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In 1901, special agent Charles M. Pepper was commissioned by the US Department of Commerce to write a report on the economic conditions in Cuba and Puerto Rico. In the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, the United States directly controlled Puerto Rico, and, following the passing of the Platt Amendment, displayed complete dominance over the island of Cuba. Pepper’s mission was simple; to survey the populations of both islands and assess their capacity for economic development. In doing so, Pepper inadvertently revealed a great deal about the American conception of race in Cuba. While describing the population of Cuba, Pepper explained the racial heritage of the Cuban citizens, and determined in what manner their mixed Latin and African ancestry affected them. First, Pepper identified the different racial groups within Cuba. Most notably to him were the creoles, native-born people from Spain. This term could potentially refer to either whites or blacks, but was generally used to denote whites of Spanish descent.1 Next, Pepper mentioned that the revolutionary Cubans hated the Spanish “yet they [have] everything in common”.2 Pepper observed that Cuban music, culture, food, and even their wells are all descended from the Spanish tradition, and

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2 Ibid., 168.
because of this ancestry, he did not believe the present animosity between the two races would persist. Finally, Pepper claimed that Cubans were “the most peaceful people in the world”.\textsuperscript{3} In fact, it was only because of their “Negro infusion” that they had any tendencies towards aggression and revolt.\textsuperscript{4} Pepper viewed the Cuban people as a mixed race, with both African and European heritage. They were neither fully Afro-Cubans nor creoles, but something in between.

But this did not signify that Pepper believed the Cuban people were racially equivalent to white Americans; instead, Pepper dwelled upon the perceived negatives of Cubans to argue that they did not deserve independence. These negative traits were developed from the mixed racial heritage of the Cuban people. He noted that the Cubans were duplicitous, simple, and that the white men of Puerto Principe were “stronger physically and more responsive mentally than in other parts of Cuba”.\textsuperscript{5} Per Ada Ferrer, Puerto Principe was “a sparsely populated district dependent economically on cattle ranching [with] a free population that was predominately white”.\textsuperscript{6} During the 10 Years’ War, Puerto Principe was one of the first parts of eastern Cuba to capitulate to Spain, which makes Pepper’s claims of superior white men of Puerto Principe even stranger. He also noted that while the Cubans have “qualities of endurance,” this often led to “apathy, lethargy, inertia [and] lack of the initiative faculty”.\textsuperscript{7} Not only did he believe the Cubans were both physically and mentally inferior to white men, he also thought that they possessed “the negative inclination to work”.\textsuperscript{8} But Pepper also postulated that this could potentially be the fault of the “management of the men rather than of abstract deductions regarding labor in the tropics”.\textsuperscript{9} Regardless, he thought that an American presence in Cuba could curtail the weaknesses of the population. Basically, Pepper argued that while the

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 172.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 173.
\textsuperscript{5} Pepper, 169.
\textsuperscript{7} Pepper, 173.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 174.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
Cubans may be influenced by their Spanish ancestry, they remain racially inferior to the American people.

Because of this, Pepper crafted the argument that Cuba was not yet fit for self-governance. Instead, he declared that “the American solution of the race problems in the West Indies” should be “to lead and guide”. Even though Charles Pepper wrote his report after the events of the Spanish-American War, he still talked about race in the same way as writers did before the war. Like the journalists of the *Omaha Daily Bee* and the *New York Times*, two sources I chose to utilize because of their respective local and national influence, Pepper talks of Cubans as if America has a moral responsibility to protect them. This sentiment will be defined as racial paternalism, and it was a key factor in motivating the American public towards war. Pepper also has a strong dislike for the Spanish, and uses racial language to justify it. He recalls the Black Legend of Spain, and notes that “there is in the Spanish nature an indifference to physical suffering, of which the Inquisition, the cruelties of the Conquistadores, the extermination of the native Indians, are the black monuments of history”.

During the war, American journalists covered the Spanish and the Cubans by these two distinct racial templates. In a speech by Senator Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire, he summarizes the American view of the Cuban people succinctly. He proclaims that “our forefathers went to war because the mother country put a tax on tea... Cuba has ten thousand more reasons... and it deserves the sympathy and help of every true American”. But he also believed that America would eventually control Cuba, expressing that, although the Cuban plight paralleled the birth of America, they were not a people of equal status. For the Spanish, the American press spoke only of their “inhuman misrule in Cuba” and their “thirsting for [American] blood”. In the aftermath of the war, America suddenly was forced to redefine Cubans, and Pepper did this by combining these two viewpoints.

But while American racial distinctions and the power of the press swayed public opinion, they were not enough on their own to

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10 Pepper, 178.
11 Ibid., 172.
drive the nation towards war. The destruction of the Maine and General Weyler’s policy of reconcentration were perhaps the two most influential events in spurring America towards action, and both were highly covered by American reporters. Both local and national newspapers consistently bemoaned “the needs of the starving Cubans”. They also mentioned the “increasing destitution of the unfortunate reconcentrados and the alarming mortality among them claimed earnest attention”. When President McKinley decided to enter the war, his main motivations for action were to “put an end to the barbarities, bloodshed, starvation, and horrible miseries now existing [in Cuba],” and “the destruction of that noble vessel [which] has filled the National heart with inexpressible horror”. According to the press, it was widely accepted that the crisis in Cuba was generated by “two chief factors… the destruction of the Maine… [and] the condition of the reconcentrados”. While there were racial undertones in the reporting on the Maine, these themes were much more prevalent in the writings covering reconcentration. For this reason, I will focus on the coverage of reconcentration before and throughout the Spanish-American War, and the implications on race made throughout.

