for FGCS seems to be broken into two forms of support.

The first form of family support is immediate “family” and/or community support, which highlights the degree all the participants talked about SSP. I considered SSP to take this role—that I call a college family. This study defines college family as a group of people not related to one another but providing emotional, social, academic support, and overall betterment of the university student(s). However, this raises the question is there more than one college family on any given university campus, or something that is equivalent? The second part would be periodic support provided by the FGCS’s actual family. This support, as mentioned above, only occurs when the FGCS is experiencing a challenging time in their education. This type of support is one reason behind the FGCS tenacity not to quit since they have a group to believe in and do not want to fail. Both of these supports work in tandem for the student. In utilizing these supports the students can make connections between college, their family, and where they fit in both of these communities. This suggests that once they enter a community that provides a type of sanctuary and unique familiarity for the FGCS, they will more easily recreate their identity which “leads to an emergent identity inclusive of both new and old selves” (Orbe, 2008).

The fluid nature of identity

As Orbe (2008) discusses in his article, identity is fluid and can ebb and flow from one end of these dialectical tensions to the other end. Gee (2000) goes more into depth on this fluidity and argues that identity in itself is fluid and anyone can be perceived as any type of person, such as a gang member to an activist, through interactions with others. This can change “from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable” (2000, p. 99). Gee introduces four different ways to view identity. The first view is Nature Identity. This type of identity view is when an individual or society has no control over this identity because it is governed by nature. An example Gee provides is being an identical twin. However, these ‘natural identities’ as Gee argues, “can only become identities because they are recognized by myself or others” and gain their power through “institutions, discourse and dialogue, or affinity groups…” (Gee, 2000, p. 102). The next is Institutional Identity. This is when an identity is placed upon an individual by an institution such as a university and/or a religion. The third is discourse identities. This is where identity becomes understood and negotiated in normal interactions with other “rational individuals” (Gee, 2000, p. 103). The last, is the affinity identity, or fan clubs or special interests. Instead of genetics, a governing institution or day-to-day interaction, affinity groups are not concerned about the people and their unique culture since these groups can be “[made] up of people who may be dispersed across a large space” (Gee, 2000, p. 105). Rather, the content is the highlight and concern of these groups. A good example of this is the fan groups focused around the cult classic Star Wars.

With these four different views of perceiving identity (Nature, Institution, Discourse, and Affinity), Gee makes an important point that these four are interrelated, but for the sake of this article I want to only focus on
Institutional and Discourse identities. As discussed in the framework, social identity must be learned and understood by the individual in that community. Concerning Institutional Identities, these identities are bestowed upon individuals because higher powers, in this case a northwest metropolitan university, have the “authorization; that is, laws, rules, traditions, or principles of various sorts allow the authorities to ‘author’ [...] its occupant in terms of holding the rights and responsibilities that go with that position” (cited as is in Gee, 2000). This can be seen with FGCS, but the “rights and responsibilities” concerning this identity are ambiguous. Through dialogue, which falls under Gee’s Discourse Identity, these identities can continue to have some sort of power.

It is through the discourse that institutional identities are upheld and make such institutional identities fracture into two possible outcomes. Identity can be gained through achievement and on-going accomplishments, or through ascription through clear signs, the institution puts in place. ADHD is a clear example of ascription, and being a movie star or professor is that of achievement. As Gee pointed out an ascribed identity can turn into an achievement through personal “constructing and negotiating,” which in turn takes this particular identity away from the institution and reshapes it. This relates to FGCS programs, such as SSS, where they are making this identity first known to these students, and helping them to have a positive outlook, and an achieved mentality that they are in college. This process of reshaping the FGCS identity label away from ascription and into achievement should be one of the goals current and future programs aim for when assisting these populations.

Where to Go from Here?

Although the findings discussed in this article represents a small subset of first-generation college students that are in support programs, their responses offer valuable insight on how they and, possibly, other FGCS view their social identity in relation to the college community. Additionally, this research suggests that support programs focused on helping FGCS can help them fully comprehend what the FGCS identity label means on an academic and personal level. This study also suggests there is a crucial timeframe to reach out to these students before they encounter the major event that makes them choose to get help with their studies or dropout because they believe it is too much for them to handle.

In saying this, multiple questions have formed and remained from this study due to various restraints. The main question I am most interested in is whether there is a difference between people who seek support and those that do not. If it wasn’t for my chance encounter with the McNair Program, my undergraduate career would have been done with little assistance, outside from going to the Writing Center. I have also encountered other FGCS that did not go to other programs such as SSP, and will be graduating as I would have been. What sets them apart from students that need such programs as SSP? Another question is why do these students drop out of college? There could be various reasons, such as a lack of proper documentation on the institution’s part, or students being unsure about this identity label.

The last question that is important to ask is what kind of connection to faculty do students have, and what connections are there between faculty and the first-generation programs? Campbell & Campbell (1997), Thayer (2000), and more researchers have accounted that mentorship is important for FGCS since they do not have someone to lean on and to show them the ropes. That is why it would be interesting to see if faculty were connected to these first-generation programs, would the students fare better? More research is needed.

We must first understand that money helps alleviate hardship this demographic faces, but will not ultimately fix the problem—as noted by Cardoza (2016). During a time of growth in FGCS attendance, it is imperative to begin the conversation about being first-generation, or at least having students encounter the identity label a little bit more than just on applications. As much as I would like to say there is one simple solution to this on-going problem, I cannot. If we make support programs have a more family feel, make these and future programs more transparent and open, and actively reach out to these students in or before their first semester, first-generation college students will be able to chase the dreams that they feel are worth chasing.

Acknowledgements

This article is the culmination of my four-year journey at Boise State University. I would not be here without the individuals who believed in me, supported me throughout writing this article, and assisted me throughout my undergraduate career. Dr. Gail Shuck, thank you for your guidance and your patience throughout this process and for helping me get into graduate school by writing countless letters of recommendation. Dr. Michal Temkin Martinez, thank you for all of your support throughout my time at Boise State. You have helped me through
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References


Gender Differences in Experiences with Sexual Objectification

Morgan Harris: McNair Scholar

Dr. Eric Landrum and Dr. Mary Pritchard: Mentors

Psychology

Abstract

Sexual objectification is a prevalent societal issue that can lead to internalizing an objectified perspective of the body (Engeln-Maddox, Miller, & Doyle, 2011). Contrary to popular belief, objectification is applicable to both men and women (Aubrey, 2006). College students are believed to have many encounters involving sexual objectification, but few researchers have investigated sexual objectification in men, creating a need to expand research in this area. I explored gender differences in experiences of sexual objectification in male and female college students. General psychology students completed the Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale (Kozee, Tylka, Augustus-Horvath, & Denchik, 2007). I report a statistically significant difference in sexual objectification based on gender, indicating that women experience sexual objectification more often than do men. Keywords: sexual objectification, gender, college students

Gender Differences in Experiences with Sexual Objectification

Sexual objectification is commonly experienced by women in the United States (Szymanski, Moffitt, & Carr, 2011), and it strongly influences self-perception. However, little is known about sexual objectification in men. I examine whether there are gender differences in the experience of sexual objectification. My goal is to provide insight into how often college students are subjected to sexual objectification. Within this study, I strive to advance the understanding of gender differences in sexual objectification using the Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale (ISOS; Kozee et al., 2007).

Sexual objectification occurs when a woman’s body and her sexual body parts, along with their functions, are viewed separately from her as an entire person (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Gervais, Vescio, & Forster, 2012). Fredrickson and Roberts explained that when women are objectified, they are treated as objects, with their primary purpose being for the use and pleasure of others. Sexual comments, objectifying gazes, body evaluation, and unwanted sexual advances are all examples of sexual objectification in addition to viewed media images (Kozee et al., 2007).

Exposure to sexually objectifying images of men and women is becoming increasingly common in the United States, as denuded bodies often serve as an instrument to sell products and attract the attention of viewers (Vaes, Paladino, & Puvia, 2011). When objectification occurs, the individual being objectified becomes a tool for another’s own purpose and the usefulness of the objectified is judged (Vaes et al., 2011). It is assumed that sexual objectivity can lead to denial of subjectivity, which removes an individual’s experience and feelings. Sexual objectification can lead to internalizing an objectified perspective of the body (Engeln-Maddox et al., 2011). This internalization can become damaging to one’s self.

As being sexually objectified is out of one’s control, it is almost impossible to avoid the negative outcomes. According to Watson, Marszalek, Dispenza, and Davids (2015), when women experience sexual objectification, they perceive being at risk of physical and sexual harm. Sexual objectification can also directly influence mental health based on one’s internalization of this occurrence (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Sexual objectification can lead to self-objectification and internalizing cultural standards that in turn lead to poorer mental health (Szymanski & Feltman, 2014). Szymanski and Feltman (2014) found that more sexual objectification exposure was related to higher levels of psychological distress.

Although much is known about the negative impact of sexual objectification on women, few researchers have examined the impact of sexual objectification on men. Aubrey (2006) indicated that objectification is applicable to both men and women. Given the explicit focus on women in objectification theory, researcher opinions remain mixed regarding the roles that gender and sexual orientation play in sexual objectification (Engeln-Maddox...
et al., 2011). Most researchers focus on women and body image. This relatively narrow focus creates a large gap with little to no empirical evidence to help researchers evaluate the difference between men and women and how they might both experience sexual objectification.

The purpose of this study is to explore sexual objectification in male and female college students. The present study used the Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale (ISOS) introduced by Kozee et al. (2007) to measure the personal experience one has with having been sexually objectified. Interpersonal sexual objectification is an essential variable in objectification theory, and sexual objectification commonly leads to psychological distress in women (Kozee et al., 2007). However, sexual objectification is occurring for and having a meaningful impact on men as well (Davidson, Gervais, Cavinez, & Cole, 2013). Unfortunately, as Davidson et al. noted, the ISOS was developed by women for women, creating limitations toward men and any objectification men may experience. In this study, I attempt to remove the gender bias by replacing gender-specific terms within the questions of the scale so that I can assess sexual objectification in both men and women.

The purpose of this study is to explore sexual objectification in male and female college students. I hypothesize that women will experience more sexual objectification than men. I also hypothesize that men will report experiencing little to no sexual objectification as characterized by the ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007).

Method

Participants

A total of 85 participants completed this study. Of those who responded to gender, 28 reported being male and 56 female. The average age was 20.18 (SD = 3.07). When asked about racial identity, 73.8% of respondents classified themselves as White/Caucasian, 11.0% Hispanic or Latino, 8.3% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6.0% Black/African American. The youngest reported age was 18 and the oldest reported age was 35. As for students’ year in school, there were 47 first-years, 25 sophomores, 8 juniors, and 4 seniors. The participants in this study were self-selected, general psychology students who completed a survey via Qualtrics. Participants received course credit for completing the survey.

Materials

Participants answered 26 questions. The first question confirmed participant consent. Four questions asked about the participant’s background (e.g., gender, race, age, and year in school). The remaining 21 questions comprised the Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale (ISOS; Kozee et al., 2007), and were measured on a Likert scale where 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally/Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, and 5 = Almost Always.

Procedure

Participants signed up to take the survey online through Sona Systems, and completed the survey individually via Qualtrics. They were allowed 30 min to complete the survey. At the end of the survey they were thanked for their participation and were provided with information about their course credit.

Results

My first hypothesis predicted that women would report having experienced more sexual objectification than men. My second hypothesis was that men would report little to no experience with sexual objectification as characterized by the ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007).

To assess my hypotheses, an independent samples t-test was performed on all 21 ISOS items using gender as the independent variable. As predicted, there was a significant difference between men and women on their experience with sexual objectification as indicated in Table 1. Nineteen out of the 21 questions resulted in statistically significant outcomes. The two items that were not significant were “How often have you been called a name that is sexist, like whore, bitch, dick, etc.?” and “How often have you been encouraged to change your body shape (e.g., lose weight, build muscle)?”
Overall, males in the study consistently reported lower means to each question while women reported higher means. This indicates that women experience sexual objectification, as indicated by ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007) more frequently than do men.

**Discussion**

Based on my analysis, there is a clear gender difference in experience with sexual objectification. Due to the findings of this research, I predict that sexual objectification is a common occurrence among female college students. It is evident that women experience sexual objectification more frequently than do males within this study. I originally hypothesized that women would have experienced more sexual objectification than men. I also hypothesized that men would report experiencing little to no sexual objectification as characterized by the ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007). Based on the findings of my research, both of my hypotheses were confirmed. Nineteen out of the 21 ISOS items tested to be statistically significant gender differences in regards to experience with sexual objectification. Women consistently reported having more frequently experienced sexual objectification, and men consistently reported little to no experience.

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) introduced Objectification Theory, which defined sexual objectification pertaining to women. My research aligns with Fredrickson and Roberts as I found that women are more likely to report sexual objectification. Previous researchers believed sexual objectification to have a meaningful impact on men as well (Davidson, et al., 2013). However, my results are not aligned with this previous claim. Only two out of the 21 ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007) items tested lead me to indicate no significant gender difference in regards to sexual objectification. Arguably, men do also experience sexual objectification, although more likely on a much smaller scale than women, or possibly on a different scale. However, as indicated by Davidson et al. (2013), the ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007) was created by women for women. While conducting my research I attempted to relieve the gender bias with the scale by altering or adding terms to become gender neutral or to also appeal to men. Two of the items I altered indicated no significant difference in regards to gender differences with sexual objectification. It is possible that if more of the items were altered or changed to better relieve bias that we would see fewer gender differences.

The results of my study can be used to show the evident issue of sexual objectification existing on college campuses. I also conclude from my study that women more frequently are exposed to sexual objectification, reporting more frequent encounters.

There are a few limitations within my study. Due to the size of my sample, it might not accurately depict what is happening on other campuses in regards to sexual objectification. My data also consisted of primarily White/Caucasian female students. I would suggest to future researchers to survey a larger data sample, and to aim for more equal numbers in regards to male and female respondents. Another limitation of this study is the use of ISOS (Kozee et al., 2007). I would recommend future researchers to spend more time relieving the gender bias of this scale, or to create a scale better fitting for both male and female participants.

In conclusion, there is an evident gender difference in experience with sexual objectification. I conclude based on the results from my research that women experience more frequent encounters with sexual objectification than do men. Within my research I attempted to relieve the gap regarding the little research done on men and sexual objectification. Though my research included both males and females, I believe further research needs to be done in regards to men and sexual objectification using a more gender-appropriate scale. I predict men and women do experience sexual objectification; however, I believe these experiences to be different. While women are primarily viewed limiting their use to being sexual objects in terms of objectification, I believe men are objectified to encourage sexual behavior.

**References**


Table 1. ISOS Items and Gender Differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Male M</th>
<th>Male SD</th>
<th>Female M</th>
<th>Female SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often have you been whistled at walking down the street?</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-7.47</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often have you noticed someone staring at your chest when you are talking to them?</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-9.13</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often have you felt like or known that someone was evaluating your physical appearance?</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-5.07</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often have you been called a name that is sexist, like, whore, bitch, dick, etc.?</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often have you felt that someone was staring at your body?</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-4.88</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How often have you heard someone make negative comments about your body or a body part?</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>-2.72</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How often have you had a romantic partner that seemed to be more interested in your body than you as a person?</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>-2.62</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How often have you noticed someone leering at your body?</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-4.89</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How often have you heard a rude, sexual remark about your body?</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>-4.81</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How often have you been praised (in a sexual way) for having a nice body or body part?</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>-4.61</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How often have you been touched or fondled against your will?</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-2.32</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How often have you been the victim of sexual harassment (on the job, in school, etc.)?</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-2.32</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How often have you overheard inappropriate sexual comments made about your body?</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-6.24</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How often have you been encouraged to change your body shape (e.g. lose weight, build muscle)?</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-6.30</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. How often have you been criticized for not looking like another person?</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-5.63</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. How often have you been encouraged to change your body shape (e.g. lose weight, build muscle)?</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>-1.47</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. How often have you been criticized for not looking like another person?</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>-2.14</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. How often have you noticed that someone was not listening to what you were saying, but instead gazing at your body or a body part?</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-4.95</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. How often have you heard someone make sexual comments or innuendos when noticing your body?</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-6.06</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. How often has someone grabbed or pinched one of your private body areas against your will?</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-2.70</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. How often has someone made a degrading sexual gesture towards you?</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-4.10</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. df for all items = 82. The frequency scale used ranges from 1 = *Never*, 2 = *Rarely*, 3 = *Occasionally/Sometimes*, 4 = *Frequently*, and 5 = *Almost Always*. 
A Woman’s Choice at the State Legislative District Level: 
A Comparative Case Study of the Northwest

Timothy Hibbard: McNair Scholar

Dr. Ross Burkhart: Mentor

Political Science, American Government

Abstract

A major concern in the United States is the underrepresentation of women in State Legislatures. Based on data from CAWP at Rutgers University, the growth of female representation has stagnated since the mid-90s. In an attempt to study this trend, I asked the question, are women’s preferences for legislative districts different than their male counterparts? I looked specifically at open-seat districts, hypothesizing that women are more likely than men to choose an open-seat district. I compiled a comparative case study of the States in the Northwest, due to its high diversity among various factors including partisanship, urbanization, and population. Due to research methodology limitations, conclusions remain elusive; however, there is support for my hypothesis.

Introduction and Justification

In modern political thought, government is meant to be a reflection of its people. According to one of the most influential political philosophers of the modern era, John Locke, government actually gets its authority and legitimacy from its people (Locke, 1690). When the government becomes an oppressive body to its people, the people are imbued with the right of revolution. This idea was the primary justification the founders used for the American Revolution against their oppressor, the King of England (Jefferson, 1776). But that was in a day when only white males were considered full-fledged citizens. And not only that, violent revolution was much more probable, and far more enticing.

In the United States of America today, the badge of citizenship has been extended to include women, as well as people of color. Yet, the governmental bodies have lagged far behind in their role to descriptively reflect its citizenry. To some, this is a form of oppression. According the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 21: “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives” (UDHR). This clause seems to imply that everyone has the right to representation. What exactly representation means will be discussed in greater detail in the literature review section. Suffice it to say that if the citizens of a state feel they are being withheld this right by the fault of the government then they have the right to revolt. However, the revolution that is taking place in today’s society is not so much a violent revolution but a political one. Researchers, interest groups, politicians, and others are carrying out this revolution in a civil, yet forceful way.

I feel that is my duty to aide in this civil revolution through research, as one who believes that the government should reflect its citizens both descriptively and substantively. It is for this reason that I have undertaken this research project. I am concerned, in particular, with the underrepresentation of women in American politics. With specific research interests in state politics, I chose to examine this phenomenon within state legislative bodies. I also chose to study the topic in the Northwest region of the United States, namely, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. I believe this sample gives me a rich variety of state governments to draw conclusions from. The Northwest is highly diverse in terms of partisanship, ideology, population, geography, and its legislative size and professionalism.

My plan for this article is to begin with a brief overview of the relevant literature concerning representation, and then more specifically, the representation of women. I will then transition into my research hypothesis and methodology where I will lay out for the reader what I expect to find in the data, and how I carried out the collecting and organizing of that data. Next I will give a brief discussion on my findings and the implications of those findings. Finally, I will conclude with my thoughts on the successes and shortcomings of the research.
Discussion of Research Question

Briefly stated, my research goal is to answer the following questions: Where are women running? Do women make different choices about where to run than their male counterparts? And are women more likely to choose less competitive races due to election aversion? The reason these questions are important to answer is because if there is a significant difference between men and women, and it is visible, it makes the problem of the underrepresentation of women more ready to be solved. If we can find evidence that women are more likely to choose one race over another, it may help in recruitment efforts, as well as training efforts that parties and interest groups can engage in to increase the number of successful female candidates, which should ultimately increase the representation of women in state legislatures.

Literature Review

The Government of the United States can be classified as a presidential republic, a representative form of democracy. Hanna Pitkin, 1967, defines representation as to “make present again.” This idea speaks to the notion that the political policy making process is done with the citizens’ voices “present.” However, political theorists don’t always think in those simplistic terms. Pitkin thus gives us four concepts of political representation: formalistic, symbolic, descriptive, and substantive (Fenichel, 1967). Though formalistic and symbolic representation are important to gender representation, most research on the subject tends to focus on the descriptive and substantive representation, with descriptive representation getting the bulk of the attention.

Descriptive representation is an important part of the modern democratic process for many reasons, including the way it addresses structural barriers to representation and its ability to produce role models for underrepresented groups (Campbell, 2006). Other findings demonstrate that descriptive representation is critical to feelings of political efficacy (Merolla, Sellers, and Fowler, 2013), which in turn has a major influence on voter behavior (Austin and Pinkleton, 1995).

However, gender representation may be concerned with more than just descriptive representation. Research by Susan J. Carroll, 2001, finds that legislatures that have greater representation of women are more likely to pass legislation that is friendlier to both women and children as opposed to legislatures that are more dominantly male (Carroll, 2001a). Other scholarship shows that female legislators at the national level are much more likely than men to give floor speeches on gendered issues (Pearson and Dancey, 2011) and are of higher quality than male legislators at representing their constituents needs (Anzia and Berry, 2011). This makes it clear that the scope of gender representation spills into the category of substantive representation—the actions that a representative takes on behalf, and in the interest, of the represented (Fenichel, 1967).

In the United States, women are considerably underrepresented. Among other nations, the United States ranks extremely low in the representation of women in their national legislature. But the problem for the United States is not simply its low level of the representation of women in the national assembly, but also on a state-to-state basis in the state legislatures. Though the national average of women legislators for state legislatures is much higher than that of the U.S. Congress (CAWP, 2014), the numbers are still remarkably low in state legislatures when considering that over half of the population is female (U.S. Census, 2010).

Because of this great gender gap in American legislative bodies, many researchers have undertaken the task of answering the question of “why?” Because of the breadth of research, there are several major theories that seek to answers these questions. Two major camps include research that focuses on political institutions, parties and ideology, while others focus on socialization, encouragement, and other similar factors.

Studies, such as a 2002 work by Kira Sanbonmatsu, have shown that one of the major factors that predict proportions of women’s representation in the state legislature is partisan affiliation. That is, states that are more heavily democratic tend to have more female representatives, and state legislatures that are more heavily controlled by Republicans are less representative of women (Sanbonmatsu, 2002). However, this wasn’t always the case. Scholars show that it was in the states that were more dominantly Democratic where women felt the largest barriers to election to the state legislatures in the 1970s and 1980s. It wasn’t until the 1990s that this trend began to turn around (Sanbonmatsu, 2002).

Ideology also matters. Though ideology is similar to partisanship, it is not the same. Partisanship deals with an individual’s party affiliation, while ideology deals with an individual’s personal political beliefs. Ideology is often associated with partisanship in the United States because most republicans self-identify as ideologically right, and most Democrats self-identify as ideologically left (Pew, 2014). The more ideologically conservative a state’s
electorate is, the less likely the state legislature is to be representative of women. And the more ideologically liberal a state’s electorate, the more one would predict higher women representation (Elder, 2012).

Institutions also play an important role in influencing the representation of women. For example, research shows that state legislatures that are less professional and have lower salaries tend to have greater representation of women. Higher salaries warrant greater competition and larger amounts of resources to be poured into campaigns, which disadvantages women (Arceneaux, 2001). Though the professionalism and partisan composition of state legislatures affect women in general, they affect women differently depending on their own partisan affiliation primarily due to the fact that Republican and Democratic women candidates often draw from different pools (Sanbonmatsu, 2002). In other words, because Republican and Democratic women draw from different pools of voters, what may be considered a hostile state or district to run a campaign in for a Republican woman, may not be as hostile for a Democratic woman, and vice-versa.

Incumbency is also a large obstacle for women’s representation, though it is a large obstacle for any underrepresented group. Research shows that states with term limits and higher turnover aren’t predictably more representative of women (Carroll, 2001b). Running against incumbents, however, isn’t the greatest obstacle to getting women in elective office. Lawless and Fox, 2004, find that the candidate emergence phase is the most significant determinant that explains the underrepresentation of women in elective offices (Fox and Lawless, 2004). They also find that women are simply less likely to be encouraged to run for political office compared to their male counterparts, and considering encouragement to seek office is a major component of any candidate’s decision to run, women are severely disadvantaged by this finding (Fox and Lawless, 2004). In addition, women are more likely than men to cite party support as a significant determining factor on their decision to run for office (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu, 2013).

Behaviorally, research shows that women tend to be more election averse than their male counterparts (Kanthak and Woon, 2014). Women are more likely to avoid electoral competition than are men, thus driving down the potential pool of female candidates. Considering that female candidates are known to be just as likely to win the election they enter (Darcy et al. 1994), this is a significant obstacle to equal representation in terms of gender. If qualified women are choosing not to run due to an aversion to elections, then the electorate may not be able to choose the best candidate for the job.

Research by Fox and Lawless, 2014, finds a significant ambition gap between women and men which stems from political socialization in their youth. The research finds that women in their high school and college years have considered running for political offices at much smaller rates than men. (Fox and Lawless, 2014). Due to the socialization differences between men and women, other research has shown that men are more likely to be overconfident in their skills, even in skills they do not have, where women have been shown to show the opposite behavior, resulting in women being less likely to run for office (Kling et al., 1999; Beloff, 1992; Furnham and Rawles, 1995).

As much of the research focuses on why women do and do not run, and how they perform in comparison to their male counterparts once elected, there seems to be a gap in the research on the question of where do women run? Given that gap, I seek to examine state legislative districts, with a particular focus on the Northwest. In order to answer the questions, what kinds of legislative districts are more favorable to women candidates, and what impact does it have on the representation of women at the state legislative level?

**Theoretical Expectations and Testable Hypothesis**

My research question centers on the assumption that incumbency is a significant deterrent to the representation of women in state legislatures. That is, that since men already dominate legislatures, and incumbents are very likely to win, women cannot defeat incumbents at rates large enough to achieve a greater percentage in their respective state legislatures. Given the knowledge of the unlikelihood of defeating incumbents, it makes sense that any candidate would prefer to run for an open seat, to the seat of an incumbent.

In light of the 2014 Kanthak and Woon research—that women are more election averse than men—it would make sense to see this trend more pronounced among women candidates. Given the known research, the hypothesis that I tested was that women would run in open seats more frequently than as challengers.
Data and Research Design

Using Microsoft Excel, I tested this hypothesis by using my data set, which examines every candidate within the four midterm elections from 2002-2014 in the four states in the Northwest. Upon inspection of the data, I narrowed my candidate pool to only include quality candidates, which consist of candidates that ran under a major party and raised at least some value greater than zero in campaign contributions; this left me with a candidate pool of 3,380 candidates. Of those quality candidates, 895 of them were female, and 2,485 were male.

I also gathered data from the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) data website which gave me the data I have on the percentages of women in each of the four state’s legislatures. After gathering my data, I organized it for this particular research project by first determining how many candidates ran as incumbents, as challengers, and in open races. I then tallied the number of men and women who ran in open races versus the number of men and women who ran as challengers.

Utilizing that data, I next created several tables for the ultimate purpose of depicting the actual percent likelihood that a candidate would choose to run as an open race candidate over a race where they would be positioned as a challenger. I then contrasted my findings between sexes to determine if there was any significant variation. Finally, I compared my results between states and tested for a significant difference between states and their percentage of women in their state legislatures.

Analysis

Subdividing all candidates into three pools by status: incumbents, challengers, and open seat candidates revealed the results found in table 1.

Table 1. Quality Candidates by Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Challenger</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>1055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest</strong></td>
<td><strong>1355</strong></td>
<td><strong>1013</strong></td>
<td><strong>1012</strong></td>
<td><strong>3380</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I next divided each status by gender, excluding incumbency; tables 2 and 3 reflect this step in my analysis. Following that division, I then determined the likelihood that a candidate would choose an open race or run as a challenger. The numbers in red reflect the greater percentage in a comparison between women who have selected a race against an incumbent or have chosen to run in an open race. The result is found in table 4.

Table 2. Open Race Candidates by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest</strong></td>
<td><strong>281</strong></td>
<td><strong>731</strong></td>
<td><strong>1012</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Challengers by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest</strong></td>
<td><strong>249</strong></td>
<td><strong>764</strong></td>
<td><strong>1013</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Likelihood of a Candidate to be a Challenger/Open Candidate by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Open Candidate</th>
<th>Challenger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>42.02%</td>
<td>41.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>52.63%</td>
<td>39.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>41.38%</td>
<td>47.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>65.45%</td>
<td>60.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest</strong></td>
<td><strong>53.02%</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.97%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I then created a correlation chart depicting the relationship between the percent share of the legislature held by women and the percentage of women who chose to run as an open candidate. The results are found in figure 1.

Figure 1. Correlation between open race candidates and percent share of legislature

My original hypothesis stated that because women are more election averse than are men, my data should reveal that women should show a significant preference to running for an open seat, than a seat currently held by an
incumbent. However, I found that only appeared to be the case in two of the four states studied, namely, Washington and Montana.

Examining the Northwest as a whole, and ignoring sex, there appears to be no distinction whatsoever between the decision to run for an open seat rather than as a challenger. Of the 2,025 candidates that chose to run for office (non-incumbents), exactly half chose to run for an open seat and half for a seat held by an incumbent, 1,012 to 1,013 respectively. Separating by sex, however, shows that women give a slight preference to open races versus challenger roles 53.02% of the time. Their male counterparts, on the other hand, prefer the challenger role to open seats, 51.1% of the time.

Findings and Conclusion

My findings give a mixed result. While it appears that state-by-state there is no preference held by female candidates for open races, when examining the Northwest as whole, there is a preference, albeit a small one. And though there is a wide variation between states in the variable, when put up against the percentage of women in a state’s legislature, there does seem to be a small correlation between the preference of open races and percent share of the state legislature. Furthermore, there does appear to be difference in the preferences of women and men in their choice to run in an open race. Women are more likely than men, in the Northwest as a whole as well as three of the four states, to prefer open races, which seems to support my hypothesis.

However, this study suffered from several limitations. First, it is difficult to truly say whether women have a preference for open races or not. Only 21% of all races studied were open races, compared to 79% of races with sitting incumbents, which means the opportunity for a candidate to choose an open race is significantly hindered. My results could only prove to be accurate if there were an equal opportunity of choices for one or the other, or a way to control for the gap, which was not the case. In future research, I will control for these factors by conducting a regression analysis.

A second limitation came in the form of studying the correlation of the preference for open races and the percent share of the state legislature held by women. While the data on race preference came from a study of candidates of four elections spanning over a decade of time, the percent share of the legislature was only a snapshot in time. In order to produce the most accurate results, a time-series analysis would have to be done for each state to determine if there was variation over time between preference, and percent share of the legislature. But without the necessary knowledge of how to conduct such a study, I was limited by my abilities. However, in future studies, if there is a strong correlation between the percentages of women who ran in open races and the percentage of women in a given state legislature over time, then it may be a significant factor in increasing the representation of women in state legislatures.

Despite the limitations, it does appear that my hypothesis was supported by the findings that women, more so than men, prefer open races to positioning themselves as a challenger to an incumbent. That is not to say that the only cause is election aversion, but it could be a significant contributing factor. State politics are never black and white, and there is rarely, if ever, one causal factor behind any phenomena. However, that should not deter researchers from examining single variables one at a time, if done so with the assumption that it is more than likely working in tandem with other factors.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this time to thank all those who have been instrumental to my success as I have navigated the waters of undergraduate research. Beginning with faculty, I want to thank Dr. Ross Burkhart, who has been there for me from the beginning of my undergraduate career as both an advisor and a mentor. Without his critical guidance and mentorship, I never would have found the McNair Scholars Program, nor been able to complete it. Dr. Jaclyn Kettler has also been crucial in just about every facet of my research from the formulation of my research question to data collection and research design. Dr. Gary Moncrief’s guidance was extremely important in helping select variables to help answer my research question, as well as providing judicious and timely insights into the field of state politics that have been key to the success of my project. Dr. Stewart Gardner, though he had little to do with the research process itself, unbeknownst to him, was very influential in inspiring and motivating my project from start to finish.

I want to thank the McNair Scholars Program for the invaluable opportunity to conduct research of my own through a generous research fellowship as well as the critical training I received from the program. I could not have
done this without their generous support. Along with the staff of the McNair Scholars Program, my McNair cohort was also indispensable throughout the process. Countless rewrites have been made primarily because of the excellent feedback I received from them. Their hard work and dedication is reflected throughout this article. They were also valuable to the process in the form of granting me an ear to listen, as well as a distraction when needed.

I also want to thank my family. Thank you to my parents for raising me to be a concerned citizen. My mother, for being a strong woman, someone I see as a role model for women and girls everywhere, someone they can look to as a woman who has been successful in a male-dominated world. Her presence in my life played a critical role in my decision to study the underrepresentation of women. My father, who has always been a support to me in everything I have undertaken. He has always been there for me to talk to about anything when I needed someone to talk to, and he has been a strength to my mother, sharing in household duties and family responsibilities, allowing my mother to be successful in her career. Finally, none of this would have ever been possible without the strength and support from my beautiful and patient wife. She has always been supportive of my research goals, and she has also had my back when things didn’t go according to plan. When I needed someone to pick me up and push me forward, she was always there.

Thank you.

Works Cited


Reclaiming Lost Territory: The Response of Owyhee Harvester Ants to Forager Intrusions by Neighboring Colonies

Brett D. Howell: McNair Scholar

Dr. Ian Robertson: Mentor

Biological Science

Abstract

Neighboring colonies of the Owyhee harvester ant, Pogonomyrmex salinus, often share non-overlapping foraging boundaries in the areas between their nests. We found that interactions between neighbors along these foraging boundaries were infrequent but peaceful, and usually resulted in one or both individuals becoming agitated and scurrying away in opposite directions. Interactions between neighbors were necessary to maintain the foraging ranges of their respective colonies. An exclusion experiment showed that when one colony of a pair situated 5-7 m apart was denied access to its foraging range, individuals from the other colony would usually (i.e., in 7 out of 10 cases) enter the unoccupied space within one day. In 6 of 7 of those cases the occupiers set up foraging trails in the newly acquired area in 5 to 39 days (median = 13 days). When foragers from the excluded colony were subsequently allowed access to their original foraging area, they reclaimed the entire area within 11 days but did not extend their advances beyond the original foraging boundaries. In contrast to the earlier encounters between neighbors, encounters during the reacquisition period were always aggressive, and in 14 of 57 encounters one or both of the combatants was killed. Non-lethal contests were shorter duration than lethal contests (19±2 s versus 422±65 s, respectively). Our results show that competition for foraging space in Owyhee harvester ants is intense despite the seemingly peaceful relationship between neighboring colonies prior to perturbation of their foraging boundaries. Keywords: Pogonomyrmex salinus, harvester ants, territorial behavior, foraging ranges, intercolony aggression

Introduction

Competition for resources often defines the interactions of neighbors and how they partition space. Many organisms actively maintain territorial boundaries by defending resources or attacking intruders that enter their range. The ability to establish and maintain a territory (‘resource holding potential’), and the value of a territory to a holder relative to a challenger (‘pay-off or value asymmetry’), are expected to influence the formation of territorial boundaries and the outcome of territorial disputes (Parker 1974; Maynard Smith and Parker 1976).

Food is a limiting resource for many desert granivores, including seed harvesting ants in the genus Pogonomyrmex (Brown and Davidson 1977; Davidson 1977, 1985). Competition for foraging space between neighboring harvester ant colonies is often cited as an important influence on the spatial distributions of nests, at least at smaller spatial scales (Hölldobler 1976; De Vita 1979; Leving and Traniello 1981; Ryti and Case 1988, 1992; Wiernasz and Cole 1995; Crist and Wiens 1996, Gordon 1991, 1992, Gordon and Kulig 1996, 1998; Adler and Gordon 2003). Individual foragers travel to and from their nest along habitual foraging trails that typically radiate up to 20 m away from the nest, sometimes farther, and gradually dissipate into resource patches where foragers search for food (Gordon 1991, 1995; MacMahon et al. 2000). In some cases these trails exist as narrow visible clearings of vegetation, or “trunk trails” (Hölldobler 1976). Encounters between individuals from neighboring colonies, which occur most often at the distant edges of foraging areas, determine the boundaries of their respective territories. Frequent interaction with neighbors is needed to maintain these boundaries (Gordon 1992).

Examples of territorial exclusion and intraspecific aggression between ants from neighboring colonies are not uniform across Pogonomyrmex species. Aggressive, and sometimes lethal contests have been reported in P. californicus (De Vita 1979), P. rugosus, P. maricopa (Hölldobler 1976), P. mayri (Kugler 1984), and P. barbatus (Hölldobler 1976; Gordon 1992, 1995; Gordon and Kulig 1996). By contrast, Harrison and Gentry (1981) observed overlapping foraging ranges and no aggressive interactions among neighboring P. badius colonies; chance encounters between neighbors were brief and resulted in little more than mutual agitation (Harrison and Gentry...
Methods

Pogonomyrnex ants are common seed predators throughout arid and semiarid regions of the Americas, including sagebrush-steppe habitat in the Great Basin of North America. Their large, conical nests often dot the landscape and typically range in density from 10-80 colonies/ha (MacMahon et al. 2000). Individual colonies may survive for more than 20 years (Porter and Jorgensen 1988; MacMahon et al. 2000) as long as the founding queen survives and continues to lay eggs (Gordon 1991). In temperate climates harvester ants forage diurnally from spring to autumn whenever surface temperatures are sufficiently warm. Foragers gather large numbers of seeds from the ground, as well as insects, soil particles, and vegetation (Tabor 1998). Pogonomyrnex salinus is the northernmost member of the genus, and occurs from southwestern Canada through Idaho, Washington, Oregon, northeastern California, Nevada, and western portions of Utah, Montana, and Wyoming (Cole 1968; Tabor 1998). Population densities as high as 164 colonies per hectare have been recorded (Blom et al. 1991), although lower densities are more typical (Porter and Jorgensen 1988; Blom et al. 1991; Robertson 2015).

We conducted our study from early June to early September 2014 at a population of harvester ants located in disturbed sagebrush-steppe habitat near Melba, Idaho. The density of ant colonies at the site was approximately 30/ha. Vegetation consisted primarily of Poa secunda (Sandberg bluegrass), Bromus tectorum (cheatgrass), Sisymbrium altissimum (tumble mustard), and limited amounts of Artemisia tridentata (big sagebrush). Earlier work on this population of ants (Schmasow 2015) found that the ants focused their foraging on P. secunda and S. altissimum seeds, as well as seeds of a rare mustard when available.

Ten pairs of colonies were included in the study. Seven pairs were selected in June, and three more pairs were added in mid to late August. The two colonies that made up each pair were located 5-7 m from one another (mean±SE = 5.8±0.2 m), and all pairs were located at least 40 m apart to ensure independence of samples. The main criteria for selecting pairs, apart from the short distance between colonies, was that ants from both colonies foraged in at least portions of the area directly between the two nests, and that these areas abutted one another to form a foraging boundary between colonies. Although we do not know the specific ages of the colonies used in our experiment, all were at least two years old based on the size of the nest mounds and associated clearings around their perimeter (1-year old P. salinus nests are relatively small and lack a prominent cleared area around the perimeter [ICR, unpublished data]).

We mapped the foraging areas of each colony over a period of several days to a week, and while doing so watched for and noted any interactions between neighbors along shared foraging boundaries. Observations were made between 0830 and noon, or until rising temperature caused the ants to withdraw into their nests. To establish a colony’s foraging boundaries we followed foragers as they moved away from their nest and marked with a small flag their most distant position from the nest. We designated the colony whose foraging range extended beyond the midpoint of the two colonies as the “alpha” and the other as the “beta”; however, no dominance hierarchy or relative measure of colony size is implied by these designations. On average, the foraging boundaries of alpha colonies extended 0.9±0.2 m (range = 0-2.0 m) past the midpoint of the two colonies. In the two cases where the colonies
met at the midpoint, we flipped a coin to establish which would be designated the alpha. There was no significant difference in the total foraging areas of alpha versus beta colonies (Paired t-test, $t_6 = 0.405, p = 0.69$).

Once we established the foraging boundaries for both colonies of a pair, we installed a barrier that prevented the alpha colony from accessing its foraging range in the intervening space between the colonies. The barrier, which was placed within 0.5m of the alpha nest, consisted of 13 cm high black plastic garden edging staked firmly to the ground in a 2-4 m arc that redirected alpha foragers away from the beta colony. We installed the barriers early in the morning, prior to the start of active foraging. In cases where ants were observed skirting around the barrier, we extended the barrier with up to 3 m of additional edging. If ants burrowed beneath the barrier we filled and packed the breach with soil immediately upon discovery. These measures were successful in denying foragers from alpha colonies access to the territory they once occupied in the area between nests.

One day after a barrier was erected and its effectiveness confirmed we began daily observations to record changes to the foraging boundaries of both the beta and alpha colony. As before, we used flags to map the boundaries. Incursions by beta foragers into the area previously occupied by the alpha colony were of particular interest. We noted the timing of formation of habitual foraging trails, which we defined as narrow (~20 cm wide) pathways used by 40 or more beta colony ants over a span of 2 minutes when foragers were active in the area (see Gordon [1992] for a similar metric used to define the foraging trails of P. barbatus).

If and when beta foragers formed a foraging trail into the area previously held by the alpha colony, we removed the barrier within two days. We then returned daily to remap the foraging boundaries of each colony and assess whether the alpha colony reclaimed the foraging range it had previously occupied. During this time we also watched for and noted encounters between ants from opposing colonies. Aggressive encounters, i.e., those that involved biting and physical tussling between individuals, were scored either as non-lethal (to both combatants) or lethal (to one or both combatants). We recorded the outcomes of aggressive encounters, and the duration of those for which we were present from the start of the interaction.

Results

We observed no instances of overlap in the foraging ranges of neighboring colonies during our mapping of boundaries, nor did we witness any aggressive contests along shared boundaries between neighbors. Neighbors active in the same general area (i.e., <30 cm apart) along shared borders seldom came in direct physical contact with one another. On the few occasions we did observe encounters between neighbors ($N = 10$ across all nest pairs), the interactions were brief (<1 s), and immediately afterward the individuals scurried away in an agitated manner for several seconds before resuming normal foraging activity within their respective territories.

Three of the 10 pairs of colonies showed no change in the beta colony’s foraging boundary after a barrier was placed near the alpha colony. These three pairs were the ones we added to the study in mid to late August, and they were not manipulated further. In the remaining seven cases, all of which were set up in June, foragers from the beta colony were observed foraging in the newly available terrain one day after the barrier was erected. In all but one of these cases the beta foragers established a foraging trail into their newly acquired foraging area, although the timing of trail establishment varied among colonies (Table 1).

Removal of the barriers triggered a rapid response by alpha colonies - alpha foragers entered their previously held territory within one day in all six cases in which the barrier was removed. Complete recovery of these foraging areas occurred 3-11 days after the barriers were removed (Table 2). Foraging trails used by beta foragers were abandoned quickly once the alpha foragers returned. Alpha foragers did not advance beyond the original boundaries of their reclaimed foraging areas (Fig 1).