While the influence of the press and the devastation of reconcentration are both topics covered extensively by other historians, I analyze them from the specter of racial biases. In The Press in Times of Crisis, Lloyd Chiasson Jr. addresses the power of yellow journalism in guiding the American people towards intervention. He states that “the Cuban situation was an ideal and timely event that both newspapers [the New York Journal and World ] launched onto during the three years between the beginning of the Cuban insurrection and the U.S. declaration of war upon Spain”. Chiasson dissects the unfair coverage of both the Maine and reconcentration, but he does not dissect them by race. And while Ada Ferrer writes in length about Cuban racial conflict in Insurgent Cuba, she focuses

16 Ibid.
exclusively on the Cuban perspective. By focusing on the American biases towards both Cubans and Spaniards, I add to the historiography of the Spanish-American War.

**Racial Purity in Spain, Cuba, and the United States**

Throughout this paper, I will explore the differing ways in which race impacted the coverage of several key individuals involved in the Spanish-American War by both local and national news. These figures include the Spanish General Valeriano Weyler, professor Amos Hershey, Consul General Fitzhugh Lee, Senator Jacob Gallinger, and Cuban insurgents Jose and Antonio Maceo. The focus of this paper is to explore the implicit racial biases in the American press during the Spanish-American War. To do this, it is necessary to define the language in which both Cubans and Spaniards defined themselves during this period. In *Insurgent Cuba*, Ada Ferrer examines the way race is intricately tied to the Cuban independence movement. To fully comprehend the impact of race, and the raceless nationalism that emerged in Cuba, it is crucial to understand the many wars of the Cuban insurgency. On October 10, 1868, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, a prominent slaveholder in eastern Cuba, released his slaves and began the first armed Cuban insurrection against Spain. He addressed these men as “citizens,” and requested them to come help “conquer liberty and independence” for Cuba. By doing so, independence in Cuba was tied to abolition, and therefore race. Thousands of other slaves were released to fight against Spain, and mulatto men, such as Antonio Maceo, became prominent military leaders in the Cuban insurgency. But this did not signal that raceless nationalism had swept through Cuba, uniting creole, mulatto, black, and white under the banner of independence. Instead, racial division slowly tore apart the Cuban insurgency. And while the war began with a call for independence and abolition, it ended with the Pact of Zanjón, a treaty signed by the white elite leadership that gave Cuba neither.

Antonio Maceo refused to accept this treaty, and continued the war effort. This period is called the Guerra Chiquita, or the Little War, and was, like the 10 Years’ War, “a war over the roles and status

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19 Ferrer, 15.
of slaves and former slaves in a new Cuban republic”.\textsuperscript{20} But the Little War was also about much more; Ferrer states that it was about “the exercise of black and mulatto political power within the nationalist movement and the republic it sought to erect”.\textsuperscript{21} In the Pact of Zanjón, Spain granted freedom to all slaves who fought amongst the Cuban insurgents, but not for the slaves who stayed loyal. Because of this, the Little War attracted both “slaves who had earlier embraced the cause of abolition and independence… [as well as] slaves who had not taken part in the rebellion”.\textsuperscript{22} The Cuban insurgency was now lead by blacks, such as Jose Maceo and Guillermo Moncada, and composed of former slaves. This allowed Spain to portray the insurrection as a race war, and use racial fears to discredit the movement. The fear of another race war like the Haitian Revolution lingered in the minds of white Cubans, and they were discouraged from supporting Maceo and Moncada. Spanish officials intentionally defined their opponents as “black savages… wild animals who went barefoot and naked” to support this viewpoint.\textsuperscript{23}

In the aftermath of the Little War, Cuban independence activists were forced to address the power of racial fear and worked diligently throughout the next 15 years of peace to neutralize this threat. To do this, they crafted “a powerful image of the black insurgent as militarily able but as politically subservient to white leadership”.\textsuperscript{24} Jose Marti, perhaps the most prominent Cuban activist, wrote that “to dwell on the divisions of race… [was] to hamper the public good” and argued for a raceless nationalism and racial silence.\textsuperscript{25} Other men, such as Juan Gualberto Gomez claimed that “those who refuse a see a black as their equal… those are the only ones in Cuba who carry out a politics of race”.\textsuperscript{26} These statements were made with one explicit purpose: to create a raceless Cuba and eliminate white racial fears. While racial tensions still existed in Cuba at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Cuban insurgents had

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ferrer, 72.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 73.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 78.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Ferrer, 89.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 128.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 136.
\end{itemize}
managed to subvert the question of race, and instead unite themselves primarily by their national identity.

Neither America nor Spain viewed Cuba as a raceless nation, and this impacted both of their interactions with the island. For the Americans, the simplest way to explain their view of Cuba involves the skull of Maximo Gomez, a Cuban general. Gomez was a white man, and had been a participant in the ongoing discussions in Cuba over the appropriate role of the black Cuban insurgent and the concept of racelessness. A few days after peace had been struck with Spain, an American scientist came to Gomez’s camp, and asked to measure the Cuban’s skull. Eventually, Gomez consented to the phrenologists demand, but this encounter showcases the perspective America had of Cuba. While the Cubans were attempting to confront the racial division of black and white, the Americans judged them by their own standards of civilization and development. The measuring of Gomez’s skull shows that the United States viewed all Cubans as belonging to a lower racial status, and that the idea of Cuban racelessness was not embraced by America.