During the period of territory reacquisition by alpha colonies, we did not observe any of the brief, uneventful interactions that had characterized encounters between neighbors prior to perturbation of their foraging territories. However, we did observe aggressive encounters between neighbors at five of the six pairs of colonies (Table 3). A total of 57 aggressive encounters were observed, 45 of which occurred along the foraging boundary of the colonies of nest pair C. Of those 45 encounters, 11 resulted in the death of one or both combatants. At four of the other five nest pairs we recorded a total of 12 contests, two of which were lethal. No contests were observed at pair D; however, because contests in general were sporadically timed and often brief, they may have occurred undetected. Non-lethal contests were significantly briefer than lethal contests (Fig 2, t-test: $t_{13} = 8.09, p < 0.0001$), and never lasted more than 43 seconds (mean duration 18.5 s, median 15.9 s, range 5 - 43 s). When contests lasted more than 4 minutes (i.e., in 11 of the 13 lethal contests that we timed from start to finish: mean duration 7.0 min, median 6.1 min, range = 4.0 - 14.9 min), both combatants died while locked in a mutual death grip. Because observations of contests between neighbors were opportunistic, differences in the number of aggressive interactions
among colony pairs may not reflect actual differences. Instead, the numbers serve to document the occurrence, intensity and consequences of individual contests between neighbors.

**Discussion**

Owyhee harvester ants compete with neighboring colonies for access to foraging areas, and in some cases encounters between neighbors in disputed territory prove lethal to one or both combatants. Aggressive interactions between individual foragers of neighboring colonies are frequently reported in *Pogonomyrmex* ants (Hölldobler 1976; De Vita 1979; Kugler 1984; Gordon 1992; Gordon and Kulig 1996) as well as other territorial ant species (Haering and Fox 1987; Adams 1990; Tschinkel et al. 1995; Brown and Gordon 2000). To our knowledge ours is the first account of aggressive and sometimes lethal encounters between neighboring *P. salinus* (*P. owyhee*) colonies. Earlier studies indicated that *P. salinus* foragers do not engage in aggressive contests with neighbors, even in the few instances in which the foraging ranges of neighboring colonies overlapped (Porter and Jorgensen 1981, Jorgensen and Porter 1982). However, it is not clear from those studies whether neighbors used their overlapping foraging ranges simultaneously. In *Pogonomyrmex* ants, patrollers set the foraging direction for workers from their respective colonies on a daily basis (Greene and Gordon 2007), and in doing so limit simultaneous use when foraging ranges overlap (Gordon 1991; Gordon and Kulig 1996). Distance between colonies may also play a role. The likelihood of aggressive interactions between neighbors decreases as a function of distance between colonies (Hölldobler 1976; Gordon and Kulig 1996), and in the present study neighboring colonies were situated particularly close to one another and thus may have increased the likelihood of aggressive encounters along foraging boundaries.

The nature of aggressive encounters in *P. salinus* follows the same pattern Gordon and Kulig (1996) report for *P. barbatus*. Most encounters between neighbors are non-lethal, and non-lethal contests are much shorter in duration than lethal contests. As a cautionary note, because aggressive encounters lasted longer and thus were more likely to be observed than non-lethal contests, the incidence of lethal contests (24.6%) relative to non-lethal contests may be overestimated in our study. Nevertheless, the regular occurrence of lethal contests attests to the intensity of competition for foraging space among neighbors. Although the cost of intercolony conflict over the course of a season may be small relative to other costs such as predation (Gordon and Kulig 1996), competition for foraging space is clearly an important driver of intercolony interactions.

As with most behavioral interactions, context is important in determining whether encounters between neighboring harvester ants will escalate into aggressive contests. Prior to experimental manipulation of colony foraging ranges we did not observe any overt aggression between neighbors along their foraging boundaries, similar to the observations of Jorgensen and Porter (1982 – *P. salinus*) and Gordon (1991 – *P. barbatus*). Instead, occasional encounters between neighbors along foraging boundaries resulted in one or both individuals becoming agitated and scurrying away in opposite directions, much like Harrison and Gentry (1981) describe for *P. badius*. Such uneventful encounters between neighbors may serve to reinforce the boundaries of foraging ranges between longstanding neighbors without costly escalation to either colony (Harrison and Gentry 1981; Jorgensen and Porter 1982; Gordon 1991).

Absence of aggressive encounters along shared boundaries is not evidence of a lack of competition for space between neighboring colonies. To the contrary, a case is growing for the importance of regular interactions among neighbors to establish and maintain the integrity of territorial boundaries in harvester ants (Harrison and Gentry 1981; Kugler 1984; Gordon 1992; Brown and Gordon 2000) and other territorial ants species (Adams 1990; 2003), although Whitford (1976) argues this is not the case in *P. rugosus* (but see Hölldobler 1976). In the absence of regular encounters with their neighbors, *P. salinus* usually occupied their neighbor’s foraging range in short order; in 7 of 10 cases foragers from the beta colony entered the alpha colony’s foraging range within one day of the alpha colony being excluded. In six of those cases foraging trails into the areas were eventually established, confirming that the areas were being exploited for food. Variability in the timing of establishment of foraging trails (i.e., 5–39 days) may reflect differences in the value of new foraging areas relative to other areas within a colony’s foraging range. For example, spatiotemporal patchiness in the availability of seeds within a colony’s foraging range may influence the extent of forager recruitment into specific areas (Gordon 1991), including newly acquired territory.

The three cases in which the beta colony did not enter the alpha colony’s range were unique in that the barriers were erected late in the study (i.e., mid-late August) rather than in June and early July, as was the case for the others. Because harvester ant colonies compete for space in which to search for seeds, not for areas of consistently high food value (Gordon 1993), it is unlikely that the lack of response by these colonies was related to the quality or quantity of food in the unoccupied areas. Instead, the lack of response may reflect seasonal shifts in
the allocation of workers to foraging. In _P. badius_, the percent of each colony allocated to foraging peaks during maximal larval production in early to mid summer, and then declines steadily as the season progresses (Kwapich and Tschinkel 2013). If a similar pattern of labor allocation occurs in _P. salinus_, the availability of foragers late in the summer may not have been sufficient for beta colonies to occupy and maintain new foraging areas.

Although historical ownership of a foraging area did not deter occupation by ants from beta colonies once the area was left undefended, it did influence the outcome of efforts by the alpha colony to reclaim the space. As Gordon (1992) found for _P. barbatus_, we found that _P. salinus_ either retreated or were driven from their newly acquired foraging areas once the neighboring alpha colony was allowed access. The alpha colony’s familiarity with its original foraging area, or the proximity of this foraging area to its nest, may outweigh any squatter’s advantage the intruding beta colony accrued while occupying the space. On the other hand, the asymmetric design of our experiment leaves open the possibility that alpha colonies (i.e., colonies whose initial foraging range extended past the midpoint of their paired neighboring colony) were able to reclaim lost territory because they were dominant over their beta counterparts. Interestingly, alpha colonies were only able to recover previously held foraging areas; their advances did not extend beyond the boundaries of their original territory. Perhaps beta colonies had an advantage in holding the foraging areas they were more familiar with, or whose value was elevated because of proximity to their nests. It would be interesting to conduct an experiment in which both the alpha and beta colonies of a pair are denied access to their respective foraging areas in alternating turns. Do both colonies hold an advantage in recovering their historical foraging ranges, or is one colony dominant over the other in terms of resource holding potential? Such an experiment would help clarify the dynamics associated with the formation and maintenance of foraging boundaries between neighboring harvester ant colonies.

**Acknowledgments**

We thank Michelle Jeffries for assistance in the field, Boise State University and the McNair Scholars Program for funding, and Michelle Jeffries, Matt Schmasow, and two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments on the manuscript.

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Hölldobler B (1976) Recruitment behavior, home range orientation and territoriality in harvester ants, Pogonomyrmex. Behav Ecol Sociobiol 1:3-44
Maynard Smith J, Parker GA (1976) The logic of asymmetric contests. Anim Behav 24:159-175
Table 1. Activity of beta foragers after installing barriers that prevented alpha foragers from accessing their foraging ranges in area between the two colonies. A foraging trail never formed at pair G even though beta foragers entered the alpha colony’s foraging range. Blank cells represent the three cases in which beta foragers did not alter their foraging boundaries after the barriers were added.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity following placement of barrier</th>
<th>Nest Pair</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days until beta foragers moved into newly available foraging area</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days until foraging trail formed by beta foragers</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
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Table 2. Response of alpha foragers following removal of the barriers. Nest pair G is not included because the barrier was never removed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity following removal of barrier</th>
<th>Nest Pair</th>
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<tr>
<td>Days until alpha foragers were observed entering their previously-held foraging area</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Days until alpha foragers occupied the 50% mark of their previously-held foraging area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days until alpha foragers completely recovered previously held foraging area. Beta foragers no longer present within the area</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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Table 3. Summary of aggressive contest outcomes between individual foragers from neighboring colonies following barrier removal. Empty cells indicate that no contests of this type were documented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome of contests between neighbors</th>
<th>Nest Pair</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-lethal</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lethal (to one or both combatants)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
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Figure 1. Sequential changes in the foraging territories of neighboring *P. salinus* colonies, using pair F as an example (see Tables 1 and 2). The alpha and beta nest mounds are indicated by filled and open triangles, respectively, and the dashed lines encircling nest mounds represent foraging territories. The filled circle in each diagram represents the midpoint between nests. (a) Foraging territories prior to experimental perturbation. (b) Foraging territories immediately after the barrier was added next to the alpha nest. (c) Foraging territories 14 days after the barrier was added. Note that beta foragers began entering the uncontested space within one day of the barrier being added. (d) Nine days after the barrier was removed the alpha colony had completely reclaimed its original foraging territory.

Figure 2. Mean ± SE duration of non-lethal (N=22) and lethal (N=13) contests between individual foragers of neighboring colonies.
Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Figure 5.
From Mao to Xi: Chinese Political Leadership and the Craft of Consolidating Power

Dexter Lensing: McNair Scholar
Dr. Michael Touchton and Dr. Shelton Woods: Mentors
Political Science

Abstract

During 1965-66, a great power struggle engulfed Chinese politics while the Vietnam War escalated. While most scholars study this period for the Cultural Revolution Mao launched, this research proposes to examine the role the Vietnam War played in China’s political power struggle. Specifically, my research will show how Mao used the issue of Vietnam to defeat his rivals and consolidate power. The Chinese political structure has changed considerably since the mid-1970s. Yet, current President Xi Jinping has attempted to purge rivals and consolidate power during his term in office. Given this largely successful attempt, I want to know the extent to which Xi has the power to personally dictate how to handle problems along China’s periphery. This question is important because China is becoming a world class naval power, has an ever-growing economy, and has the potential to become a hegemon in Southeast Asia. This research compares the Vietnam War’s impact on Chinese politics during 1965-66 with Xi Jinping’s contemporary anti-corruption campaign. Specifically, I use Causal-Process tracing to compare and contrast consolidation of power under Mao and current President Xi Jinping. I draw from primary government sources of the time period, but also employ secondary sources to contrast them with each other. The results of this study finds that the PLA was the dominant source of strength for both Mao and Xi. Additionally, both Mao and Xi’s wives played critical roles in their success. Furthermore, the creation of new organizations helped both Mao and Xi circumvent the Party apparatus when they needed to further consolidate their personal authority. Current indications suggest that Xi Jinping is attempting to hold onto power for the foreseeable future, even after his expected retirement in the year 2023.

Introduction

China has a long and colorful history of stories regarding power and politics. This article focuses on two individuals from two important time periods who consolidated power: Mao Zedong during the mid-1960s and China’s current President Xi Jinping. Mao consolidated power from 1965-1966, just as the Vietnam War started to escalate. Xi has rapidly consolidated power from the time he took over as president in November of 2012.1 China’s leadership moved away from a strong man rule after Mao’s death in 1976, to a government led by a collective group of leaders. Between 1992 and 2012, no individual dramatically stood out from the rest. However, China has turned again to strong man rule since Xi has taken power.2 Because of the change, this article explores the potential political, economic, and social changes that might result from the shift toward strong man rule. This is important for numerous reasons. China’s sheer physical and economic size, as well as its geographical location, render Chinese geopolitics more influential than any other Asian country. Furthermore, China is building a world class navy,3 and

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its economy has become critical to the global economy. Because of these characteristics, anything that happens to China in the future will certainly have an impact on the rest of the world.

I employ a case-oriented qualitative comparison to explore how both Mao and Xi consolidated power in this study. The main variables I use to explain consolidation of power include: international crises, economic conditions, leadership qualities, corruption, and control of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The results of my analysis demonstrate that leadership qualities and control of the PLA proved to be important for both Mao and Xi’s consolidation of power. Additionally, I employ a historical timeline analysis of events to assist in identifying the causal factors that are important for both Mao and Xi’s consolidation of power. I argue that two causal factors were important for both Mao and Xi. (1) Both Mao and Xi’s wives played critical roles in their success and (2) both Mao and Xi established new organizations to sidestep existing power structures and build more personal authority. The first section of the article provides the background to the research question. Next, I describe the variables I use and explain why they played an important role for both Mao and Xi. Next, I provide historical analysis that highlights additional causal factors for both Mao and Xi’s ability to consolidate power. Finally, I summarize the results of my analysis and address potential implications for China.

Background

1962

Li Zhisui—Mao’s personal physician—described 1962 as a turning point in Mao’s political life. That turning point began in January, at the seven thousand cadre’s conference—so named as a meeting of the top seven thousand officials from across the country. The previous three years were a tumultuous period for the Chinese Communist leadership. In 1959, Mao relinquished his post as head of state to Liu Shaoqi. Liu was Mao’s handpicked successor, and the number two man in China behind Mao. Although Mao remained chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Great Leap Forward (GLF) damaged his credibility. The GLF from 1958-1961 is a dark hole in China’s history that the CCP still does not acknowledge. Estimates vary, but most scholars agree the death toll is anywhere between 30-45 million people—most of the deaths occurred from a great famine that it produced. Mao started the GLF to accelerate the economy and catch up with the West, but it resulted in disaster. Mao blamed the results on the weather conditions.

The CCP—and the country—is run by the handful of men that make up the Political Bureau Standing Committee (PBSC). Usually consisting of 7-9 members, it is led by the general secretary, or chairman during Mao’s time, who is the president of China and leader of the party. From 1962-1966, the members consisting of the PBSC were Mao (who was chairman of the Party), Liu Shaoqi (head of state), Deng Xiaoping (general secretary of the party), Zhou Enlai (premier), Lin Biao (Minister of Defense), Chen Yun, and Zhu De. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were trying to right the ship after the tragedy of the GLF, which meant opposing Mao’s disastrous domestic policies. Liu gave a speech criticizing GLF policies at the seven thousand cadre’s conference, which, in essence, was a criticism of Mao. More importantly, Mao offered a self-criticism at this conference. Mao had become an immortal figure, and this self-criticism was a shock to many people. Philip Short writes, “Minimal though it was, Mao’s acknowledgement of liability electrified the meeting. He did not need to say more: in a Party
which had learned to regard him as infallible, it was extraordinary enough for him to admit to any failings at all.”10 Furthermore, Mao did not have plans on stopping the campaign of the Great Leap Forward.11 Liu’s speech caught Mao off guard, and more importantly, Liu’s speech was supported by the majority of cadres in attendance. The top officials throughout China expressed their disapproval of Mao’s policies.12 A bitter experience, this triggered a counterattack that would begin later in the year. After this conference, Mao increasingly became dissatisfied with Liu Shaoqi and the rest of the leadership. Mao retreated to Hangzhou for the spring and summer to prepare his counterattack, leaving the leadership and operation of the CCP to Liu, Deng, and Zhou Enlai.

Jiang Ching—Mao’s fourth wife—made her first public appearance in a meeting with the wife of Indonesia’s President Sukarno in September.13 Jiang Ching is an important figure in the power struggle between Mao and Liu, and played a prominent role in Chinese politics during this time. Additionally, the American presence in South Vietnam had grown by the end of 1962. There were a little over three thousand military advisors at the end of 1961. That number increased to over nine thousand by the end of 1962.14 This development would continue to play an increasingly important role in Chinese politics.

1963

At a Central Work Conference in February, Mao declared the Party had to fight revisionism through class struggle. This conference also introduced the ‘Four Clean-Ups’ campaign launched in the rural areas (check production team accounts, granaries, housing, and the allocation of work-points).15 After this conference Mao once again retreated to see how the leadership implemented his programs. Controversially, Liu Shaoqi made a speech titled ‘the second ten points’ that upset Mao shortly after the new programs Mao established.16 Mao was upset because Liu deviated from the policies Mao outlined in the SEC. The internal party struggles over policy started to rapidly escalate.

Mao welcomed a delegation from the VWP (Vietnam Worker’s Party) on June 4th.17 During this meeting Mao attempted to continue driving a wedge between Hanoi and Moscow. On November 2nd, Ngo Dinh Diem, President of South Vietnam, was assassinated in a coup. This escalated events in Vietnam, further sending the country on a road to war.

1964

An increased amount of aid to North Vietnam was approved in mid-June at a CCP work conference. Zhou Enlai led a CCP delegation to Hanoi in July to meet with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and Pathet Lao about America escalating its actions in Indochina, and Vietnam in particular.18 A five-man group led by Peng Zhen that became the precursor to the Cultural Revolution Group was established in July. Initially, the group was established to cleanse the arts and literature of China—people who were not carrying out party policy according to Mao.19 Later, Mao used it to help circumvent the power of the Party.

In the Gulf of Tonkin, an incident occurred on August 2nd which played an important role in triggering a full-scale war between the U.S. and North Vietnam. Still highly debated today, an American ship was fired upon by a North Vietnamese aircraft. This prompted U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson to carry out airstrikes on North Vietnamese naval installations.20 On October 16th, China tested its first nuclear weapon.21 Further south, in Vietnam,

11 Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, Mao: The Unknown Story (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), 495.
12 Chang and Halliday, Mao: The Unknown Story, 475-476.
13 Short, Mao: A Life, 521.
14 Mark Lawrence, The Vietnam War: A Concise International History (Oxford University Press, 2010), 72.
15 Short, Mao: A Life, 517.
16 Zhisui, The Private Life of Chairman Mao, 400.
19 Zhisui, The Private Life of Chairman Mao, 447.
20 Lawrence, The Vietnam War: A Concise International History, 86.
21 Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, Mao: The Unknown Story, 484.
events were rapidly deteriorating. President Johnson began to expand the U.S. military role during the month of November. The number of U.S. military advisors reached 23,300 by the end of 1964.22

1965

Mao began the year launching a personal attack on Liu Shaoqi at a central work conference in January. A CIA report described how critical this meeting was by saying, “this party work conference in January 1965 was an important milestone on the road to the ‘great proletarian cultural revolution’”.23 On February 7th, troops from North Vietnam attacked U.S. bases in South Vietnam around Pleiku, killing eight Americans. Less than a month later, the U.S. initiated Rolling Thunder—a sustained bombing campaign of North Vietnam.24 This led to the first U.S. Marines arriving in South Vietnam at the DaNang military base on March 8th.25

Mao sent Jiang Ching to Shanghai in February to prepare attacks on the Party through propaganda channels. Zhang Chunqiao, a top Party official in Shanghai, supported Jiang Ching’s endeavors. Zhang helped Jiang enlist the services of a writer named Yao Wenyuan. Together with Mao, Jiang and Yao planned an article that would be published later in the year to help set off the Cultural Revolution.26 It is important to describe what the Cultural Revolution was. China expert Lance Gore explains it this way:

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) that lasted for a decade was a radical movement that shut down schools, slowed production, turned people against one another in civil war-like upheavals, and virtually severed China’s relations with the outside world. It was proletarian because it was a revolution of workers, peasants, and students against party officials. It was cultural because it meant to alter the values of society in line with the communist ideology.27

From September to October, an important Party conference took place. One big issue was strategy regarding the Vietnam War. This meeting also played an important role in shaping the upcoming Cultural Revolution.28 Mao wanted Wu Han criticized. Liu, Deng, Peng Zhen and the rest of the leadership refused, however, knowing what might happen as a result. This proved that Mao did not have complete control over the Party and would have to maneuver carefully to dispose of his opponents. Furthermore, during this conference, Peng Zhen made some defiant remarks that were directed at Mao. Peng said that “everyone in the face of truth was equal” and that even Chairman Mao should be criticized.29

Simultaneously, events in Vietnam began to further deteriorate. The number of U.S. troops in South Vietnam reached 184,300 by the end of 1965.30 China was pressured to support Hanoi, and at the same time their relationship with the Soviet Union was at an all-time low. Simultaneously, a sense of being encircled because of the growing U.S. military presence in Vietnam was alarming. Additionally, the Chinese economy had still not completely recovered from the GLF. Amidst all this, Mao started to take advantage of the growing turmoil in Vietnam. From now on, everything would be a sideshow to his goal of completely destroying the Party apparatus and removing everyone in his way.