In Impurity of Blood: Defining Race in Spain, 1870-1930, Joshua Goode tracks the development of racial theories in Spain, and how they differed greatly from elsewhere in Europe. While other European nations were obsessed with racial purity, Spanish anthropologists attributed Spanish historical success to their unique racial fusion. Per Goode, “Spain’s racial problem became a question of both keeping the foreign elements out and also finding and nurturing the supposedly proper components together within Spain”. Following the Disaster, the Spanish name for the Spanish-American War, Spanish officials were forced to address why “despite overwhelming numerical supremacy” they still lost the war. Drawing upon this unique Spanish notion of racial fusion, anthropologists argued that, at some point, the racial balance in Spain was distorted, and this led to military ineptitude. They pointed to Spanish fatalities to support their assumptions; while 20% of Spanish deaths were due to disease, this

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27 Ibid., 201.
29 Ibid., 121.
only accounted for 3% of American causalities.\textsuperscript{30} Clearly, the proper Spanish racial fusion had somehow been diluted. While the Cubans attempted to transcend race, the Spanish perceived their intermingling with Spanish people as a key reason for the decline of the Spanish empire.

**Reconcentration: The Barbaric General Weyler**

In writing his report, Charles Pepper is confirming that the racially-motivated paternalism that helped guide America to intervene in Cuba remained after the war. But it changed in a significant way; before the war, Americans viewed the policy of reconcentration as both an atrocity and as a motivation to enter the war. To fully understand the impact of reconcentration on the American public, it is crucial to understand the timeline of the Spanish-American War. The Americans did not officially enter the war until April 25, 1898, two months after the destruction of the Maine. But the Cuban War for Independence, the third of the Cuban wars for liberation from Spain, began in 1895. Reconcentration was first implemented by the Spanish in February, 1896. For nearly three years, the American public was constantly bombarded with headlines covering the atrocities in Cuba. Chiasson calls this period “three years of sensational, and often inaccurate, news stories”.\textsuperscript{31} In an interview with Colonel Myron M. Parker, he stated “the condition of the reconcentrados in Cuba… passes the comprehension of a man accustomed to the usual phases of life”.\textsuperscript{32} He then proceeded to state the exact misfortunes he observed; “warehouses full of starving men and children… miles and miles [of] the charred stalks of the burned sugar cane… [and the] picture of desolation”.\textsuperscript{33} Every day, the average American witnessed “reports of suffering and mistreatment occurring in Cuba,” and this definitively shaped their opinion towards the Spanish but also General Valeriano Weyler.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 122.
\textsuperscript{31} Chiasson, 106.
\textsuperscript{32} “Picture of Desolation,” Omaha Daily Bee, Mar. 16, 1898.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Chiasson, 107.
Reconcentration was the predecessor of concentration camps, and was called “a crime against the human race itself.” Weyler began the policy in a quest for efficiency; his goal was to separate the Cuban population from the already radicalized elements, to prevent support for the insurgency. Instead, he created zones of starvation and death for non-combatants, and was called “a vulgar combination of butcher and thief.” Nicknamed ‘the Butcher,’ Weyler was already known as a cruel man before his involvement in Cuba, and had gained “this unenviable reputation in the last war,” the Third Carlist War, in which his brutality “made a record that twenty years have not effaced.” Weyler was even heavily criticized by the press on non-military matters. Before America’s entry into the war in Cuba, Weyler was accused of fortifying Havana Harbor with both “torpedo and submarine mines.” This was incredibly significant, for if this accusation was true, it would prove Weyler was definitively responsible for the destruction of the Maine. When he swore upon his soldier’s honor that he did not do this, the *Omaha Daily Bee* suggested that he had to prove “first, that he has any honor; and, second, that he is a soldier and not a butcher.” Weyler was accused of destroying the Maine by not only the American press; he was also condemned by the international press, with this story spreading as far as New Zealand, showing the vast disapproval of his actions.

Weyler quickly became the scapegoat for the entirety of the horrors of reconcentration, and he did little to dissuade the press from blaming him. In *Press in Times of Crisis*, Lloyd Chiasson explores how the Cuban and Spanish military leaders interacted differently with the American press. Weyler, Chiasson remarks, was highly reluctant to interact with the media and “never succeeded in controlling news

coverage of the revolt”. The New York Times went as far to claim that Weyler “declared war on journalists,” and published several articles about the daring escapes of journalists from his savagery and repression. To push the narrative that Weyler was a tyrant who suppressed free speech, “hundreds of inches of space [were dedicated] to freeing Melton, a writer for the World”. Weyler’s hostility towards the press was a significant factor in the American media’s coverage of reconcentration and the Spanish-American War, especially when combined with the racial sympathy felt for Cuban citizens.