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23 “Factionalism in the Central Committee: Mao’s Opposition Since 1949” ibid, 25.
24 Lawrence, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History*, 89.
1966

Lin Biao suggested additional changes were likely at a PLA political work conference in January.\(^31\) The change Lin had in mind was removing those who were supportive of Liu. Also in January, Mao called together a handful of trusted individuals, including his wife Jiang Qing, to form a group that would replace the existing Cultural Revolution Group.\(^32\) Mao had become greatly angered by Peng Zhen and waited for the right time to oust him. The current Cultural Revolution Group under Peng Zhen remained intact for the time being. Peng released a report titled the “February Outline Report” that claimed playwrights such as Wu Han and others deserve the freedom to write whatever they want to. On February 8\(^{th}\), Peng and the rest of the Cultural Revolution Group flew to Wuhan to talk to Mao about the outline. Mao did not absolutely support it, but he did not object to it either.\(^33\) At the end of March, when Liu Shaoqi left for a state visit to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Burma, Mao decided to strike. After Liu left, Mao decided to condemn the “February Outline” and state that it should be repudiated.\(^34\) At this point, either right before or right after Liu left, Peng Zhen and Lu Ting-\(y\)i—director of the propaganda department—were arrested.\(^35\) This triggered a secretariat meeting from April 9\(^{th}\) through the 12\(^{th}\) that was presided over by Deng Xiaoping. At the meeting Kang Sheng and Chen Boda criticized Peng Zhen. Deng was pressured into joining Zhou Enlai, Kang Sheng, and Chen Boda to decide that Peng had wrongly opposed Chairman Mao on some issues and should be removed from the Cultural Revolution Group. Following this, Mao called a meeting of the Standing Committee on April 16\(^{th}\) and had the Cultural Revolution Group disbanded.\(^36\)

In May, at a work conference chaired by Mao, it was officially revealed that Peng Zhen had been purged. Also, the new Cultural Revolution Group was established. It included Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng, and Chen Boda.\(^37\) This new group, led by Jiang Qing, grew more powerful than the Party apparatus. With both Peng Zhen and Lo Rui-Ching now gone, Mao had the upper hand. On May 18\(^{th}\), Lin Biao talked to the Politburo in secret and claimed that Peng Zhen and Lo Rui-Ching had collaborated with a small group of people in an attempted coup against Mao.\(^38\)

By June, Liu Shaoqi was no longer in control of the state run newspaper The People’s Daily—which was a powerful weapon, and continues to be today.\(^39\) On August 1\(^{st}\), Mao called for a Central Committee Plenum. At this plenum Liu was demoted. Lin Biao replaced him as deputy leader of the Party. Liu slid from 2\(^{nd}\) to 8\(^{th}\) in the Party hierarchy, but he remained head of state—although at that point it was just a title with no power attached.\(^40\)

To the south in Vietnam, the number of U.S. troops in South Vietnam now stood at 385,300—an increase of 200,000 soldiers since the end of 1965.\(^41\)

1967

By the end of February, the Politburo stopped functioning. The Standing Committee and Cultural Revolution Group, chaired by Premier Zhou Enlai, took over.\(^42\) It signaled Mao’s success in defeating the Party apparatus. Liu and Deng were subject to trumped up trials, marking their complete fall from power.\(^43\) As part of the Cultural Revolution Group, Jiang Qing was a key player in the purge of Party officials. Jiang relished seeing Liu and Deng humiliated, so humiliated that they would never be able to mount a political comeback. She was right about Liu who would pass away in 1969, but a decade later the iron-willed Deng Xiaoping would have the last laugh when there would be no Mao to protect her.

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33 Short, Mao: A Life, 531.
34 Short, Mao: A Life, 531.
36 Rice, Mao’s Way, 239-240.
39 Short, Mao: A Life, 536.
41 Lawrence, The Vietnam War: A Concise International History, 102.
42 Short, Mao: A Life, 562.
43 Chang and Holliday, Mao: The Unknown Story, 532-533.
1968-2011

Liu Shaoqi was officially expelled from the Party at a meeting in 1968. Although Liu was expelled from the party, Deng Xiaoping was allowed to keep his Party membership. Mao gave Deng an opportunity for hope. It was a decision that had a lasting impact, not just for China, but the world. Premier Zhou Enlai passed away on January 8, 1976. Zhou had been one of the most beloved Chinese officials of the twentieth century. Later that year, Mao Zedong died on September 9th. With the top two Chinese officials dying in the same year, the battle for political power began. That battle was won by Deng Xiaoping, who had survived the Cultural Revolution. Mao’s wife Jiang Qing and her collaborators were arrested. Charismatic, brilliant, and ruthless, Deng had all the qualities of a strong Chinese leader. Deng officially replaced Mao and took over as the leader of the CCP in December of 1978.

In 1980, Deng started opening China’s economy to the world. Travel in and out of China also started to accelerate; under Mao travel was restricted. Peasants in the countryside were able to do their own private farming and individuals were able to begin their own businesses. These were radical changes for the Chinese people. Other things stayed the same though, specifically politics.

The PRC constitution changed in 1982. Two five-year term limits were established for the president, vice-president, and members of the PBSC. Nobody would be able to rule again indefinitely as Mao had done. Ironically, Deng was not the Party secretary during his time in power, but he was still the Party chairman and the paramount leader until 1992. Jiang Zemin, the former mayor of Shanghai, replaced Deng. This began a shift in the CCP hierarchy from a strong man rule, toward a consolidated leadership with no single individual dominating the Party. The 1990s under Jiang saw incredible economic growth in China, but also turbulent relations with Taiwan.

Hu Jintao replaced Jiang Zemin in 2002. Under Hu, China continued its strong economic growth, and was led by a group of leaders with no strong personalities. China’s economy surpassed Japan’s as the world’s second largest in 2010. It was a symbolic event for China that highlighted its growing power, especially in East Asia. Just two decades ago, it would have been thought of as inconceivable. The year 2011 ended shrouded in mystery when British businessman Neil Heywood was found dead in a Chongqing hotel on November 11th.

2012

As a fast rising Party official, Bo Xilai expected a position on the PBSC in November. Although Bo and Xi Jinping were both princelings, they were political competitors for power in the CCP. Some CCP leaders in Beijing, most notably Premier Wen Jiabo, were openly critical though of the political model Bo established in Chongqing. Bo was a very popular official; his crusade against corruption and revival of Maoism struck a popular nerve among people. Bo’s popularity continues to exist among the people of Chongqing, even after his downfall. The Party removed Bo from all his leadership positions in April, and his wife Gu Kailai was detained on suspicions of killing Mr. Heywood. The biggest mistake Bo made was embarrassing the CCP. In August, Gu Kailai admitted to murdering Mr. Heywood by poisoning him, and was sentenced to a suspended death sentence.

To understand just how important 2012 was, and specifically the problems that grew from the murder of Neil Heywood, one should read Xiansheng Tian who sums it up saying:

The year of 2012 witnessed one of the greatest challenges the Chinese Communist Party had ever experienced in its history. The dramatic escape of a powerful police chief, Wang Lijun, from Chongqing city and his effort in looking for protection by the American Consulate General in Chengdu, China, shocked the whole world as well as the Chinese Communist Party itself.50

Currently there are three different groups that dominate Chinese politics; the princeling faction, CYL faction (Communist Youth League) and the Shanghai clique. The pricnelings are led by current President Xi Jinping, the CYL faction by former President Hu Jintao and current Premier Li Keqiang, and the Shanghai clique by former President Jiang Zemin. There are times when the groups become blurred and members of one group also have ties to a different group. There are scholars who debate that looking at Chinese politics from the perspective of these factions is not accurate;51 however, it is the easiest way to understand current Chinese politics. Because of the embarrassment caused by Bo, the princeling group took a hit. Xi’s position as the next president of China was not as secure as it had been. For a short time, this gave the CYL faction a much needed boost. But then another incident occurred right after the Bo Xilai scandal that dealt a blow to the CYL faction. Ling Gu, the son of then director of the CCP General Office—a powerful position in the CCP—and close advisor to President Hu, Ling Jihua, was killed in a traffic accident. Driving a Ferrari, two of Ling’s girlfriends who were also in the car with him managed to come out alive, but both suffered severe injuries.52 The affair exposed the enormous wealth of assets by Ling, and his mother Gu Liping. President Hu’s enemies launched attacks on him and the CYL faction. Most notably, Jiang Zemin scathingly attacked Hu, blaming him for the failure of looking over his group and keeping them from trouble. Hu’s authority and influence took a big hit from this.53 Furthermore, his power at placing his allies in top spots at the upcoming leadership change was affected by this.

Right before Xi was set to become the new president, he went “missing” from September 1st through the 15th. Among the most apocryphal reasons given was the story that Xi had injured his back swimming;54 the real reason was quite different. The prominent China scholar Willy Lam mentions that most likely Xi did it to do something unprecedented: “He was using his silence as a protest against what he perceived to be irregularities in preparations for the Eighteenth Party Congress, particularly personnel arrangements that were not to his liking.”55 Xi wanted to be chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) immediately. When Hu became president, he had to wait two years until he became chairman of the CMC, taking over for Jiang Zemin. Xi got his wish immediately, however, at the Eighteenth Party Congress in November, thanks in large part to Jiang Zemin. With corruption becoming a major problem in China, Xi began to enforce discipline on Party members immediately. Shortly after the Eighteenth Party Congress, Xi announced the “Eight Point Regulations against Extravaganza” which were guidelines designed to prevent cadres from taking advantage of their status—or in other words, no more openly flaunting their wealth.56 More importantly, this began Xi’s anti-corruption campaign which was fully implemented the following month.

2013

Xi and President Obama held their first summit together in California in June amidst rising concerns about cybersecurity and conflict in the South China Sea.57 A year-long rectification campaign also began in June called the “Campaign on Mass-Line Education and Practice.”58 This campaign was aimed to establish better relations with the people and enforce Party discipline.

50 Xiansheng Tian, Ibid. 323
53 Lam, Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping, 7.
55 Willy Lam, Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping, 8
Xi carried out a considerable power grab in November that enabled him to further consolidate power in himself. At a Party conference, two new superagencies were created. The first was the CNSC (Central National Security Council) which is supposedly modeled like the U.S. national security council. With authority over all the security forces in China, it is a powerful organization. The other organization created was the CLGCDR (Central Leading Group on Comprehensively Deepening Reforms) which is tasked with reforming the economy, and also pertains to the culture. Xi is chairman of both these new agencies.59

Zhou Yongkang was the first ‘big tiger’ caught in Xi’s anti-corruption campaign in December when he was placed under investigation.60 A retired Chinese official who served on the PBSC under Hu Jintao, Zhou had been in charge of the security forces. His power reached far and wide. Both Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were opposed to this at first because of Zhou’s stature. Xi however, was able to convince Jiang that Zhou should be removed.61 Zhou had also been a close ally of Bo Xilai; therefore, the arrest of Zhou is seen by many as politically motivated. In 2012, before Xi came to power, there were rumors that Zhou Yongkang and Bo Xilai had planned a coup against Xi before he could assume power. There were also rumors that Zhou personally tried to have Xi killed before and after Xi took over.62 This would partially explain why Xi wanted to remove both Bo and Zhou.

2014

General Xu Caihou was expelled from the CCP and handed over to prosecutors in June. Xu had been a member of the 25-man Politiburo—the second highest political group after the PBSC. Xu also served as the vice-chairman of the CMC.63 From 1999 until 2012, Xu was in charge of promoting high ranking military officials in the PLA.64 This indicated that the anti-corruption campaign was beginning to reach high into the military. The publication of a book filled with Xi Jinping’s quotes titled The Governance of China came out in October.65 Neither the previous two presidents, nor Deng Xiaoping, had a book published filled with their speeches to promote their personality. From October 20-23, the Fourth Plenum of the 18th Central Committee met. The focus of the meeting was on the rule of law.66 Not in a Western sense, but as a way for Xi to control the Party.

2015

The PLA released a list of 14 Generals that were under investigation for corruption in March.67 It is further evidence that Xi’s anti-corruption campaign had expanded within the military. It also shows that the PLA is Xi’s main base of support. He would not be going after the PLA if he feared a backlash against his corruption campaign among the military elite. Zhou Yongkang was sentenced to life in prison for corruption in June.68

61 Wily Lam, Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping, 106.
62 Andrew Wedeman, “Xi Jinping and the Politics of Corruption”,

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On July 1st, China approved a sweeping new national security law. The law is vague, but it appears to give Xi even more power on national security.69 As Ankit Panda writes, “The Party seems to be coalescing national security authority around Xi as an acknowledgement that centralized authority is both in the interest of the Party and the country.”70 It is indicative of how complete Xi’s power is in the realm of national security. At the end of July, the anti-corruption campaign took down another high ranking military official—Guo Boxiong. Guo, who served as vice-chairman of the CMC from 2002-2012—with Xu Caihou—was accused of taking bribes.71 Guo Boxiong and Xu Caihou were both high ranking military officials who were promoted by Jiang Zemin. Xi appears to be further strengthening his grip on the military by removing Jiang’s men. The next sections of the article focus on the variables and how Mao and Xi consolidated personal power.

**International Crises**

The first variable I address to explain power consolidation is international crisis. I use Oran Young’s definition of an international crisis: “An International Crisis is a set of rapidly unfolding events which raises the impact of destabilizing forces in the general system or has any of its subsystems substantially above ‘normal’ (i.e., average) levels and increases the likelihood of violence occurring in the system.”72 China’s leaders from 1964-1966 faced an international crisis with the escalation of the Vietnam War. Mao’s comments to a delegation of the Japanese Communist Party in February of 1966 highlights the seriousness of the Vietnam War’s threat to China. Mao elaborated, “A war between China and America is inevitable. This year at the earliest or within two years at the latest such a war will occur. We will attack them from four points, namely the Vietnam frontier, the Korean frontier, and through Japan by way of Taiwan and Okinawa.”73 But, did it help Mao consolidate power in himself? Donald Zagoria claims, “First, it is reasonably clear that American policies in Vietnam served as a catalyst to trigger long-standing political divergencies among the Chinese leadership.”74 The danger of this time period, and how close the U.S. came to carrying out military strikes against China is lucidly explained by Lyle Goldstein who chillingly sums up the crisis situation at that time, “US-China crisis interaction during this period witnessed several instances when American leaders contemplated the possibility of employing nuclear weapons against China and actively considered preventative strikes against Chinese nuclear facilities in the early 1960s.”75 It wasn’t just the Vietnam War though that contributed to the international crisis’s that China faced. On September 30, 1965, Sukarno, President of Indonesia, was overthrown in a coup by an American supported general named Suharto. Sukarno had ties to the countries communist party (PKI) who were supported by Beijing. In addition to a terrible relationship with the Soviet Union and the Vietnam War escalating, this setback for Mao further divided the leadership. Edward Rice explains, “The series of failures, which culminated in the reversal in Indonesia, undoubtedly widened the split between Mao Tse-tung—who had been largely responsible for the direction of external affairs—and his opponents in the leadership.”76

During 1965, the widening split in the leadership gave Mao an opening to consolidate personal power. More importantly, it forced Zhou Enlai and Chen Yi to choose sides in the power struggle between Mao and Liu. As Harry Harding and Melvin Gurtov mentioned, Lo Jui-Ching and Peng Chen became politically vulnerable after Zhou joined the Mao alliance.77 Foreign policy played a big role for Mao in his consolidation of power. It divided

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74 Donald Zagoria, *Vietnam triangle; Moscow, Peking, Hanoi* (New York: Pegasus, 1967), 63.
the leadership to the point that whoever opposed Mao was exposed. Andrew Wedeman writes that, “Because foreign policy became an ideological weapon, it lost its substantive importance and was subsumed under the more general debate on domestic topics.” It’s also worth examining the timing of when Mao began the Cultural Revolution with what was happening externally. Mao began his attack on the Party center not long after American troops started pouring into South Vietnam. As Byung-joon Ahn cleverly notes, “Why did Mao raise the Wu Han issue at the particular time of September-October 1965, although Wu Han had written his play in 1960 and the play had been staged in 1961? Why did he raise the question of revisionism within the Central Committee at the same time?”

Certainly one reason is because Mao was in retreat from the Great Leap Forward between 1960 and 1962. But, another factor is the Vietnam War which escalated in the spring of 1965. The response on how to respond further divided the leadership and gave Mao an opening to attack the Party. Another important factor is worth considering though. In a crisis, people look to a strong leader to lead them through the stormy waters. Throughout China’s five thousand years of history, people looked to and relied on strong leaders of the long succession of dynasties to protect them. For China, during the mid-1960s the Chinese peasants trusted Mao. Additionally, he had already stood up to America once before—during the Korean War—with success. With that position, he consolidated power in himself, and dusted off his opponents in the process.

Today, China faces growing tensions in the South China Sea. One of the biggest sources of friction that the U.S. and China’s neighbors has with China is the building of islands in the South China Sea. China’s construction of airstrips and facilities has raised concerns. Confrontations have risen between China and Vietnam over China dragging an oil rig close to the coast of Vietnam. Also, China has clashed with the Philippines in the Spratly Islands and the Scarborough Shoal—a group of reefs and rocks. The Philippines has sued China over the rights to explore for oil and gas 200 miles off the Philippines coast, an area that overlaps with Chinese interests. Meanwhile, tensions are rising between China and Japan. While the chance for conflict, or even war, has increased over the past five years, it still remains unlikely because of the strong economic interdependence between China and Japan, Taiwan, the U.S., and Southeast Asia. The geopolitical situation currently is nowhere near as chaotic as it was under Mao in the mid-1960s. Xi Jinping is not facing U.S. bombing raids right on his doorstep. Furthermore, China is militarily stronger today than under Mao. It helps that China’s neighbors—Vietnam, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, and the Philippines—do not have the military capabilities that China does. So while there might be an international crisis in the terms defined by Young, most International Relations scholars would agree what we face today is not a crisis in the sense of what it was during the Vietnam War. Possibly the biggest reason that the international situation is not contributing to Xi’s consolidation of power is because upon becoming president he assumed the title as chairman of the CMC, Party secretary general of the CCP, and head of the CCP Central Leading Group on Foreign Affairs. Basically, he has had complete control of foreign policy decision making since the moment he became the leader of China. During the mid-1960s Liu Shaoqi was head of state, and Premier Zhou Enlai also played a large role in Chinese foreign affairs. There was not a consensus on foreign policy among China’s elites during Mao’s time of consolidating power as there is now with Xi.

**Economic Conditions**

This research examines economic factors such as GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and GNI (Gross National Income) when examining the economic conditions in China. Although issues such as pollution and quality of living

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are hot topics today, my focus is on factors that show an overall view of China’s economy. As noted previously, China’s economy was in bad condition during the 1960s because of the GLF launched by Mao. By 1965 the economy was doing better due to the efforts of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. But, China continued to lag far behind most other countries. To illustrate the state of the Chinese economy during the 1960s, below is a graph comparing China’s GDP per capita with Cambodia—a country that is a small fraction of the size of China. Throughout the 1960s Cambodia had a higher GDP per capita than China until the Vietnam War wreaked havoc on Cambodia. Thus, Mao’s consolidation of power from the end of 1965 through 1966 cannot be explained by the economy. The economic conditions of the time period do not suggest Mao used the success or deterioration of the economy to consolidate power in himself. Furthermore, Mao’s economic policies were why his credibility was damaged in the first place. Because of the GLF, Mao went into retreat, enabling Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping to take control of the Party apparatus.

![GDP Per Capita Graph](image)

Figure 1. Data from database: World Development Indicators. Source: World Bank

After the death of Mao, Deng Xiaoping opened up China’s economy. Incorporating market reforms, the Chinese economy took off. In 2014, China overtook the U.S. as the world’s largest economy.84 In just the space of three and a half decades, China’s economy has gone from an embarrassment to being the largest economy in the world. The Chinese economy has become vital to the world. Jonathan Fenby writes, “The PRC lends more than the World Bank to developing nations.”85 But, China still has a long way to go towards being a prosperous country. In terms of Gross National Income, China still trails the U.S. by a considerable amount even though China has a population that is nearly four times that of the U.S. The chart below demonstrates this discrepancy between the two countries. Despite the problems in China’s economy today, Xi had the benefit of taking over at a time when China’s economy was performing at a high rate. The challenge for Xi will be to keep the GDP growth at 6% or higher for the next decade. In analyzing CCP policies toward the economy, there are no indications that disagreements about economic policies helped Xi consolidate personal power. China’s premier is the one typically in charge of economic affairs.86 But, Xi has managed to diminish the role of China’s current premier—Li Keqiang—by establishing the CLGCDR and making himself the head of the group. The CLGCDR, in vague language, was established to carry out reforms and direct policy concerning “economic, political, cultural, social and environmental sectors as well as the Party system.”87 It is now the top decision making body with regards to reforming the economy.88 It is unclear if Xi did this because of his disapproval of Li’s economic views. Wily Lam notes that there is a difference of opinion between Xi and Li on economic policies saying, “Unlike Xi and his conservative colleagues, Li wants the

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85 Fenby, Tiger Heads Snake Tails, 4.
88 Lam, Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping: Renaissance, Reform, or Retrogression? 278.
government to curtail direct interference in the economy.” Additionally, Xi has further sidelined Li by putting himself as head of the Central Leading Group of Finance and Economic Affairs, a job usually assigned to the premier. Some might argue that this could be proof that economic policies did play a role in Xi consolidating power. But, it is important to remember that Li is part of the CYL faction that competes for power against the Gang of princelings. The establishment of the CLDCDR appears to be more about power politics than economics. It has taken away Premier Li’s biggest source of power.

![GNI Current US$](image.png)

Figure 2. Data from databank: World Development Indicators. Source: World Bank

**Leadership Qualities**

In exploring whether leadership qualities played a role for both Mao and Xi in consolidating personal power, my research mainly focuses on cult of personality. Many authoritarian countries have leaders who possess and cultivate a cult of personality. Modern day Russia and Vladimir Putin is just one example. But, perhaps no modern leader has ever developed a cult of personality quite like Mao Zedong. During the mid-1960’s Mao’s cult of personality was at its apex. The legend of Mao and “Maoism” didn’t just reside in China, however, but spread globally. This was largely due to the self-promotion that Mao pushed. China gave arms, money and food to countries at a time that millions of Chinese peasants were dying from famine. At home in China, Mao already had the stature as founder of the PRC. Additionally, the term “Mao Zedong Thought” had been coined in 1943 that added to the cult of Mao. During the early 1940s the anthem “The East is Red” was also written:

The East is Red, the sun rises.
In China a Mao Zedong is born.
He seeks the people’s happiness.
He is the people’s Great Savior.

Mao’s cult of personality really started taking off after 1959, when Lin Biao became Minister of Defense. Lin put together the little red book of Mao’s quotes that became published. Lin also propagated the cult of Mao in the PLA, much to the chagrin of Luo Jui-ching. Mao’s cult of personality had an important role in completely consolidating power in himself. Mao became idolized across the country. Parris Chang writes “The formation of a strong personal cult of Mao gradually turned Mao into an institution” the importance Chang notes is that “Other party leaders were thus disarmed from opposing or attacking Mao publicly, inasmuch as Mao had become the source of authority and correctness and they could not base a claim of legitimacy in opposition to Mao.” The mixture of the little red book along with songs that idolized Mao played an important role in Mao’s cult of personality. It was a huge advantage

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for Mao against any opposition that dared to challenge him, or undermine his authority. It also was used as a tool for consolidating power in himself.