Cuban leaders, such as Maximo Gomez, were aware of this paternalistic compassion that American journalists felt towards the reconcentrados, and they used this to their advantage. On one occasion, Gomez “cut off a large amount of the food supply to the cities, [forcing] Cubans into his ranks or into the reconcentration camps to starve”. The American reporters failed to understand the complexity of the issue, and instead blamed these deaths on the actions of the cruel Spanish officials. John Lawrence Tone, in *War and Genocide in Cuba*, explores both reconcentration and deconcentration. Deconcentration was a Cuban strategy that Tone called “a precursor to, and even a cause of, Weyler’s reconcentration”. The Cuban insurgents uprooted people who lived near Spanish towns “as a way to eliminate them as props to the Spanish regime”. Tone notes that this process was most extreme in Pinar del Rio, “where [Antonio] Maceo arrived in January 1896 and burned down half of the towns”. Again, American journalists failed to understand the intertwined nature of reconcentration and deconcentration, and just attributed the destruction to the Spanish. Because of this biased coverage, there was “a well-justified worldwide outcry against such methods of making war, but all the blame attached to Weyler, while the Cuban

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40 Chiasson, 109.
42 Chiasson, 109.
43 Chiasson, 108.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
insurgents’ role in reconcentration went unnoticed”. Tone also
discusses the inaccuracy of American journalists, who reported
widely inflated death counts. These correspondents claimed that 300
to 400 thousand Cuban citizens perished from the effects of
reconcentration, but Tone suggests that it was a smaller, but still
significant, 155 to 170 thousand. The rampant misunderstanding
surrounding Weyler and deconcentration can be contributed to both
the sensationalist American press and the paternalistic sentiment held
towards Cubans by the American public, which were generated by a
feeling of racial superiority.

**Colonel Paglieri: Conflict with the American Press**

The Spanish were aware of the effect and power of the
American press, and they despised it. In the *Omaha Daily Bee*,
numerous articles were published detailing the hostilities between the
Spanish military officials and the American journalists. An especially
notable character in these articles was the Havana Chief of Police,
Colonel Paglieri. Paglieri had a strained relationship with the press,
and would frequently censor reports made by American
 correspondents that he believed were too offensive to Spain. The
conflict between Paglieri and the American press reached a boiling
point after the destruction of the Maine. The Maine exploded on
February 15, 1898, killing 268 men, and the press insisted that this was
the work of Spanish treachery. Colonel Paglieri maintained that this
was false, and that the Spanish were not involved. Since then, it has
been definitively proven that the Spanish were not responsible for the
destruction of the Maine, but at the time, the destruction of the Maine
“caused the public opinion, or rather the public feeling, of this
country to settle in a determination that Spain must quit this
hemisphere”. There was no doubt in the public’s mind that the
Spanish government was solely responsible for the Maine.

After a month of deflecting blame about the Maine, Colonel
Paglieri finally broke and told his interviewer that “Spain has got

47 Ibid., 203.
48 Tone, 223.
tired of you American correspondents— you canaille, you piga”. Later in the interview, he insisted that the papers had insulted “Gentlemanly Spain” with their unfair coverage. By stating this, Paglieri acknowledged the extensive reach of print media, and the substantial effect it had on international relations. When the Spanish attempted to expel Consul General Fitzhugh Lee because of his sympathy for Cuban reconcentrados, the underlying motivation was the “companionship existing between General Lee and correspondents of papers which have been decidedly unfriendly to Spain”. In the interview with Paglieri, the journalist also noted that this animosity between Spain and America was at least partially perpetuated by the Spanish media, who call the Americans “a race… composed principally of fat pigs only to be stuck with Spanish bayonets”.

Senator Jacob Gallinger: The Inhumanity of Spain

The American press attempted to be less transparent with their critiques of Spain, but they still possessed a distinct negative racial opinion of Spaniards. A racial divide existed between Spain and America, and both nations articulated this using the press. Charles Pepper expressed this when he spoke of the Black Legend of Spain: the conquistadors, the inquisition, and now reconcentration. The papers, both national and local, managed to critique the behavior of the Spanish in all types of publications. Perhaps one of the most blatant examples of this involves a congressional speech, made by Senator Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire. Gallinger was a prominent senator and former physician, and “no man... during the McKinley administration enjoyed the confidence of the late President to a greater degree than did Hon. Jacob H. Gallinger”. Not only was he a highly influential politician, Gallinger was also a member of the “Cuban Commission,” a group of politicians assembled by William Randolph Hearst because of their interventionalist views towards

50 “Charges of the Press,” Omaha Daily Bee, March 7, 1898.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 The Successful American 5-6, Press Biographical Company (1902): 406.
Cuba. These men then journeyed to Cuba, made a report that argued for annexation, and presented their case before Congress.

On March 23, 1898, Gallinger prepared to recount the horrors and devastation he saw in Cuba to Congress. But before the Republican senator was given the opportunity, several Democratic representatives intervened, and suggested peace. Senator Bacon, from Georgia, proposed a joint resolution “to preserve peace with all the nations of the world”. After this, Mr. Hale, the chairman of the naval affairs committee reported that he had finished the bill providing relief for the survivors of the Maine catastrophe. While there was “a suppressed murmur of expectancy in the gallies… the measure was read and passed without a word of debate”. After this, Gallinger began his speech. He first addressed Mr. Hale and proclaimed that “the brave men lost in the Maine disaster could not be atoned for with gold or silver”. This was met with “a spontaneous wave of applause [which] the vice president had difficulty in restoring order”.

While Gallinger began his analysis of Cuba by referencing the Maine, the rest of his call for war was based on a critique of the Spanish people. Gallinger used the “beggary and death in Mantazas,” which was caused by reconcentration, to further argue his point. He declared that Spain was waging a “war of starvation and extermination… a war more cruel than the world has ever known,” and that a country desperate enough to “starve 400,000 of its people would do anything”. Gallinger then proceeded to vividly describe the horrors he witnessed in Cuba. On his route to Mantanzas, he saw “wretched people in rags,” but it was not until he reached the city that he realized “the full extent of the suffering”. Gallinger repeated the words of Dante when describing the scene, “who enters here leaves hope behind”. Finally, Gallinger accused Weyler of devising “a scheme of human suffering and sorrow that put Dante’s Inferno to the

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 “Time to Interfere.”
62 Ibid.
shade and converted a contented, prosperous people into a herd of suffering, starving unfortunates”. 63

Senator Gallinger plainly stated that “Spain has failed to meet the requirements of an advanced civilization”. 64 The senate so profoundly agreed with this point that the author noted “Mr. Gallinger was interrupted by hearty applause from the galleries”. 65 Clearly, Gallinger’s opinion of Spain as a vastly inferior nation was held by his peers. In his speech, Gallinger provides the template for an American racial analysis of Spain. First, he focuses on reconcentration. He centers his argument around the idea that no civilized nation would allow such horrors to befall their own people. But Gallinger does not simply state that reconcentration is bad, rather, he vividly describes it to his captive audience, articulating every death he witnessed. Next, Gallinger proclaims that the people of Cuba were a “contented, prosperous people” before the actions of General Weyler. 66 By doing this, he is stating that the Cuban people have been degraded by the actions of the Spanish, and insinuating that they desperately need American intervention to again be successful. But by making this claim, Gallinger clearly displayed the effects that racial paternalism was having upon the American people. Gallinger critiques the Spanish, but he also dismisses the idea that the Cuban people could free themselves, and instead argues that America has a moral obligation to protect them. By crafting this argument in subtle racial terms, Gallinger is expressing his own racially paternalistic sentiments.

Gallinger was not alone in his criticism of the Spanish people; newspapers throughout America echoed his claims. At one point before America entered the war, the US government declared that all foreign aid sent to Cuba would be sent in American men-of-war, for the sake of expediency. The Spanish government saw this “peaceful and friendly mission... as an encouragement to sedition,” and they requested that the US find other vessels to carry their supplies. 67 The press admitted that there was “an air of reason in this suggestion,”

63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
but also remarked that “there is an air of ungraciousness amounting to positive inhumanity”.\footnote{68} The Spanish had plenty of time to raise their concerns, the correspondent argued, and they had failed. As the writer saw it, the only accomplishment of the “Spanish action, coupled with the Spanish delay, will doubtless be that many Cubans will perish of starvation whose lives might have been saved”.\footnote{69} While both the American and Spanish governments were at blame for this controversy, the press shaped a narrative that placed all accusation at the inhuman Spanish.

While most critiques of Spain centered upon reconcentration, some journalists addressed the issue from other perspectives. For example, some writers examined the military inefficiency of Spain, and used this to argue that they were an inferior people. One article in the\textit{Omaha Daily Bee} was titled “United States officers witness the performance and laugh in their sleeves at the Spanish gunners”.\footnote{70} The correspondent then proceeds to recount the entire embarrassing display for the Spanish military. Spain was attempting to display their immense superiority, but instead “spent at least $10,000 and twenty-seven modern projectiles to show the naval authorities of the United States just how poorly Spanish artillerymen handle good guns”.\footnote{71} Finally, the correspondent noted that while the Spanish troops began by making coarse remarks to the Americans present, eventually the “inefficiency penetrated even into their unexpert brains and they kept quiet”.\footnote{72} Reconcentration was the central reason that the Spanish were inferior to Americans, but their repeated military failings provided additional support.

\textbf{Amos Hershey: The Responsibilities and Failings of the American Government}

While the American news frequently insulted Spain over the nation’s military ineptitude, the principle reason for the American public’s diminished racial view of Spaniards was reconcentration. The

\footnote{68} Ibid.\footnote{69} Ibid.\footnote{70} “Shooting at a Mark,”\textit{Omaha Daily Bee}, Mar. 23, 1898.\footnote{71} “Shooting at a Mark.”\footnote{72} Ibid.
press used the tragedy of these camps to fuel their narrative of the war in Spain. Amos S. Hershey, a professor of political science at Indiana University, presented a slightly different version of this. He presented an academic perspective on the situation in Haiti, and while his exact opinion was not popularized, it was influential. He clamored for the United States to defend Cuba and humanity, and stressed the moral and legal obligations of the American government to act. He wrote that “we stand convicted in the eyes of the civilized world… whether we intervene at this late day or not, of negligence in permitting one of the greatest crimes of the nineteenth century to be perpetrated at our Southern Gate”.

Hershey is referring to the Monroe Doctrine, which stated that European powers needed to respect the Western hemisphere as the American sphere of influence. The Spanish-American War was the first conflict in which the American government truly enforced this policy, but Hershey thought the United States should have been more proactive. Hershey was harsh on the inactivity of the American government, and believed America had already failed in its duty as protector by allowing this atrocity to occur in Cuba. In this manner, Hershey was unique. While numerous other journalists and correspondents wrote about the failings of Spain, Hershey was one of the few who also blamed the American government for their continued lack of response to the travesties occurring in Cuba.