Since the death of Mao, China’s leaders have been careful to prevent anyone from developing a cult of personality like Mao had done. The horrors of the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution continue to haunt the CCP. That is why some people believe that when the CCP decides on who the next leader should be, they look for someone that is intensely loyal to the Party and not very popular. When Xi Jinping became the appointed heir of China, nobody suspected that he would attempt to establish a cult of personality. Xi’s background was as someone who always took the middle road, and he had a humble, quiet personality. Additionally, Xi’s father had been a liberal reformer. Since Xi has taken over though, there are signs that he has developed a cult of personality not seen since Mao. In China people just don’t recognize Xi as their President, but also call him “Papa Xi” or “Big Daddy Xi.” An article in the New York Times notes, “Not since Mao dominated the nation with his masterly blend of populism, fervor and fear has a Chinese leader commanded so much public awe.”

And like Mao, Xi has had some of his speeches published in a book titled The Governance of China. The book can even be found at most Barnes and Noble bookstores in the U.S. Songs also have come out praising Xi, including one that has a similar beginning to “The East is Red.” There has also been a children’s song praising ‘grandpa Xi.’ Further evidence of Xi’s growing cult of personality is the creation of Xi’s “Little Red App.” It contains Xi’s quotes and a map of where he made the quotes. Also contained in the app is a story collection about subjects that Xi has an opinion about. Its name evokes Mao’s little red book. Another telling sign of Xi’s growing cult of personality is the recent directive by authorities telling officials to include lectures about Xi’s speeches at schools.

The growing popularity of Xi makes it difficult for someone to oppose him. China’s premier Li Keqiang appears to be fine with everything that Xi has done. And because of Xi’s forceful personality, there is not much Li can do.

In an interview, China scholar David Lampton highlights that Xi is popular saying, “One limitation on these ‘loser’ groups acting on their fears and resentments is that Xi is apparently popular with the public. This presumably makes potential enemies hesitant to confront him.” Xi’s developing cult of personality and popularity has helped him consolidate power in himself. The long history of strong leaders in China is emphasized by Ross Terrill who wrote, “It was very hard, Mao said, for the Chinese people to get out from under thousands of years of worship of the emperor. Indeed. And hard, perhaps, for even a Marxist Chinese ruler to dispense with it.”

Maybe that still holds true today. The Chinese people want a strong leader, not a government led by a small group of indistinguishable men.

In talking about leadership qualities, it’s also worth mentioning something else that both Mao and Xi have in common: a knack for keeping the rest of the CCP leadership off-balance. Mao was notorious for keeping the rest of the leadership guessing as to what he might approve or disapprove. Xi appears to have picked up on that. In an interview with the New York Times Christopher Johnson notes, “It strikes me that nobody knows entirely what’s on the mind of Xi Jinping. I think he likes it that way.” Johnson also goes on to say that, “He likes keeping everyone off balance. You see it in the way he gives a new policy speech practically once a week, and keeps everyone guessing and running to keep up.” What this means for China and the world is that events might suddenly occur in a whirlpash manner that comes unexpectedly. One area where this is already happening is in the South China Sea and

95 Jacobs and Buckley, “Move over Mao, Beloved ‘Papa Xi’ Awes China”.
East China Sea. When China announced the establishment of ADIZ (Air Defense Identification Zone) at the end of 2013—which overlapped with Japanese territorial airspace—it came as a surprise. It also looked like a rash decision made by Xi. More of these kind of actions could occur in the future.

**People’s Liberation Army**

Since the founding of the PRC, the PLA has had the most power of any governmental organization in China other than the CCP itself. Defining the role of the PLA in Mao and Xi’s consolidation of power can be complicated. My research examines if Mao and Xi had the support of the leading figures in the PLA, and how it helped them. For Mao, support from the PLA was critically important for defeating his rivals. When Lin Biao took over as Minister of Defense in 1959, the PLA went from potentially being Mao’s biggest problem to his strongest base of support. Lin became Mao’s biggest supporter. By indoctrinating the PLA with “Mao Zedong Thought” Lin proved his loyalty to Mao. The importance of the PLA to Mao is explained by Parris Chang who writes, “Nevertheless, it seems obvious that PLA leaders played a vital role in the victory of Mao and the defeat of his opponents in the Plenum; this can be seen from the fact that three marshals of the PLA, Yeh-Chien-ying, Hsu Hsiang-chien, and Nieh Jung-chen, were awarded by their promotions to the Politiburo.”

That Mao had more support from the PLA than any other institution is further demonstrated by Ahn who notes, “To begin with, the leadership of the PLA’s top machinery proved to be more amenable to Mao’s ideas and policies than to the Party’s.” More importantly, Lin increased the power of the PLA within the structure of the CCP. Ken Lieberthal explains:

> Lin Biao then took a series of initiatives to enhance the role of the PLA in CCP affairs. He quickly began to increase the number of Party members in the military, perhaps because that would give him a greater say in national CCP affairs. During 1963-5, moreover, he worked to expand the PLA’s organizational responsibilities, blurring at some points the boundaries between Party and military.

In 1965, the PLA further expanded its power by taking over complete control of the Public Security forces. Having control of all the security forces tilted the advantage to Mao in his quest to completely consolidate power in himself. Additionally, as noted before, the most vocal opponent to Mao and Lin Biao in the PLA was purged toward the end of 1965, just as the Cultural Revolution was getting started. The purge of Luo eliminated the one high ranking officer in the PLA who did not agree with Mao’s war policies. Mao once said that, “Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun;” there is no question that Mao held the barrel of the gun in his power struggle with Liu and the Party.

The first job Xi Jinping got after graduating college in 1979 was as an aide to Geng Biao, a senior defense official. Geng and Xi’s father were very close, and it’s how Xi got the job. It allowed Xi to forge ties with the military that he kept even after he left for the countryside in 1982. And before Xi became President, he forged relationships with top military officials. You Ji writes that, “His close ties with PLA generals were both personal and institutional long before he was chosen as China’s next leader. His friendship with offspring of PLA elders can be traced back to the 1950s.”

Upon becoming China’s leader, Xi has quickly established a command of the PLA that

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his two predecessors were not able to do.\textsuperscript{111} Helping Xi is the fact that a large share of princelings are in the PLA, making it Xi’s major source of support.\textsuperscript{112} Of any group or institution, it is the PLA that Xi leans on for advice. Willy Lam has noted that the PLA princeling generals act as Xi’s private think tank.\textsuperscript{113} Since taking power, Xi has also used his position as CMC chairman to promote generals that support him.\textsuperscript{114} Xi understands just how imperative it is to have control of the PLA in consolidating power. The establishment of the CNSC, with Xi making himself chairman, is further proof that the security forces in China is under Xi’s complete control. At the end of 2014, further evidence of Xi’s growing power came with the appearance of the “CMC chairman responsibility system.” Although its appearance in Chinese media outlets has not been frequent, it is important to consider that it was not brought up under Jiang Zemin or Hu Jintao. One author describes the importance of it saying:

The current evidence strongly suggests that this concept is another piece of Xi Jinping’s ongoing effort to consolidate his leadership power, with specific focus on consolidating his actual control of the PLA during a period of both aggressive modernization and political turmoil caused by the anti-corruption campaign.\textsuperscript{115}

By taking over as chairman of the CMC right away, promoting generals that are close to him, and establishing the CNSC, Xi has demonstrated that the PLA is a main factor for his consolidation of power. Command of the gun oftentimes determines political conflicts and power throughout the world to this day. Both Mao and Xi were able to use it as leverage in consolidating power in themselves.

**Corruption**

Corruption for this article is defined as “the abuse of public office for private gain.”\textsuperscript{116} Although corruption looks different in every country, I mainly focus on the number of Party officials disciplined for corruption, and also focus on the high ranking officials that are detained. From 1962 until Mao’s death, the issue of corruption was not a significant problem in China. The absence of a market economy can partially explain why this was, but also the absolute authority by Mao after 1965 meant that bribes were not as frequent; your status depended on how well you adhered to Mao Zedong thought. Purges under Mao did not occur based on corruption, but whether you were considered a capitalist-roadster like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping had been. Because of this, I consider corruption as a non-factor for the Mao period.

Since the first day upon becoming general secretary of the CCP, Xi has framed corruption as an existential threat to China. Even previous presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao have considered corruption as “a matter of life and death” for the CCP.\textsuperscript{117} The Heritage Foundation ranks China 144\textsuperscript{th} out of 178 countries in a freedom from corruption index. Corruption has gotten worse in the last few years. As the chart below shows, China has slipped lower in the rankings than countries like Egypt. The day after he was officially introduced as the general secretary, Xi acknowledged the importance of corruption saying, “Under the new conditions, our Party faces many severe challenges, and there are many pressing problems within the Party that need to be resolved, particularly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111} You Ji, Ibid. 59.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Willy Lam. “The Generals’ Growing Clout in Diplomacy” China Brief, April 3, 2015, accessed July 24, 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=43750&cHash=9f47f10a7531e5f9b9d2428f6f1c275c5#.VbO6hBG2TIX.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Jonathan Fenby, “What the West should know about Xi Jinping, China’s most powerful leader since Mao” New Statesman, June 23, 2015, accessed September 3, 2015 http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2015/06/what-west-should-know-about-xi-jinping-china-s-most-powerful-leader-mao, see also Kevin McAuley “President Xi Clears the Way for Military Reform: PLA Corruption, Clique Breaking and Making, and Personnel Shuffle” China Brief February 4, 2015, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=43498&tx_tnews%5BbackPid%5D=789&no_cache=1#.VbPS1BF77IV.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Lam, Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping, 105.
\end{itemize}
Several weeks later, Xi backed up those words with action. The “eight rules” campaign was introduced on December 4, 2012. This new initiative by Xi was intended to combat corruption and clean up the behavior of CCP officials. Openly flaunting one’s wealth would be punished. These new eight rules went into effect in January of 2013. More importantly, it also signaled the beginning of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign. At the start, nobody expected this anti-corruption campaign to end up being the most far reaching crackdown since the Cultural Revolution. Xi emphasized that the Party should crackdown on both “tigers” and “flies” meaning both high and lower level officials will be investigated. From 1997 to 2012, 550,000 Party officials were indicted for either corruption or dereliction of duties. But, one report notes that since the end of 2012 until the beginning of 2015, “414,000 officials have been disciplined by the party for corruption, and 201,600 have been prosecuted for the infraction in court.” Those numbers are astonishing compared to the fifteen year period from 1997-2012. They also show how far and deep Xi’s anti-corruption campaign has reached. Party officials throughout the country are on edge that they might be next.

Evidence of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign’s success is its reach into the PLA. Xi understands that he needs the complete support of the PLA to succeed in being the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao. This was no easy task, however, with top military officials still loyal to Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao when Xi assumed power. Removing Zhou Yongkang, who was in charge of the overall security forces, was a first step in this direction. Furthermore, tackling the generals Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong who both pledged loyalty to Jiang Zemin, and were two powerful forces within the PLA, proved to be a major success for Xi. Adding to this, Xi has been able to restructure the PLA to his advantage with the help of the anti-corruption campaign. Xi has been just as resolute as Mao was that the Party have complete authority over the gun. Elevating allies in the PLA, with help of the anti-corruption campaign, to top spots has helped Xi cement his grip on power.

Figure 1. Source: Heritage Foundation

Evidence of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign’s success is its reach into the PLA. Xi understands that he needs the complete support of the PLA to succeed in being the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao. This was no easy task, however, with top military officials still loyal to Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao when Xi assumed power. Removing Zhou Yongkang, who was in charge of the overall security forces, was a first step in this direction. Furthermore, tackling the generals Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong who both pledged loyalty to Jiang Zemin, and were two powerful forces within the PLA, proved to be a major success for Xi. Adding to this, Xi has been able to restructure the PLA to his advantage with the help of the anti-corruption campaign. Xi has been just as resolute as Mao was that the Party have complete authority over the gun. Elevating allies in the PLA, with help of the anti-corruption campaign, to top spots has helped Xi cement his grip on power.

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Wang Qishan is perhaps the most feared name in China today. He is also one of the few people Xi Jinping trusts. As director of the Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection (CCDI), Wang is Xi Jinping’s right hand man. What makes Wang so intimidating is his position as head of the CCDI, which is the most feared and powerful department in the CCP. Additionally, Wang knows how to capitalize on his position. An article by The Economist noted that, “Fear is Wang Qishan’s favoured weapon As leader of the Communist Party’s most sustained and wide-ranging anti-corruption campaign in its history, he often urges his investigators to be ‘frightening.’” 

Like Xi, Wang is also a senior princeling. This has caused increased suspicion that the anti-corruption campaign is really a political tool to oust political rivals. Wang’s loyalty and support of Xi has been important for removing political opponents. Although Xi has said that, “Cases will be investigated completely and no leniency will be meted out no matter who is involved.” So far in the anti-corruption campaign, Xi has taken down five big tigers. All of them are considered political rivals. The removal of these officials has greatly helped Xi further expand his authority. Furthermore, the one faction in the CCP that has not been affected by the anti-corruption campaign is the princeling group that Xi leads. Willy Lam has noted “That Xi and the CCDI are targeting rival factions within the CCP is illustrated by the ‘Code on Disciplinary Punishments.’” 

Doubling down on rival factions enables Xi to further weaken his opponents. There are immense risks associated with the anti-corruption campaign. If Xi does not take down enough big tigers than people will accuse the Party of not trying hard enough to combat corruption. If too many big tigers are arrested though, people might point to it as evidence that everyone is corrupt, further delegitimizing the CCP. Xi walks a fine line in making the anti-corruption campaign successful without further weakening the CCP. The choice to carry out the campaign however, was an easy decision for Xi considering his goals. Framing corruption as a crisis situation, and the cornerstone of his first three years in office, has allowed Xi to remove political opponents while expanding his personal authority.

**Additional Causal Factors**

In analyzing the historical timeline I constructed, two additional causal factors appeared for both Mao and Xi in consolidating power. The first is the creation of organizations. The second is the important role of Mao and of

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125 Ding Lin, “Xi Jinping vows ‘power within cage of regulations’”


127 Lam, “China’s Anti-Graft Campaign in Review” ibid.
Xi’s wives. I first explain the importance of the creation of organizations, and later, the importance of their wives. For Mao, the creation of the Cultural Revolution Group was important because it directed the purges of top Chinese officials such as Head of State Liu Shaoqi and General Secretary Deng Xiaoping. As Jung Chang and Jon Halliday point out, “At the end of May 1966, Mao set up a new office, the Cultural Revolution Small Group, to help run the Purge. Mme Mao headed it for him, with Mao’s former secretary, Chen Boda, its nominal director, and purge director Kang Sheng its ‘adviser.’” The Cultural Revolution Group eventually became more powerful than the Party apparatus itself. Revolutionary committees were established throughout the country after the complete destruction of the Party apparatus. In addition to the Cultural Revolution Group, Kang Sheng was also important. Philip Short explains how the sly former secret police chief became such a valuable tool for Mao writing:

So did Kang Sheng, who became the Chairman’s informant on Deng Xiaoping’s Secretariat. He soon showed that he had not forgotten his old tradecraft as secret police chief in Yan’an by setting up a ‘Special Case Group’ to investigate what he claimed was covert attempt to promote the rehabilitation of Gang Gao. In a chilling foretaste of the tactics Kang would use against Mao’s enemies in the great upheavals that lay ahead, thousands of people were interrogated and a senior vice-premier purged on the sole evidence of an unpublished historical novel.

Kang’s background as head of the secret police was a crucial advantage for Mao. Control of internal security is critical for complete political control. The reinvention of the PLA under Lin Biao was hugely important for Mao as well. As noted previously, Lin increased the power of the PLA within the structure of the CCP. Although it was not the creation of a new organization, the powers it acquired under Lin—with Mao’s approval and encouragement—were new. All these factors were important for Mao in consolidating power.

Xi Jinping has proven to be more skillful than Mao in creating organizations that give him more power. In November of 2013, Xi created two super organizations, the CNSC and CLDCRG, described previously, then placed himself as the chairman of both of them. China scholar David Lampton describes what Xi Jinping’s goals were in establishing the CNSC saying, “In short, Xi is both driving to achieve better policy coordination and greater personal control in the system.” The CNSC is responsible for overseeing all the external and internal security affairs in China. Willy Lam notes the reasons for the establishment of the CNSC saying, “The plenum set up a National Security Committee (NSC) to better coordinate the work of functions that range from police and counterespionage to the media and foreign affairs.” There is some debate about what the CNSC actually does, and is responsible for, but there is little disagreement that it is a very powerful instrument vested in Xi. The other organization, the CLGCDR, greatly diminished the spotlight of Premier Li Keqiang. Just recently, on July 1, 2015, another new national security law came out. Xinhua describes it this way “covers a wide spectrum of topics including defense, finance, science and technology, culture and religion.” But the scope of the law still appears vague to many China watchers. Patrick Boehler remarks, “The law addresses purported security threats in areas as varied as cyberspace, food supply and religion.” Behind all the confusion about the law is the constant maneuvering by Xi to completely consolidate power. There is also a possibility that the new law allows Xi a legal

128 Chang and Halliday, Mao: The Unknown Story, 514.
129 Philip Short, Mao: A Life, 521-522.
134 Xinhua, ibid.
cover for his activities.\textsuperscript{136} Xi, through all of these actions, has proven that establishing new organizations is a vital tool for consolidating power.

Mao and Xi’s wives are the second additional causal factor that was important in their success. Mao began to retreat from the spotlight from 1960-1962 because of the GLF. Writers began to publicly criticize Mao’s policies. Wu Han and Teng To were two writers specifically that lashed out in the cultural sphere. By the end of 1962, it became a growing problem for Mao. In every country, control of the media is considered indispensable for controlling power, and Mao had always used the pen as one of his most powerful weapons. This time, Mao employed the services of his wife Jiang Qing to try and take back control of the propaganda and culture in China. By unleashing Jiang Qing, Mao violated the agreement with the rest of the Party that was put in place when they married which barred Jiang from being active in politics. Jiang served as an important pillar of support Mao needed to purge his rivals. Harry Harding describes her importance this way, “The second element in the nascent Maoist coalition was a group of radical intellectuals who, by mid-1966, would come to serve as the doctrinal arbiters and mass mobilizers of the Cultural Revolution. The key person in assembling these leftist propagandists and writers was Mao’s wife, Jiang Qing.”\textsuperscript{137} Jiang also became a leading member of the Cultural Revolution Group (CRG) that ran the Cultural Revolution. The CRG eventually became more powerful than the Party apparatus itself. Indeed, Jung Chang and Jon Halliday argue that it was Jiang who ran the CRG.\textsuperscript{138} Li Zhisui summarizes Jiang Qing’s importance nicely saying, “But at this turning point in his career, Mao needed Jiang Qing. Even her political ambitions were of use. She was, as she claimed, the most loyal lieutenant he had, because without Mao, Jiang Qing was no one.”\textsuperscript{139} How fitting then, that after Mao died, Jiang went on to say that, “I was Chairman Mao’s dog. Whoever he told me to bite, I bit.”\textsuperscript{140}

Peng Liyuan surpassed her husband Xi Jinping in popularity for most of their marriage. Peng was a famous folk singer and performer for the PLA. The importance of Peng cannot be overstated in Xi’s rise as the leader of China. Because of Peng’s connections in the PLA, she was able to introduce Xi to the Shanghai group—a powerful political faction run by former President Jiang Zemin. Willy Lam reports that, “It was Xi’s wife, Peng, who first got her husband connected with the Shanghai faction.”\textsuperscript{141} Without this connection Xi probably would not have gotten the job of Party secretary of Zhejiang province that proved to be so important. Later on through his job as Party boss of Zhejiang, Xi spent time with Jiang and made a positive impression. Jiang would make sure at the 2007 Party Congress that Xi would be designated as the next leader, after President Hu Jintao finished his term in 2012.\textsuperscript{142} The importance of Peng in Xi’s rise is vital to understanding how Xi went from being what Evan Osnos describes as an “unremarkable provincial administrator”\textsuperscript{143} to being the most powerful leader since Mao. Since Xi has become President, Peng has continued to help out her husband in a way that the previous two first ladies of China never did. Peng has made headlines in China and throughout the world with her fashionable public appearances. Naomi Ng and Jun Mai write, “Peng’s clothes are always the talk of the town when she is seen in public, just as Britain’s Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge.”\textsuperscript{144} This approach by Peng is seen as a way for Xi to project soft power throughout the world. Whether it has worked, or will work is yet to be determined. Jaime Florcruz remarks that, “Chinese analysts think that Peng can similarly help burnish China’s image overseas by projecting a softer touch.”\textsuperscript{145} Either way, Peng continues to play an important role for her husband, which is the first time since Jiang Qing that the wife of China’s leader has attempted to do so.