It is apparent from Hershey’s tone that he no longer viewed Spain as a civilized nation, but he also held a negative opinion of Cubans. While bemoaning the Cuban tragedy, Hershey took precious time to stress that Cubans are not equal in status to white Americans. He called the Cubans “a race which, whatever its shortcomings, is human and American”. While the people of Cuba did not deserve reconcentration, Hershey did not believe they had earned equality either. Hershey’s entire article is an urgent call for President McKinley to declare war on Spain, and was published days before McKinley eventually did. Notably absent from Hershey’s plea is any mention of the Maine, which was commonly used as a symbolic rallying call for the pro-war movement. By neglecting to mention the Maine, Hershey is revealing that paternalistic sympathy for the Cuban people,

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73 Hershey, 77.
74 Hershey, 79.
accompanied by a negative view of the uncivilized, inhumane Spanish, was enough to motivate some to action.

Consul General Lee and Lieutenant General Maceo: Comparing White and Black Heroes

Perhaps no two men articulated the different perspectives on race in America than Consul General Fitzhugh Lee and Lieutenant General Antonio Maceo. Both men were perceived as heroes during the Spanish-American War, but there was one significant difference; Lee was a white American, and Maceo was a Cuban mulatto. Lee was the nephew of the Confederate general Robert E. Lee, and served as a Confederate cavalry leader during the Civil War. Rather than being outcast for his Confederate roots, Fitzhugh Lee was celebrated for his strong American bloodline.\(^75\) He was praised for being “courageous and possessed of tact and common sense,” and the Pictorial History of Our War with Spain for Cuba’s Freedom remarked that there “never was… a more genuine and typical American gentleman”.\(^76\) The Pictorial History was written and compiled by Trumbull White, an American author who wrote several popular histories of exotic lands, in books such as Glimpses of the Orient, Puerto Rico and Its People, and The War in the East: Japan, China, and Corea. Lee was first appointed to the consulship in Cuba by President Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, but “the nation recognized that he was first an American and an interference with him on partisan ground would not have been tolerated”.\(^77\) Because of this, the Republican President McKinley kept Lee stationed in Havana, and allowed him to continue his diplomatic mission on the island.

Before examining the contrast between Trumbull White’s portraits of Antonio Maceo and Lee, it is necessary to explore why White chose to include Maceo. The majority of the book is dedicated to white American heroes, so including Maceo was a bold decision. White dedicates a chapter of his work to Maceo because the mulatto insurgent leader was killed in combat, and “no event in the war up to

\(^{75}\) Trumbull White, Pictorial History of Our War with Spain for Cuba’s Freedom (Evanston: Freedom Publishing Co., 1898), 240.
\(^{76}\) Ibid.
\(^{77}\) Ibid., 243.
that time caused such general satisfaction among the supporters of the existing government, both in Cuba and in Spain, as the death of Maceo”.\(^7\) \(^8\) The \textit{New York Times} remarked that his death caused “excited students [to rush] through the streets [of Madrid], making demonstrations at the Government offices and at the United States Legation, and venting their feelings in cheers for Spain, her army, and Major Cirujeda”.\(^7\) \(^9\) While the Spanish were elated over the death of Maceo, the Cuban insurgents obviously felt differently, especially once it was revealed that Maceo was betrayed by his surgeon, Maximo Zertucha. General Weyler was responsible for this “hellish scheme,” and the Cuban Junta decried that he was a “cold-blooded murderer” and controlled by his “beasty instincts”.\(^8\) \(^0\) This is yet another reason that the press despised Weyler. But it is crucial to recognize that White does not include Maceo because of his military endeavors. Maceo was one of the only black generals during the 10 Years’ War, and played a significant role in the Little War. But both of these wars were portrayed as race wars, and compared to the Haitian Revolution. Because of this, White only celebrated Maceo for his death, not for his life.

While Trumbull White viewed Lee as a man “heartily admired... even by those most antagonistic to him,” he describes Antonio Maceo in a notably different manner.\(^8\) \(^1\) Instead, White predicts that Dr. Zertucha betrayed Maceo “on account of his color” and that “the subordinate officers in the Cuban ranks did not show proper respect for him, or obedience to his commands”.\(^8\) \(^2\) While White himself believes that Zertucha’s opinion of Maceo is false, by placing it in his book, he is acknowledging that some people still held these views towards the insurgent general. This is especially noteworthy since throughout Maceo’s career he was forced to address criticisms of his character based solely on his race, ignoring his past military successes.\(^8\) \(^3\) After this, White explored the positive characteristics of Maceo. He recalled that Maceo “never drank wine, he never smoked,

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\(^7\) Ibid., 256.
\(^8\) \(^1\) White, 243.
\(^8\) \(^2\) Ibid., 255.
\(^8\) \(^3\) Ferrer, 59.
and that in a land where tobacco is as common as potatoes in Ireland".\(^{84}\) Despite his “massive frame”, Maceo was “neat, even to fastidiousness, in his dress” and “usually carried a cane”.\(^{85}\) In complimenting Maceo in this fashion, White was attempting to show that Maceo was an exception; he was different from the rest of the Afro-Cubans and mulattos. While they were inclined towards the vices of smoking and drinking, Maceo resisted; and while Afro-Cubans and mulattos were often depicted as savages, Maceo was an exceedingly well-dressed man.

White’s method of praising Maceo is eerily similar to the language employed by the Cuban phrenologists who examined his corpse in 1900. Upon examining his skull to determine the “true nature of the mixed race insurgent leader,” they determined that he was more like “modern Parisians” than “African blacks”.\(^{86}\) These scholars then confidently proclaimed that for “for a person of his race... Maceo had been a truly superior man”.\(^{87}\) While both Fitzhugh Lee and Antonio Maceo were celebrated for their exceptionalism, this took different meanings for each man. Lee was regarded as a great diplomat and American, and race had no negative impact on the way he was described. For Maceo, he was important because he succeeded despite his supposed racial shortcomings. This is an important distinction, and displays how race influenced the American people’s opinion of political figures.

**Fitzhugh Lee: Sympathy for the Cuban People**

No politician embodied the conflict between the American and Spanish newspapers over the role of sympathy in war better than Consul General Fitzhugh Lee, who oversaw diplomatic relations with Cuba from 1896 to 1898. Apparently, Lee was so remarkably exceptional at his job that “never... did the Spanish authorities in that city omit any of the forms of courtesy”.\(^{88}\) While his autobiographer may have made that claim, this was far from the truth. Throughout

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\(^{84}\) White, 255.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 256.

\(^{86}\) Ferrer, 168.

\(^{87}\) Ibid.

\(^{88}\) White, 243.
Lee’s tenure, he clashed frequently with the Spanish government over numerous topics, mainly because of the immense paternalistic sympathy he felt towards the Cuban people. As Trumbull White recalls, “Spanish outrages… roused in him but two sentiments… sympathy and grief for those who suffered… [and] indignation and enmity against those who were guilty”. For this reason, one of Lee’s chief missions in Cuba was to provide aid to reconcentrados, and by doing this, he emphasized that this support served as a weapon against “the more brutal Spanish organs”. It’s crucial to note that Lee and General Weyler despised each other, which caused Lee, and most Americans in Cuba, to turn “exclusively to Cuban sources for intelligence about reconcentration”. While Lee was motivated by his paternalistic sympathy for the Cuban people, his hatred for Weyler led him to consult biased information, and furthered his support for the reconcentrados.

But while Lee’s heart was allegedly full of support for the Cuban independence movement, the Spanish papers presented a different narrative. Spain resented the sympathy shown by the American humanitarians, such as Consul General Lee, and on numerous occasions asked the United States to stop supporting Cuba. The Omaha Daily Bee wrote that “the Spanish press in Havana generally [try] to discredit the American Red Cross efforts, and to stop the arrival of American food in order to thus complete Cuban extermination”. At one point, the Spanish attempted to have Lee fired, “based largely upon his sympathy for the Cubans”. The American government refused this request, and the Spanish attempted to avoid public ridicule by insisting it “was never put in the shape of a demand, but that it was merely a suggestion on the part of Spain”. In short, the press wrote that the Spanish resented Lee because of his sympathy, but this was not Spain’s only grievance with the Consul General. The Spanish also frequently accused Lee of “the

89 Ibid., 244.
91 Tone, 223.
92 “No Ill Feeling Toward Lee,” Omaha Daily Bee, Mar. 7, 1898.
93 “Haughty Dons Back Down,” Omaha Daily Bee, Mar. 8, 1898.
94 “Haughty Dons Back Down.”
improper distribution of American charity”.95 Another article reflects on the Spanish coverage of America, noting that “the Havana papers, commenting on American charity, accuse unknown persons of fraud and smuggling”.96

This sympathy expressed by Lee, whether sincere or not, had racial undertones. But while Lee’s opinions of the Cuban people were partially obscured by the press, he proudly displayed them in his book, Cuba’s Struggle Against Spain with the Causes of American Intervention and a Full Account of the Spanish-American War. He identifies the five racial classes within Cuba; white Cubans, black Cubans, colored Cubans, the Spanish, and foreigners. Of these groups, he claims that the white Cubans are “the owners of the soil” and “a class educated and refined”.97 But Lee is quick to assure his audience that white Cubans are not equal to white Americans, for they “lack the energy of more northern nations”.98 The black Cubans “are laborers… [and] quite illiterate,” and Lee claims that during their slavery they “were in many respects treated better by Spanish laws than were their masters”.99 For the colored Cubans, Lee calls them a “mixed race… descended from African slaves and… the negroes who came with the first Spaniards to Cuba”.100 And while these men are “better laborers than the same class of natives in the other West India islands,” Lee still believes that they are inferior to both white Americans and white Cubans.101 He writes that they “are not numerous enough or strong enough morally or physically to cause them… to Africanize the island”.102 This is a recurring theme in his book; he also states that “all fear of negro domination in the island may be dismissed as idle”.103