\textsuperscript{137} Harry Harding, Ibid. 157.
\textsuperscript{138} Chang and Halliday, \textit{Mao: The Unknown Story}, 514.
\textsuperscript{139} Zhisui, \textit{The Private Life of Chairman Mao}, 442.
\textsuperscript{140} Short, \textit{Mao: A Life}, 521.
\textsuperscript{141} Lam, \textit{Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping}, 57.
\textsuperscript{142} Lam, \textit{Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping}, 57-59.
Implications

I finish by examining the possible outcomes in China due to the recent switch back to a strong man rule after decades of a consolidated leadership. Before I begin my conclusion, it should be noted that making predictions about China is not easy, and the views here are my own. The journalist Rob Gifford spoke of how “China messes with my head on a daily basis.”\textsuperscript{146} I believe that is true of anyone who follows China. One day you think China is about to take over the world, and the next day you think it is about to implode. The first possible outcome is that the CCP will collapse. This is a growing view among China scholars today, most notably David Shambaugh.\textsuperscript{147} China’s recent economic slowdown might help accelerate the implosion of the CCP. It is widely believed that the legitimacy of the CCP over the past three decades has rested on the strong economic growth that Deng Xiaoping started. But with that growth slowing, satisfaction with the Party could rapidly disintegrate. Bruce Gilley argues that China will eventually democratize. Furthermore, Gilley believes that democratization in China will be led by the political elite rather than a revolution from below.\textsuperscript{148} A move to democratization might be inevitable in the future, even if it is from below. As Gifford points out, “but I think that once you allow people to choose their pizza toppings, sooner or later they are going to want to choose their political leaders.”\textsuperscript{149} The Chinese people have more choices today than at any point in the past 150 years. Those choices could lead to political changes. The growing gap between rich and poor, increasing job losses from State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), environmental problems and social strains is evidence that frustration with the Party could build to a tipping point where democratization is a possibility in the future. Additionally, Xi’s anti-corruption campaign is not popular among all Party officials. Evan Osnos points out that, “The struggle between an emperor and his bureaucracy follows a classic pattern in Chinese politics, and it rarely ends well for the emperor”.\textsuperscript{150} Xi’s goal is to keep the Party unified. Additionally, the collapse of the Soviet Union still haunts the CCP. Xi Jinping is determined that the CCP leadership understand the lessons from it, and why it failed. Naturally, there are those who point to the Soviet Union in explaining that the collapse of the CCP is likely. The problem with this analogy should be obvious though. The Soviet Union had a political leader that was willing to give up political power. Xi Jinping by contrast, is thus far determined to preserve the CCP, whatever it takes.

Another reason for the possible collapse of the CCP is the absence of an ideology. Under Mao, the CCP rested its legitimacy on Marxism. The death of Mao however, sounded the death of Marxism in China. The results of that left a moral vacuum in China. Over the past decade the CCP has tried to fill the vacuum with Confucianism, but the results have not been great. It is this author’s belief that the Chinese people have found for themselves their own ideology: Christianity. The explosion of Christianity over the past three decades is astonishing. Ironically, the CCP can use this to its advantage. Chinese people just want to be able to worship without governmental interference. A Chinese human rights lawyer, talking about Christians in China with the journalist Evan Osnos said, “They don’t care who is in power; Caesar, Mao Zedong, the Communist Party”…“Whoever is in power is in power. But don’t hinder my belief in Jesus.”\textsuperscript{151} The CCP has been able to stay in power since the death of Mao because it is able to adapt to new situations. This is a situation that the CCP has a chance to adapt to, and help itself stay in power. Part of the reason for the implosion of the CCP however, I believe, is that there is a slight chance Xi Jinping could be assassinated. I don’t intend to sound sensational, but when you make a lot of people mad as Xi has done with his anti-corruption campaign, there is always an outside possibility of this happening. Additionally, there were rumors that Xi was a target of assassination and coup attempts before he took power.

Second, China will continue to muddle along; it will not become super powerful, but will not collapse either. In this scenario China will continue to experience bumps in the economy and in its relationships with foreign countries, but no major changes will occur. China will not challenge the U.S. for global superiority, but relations will remain tense. Among China scholars, Minxin Pei is most closely associated with this stance. In Pei’s book \textit{China’s Trapped Transition}, he notes China’s refusal to install political reforms might lead to prolonged

\textsuperscript{149} Gifford. \textit{China Road}, 18.
\textsuperscript{150} Osnos, “Born Red”.
stagnation. Parts of China today are experiencing slow economic growth, while other areas, specifically the southern coastal cities, have high growth rates. This contrast throughout will likely continue without reforms of China’s SOEs. Finally, Xi Jinping will carry out reforms that enable China to become a superpower. There is a possibility that Xi is consolidating power so that he can carry out reforms in the future. Most likely these will be economic, but social and political reform are also a possibility. It appears that Xi Jinping is planning on possibly holding onto power well past his expected retirement in the year 2023. Willy Lam has written that, “Xi appears to be angling to break the 10-year-tenure rule for the country’s supreme leader, with the aim of serving longer than any Chinese ruler in decades.” There are no indications that Xi is looking for his successor which usually happens after a few years in office. It appears that rather than finding his replacement, Xi is maneuvering people into positions that will help cement his grip on power which will last for as long as he lives. Xi appears more than up to the challenge. One editor of a Chinese paper described Xi this way, “He’s not afraid of Heaven or Earth, and he is, as we say, round on the outside, and square on the inside; he looks flexible, but inside he is very hard.” Indeed, Xi Jinping has a fire inside of him that no Chinese leader has had since Deng Xiaoping. Don’t expect this fire to be extinguished anytime soon. Kevin Rudd, the former prime minister of Australia and China scholar who has met Xi on several occasions notes that Xi is, “not trying to be something that he’s not. He is a born leader.” Rudd adds, “He’s very comfortable with the exercise of power.” Xi’s comfort with power is clearly evident throughout his three years in power thus far. That power will likely stay with Xi for the rest of his life. Recently, China’s media outlets have referred to Xi as China’s ‘core leader.’ This is evidence that Xi has successfully consolidated personal power. Chris Buckley writes, “Officials have suggested that hailing Mr. Xi as a leader of such stature—one in the footsteps of Deng, who ruled China through its transformation after Mao’s death—carries a warning not to question, let alone challenge, his authority as the government navigates turbulent changes.” Furthermore, a leading magazine of the CCP “has called for conforming with the country’s top leader, Xi Jinping.” Going forward, Xi is positioned to establish his power and remain influential well past his expected retirement. Additionally, Xi’s aim is not to be a great leader, but to be the greatest leader of recent Chinese history.

Conclusion

Like Mao before him, Xi has demanded complete loyalty to himself. Both men expect the Party to be subservient to their directives; anything less is unacceptable. Both Mao and Xi view themselves as the perfect leaders for China, and only through their leadership will China return to its rightful place as the greatest nation and civilization. For both Mao and Xi, control of the PLA and leadership qualities proved important for consolidating personal power. The PLA in a way, is a separate institution that has always had a considerable amount of power. Any attempt at consolidating power must be accompanied with a control of the PLA. Leadership qualities, mainly cult of personality, are also critical. When a leader develops a cult of personality, any potential political opponent becomes less likely to challenge the authority of a leader. Developing separate instruments of power to circumvent the Party, and the role their wives played were also important additional causal factors for both Mao and Xi. When feeling constrained by the CCP system, Mao and Xi created alternative power sources for themselves. The roles of Mao and Xi’s wives are often overlooked. Jiang Qing and Peng Liyuan were critical in different ways so that their husbands could be successful. More importantly, a key attribute for both Mao and Xi in consolidating power is the presence of a crisis situation. For Mao that crisis was the Vietnam War. For Xi Jinping it has been corruption.

152 Minxin Pei, China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006).
154 Osnos, Born Red. Ibid.
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Bibliography


Is Diet Selection by Greater Sage-Grouse Influenced by Biomass Availability or Toxins?

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Biological Science

Abstract

Foraging herbivores must meet nutritional requirements by not only finding enough plant biomass to consume, but also finding plants with high protein content and low concentrations of potentially toxic plant secondary metabolites (PSMs). Greater sage-grouse (Centrocercus urophasianus; hereafter, sage-grouse) are sagebrush obligate herbivores that consume relatively high concentrations of PSMs. To meet their nutritional needs and avoid ingesting high amounts of PSMs, sage-grouse may select species of sagebrush for food that have lower concentrations of PSMs than a more abundant species with higher concentration of PSMs. Diet selection by sage-grouse may also be driven by chemical factors at finer scales once a species is selected. For example, different morphotypes of sagebrush (identified by leaf morphology and plant structure) within a patch have different chemical profiles that may influence selection at a patch scale. Our objective was to determine how diet selection is influenced by available biomass and chemical characteristics of morphotypes within a foraging patch, and whether sage-grouse select specific morphotypes of sagebrush to maximize biomass consumed per bite or minimize toxin consumed per bite. For each sagebrush morphotype, we determined density of plants within a patch and available biomass which we calculated as plant volume. We then measured biomass and monoterpene concentrations of the leaves per bite. Our results showed that browsing is not proportional to biomass availability, but that sage-grouse selected sagebrush morphotypes that minimized toxin intake per bite. Our research aims to understand plant-herbivore interactions and how sage-grouse select and use habitats at different spatial scales.

Introduction

Foraging herbivores obtain protein from plants to use for activities necessary for survival like growth and reproduction. The Greater sage-grouse (Centrocercus urophasianus, hereafter sage-grouse) is a specialist avian herbivore that consumes up to 100% sagebrush during the winter months (Patterson, 1952), which produce a wide variety of plant secondary metabolites (PSMs) (Kelsey et al., 1982). Sage-grouse select patches and individual plants within a patch with high protein and low toxin concentrations (Remington and Braun, 1985; Frye et al., 2013). High quality diets may improve reproductive success (Becketton and Middleton, 1983; DeGabriel et al., 2009). Within a landscape, not all plants have the same level of protein because protein content varies between different sagebrush species (Artemisia spp.) and forbs (Barnett and Crawford, 1994; Gregg et al., 2008). Similarly, concentrations of PSMs, including monoterpenes vary among species and among individual plants (Kelsey et al., 1982). Adult sage-grouse consume forbs and insects during nesting, and juveniles consume primarily forbs and insects during their growth period (Gregg et al., 2008). These alternative food sources are high in protein, and sage-grouse select the highest protein foods available in any season (Gregg et al., 2006). Sagebrush habitats have been declining in quality and quantity for several decades, which has coincided with simultaneous declines in sage-grouse (Schoeder et al., 2004; Garton et al., 2011) and sage-grouse rely on the sagebrush habitat for cover.

Plants often have physical and chemical defenses as a mechanism to deter foraging herbivores. Sagebrush produces PSMs, which are defensive chemicals generally toxic to herbivores and therefore influence habitat and diet selection (DeGabriel et al., 2009; Frye et al., 2013; Ulappa et al., 2014). PSMs, such as monoterpenes, can inhibit digestive enzymes, and some compounds can only be excreted by conjugation with protein, which requires animals to consume enough protein both for metabolism and for their own body maintenance (Kohl et al., 2015). Metabolism and excretion of compounds is energetically expensive and may result in altered energy budgets...
Herbivores forage selectively to avoid toxins and to maximize protein intake (DeGabriel et al., 2009; Frye et al., 2013; Ulappa et al., 2014). Herbivores also sometimes select plants that are low in toxins but may not have the highest protein content of available plants (Guglielmo and Karasov, 1996; McArthur et al., 2014; Marsh et al., 2006), which suggests there may be a trade-off for some herbivores where animals must select between high protein or low toxins, as available plants may not have both characteristics. Plant toxicity and protein content influence diet selection, but consumption of plant matter is limited because increasing intake of plant matter may not compensate for low nutrients (Sedinger, 1997), and herbivores may not be able to increase consumption of plants with high toxin concentrations (Wiggins et al., 2003). Some herbivores reduce their meal size or bite intake as a strategy to limit toxin intake (Wiggins et al., 2003; Sorensen et al., 2005a; Sorensen et al., 2005b). Sage-grouse exhibit diet selection at the landscape and patch scale (Frye et al., 2013) and may exhibit selection at the leaf scale to maximize nutrient intake while minimizing PSMs.

This study investigates how sage-grouse forage at the fine scales (within a patch, and at the bite scale) on three different sagebrush morphotypes (A. tridentata wyomingensis, medium A. arbuscula, and small A. arbuscula) to determine if diet selection is influenced by food availability (leaf biomass) or food toxicity. We evaluated if sage-grouse maximize biomass consumption or minimize toxin intake per bite. We hypothesized that sage-grouse select specific sagebrush species or morphotype with the lowest toxin risk.

Methods

Study site

The study site was in Raft River, Idaho, USA (42° 35’ N, 113° 14’ W) in Cassia County. We flushed radio marked sage-grouse during the winter of January 2015. Wyoming big sagebrush (A. tridentata wyomingensis) was the dominant shrub across the landscape, followed by low sagebrush (A. arbuscula), native grasses, and juniper. However, at sites used by sage-grouse, low sagebrush was more abundant than Wyoming big sagebrush. Elevation ranged from 1,380 m to 2,140 m and the average annual precipitation was 33 cm. Temperatures ranged from 4 to 5°C and snow depth was about 5 cm during the time that transects were conducted.

Field methods

Sage-grouse were trapped by Idaho Fish and Game using standard trapping and marking techniques (Giesen et al., 1982; Wakkinen et al., 1992) during spring 2012 and 2013. Birds were flushed using radio-telemetry in January 2015. Foraging patches were identified at flush sites using fresh tracks, pellets, and bite marks on sagebrush plants. Bite marks were also used to identify browsed plants and quantify intensity of use by sage-grouse. Sagebrush morphotypes were defined as structural classes of each species, with small (h < 15 cm), medium (55 > h > 15 cm), and large (h ≥ 56 cm) structural classes (Figure 1). Sagebrush species were identified in the field using morphological characteristics and verified in the lab using monoterpene profiles (Thacker et al., 2012). We conducted line-intercept transects (10 m transects extending in each cardinal direction) to calculate percent cover of each morphotype (Canfield, 1941), and conducted density counts on a 1 m belt transect around the transect lines. Transects originated from the center of the foraging patch. Sage-grouse bite marks were counted on each sagebrush plant within 1 m of transect, and we classified bite marks as fresh (determined by bright green meristematic tissue along the leaf margin) or old (brown or dark green leaf edges). For each plant, we used the height (cm), length (cm) and width (cm) to calculate the volume (cm³) of the plant using the equation for an ellipsoid to best approximate plant volume (Messina et al., 2002). We collected plant samples from three browsed and three non-browsed plants of each morphotype of sagebrush. Browsed plants had at least ten fresh bite marks by sage-grouse and non-browsed plants had no more than one fresh bite mark. The plant samples were kept on ice in coolers during fieldwork and transferred to a -20°C freezer in the laboratory.
Laboratory methods

Because sage-grouse do not eat stems, we removed leaves from woody biomass for chemical analysis. Leaves were removed by dipping samples into liquid nitrogen and using forceps to brush leaves off the stems into a separate container. Samples were ground using a mortar and pestle in liquid nitrogen into a particle size of about 2 mm, and weighed into separate vials for analysis. All samples were stored at -20°C.

We used headspace gas chromatography to detect monoterpenes in leaf samples, using a gas chromatograph (Agilent 6890N) with a headspace auto-sampler (Hewlett Packard HP7694). After grinding, we measured a 100 mg subsample of ground leaf into a 20 ml gas chromatography headspace vial. A cocktail of monoterpene standards was used to generate reference retention times (min) to identify compounds from samples. Not all compounds were identified, and unknown compounds were labeled based on retention times. Peak areas (area under the curve, AUC) and retention times were calculated using HP ChemStation version B.01.00 (Santa Clara, California, USA).

A leaf clipping experiment was performed from three sagebrush morphotypes: *A. t. wyomingensis* (n = 20), medium *A. arbuscula* (n = 20) and small *A. arbuscula* (n = 20). We clipped 10 “bites” from each individual sagebrush morphotype to mimic sage-grouse bite marks, and we measured the weight (g) of the total leaf biomass for the clipped leaves. We determined the average weight (g) per “bite” of each morphotype to compare the bite sizes for the calculation of monoterpenes per bite.

Statistical methods

All statistical analysis used JMP Pro 11.0 (SAS Institute Inc. 2013) and R version 3.2.0 (R Foundation for Statistical Computing 2015). The average volume per plant for each sagebrush morphotype was calculated from the methods of Messina et al., 2002. The leaf biomass (g) of Wyoming big sagebrush, medium low sagebrush, and small low sagebrush morphotypes were compared using ANOVA, and for significantly different ANOVAs we compared all pairs using a Tukey’s HSD test. The total monoterpene concentration (AUC/ 100 µg dry weight, DW) and individual monoterpene concentrations were determined from gas chromatographs. The average monoterpenes per bite were calculated from the total monoterpenes (AUC/g dry mass) times the average clipped bite size (g) for each sagebrush morphotype to determine toxicity per bite.

Results

Sage-grouse selected medium plants of *A. arbuscula* for browsing over small *A. arbuscula* and *A. t. wyomingensis* within a patch (Figure 2; Chi-squared: \( \chi^2 = 285.12, P = < 2.2e-16 \)). The proportion of non-browsed plants was higher than browsed which shows that sage-grouse are selectively foraging within their habitat. Small *A. arbuscula* had less biomass than medium *A. arbuscula* which had less biomass per shrub (cm³) compared to *A. t. wyomingensis* (Figure 3; ANOVA: \( F_{2,430} = 572.8, P < 0.0001 \)).
Figure 2. Proportion of *A. t. wyomingensis* shrubs (5% of available) and *A. arbuscula* shrubs (15-33% of available) within a used patch that were browsed. (Chi-squared = 285.12, df = 2, p-value < 2.2e-16).

Figure 3. Average shrub volume of each sagebrush morphotype within used patches ($F_{2,4330}=572.8$, $p < 0.0001$, different letters = significant difference)

For the clipping experiment of leaf biomass, *A. arbuscula* has less leaf biomass per bite (g) compared to *A. t. wyomingensis* (Figure 4; ANOVA: $F_{2,4330} = 572.8$, $P < 0.0001$). Leaf biomass for small and medium *A. arbuscula* did not differ from one another ($P = 0.9077$). The toxicity per bite for sagebrush species was significantly different for *A. arbuscula* and *A. t. wyomingensis* (Figure 5; ANOVA: $F_{2,4330} = 572.8$, $P < 0.0001$) but small and medium *A. arbuscula* did not differ from one another ($P = 1.0$).
Discussion

Our results suggest that diet selection of *A. arbuscula* is driven by toxins at the plant and leaf scale. Herbivores typically select plants that are high in protein (Gregg et al., 2008; Frye et al., 2013; Ulappa et al., 2014). In contrast, protein content was higher in *A. t. wyomingensis* than in *A. arbuscula* at our study site (results not shown). However, in another study with sage-grouse we compared the nutritional and chemical quality at the bite scale and found that diet selection was still driven by plant toxins (unpublished data). Our results suggest that sage-grouse foraged on plants that were smaller in shrub volume and leaf biomass because those plants had lower toxin concentrations. When examining the different sagebrush morphotypes in the field, *A. t. wyomingensis* had fewer bites per plant, but small and medium *A. arbuscula* had more bites per plant. *A. t. wyomingensis* has large shrub volume and leaf biomass per bite, but is the most toxic morphotype (highest concentration of monoterpenes) and fewer bites of this plant could be a strategy to limit toxin intake. Increased toxin consumption is energetically costly to process and to metabolize (Sorensen et al., 2005b; Sorensen et al., 2005c) and reducing the bite size is a strategy herbivores may employ to reduce toxicity (Torregrossa and Dearing, 2012).

Diet selection in winter increases our ecological understanding of how sage-grouse use their habitat at different spatial scales (patch, plant, and bite) and browsing may influence sagebrush morphotypes across a
landscape. Larger shrub volume did not influence browsing at the species level because sage-grouse selected *A. arbuscula* which has relatively low biomass. However, shrub volume for a particular sagebrush morphotype influenced foraging where sage-grouse selected medium over small *A. arbuscula*. Plant chemistry affects habitat selection at the patch and landscape scale (Wiggins et al., 2006; Frye et al., 2013), but there are few studies documenting diet selection at smaller spatial scales. Diet selection at the bite scale adds further insight about selective foraging which is important for herbivore foraging dynamics and in an avian specialist, the sage-grouse. The fine scale level of diet selection is unknown and bite scale selection may translate to diet selection at the landscape scale. Understanding multi-scale habitat selection can give insights how plant toxicity drives diet selection for sage-grouse. At the species level, sage-grouse foraged on sagebrush plants to minimize toxin intake by consuming *A. arbuscula* rather than *A. t. wyomingensis*, but at the morphotype level, sage-grouse selected *A. arbuscula* plants based on the shrub volume to increase biomass consumption. In addition, understanding the age of sagebrush plants along with morphotypes should be considered in future studies to know if the toxicity level increases with age.

In a changing climate, understanding sagebrush morphotypes at multiple spatial scales can increase our knowledge to protect habitats from destruction. By prioritizing high quality resources and habitats, managers may be able to decrease population declines for sensitive species such as sage-grouse, because declines in sage-grouse populations are associated with habitat fragmentation and degradation (Connelly et al., 2000; Schroeder et al., 2004; Aldridge et al., 2008). Biomass availability and toxicity of sagebrush species and morphotypes should be taken into consideration in habitat prioritization for conservation of sage-grouse.

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**References**


Poetic Myths: American Nationalism and the War of 1812

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Dr. David Walker and Dr. Raymond Krohn: Mentors

History

Abstract

“The Star Spangled Banner” is one of the best known patriotic songs in the United States; however, most people do not know it originated as a poem during a much understudied, but highly influential time. “The Star Spangled Banner” is one of several poems that helped build unity in America during and after the War of 1812. This project analyzes early 19th century American poetry and the influence it had on building foundational ideologies of American nationalism. It focuses on the role poetry played in creating nationalistic myths by using primary texts to explore and analyze the different themes, words, and styles used to convey poetry to the populace between 1812 and 1829. It also shows ideas, beliefs, and social and political ideologies prevalent among those with the influence to get their voices heard. The ideas that are most prevalent in the American nationalistic myth are those of valor, gallantry, pride, perseverance, godly endeavor, liberty, duty, roughness, and steadfastness. This study helps provide a general understanding of how national unity is built in fledgling countries.

Introduction

“Oh say can you see by the dawn’s early light, what so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming? Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight, O’er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming!” There are very few people in the United States today that would not recognize these lines as the beginning of the country’s national anthem. Yet, based on a recent poll asking which war was associated with this song, only 30% answered correctly. The majority of those polled believe the anthem originated in the Revolutionary War; a few even answered that they believe it emerged during the Civil War. The correct answer, however, is the War of 1812.1

On September 13, 1814, Francis Scott Key penned “The Star Spangled Banner” as he was forced to watch the bombing of Fort McHenry from a British frigate, which he had boarded in an attempt to negotiate a prisoner exchange. All night Key watched as the fort was brutally assaulted. When the dawn rose and the carnage could finally be seen, Key was astonished to find that the flag still waved. Overcome by emotion, he quickly wrote down his feelings of pride, patriotism, and awe in the poem “The Bombardment of Fort McHenry.” The poem quickly became popular, and, as many poems were during the time, it was set to a familiar tune, “To Anacreon in Heaven,” and renamed, “The Star Spangled Banner.” It wasn’t until 1931, one hundred and seventeen years later, that it would be officially declared the national anthem.

“The Star Spangled Banner” ranks the United States among many other nations whose anthems took shape during a time of war. The anthems of France, Great Britain, Belgium, Cuba, Greece, and Venezuela, just to name a few, were also written in response to wartime events such as a coming battle, a current battle, or in the aftermath of a battle.2 The purpose of writing and consequently spreading these anthems was to inspire patriotism in an effort to

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1 This poll was conducted anonymously online at http://www.misterpoll.com/polls/603773. The poll was initiated on June 3, 2015, and concluded on June 11, 2015. At that time 78 voters had responded to the question: What war is associated with the American National Anthem (Star Spangled Banner)? Of those 78 people: 42 (53%) said Revolutionary War, 24 (30%) said War of 1812, 11 (14%) said Civil War, and 1 (1%) said World War I.

2 The information regarding these anthems was gleaned from an essay written by Mathew Perry entitled, “National Anthems: A Call to Arms” found at: http://users.dickinson.edu/~history/product/perry/national_anthem.html and also from the website of the National Anthems of the World Organization found at: http://www.national-anthems.org/history.php. Please see these sites for more information on these and other national anthems.
unify the country’s populace. This unity is what scholars refer to as nationalism. The term “nationalism,” however, can be ambiguous and deceiving.

In 1828, Noah Webster compiled the first dictionary of American English. The term nationalism does not appear as an entry in that volume. A few of Webster’s other definitions shed light on the origins of the word. For instance, his definition of “nation” reads: “a body of people inhabiting the same country, or united under the same sovereign or government.” He defined the word “national” as: “public; general; common to a nation.” This means that, according to Webster, the root of the term “nationalism” should encompass the entirety of anyone governed by the United States. By these definitions, one could assume anything deemed “national” by nature would need to be a general understanding and common to each member of the nation. Therefore, any ideas, beliefs, language, religion, and politics would need to be the common understanding and practice of the governed body. There is a piece missing though. Webster posited that a nation encompasses “a body of people inhabiting the same country,” but he did not indicate that it is the entire body of people.

The common term for this body of people governed by a central government is “citizen.” Webster defined that word as: “an inhabitant who enjoys the freedoms and privileges of the city [or country] in which he resides.” Although this may sound fairly straightforward, Webster included an accompanying definition. “In the United States, [a citizen is] a person, native or naturalized, who has the privilege of exercising the elective franchise, or the qualifications which enable him to vote for rulers, and to purchase and hold real estate.” Webster’s definitions, readily suggest that only free white men made up the citizenry of the U.S., because only they could afford to own land and had the power to vote. This citizenry determined what would be considered “national.” Only these citizens were deemed relevant to the government and important enough to inspire thought and action in the country. In contrast, according to the definition, women and black men, whether free or slave, could not be considered citizens because they could not vote. Furthermore, only a white, male immigrant who had been naturalized and prospered enough to own land could be considered a citizen. By Webster’s definitions, only a limited number of the population residing in the United States in 1828 were actually citizens who determined what the earliest face of nationalism would look like.

When nationalism is considered in this vein of reasoning, it raises the question of whether nationalism is ever truly real. The fact is, no nation is ever going to have 100 percent popular support. It is very rare that a group of people will ever agree unanimously upon what is best for a nation, because its ideas, beliefs, and social and political objectives will never be totally unified. Anthony D. Smith, a historical sociologist, in his attempt to define and explain the theoretical concept of nationalism, claims that no matter the definition one chooses to incorporate, the underlying theme common to all is that the “nation is at the centre (sic) of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being.” Due to this ambiguity and lack of cohesiveness, nationalism, as a whole, is more myth than reality.

Hugh Seton-Watson, a historian and political scientist, suggests that “no scientific definition of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.” History textbooks teach that countries and nations are built on certain ideas and principles, and anyone who does not hold true to those ideas and principles is not exhibiting nationalism. There are some historians and social scientists that will say that when nationalism breaks down, so does the country. While this may be true in some instances, it is definitely not the norm. Because nationalism is based on abstract ideas that originate with only a small percentage of the populace, the idea that someone not agreeing with those ideas will destroy a nation is absurd. There may be contention among the populace on differing opinions in regards to the ideals nationalism is based on. There may even be uprisings and rebellions of people who do not agree with those ideas. The fact that ideas of nationalism are created by people who are both powerful and influential makes them stronger than most rebellions and uprisings. This is why, even though nationalism cannot be defined, it still exists. It just exists as a myth rather than a concrete ideology.

The notion of nationalism as a myth is more easily identifiable. As with most myths, the ideas of nationalism have a basis in truth, but are greatly exaggerated or overplayed to incite a particular action from a group. Just as origin myths from various cultures around the world teach of the sacrifice, love, and power of those who created life, so too does the myth of American nationalism. Our myth lies in the history of our county and on the

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3 The term nationalism does not appear until the fourth edition of the American Dictionary of English printed in 1842.
4 Webster, American Dictionary, Vol. 2.
5 Webster, American Dictionary, Vol 1.
6 Ibid.
8 Seton-Watson, Nations and States, 5.
shouders of our “founding fathers.” American nationalism, even from the earliest of times, was based on the actions and characteristics of those who led the people through the Revolutionary War and created the United States. However, these characteristics are based on idolized conceptions of who those men were and what they did. Furthermore, not everyone viewed these “heroes” in the same light or agreed with their actions. But that does not matter in the realm of nationalism. The ideas, beliefs, and the social and political objectives of a nation, need only be of a majority opinion of those in power, rather than a unanimous opinion of the entire populace, to become a basis for growth and unification. It is actually the concept of patriotism that allows nationalism to flourish within a county.

“Patriotism,” as defined by Webster, construes a “love of one's country; the passion which aims to serve one's country, either in defending it from invasion, or protecting its rights and maintaining its laws and institutions in vigor and purity. Patriotism is the characteristic of a good citizen, the noblest passion that animates a man in the character of a citizen.” According to this 1828 definition, if a man is patriotic, he loves his country and will uphold the ideas on which it is founded. Although many people may confuse nationalism and patriotism, patriotism is simply a way for the populace to support the ideas of nationalism their leaders have established.

Due to the ambiguity surrounding definitions of nationalism as a whole, this study is not an attempt to solidify a categorization of nationalism. Rather, this study is an attempt to show one aspect of how the myth of nationalism is historically built. Most historians have focused on the mediums of word of mouth, newspapers, and political propaganda when studying the spread of American nationalism in the early 19th century. They have devoted little to no attention to the role of poetry in the first era of American nationalism. This project, then, will fill this niche and produce data that, when combined with evidence from other historians, may help answer the question of what traits and doctrine unified our country in the past and how that task was accomplished.

In 1825, William Cullen Bryant claimed that poetry was a “suggestive art” that had the power to influence three areas of human thought: the imagination, the passions, and the reason. He challenged the people to “consider the influence of poetry on the welfare and happiness of our race...as it addresses itself to the imagination, to the passions, and to the intelligence.” Similarly, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote in 1832 that, “the true glory of a nation consists [of]...the extent of its mental power, -the majesty of its intellect, -the height and depth and purity of its moral nature.” During the time of these two great authors, there was a literary revolution that called for the production of a national literature—an American literature—rather than continuing to follow in the footsteps of Britain’s great authors. However, there was little support for this shift, both from the populace and the government. As such, it fell to the authors themselves to try to build a niche for themselves in American culture. They focused their works on things the general populace valued. Poets wrote about the world around them to project the majesty of the American nation. They wrote about patriotism to project a sense of unity and loyalty among the citizens. They wrote about specific events both in the present and from a historical perspective to showcase important events that had brought America to its current glory. In short, these poets wrote in an attempt to create an American literature by building an audience through American nationalism.

Unsurprisingly, the majority of poems written during the War of 1812 revolved around the various battles fought or on the war itself. There were a few written about icons who died, monuments to the past, and even some based on nature. While not all of the poetry was the same, and not all of the poems produced during the War of 1812 were written with an idea of building a national unity, the majority contained a common thread in the virtues, characteristics, ideals, and symbols they presented. The earliest form of American nationalism was born from these threads.

Using the time period from 1812 to 1828, which encompasses the years of the War of 1812 and the period of national unification that immediately followed it, this study will show how poetry influenced certain areas of nationalism. Each of the sections is dedicated to a different theme found within the verses of the poems. Not only does each section show the ideas popular among those who had the opportunity to publish their poems, but how those poems relate to the ideas of nationalism instituted by the citizens of the United States at the time. It is as

9 Webster, American Dictionary, Vol 2.
10 Link, American Nationalism and the Defense of Poetry, 49.
11 Ibid., 50.
12 Ibid., 51.
important to keep in mind the previously identified definition of citizen as it is important to realize the scope of the poetry being presented here.13

Historiography

The topic of nationalism, has greatly interested historians for many decades. Past studies in nationalism, mostly focused on European, Asian, Middle Eastern, and African countries, but had not ventured into the realm of American nationalism. Recently, Jasper M. Trautsch, a nationalism scholar at the German Historical Institute in Paris, France, published an article answering the question of why so few scholars have seemingly ignored nationalism in the United States. “Nationalism,” he explains, “implied a doctrine or a specific form of consciousness conveying superiority or prestige and had often engendered exclusion, wars, displacements, and genocide, which, as such, had never come to pass in America.”14 He furthers his claim that it has only been since the September 11, 2001 attacks that American nationalism become a topic of serious consideration for historians, due to the intense display of it during this time of national tragedy.15 Nationalism scholars finally conceded that American’s did in fact have a sense of nationalism, though it was very different from their previous studies in other countries.

American nationalism is different in that there were not multiple centuries worth of antagonistic ideas threatening it, as can be seen throughout all the other nations of the world. As the study of American nationalism has grown in popularity, many debates have gained attention within the historical community. The biggest of these has concerned the precise formation of American nationalism. In his article, Trautsch considers when nationalism emerged for the first time in American history. Ultimately, he concludes that it was the “period between the American Revolution and the Civil War that an American nationality emerged,” and that it “continues to be an ongoing process.”16 His findings, however, are by no means new to authors who have studied it for longer than it has been popular.

Most historians who study the War of 1812 and the Era of Good Feelings concur that this period, as Donald Hickey proclaims, “promoted national self-confidence and encouraged the heady expansionism that lay at the heart of American foreign policy for the rest of the century…The war gave the fledgling republic a host of sayings, symbols, and songs that helped Americans define who they were and where the young republic was headed.”17 Ernest Gellner counters this definition of emerging nationalism. “Nationalism,” he asserts, “is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist.”18 Despite semantics, both claim nationalism first occurred in America during the War of 1812 and the years immediately following it. The fledgling country that had been torn apart by party politics since the ratification of the U.S. Constitution was finally drawn

13 This scope becomes very apparent when one considers that it was white, male authors who wrote the published poetry of the time period. Every effort was made to locate poetry written by women, black men, whether free or slave, and immigrants. After searching through several volumes of poetry anthologies, literature anthologies, archival sources, and newspapers, there were simply no poems to be found that were written and published by women, black men, or immigrants during this time period. It is possible, however, that they were submitting their work as anonymous authors, as a great many poems discovered did not have authors listed.
15 Ibid., 2. For further discussion on the growth of nationalism post-September 11, 2001, see Bratta, Flag Display Post 9/11: A Discourse on American Nationalism.
17 Hickey, The War of 1812, 3. For more information on the emergence of nationalism during the War of 1812 see also, Eustace, 1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism; Pessen, American Nationalism and American Historians; Hicks, Mowry, and Burke, A History of American Democracy; and Hockett, Political and social growth of the American People, 1492-1865.
together in a fight for economic survival. Benedict Anderson, the author of *Imagined Communities*, embraces the concept of nationalism as myth and is quick to point out that, “it is doubtful whether either social change or transformed consciousness, in themselves, do much to explain the attachment that peoples feel for the inventions of their [nation] or…why people are ready to die for these [nations].” 19 Although the general population may come together for a common purpose, it is the concept of patriotism that really cements nationalism within nation-states.

During the War of 1812, patriotism, founded in the seemingly impossible naval victories, unified the country. The war with Great Britain, which had the world’s most powerful and prominent Navy, brought a lot of internal criticism of the U.S. government. When the American Navy achieved victories in the Great Lakes and Atlantic campaigns, both political parties rejoiced and celebrations were heard throughout the countryside. In these victories, the populace found a common ground. 20 “What the celebration of naval victory shows,” states political historian, Jennifer Clark, “is that the War of 1812 played a much larger role as a catalyst for nationalism than implied by [all of the other political movements of the time combined].” 21 Despite the reasons behind the war, the American public believed it necessary to support the men who honored the call to arms. No longer were they men from individual states fighting in “Mr. Madison’s War.” They were American sailors and soldiers fighting an American war, and they needed to be supported by their fellow Americans. In no time, the individual states ceased to exist and America the nation-state emerged with a sense of nationalism.

Although there is plenty of evidence to support the claim that the events during and after the War of 1812 sparked a sense of nationalism, exactly when nationalistic sentiment spread to an expanding America remains problematic. One of the first and most basic ways was through public political festivities and patriotic celebrations. David Waldstreicher, Simon Newman, and Christopher Looby each discuss this concept from different angles. 22 Newman shows how patriotic and political celebrations, like electoral candidate speeches, the Fourth of July, and George Washington’s birthday, brought urban communities together for parties and parades. From the time of the Revolution, these festivities reminded the populace of the sacrifices made in the cause of freedom. They featured guest speakers that would entreat the gathering with political ideas of unity, oneness, patriotism, and American exceptionalism. Each occasion was another chance for leaders to build a sense of nationalism. The problem was that most of these commemorative events did not reach the large number of rural communities or individual farmers who found few reasons to venture into larger metropolitan areas.

These political speeches became a highly useful way of circulating ideas among the people who were in a position to affect change, despite their inability to expand into many of the rural communities. The leading political party, and preferred guest speakers, at the end of the War of 1812, was the Democratic-Republicans. 23 They posted numerous propaganda posters and pamphlets declaring their platform and encouraging the people to stand together in unity. 24 One of their greatest weapons was President Washington’s Farewell Address, though he had officially backed the Federalists. His legendary treatise was reprinted in newspapers and political pamphlets for years after his resignation and death. In his speech, Washington urges the people to embrace one another as a nation and to not give in to the differences that would naturally separate them. 25

It was not just Washington’s great address that was being printed in the papers. Waldstreicher makes the claim that it is was the newspapers spreading the news of these celebrations that really helped to spread nationalism. “For answers,” he asserts, “to the great questions left by the American Revolution – who the people were, what their character was, what they believed – people looked to the festivals and the printed commentary that sought to persuade everyone how to act.” 26 Although Waldstreicher refers more to the Revolutionary time period, the concept pertains to other time periods as well. After the War of 1812, the people turned to the newspapers to show them how to proceed. The nation was still new and no one understood just how to progress out of state loyalties to that of a

19 Anderson, 141. See also, Citrin et al., *Is American Nationalism Changing? Implications for Foreign Policy*.
21 Ibid, 74.
22 Burgett, *American Nationalism - R.I.P*
25 Furstenburg, *In the Name of the Father*, 41-43.

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national loyalty. Newspapers, which were generally supportive of a particular political party, used their articles to form a unique American image and character. However, newspaper reports about the War of 1812 itself really brought American nationalism to the forefront of these stories and propelled the political ideals into the hearts of the populace.

Although the celebrations and newspapers played an important role in the spreading of national ideas, Looby argues it was a literary and philosophical language that truly solidified a sense of nationalism in American culture. Drawing on the works of Benjamin Franklin, Charles Brockden Brown, and Henry Hugh Brackenridge, Looby shows how the ideas presented in these post-revolutionary texts not only impacted their readers, but also how philosophers and theologians in later years interpreted those ideas and then expounded on them. These expanded ideas were disseminated during the post-War of 1812 years via word of mouth, political speeches, or newspapers.

Some critics are quick to point out that this sense of nationalism, born from the War of 1812, centered only on the white male populace, as only they held any power within the government. Recently conducted research focuses on racism within American nationalism, and there has always been a level of division among the people based on race, ethnicity, religion, and culture. Due to the complexity of sorting the size and influence each of these factors might contribute to understanding the whole scope of the issue, this project will center on general perceptions of nationalism regardless of the religious, racial, or ethnic identity of the contributor. Focus will, instead, be on the common virtues, ideals, characteristics, and symbols found within the poems themselves.

**Common Virtues in American Nationalistic Poetry**

During a time of war and strife, one may assume that virtues attributed to the belligerents would be positive with regards to one’s own country and negative towards the enemy. This was not the case in the majority of the poems analyzed from the War of 1812. These poems tell a story about a particular time and place, and usually both opposing sides of the conflict appear in a positive light. This could have been because of a lingering sense of connection to Great Britain, among American authors, or simply an attempt to show the strength of the enemy so that a victory would be more impressive and a defeat more palatable. Since Great Britain had one of the most powerful naval and land forces in the world, poets chose to use the same virtues found among the British forces to describe their own. These virtues developed into the cornerstones of American nationalism. Supporting the war effort meant a man possessed these virtues, whereas not supporting the war effort meant he lacked those same virtues. When a virtue was exhibited as positive, whether British or American, it became desirable to not only possess the virtue but to identify with others who possessed it as well. This desire to identify and unite marked the beginning of the myth of American nationalism.

These virtues are a nationalistic myth because they are undefinable and unmeasurable. One person’s idea of honor or cunning may differ from another’s. There is no way to measure how brave someone is or is not. This is what made these virtues desirable. All one had to do to possess them was to claim them and associate with other people who claimed them. Most of these virtues had long since been associated with great leaders and movements throughout world history. Among the most popular virtues in the poetry from the War of 1812 are valor, gallantry, pride, and perseverance.

**Valor**

Valor, courage, bravery, and daring are often presented as synonyms in the thesaurus. All of these words are used repeatedly throughout the poems written during the War of 1812. The poets show these virtues mostly through the eagerness and actions of the common soldiers and seamen. “Come, Ye Lads, Who Wish to Shine,” an anonymous poem written in 1812 near the beginning of the war, choruses: “Beat the drum, the trumpet sound/ Manly and united,/ Danger face, maintain your ground,/ And see your country righted.” This poem was to be sung

28 For examples of recently conducted research that contributed to this essay see: Madriaga, Why American nationalism should never be considered postnationalist; Gerstle, Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism; Cheng, American Historical Writers and the Loyalists, 1788-1856: Dissent, Consensus, and American Nationality; and Johnson and Frombgen, Racial Contestation and the Emergence of Populist Nationalism in the United States.
to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*. As such, it was a fairly common tune and included in one of the first anthologies following the War of 1812. This poem is only one among many that implied a man with courage and bravery would answer the call to arms and join one of the state militias. This was especially important during the War of 1812, as the regular army only had 11,744 officers and enlisted men. The fighting force behind the War of 1812 relied on militia volunteers. Inspiring men to unite and fight was crucial. However, it was not easy as the British had superior numbers and veteran soldiers in almost every battle.

Building on the ideas of courage, bravery, valor, and daring was important to the efforts of the War of 1812. The key lay in using these virtues to connect ordinary men with enough national identity to not only unite them together as a fighting force, but to keep them fighting even when the opposing forces seemed overwhelming and impossible to beat. Another common theme among the poems analyzed is that of overcoming horrible odds. One such poem is “The Battle of Stonington on the Seaboard of Connecticut,” written by Philip Freneau in 1814. During this battle, the HMS *Ramillies*, *Pactolus*, and *Despatch* bombarded the small town of Stonington, Connecticut. The three ships had a total of 113 canons against the two possessed by the people of Stonington. For four days, the British assaulted the town with a nearly nonstop barrage of gunfire, while the townsfolk fired their two canons as often as they could. At the end of four days, the British ships finally gave up and sailed away after unsuccessfully displacing the town folks and taking their supplies. Freneau writes: “The shells were thrown, the rockets flew,/ But not a shell, of all they threw,/ Though every house was full in view,/ Could burn a house at Stonington.” He expatiates on the battle showing how the people used their two canons to annihilate the *Pactolus* and *Despatch* so much that the *Ramillies* gave up the fight for fear it would suffer the same fate. For weeks, Stonington was in the news both locally and nationally. Americans found the story exciting and bolstering, but still only a story in a newspaper. Through his poem, Freneau gave the battle life in the eyes of readers who lived nowhere near the area. This poem allowed people to experience the battle for themselves, and feel the same sense of courage, bravery, valor, and daring the people of Stonington did as they faced the British. Though it cannot be seen or measured, Freneau’s poem helped to unite people in a way that simply stating the facts of battle was never able to.

**Gallantry**

Gallantry is similar to valor and courage, but is usually associated with something more. Gallantry is not only defined as a “spirited and conspicuous bravery” but also as “an act of marked courtesy.” To be gallant in war was not only to fight bravely, but to do so in a manner that showed respect and dignity towards the enemy. In “Firstfruits in 1812,” Pierpont describes the battle between the HMS *Guerriere* and the USS *Constitution*. After the British surrendered the battle, the American captain, Isaac Hull, could have had the British prisoners killed, beaten, set out to sea in long boats to die a slow death from dehydration, or any other number of atrocities. However, he chose to be gallant instead. When the British captain offered up his sword to Hull as a declaration of defeat, he refused it. Pierpont states: “Baces, injures, o’er our side/ Slowly bears his sword of pride:/ Holds it out, as Hull stands there in his renown:/ ’No, no!’ says th’ American,/ ‘Never, from so brave a man,/ But I see you’re wounded, let me help you down.’” Pierpont does not end his show of gallantry with just the captain, but extends it to the whole crew as well. He writes, “All that night we work in vain/ Keeping her upon the main,/ But we’d hulled her far too often, and at last/ In a blaze of fire there/ Dies the pretty Guerriere.” The men of the *Constitution* could have easily destroyed and sank the *Guerriere*, but instead they chose to try their hardest to save the enemy ship.

“Firstfruits of 1812” does not just tell a story of brave Americans who gained victory over a better equipped enemy. Instead, Pierpont sets out to show that Americans need not be monsters in war, but must instead show gallantry. During a time when the British forced American sailors into service, and often treated them

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31 For more examples see also from Stevenson’s *Poems of American History, Reparation or War* (286), *Terrapin War* (286), and *The United States and Macedonia* (293). Examples of valor also appear throughout many other poems of the time, however, these poems have valor as one of the main topics.
34 Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, “gallantry”.
36 Ibid., lines 61-65.
inhumanely if they defied their captivity, the desire to be cruel and vengeful towards the enemy ran high. Pierpont, however, understood that uniting a nation on the precipice of vengeance and retaliation would not carry the nation forward into the future. Only under positive virtues that would garner compassion and understanding, could the people be united and compelled to foster the same attitude towards one another. After all, if one could find common ground and be courteous to one’s enemy in war, it was expected that they could do the same for their neighbors.

Pride

Pride can be a double edged sword with both positive and negative connotations. When positive, it is a “feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one’s own achievements, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired.” In its negative form, pride often leads to over confidence and ego and usually ends in a downfall of some sort. Poets from the War of 1812 display both types of pride in their poetry. Perhaps not surprisingly, the negative connotation was not applied to the American forces, but only to the British. Pride, at its worst, was blamed for the downfall of the British troops in the battles that they lost.

“The Constitution and the Guerriere” illustrates how pride emerged as Great Britain’s downfall. After a three-week chase, the HMS Guerriere, one of the most active and prestigious ships of the British Royal Navy, and the USS Constitution finally came into contact on August 19, 1812. The British captain, James Richard Dacres believed the Constitution and her American naval men would easily be defeated due to their vast inferiority. In the poem, Dacres declared, “Make that Yankee ship your prize,/ You can in thirty minutes, neat and handy, oh!/ Or, twenty-five I’m sure,/ You’ll do it in a score,/ I will give you a double share of good brandy, oh!” Dacres was full of pride, and for good reason, considering the power of the Royal Navy. The fight commenced and the Constitution caused much more damage to the Guerriere than they caused the American ship. In the poem, Dacres showed his error in overestimating his own forces while underestimating the force of his enemy when he professed, “Lord, I didn’t think those Yankees were so handy!” After a second barrage of cannon fire, Dacres surrendered. “The Constitution and the Guerriere” was written in the aftermath, amid the rejoicing of the populace. The victory of the Constitution and destruction of the Guerriere increased morale and unity among not only the American forces, but the general population as well. Not only did this poem bring the story of the battle to light in a fun and humorous manner, it also showed how pride would be the downfall of the British. This poem, and others like it, were written to build confidence and unity of purpose among the people. With the political parties and people strongly divided on the prudence and wisdom of the war, the author of this poem used the unexpected and surprising victory to begin bridging the division by showing how the pride and arrogance of the British led to their defeat because they underestimated the cunning and determination of the Americans.

In contrast, poets tended to give pride a positive connotation when it was applied to the American forces. One of the most compelling poems that appealed to the pride of the outclassed American forces is “Farewell, Peace.” This poem was written by an anonymous author at the beginning of the War of 1812 to defend the declaration of war and inspire the people to have pride in themselves, their fledgling country, and their fighting forces. Building on the past was a common tactic among authors, politicians, and poets during this time and “Farewell, Peace” is no different. The author refers back to the Revolutionary war and patriot soldiers who had already won freedom from the British once stating, “Sons of Freedom! Brave descendants/ From a race of heroes tried./ To preserve our independence/ Let all Europe be defied./ Let not all the world, united./ Rob us of one sacred right:/ Every patriot heart’s delighted/ In his country’s cause to fight./ Come then, war! With hearts elated/ To thy standard we will fly:/ Every bosom animated/ Either to live free or die.” The author appeals to the citizens of the American nation to exhibit the same qualities as the patriots of the Revolution, and to fight the British in this new battle for basic rights. Using the pride that most citizens still felt for the patriots who freed America from British rule, this tactic was meant to unite the people under a common past. By reminding the citizens of the same fight that had been fought on the very same soil a short thirty-five years before by the fathers and grandfathers of the current

37 Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, “pride”.
39 Ibid., line 39.
40 Other poems from Stevenson’s Poems of American History that show a similar underestimation of the American forces and British pride include On the Capture of the Guerriere (290), The Wasp’s Frolic (293), The United States and Macedonia (294), and The General Armstrong (296).
generation, was a strategic effort in the face of building of national unity that put the reader in the position to either be proud of their heritage and support the war or to disrespect their own family name by refusing to fight.

Perseverance

Despite the growing sense of nationalism, as the War of 1812 dragged on, with neither country remotely close to claiming victory and devastating defeats for both sides, it became necessary to once again boost morale in order to maintain a semblance of unity. A new trend formed within the poetry of the era—perseverance. One of William Cullen Bryant’s earliest poems, “After a Tempest,” does not deal directly with battles and war. Bryant was a poet who often embraced nature, and the message of perseverance in his work is strong. He begins his poem writing about a horrible storm that he thought would never end, but one day it broke and the sun began to shine once more. He then talked about how new, beautiful, and fresh the world looked after the storm had passed. Near the end of the poem he switched topics slightly and addressed the ravages of the war. He stated: “I looked, and thought the quiet scene/ An emblem of the peace that yet shall be,/ When o’er earth’s continents, and isles between,/ The noise of war shall cease from sea to sea,/ And married nations dwell in harmony.” He then examines the damage the war has done to the earth, and compares it to the damage from the fierce tempest at the beginning of the poem. He ends by stating, “Like the glorious light of summer, cast/ O’er the wide landscape from the embracing sky./ On all the peaceful world the smile of heaven shall lie.”

“The Battle of Bridgewater” provides another example of poetic perseverance. In July of 1814, the British and American forces fought, once again, for the right to control the Fort at Niagara Falls. The battle was one of the bloodiest battles of the War of 1812 as each side knew the fort was a strategic location for both the land and water forces. Although the Americans withdrew, the devastation endured by both sides, left the claim for victory indecisive. Neither side could boast that it had won, as both forces were decimated and nearly destroyed. Regardless of the outcome, the poet of “The Battle of Bridgewater” used his influence to spread the idea of persevering through the trial of war. The author wrote: “Haste, haste thee, Scott, to meet the foe,/ And let the scornful Briton know,/ Well strung the arm and firm the blow/ Of him who strikes for liberty/…/Charge, Miller, charge the foe once more,/ And louder than Niagara’s roar/ Along the line is heard encore,/ On, on to death or victory.”

After the news came that the American forces retreated from the battle, there was disharmony among the citizens as to whether the battle should have been fought in the first place. “The Battle of Bridgewater” showed the people that if the soldiers who were fighting and dying were capable of persevering to the very end and fighting a battle they could not win, then citizens should do the same. These lines urge the people to stay united and persevere through the trials of the war—even if they did not see a way to win, staying united together in a common cause was more important.

Common Ideals in American Nationalistic Poetry

When attempting to build nationalism among a divided nation it is important to unite the people behind common ideals. During the War of 1812, there was a great deal of anger among the people due to the trade restrictions being forced on them by both the British and the French. American ships were constantly coming up against blockades and American sailors were being pressed into service on British ships. Though there are differing theories on the reasons behind James Madison and Congress declaring war on Great Britain, the main reason that they gave was to stop the impressment of American sailors and to ensure the right to free trade with whomever the United States chose to trade with. It was from this premise that the War of 1812 poets wrote about the ideals of liberty, duty, and Godly endeavor.

Liberty

In today’s world, it is common to see liberty and freedom used synonymously. However, similar though they may be, they are not the same. The basic difference between the two is that freedom is being free from something or someone, while liberty is being free to do something. The American Revolutionaries fought for

42 Hollander, American Poetry: The Nineteenth Century, 149, lines 37-41.
43 Ibid., lines 52-54.
45 Eyler Robert Coates, Sr., The Jeffersonian Perspective, Freedom, Liberty, Rights and Their Limitations.
freedom from the tyrannous rule of Great Britain. The War of 1812 was a fight for liberty—the right to trade with whomever a merchant wanted, whenever they wanted to. The political leaders of the time wanted support for the war and they used the idea of liberty to get it. Citing the egregious behavior of both the French and British trade blockades, the leaders declared war. The poets of the time, used this same ideal throughout their poems to call the men to fight for liberty in the United States.

One such poem appeared after the British burned the capital in 1814. “Ye Parliament of England” was written as a letter to the English Parliament. At the beginning of the poem, the author reminded Parliament why war was declared in the first place, asserting, “You first confined our commerce./ And said our ships shan’t trade./ You next impressed our seamen./ And used them as your slaves.” After then describing several instances when Great Britain thought they had the upper hand but the American forces reigned supreme, the author ended his letter declaring, “Go tell your king and parliament,/ By all the world ‘t is known,/ That British force, by sea and land,/ By Yankees is o’er thrown./ Use every endeavor,/ And strive to make a peace,/ For Yankee ships are building fast,/ Their navy to increase;/ They will enforce their commerce,/ The laws by heaven are made,/ That Yankee ships in time of peace/ To any port may trade.” The author makes it very clear to the reader that the cause and the end result of the war is the right to free trade. This right to trade without restriction was the embodiment of liberty during the War of 1812.

Although not everyone was a sea-merchant or transatlantic tradesman, a myth of nationalism was still built around this embodiment of liberty because it impacted the entire nation. The economy of the United States relied on imports and exports to remain fluid. The right to trade was, therefore, tied to every citizen whether directly or indirectly. The call to arms in the name of liberty was a way of unifying the nation behind a common ideal as well as a common goal to restore trade as swiftly as possible.

Duty

With the ideal of liberty, the country had a purpose for which to fight, if it could just get the citizens to answer the petition. At the beginning of the war, the people were still divided in their opinion of the war itself. The response to the call to fight was fairly slow. There were some who believed that the war was a risk as it was a miracle they had beat Great Britain the first time. There were also those who believed the real reason for the war was to invade Canada, and they did not agree with that plan. The poets took it upon themselves to attempt to unify the populace by uniting them under the ideal of duty.

One of the first poems written during the War of 1812 addresses the issue of fighting for the nation due to a sense of duty. Anonymously authored, “The Times” began: “Ye brave sons of Freedom, come join in the chorus,/ At the dangers of war do not let us repine,/ But sing and rejoice at the prospect before us,/ And drink it success in a bumper of wine./ At the call of the nation, Let each to his station, And resist depredation, Which our country degrades.” The author encouraged the reader to join the fight by speaking of liberty, valor, pride, and patriotism that were won during the Revolutionary War. The author implied that these virtues and ideals would not exist in America had the patriots not voluntarily answered the call of duty and fought for them. At its close, the poet issued the challenge for the reader to forget “local attachments” and instead embrace the Union in unity forever.

Godly endeavor

Of all the ideals that are spoken of throughout the poems from the War of 1812, the most common is that God granted his favor to America. Since the founding of the colonies in the seventeenth century by varying religious sects, God has been a prevalent topic in American literature. Divine providence was a subject addressed by George Washington in many of his speeches, including his Farewell Address. Although the people were divided about the various religious teachings of the Christian sects, most would agree that there was a God and that he favored his chosen people. It was this ideal that the poets built upon. They did not mention specific religions in their poems. Instead, they focused on how divine providence and God’s good graces helped to win battles. In one poem, “Sea and

47 Ibid., lines 61-72.
48 For information on the financial status of the United States during the War of 1812 please see the doctoral dissertation of Lisa Morales, The Financial History of the War of 1812.
50 Ibid., line 49.
Land Victories,” the author told of many of the impossible victories attained by the American forces and attributed them all to a higher power, stating, “Should grief and madness rise,/ Remember God, the avenger, reigns.” Using the idea that God is no respecter of persons, the author reminded the people that though they may not agree on how to worship, they were unified through a similar God who protected His people and avenged them against their enemies.

Common Manliness Characteristics in American Nationalistic Poetry

In addition to common virtues and common ideals, the poets of the War of 1812 strove to unify the citizens of the United States under common physical characteristics as well. This proved to be much harder. Unlike virtues and ideals that cannot be seen or measured, characteristics can. The color of one’s skin, the style of one’s clothes, or the cadence of one’s speech could all be used to implicate the social status of any man, woman, or child. Despite this obvious obstacle, many of the poets writing during this time chose to draw on the characteristics they deemed important for those actually doing the fighting. Because soldiers were men, these characteristics focused on the manly attributes of common men, being loud and rough, and finding the strength to remain steadfast.

Common men

It was important for the poets writing during the War of 1812 to portray the soldiers in their poems as common men, rather than professional soldiers or even men of influence. The majority of America’s fighting force relied on volunteers. Those volunteers were mostly farmers, carpenters, fisherman, sailors, and other skilled laborers. They spent little time actually training to fight, unlike the British Army and Navy whose soldiers were constantly drilled on maneuver and tactics. Being common meant the Americans fought for more than money and obligation. They were united in a mutual goal to protect their homes and families—the very backbone of the common man. This concept was important to the security and well-being of the common men throughout the history of the colonies. Before a standing army was organized during the Revolutionary War, colonies, and later states, were most protected by their militias. Each man was required to serve in the militia for a predetermined amount of time. The majority were made up of common, rural farmers and laborers. However, without these militias, America never would have gained its independence. In order to inspire more men to be like the militia men and join the fight willingly, poets played on the strength of commonality by reminding the citizens that it was up to them to protect their homes and very livelihoods.

One such poem, “The Lost War-Sloop,” was written in 1814 about the third USS Wasp, which after defeating the HMS Atlanta, was caught in a storm and never seen again. The author spent a great deal of time detailing the ship and its crew in comparison to those of the British. The author wrote, “Well her daring crew knew shoal and wind and tide:/ They had come from Portsmouth river,/ Sea-grit Marblehead and Salem,/ Bays and islands where the fisher-folk abide,/ Come for love of home and country,/ Come with wrongs that cried for vengeance./ Every man among them brave and true and tried. ‘Hearts of oat’ are British seamen?/ Hearts of fire were these, their kindred,/ Flaming till the haughty foe should be descried!” The men on board the USS Wasp were nothing more than local fisherman and sailors. Their advantage lay in the fact that they knew the rivers and bays more intimately than anyone else because they lived there and spent every day on those waters. The very strength on the volunteer militias was that they were comprised of common men who knew the countryside and waters and understood the cost of losing. It was this knowledge that united them.

Loud and rough

In addition to being common, one of the most collective themes of manliness that poets focused on was that American fighters were loud and rough. A common comparison throughout many of the poems likened the British to lightening and swords, while the Americans were compared to thunder and cannons. In many of the poems, the British were described as flashy, with their tailored uniforms and polished brass buttons, always fighting with

51 Stevenson, Poems of American History, Sea and Land Victories, 328, lines 45-46.
52 For a more in depth look at how political leaders also used home and family to inspire the common man to volunteer in the War of 1812 read Nicole Eustace’s book, 1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism.
decorum as they had been trained and drilled to do. Like lightening and swords, they could be deadly and precise, but still limited in their destructive abilities. By contrast the Americans were poor volunteers. They did not have uniforms but fought in their own homespun clothes. They knew how to follow orders but they were not as methodical as the British in their maneuvers and tactics. Like thunder they tended to last longer than lightening and overshadow the brightness with the noise. Like a cannon, the American forces were adapt at causing destruction and chaos for the British who were used to fighting Napoleon Bonaparte’s well trained and highly disciplined Grande Armée.54

The poem that most clearly showcases these comparisons was actually written after the Treaty of Ghent had been signed. Neither the British troops in Louisiana nor the American troops under General Andrew Jackson, realized that a peace treaty had been signed to end the war. On January 8, 1815, the British attacked New Orleans with a force of 5,900 men against Jackson’s 3,500.55 At the end of the battle nearly 2,600 British soldiers were either dead or wounded. By a miraculous contrast, only 8 Americans died in the fight and 14 were wounded.56 Poems were quickly written about Jackson and his troops and the Battle of New Orleans quickly became a heroic folk tale. “Jackson at New Orleans” described the battle in detail. However, at the very beginning, when describing the belligerents is when the comparison between lightening and thunder is made. In relating the arrival of the British troops at New Orleans, the author stated, “Batteries roll on, halt, and flashing lightnings/ Search out our earthworks, silent and portentous.”57 The British troops were met by the American forces which were described as attacking with the “Roar of our thunders till the grape and shrapnel/ Shriek through their columns.”58 The poet used this graphic wording to show the readers that though the British look good and have finesse in their movements, they were overshadowed by the loud and rough actions of ordinary American men. This illustration was a way to unite the populace in their commonness and encouraged them to be proud of their base heritage.

Steadfast/strong

The War of 1812 was a hard fought war for both the British and the Americans. Neither side expected that it would end in a status quo antebellum. The British were forced to divide their forces between America and France. The United States “entered the war with confused objectives and divided loyalties.”59 The British knew the Americans were unprepared to fight. Both sides underestimated the other resulting in a lack of victory for either. However, there were plenty of single battle victories for each side during the conflict. As one would expect, the triumphs brought the nation closer together under a banner of mutual success. Defeats were harder to swallow. While no one particularly wanted to acknowledge a loss, they could not simply be ignored. Poets tried to find a way to present the lost battles in a positive light. One way they did this was by encouraging their audience to remain strong and steadfast. In this way the people were unified in defeat as well as victory.

One particularly devastating American defeat became a rallying cry throughout the remainder of the war. In June of 1813, the USS Chesapeake met the HMS Shannon near the Boston Harbor. In the course battle the commander of the Chesapeake, James Lawrence, was fatally wounded. The poem “Defeat and Victory” described the scene that would become a rallying cry during other battles as well. Lawrence was taken below deck but continued to inspire his men to fight, though defeat was almost certain. The poet wrote, “Gallant Lawrence, wounded, dying./ Speaks with still unconquered lip/ Ere the bitter draught he drinks:/ ‘Keep the Flag flying!/ Fight her till she strikes or sinks!/ Don’t give up the ship!’”60 Though the Chesapeake was lost, the legacy of the commander and crew to remain steadfast despite all odds, survived. Commodore Oliver Perry, in his fight for the control of Lake Erie, named his flagship Lawrence, and hung from the mast a flag with the slogan, “Don’t give up

54 For information on Napoleon’s Army see Hughes’ book, Forging Napoleon’s Grande Armée: Motivation, Military Culture, and Masculinity in the French Army, 1800-1808. This book also gives great information on the idea of manliness as a characteristic of a soldier.
55 Center for Military History, American Military History, 153.
56 Stevenson, Poems of American History, 323.
57 Stevenson, Poems of American History, Jackson at New Orleans, 325, lines 4-5.
58 Ibid., lines 10-11.
59 Center for Military History, American Military History, 131.
60 Stevenson, Poems of American History, Defeat and Victory, 302, lines 5-10.
the ship,” a slogan still used in the United States Navy today.61 Other poems written about battles lost carry the same message to remind the people to remain steadfast and look forward to a brighter future for America.62

Conclusion

The War of 1812, though an often neglected conflict in studies of American history, provided the cornerstones of American nationalism. Poets had the power to begin building an idea of what it meant to be an American. They promoted virtues of valor, gallantry, and pride, ideals of liberty, duty, and godly endeavors, and characteristics of commonness, loudness, and steadfastness to depict a nation of strong and rugged men; men that matched the landscape of the rugged countryside and everlasting seas. They encouraged men to not only accept these attributes, but to embrace them in brotherhood and rally behind them in battle. Though these attributes did not, and were not meant to, apply to the entire populace, they nevertheless became the first foundation of American nationalism.

Nationalism, however, is not a concrete idea. It is made up of different ideas presented by people who have the power to be heard and accepted by those with the power to affect change. During the War of 1812, poets who were able to publish their works wielded this power. Though their attitudes towards virtue, ideals, and the characteristics of manliness were their own opinions, because they were built on the stories of astonishing battles and incredible men, they were not only merely accepted, but were embraced by the populace as well. Ordinary men suddenly felt extraordinary because they were implementing the same attributes their heroes had. The problem with this is that not all the stories from the past were based on fact.

The stories from the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, which inspired many of the poems, quite frequently, became exaggerated the farther they were spread and the longer they were told. However, men continued to believe in them and aspire to them, because they had an unquenchable desire to be more and do more in life. Believing in something that may or may not have happened, in an effort to improve one’s self and one’s country is the real conceptualization of nationalism. In the end, it doesn’t really matter whether the stories, feelings, ideals, virtues, or anything is real. All that matters is that the people believe it and embrace it. That is the myth of nationalism.

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61 Hickey, Don’t Give Up the Ship: Myths of the War of 1812, 117-135.
62 Other poems in Stevenson’s Poems of American History that show the characteristic of steadfastness include The Battle of Queenstown (292), The Shannon and the Chesapeake (300), Chesapeake and Shannon (301), The Battle of Valparaiso (307), The Battle of Bridgewater (308), and The Battle of Baltimore (315).
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