95 Ibid.
96 “Charges of the Press.”
97 Fitzhugh Lee and Joseph Wheeler, Cuba’s Struggle against Spain with the causes of American Intervention and a Full Account of the Spanish-American War (New York: American Historical Press, 1899), 617.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
101 Lee, 617.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., 77.
Lee’s attempt to diminish American black panic echoed the writings of early Cuban nationalists. Throughout the 10 Years’ War and the Little War, the Spanish government described black and mulatto Cubans as “a threat to civilized white society,” and preyed upon this fear to diminish white support for the independence movement.¹⁰⁴ During the period of peace before the Cuban War for Independence, nationalist writers such as Jose Marti and Manuel Sanguily “constructed a war of mutual redemption and a black insurgent who, grateful for that redemption, protected rather than endangered the nation”.¹⁰⁵ By doing this, they assured their audience that Cuba would not be another Haiti, and promoted the idea of racelessness. While Lee also argued that the black and mixed population posed no threat to ‘Africanize’ the island, he did this while still believing in racial classes. Rather than proposing that the Cuban races could transcend their differences, Lee stated that the white Cubans would always possess the island. Consul General Lee saw Cuba in explicitly racial terms and felt sympathy for the suffering reconcentrados he perceived as inferior.

Racial Division among the Cuban Insurgents: The Death of Jose Maceo

While Lee divided the Cuban people into five separate racial classes, most journalists treated the Cubans as a mixed race, except for distinct moments when they chose to highlight the perceived racial tensions in Cuba. A notable example of this involves the death of Jose Maceo, the brother of Antonio Maceo. He was killed in July, 1896, before the US intervened in the conflict, and had fought against Spanish rule for decades. But the cause of his death was contested; while we know now he died in conflict with Spanish troops, the American press alleged that he was murdered by his own troops while attempting to start a race war. The article reports that Jose’s killing signaled that “a race war has broken out in the insurgent ranks between the whites and the blacks”.¹⁰⁶ The author also claimed that Jose had been illicitly seizing weapons intended for General Calixto

¹⁰⁴ Ferrer, 83.
¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 124.
Garcia, a white Cuban insurgent leader, because of his jealousy of Garcia’s “superior authority”.\textsuperscript{107} Finally, the journalist connected this story with the recent court-martia ling of Manuel Gonzales and his subordinates, indicating that there was a pattern of “trouble between the blacks and whites”.\textsuperscript{108} Gonzales, the Provincial Treasurer, along with his followers, were accused of shorting the cattle tax, and were punished by death. The journalist then noted that “Gonzales and the other men shot by Gomez were negroes”.\textsuperscript{109} Despite the inaccuracy in the reporting of Jose’s death, this article still shows that there was a debate among the American people on the racial identity of the Cubans, especially before the war. While some Americans perceived Cubans as an inferior mixed race, but suffering a plight similar to that of the revolutionary Americans, others divided the populace of the island into a binary of black and white.

**Conclusion**

The influence of the American media during the Spanish-American War in mobilizing the interventionalist movement is widely acknowledged. But the way these correspondents utilized race when addressing both Spaniards and Cubans to mold their narrative of war is frequently ignored. For the Cubans, this conversation centered around a combination of sympathy and racial paternalism. The American media frequently compared the situation of the Cuban insurgents to the American revolutionary movement, and because of this, declared that the Cuban independence movement was deserving of American sympathy and support. While the Cubans were consistently associated with the Revolutionary imagery, there was another, far more impactful reason why they were portrayed as sympathetic figures. Combining the substantial body count with the sensationalism of the press, reconcentration was a well-covered topic in the United States, and helped further craft the image of the sympathetic Cuban. Reconcentration impacted the racial perception of the Spanish; the American people perceived them as inhuman savages, incapable of civilization. But this sympathy for the Cubans

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
was not alone; it was combined with intense feelings of racial paternalism. The Americans largely viewed the Cubans as a suffering people, but they did not believe they were capable of caring for themselves. This portrait of the suffering Cuban was combined with American ideas of race to argue that while the Cuban people did not deserve reconcentration, their African and Spanish heritage made them unfit for self-governance. As Charles Pepper wrote, for all that had happened to the Cuban insurgents, they still required “the helping hand of the United States”.110

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110 Pepper, 177.
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The Power of Puns: Dream Interpretation in the Ancient Near East

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The prognostic dream that features in Tablet I of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* sets the scene for an example of dream-interpretive practices in the ancient Near East. Upon waking from his dream, Gilgamesh consults his mother, asking her to interpret the meaning of his dreams. He relates his dreams in full, yet she focuses upon only a few select elements. She reveals to him that the meteors he saw represent the strength of the man he will soon meet, and the axe he saw represents the competition he will have with another man. This scene plays a critical role in the epic’s plot, since the interpretation of these dreams helps introduce one of the main characters, Enkidu. The interaction between mother and son in this tale is an example of one of many ways dream interpretation played a role in life for those in the ancient Near East.

Oneiromancy, the interpretation of dreams, was an integral part of magical practices in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. Not only was its use widespread across time periods and cultures, but it also played an influential role in peoples’ lives, such as in the life of Gilgamesh. The earliest examples of dream-interpretive practices in the Mediterranean come from the Old Babylonian Period (c. 2003-1595 BCE). However, the most comprehensive dream text from Mesopotamia dates to c. 669-627 BCE, first found in the archive of Assurbanipal. Comparable texts from Egypt date similarly to their Mesopotamian counterparts. There are two notable Egyptian dream

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1 *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet 1
2 Noegel in Skpakowska 96
3 Ibid., Oppenheim 222
The written word has a rich relationship with the practice of oneiromancy in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. Dreams were most often viewed as omens, both positive and negative, and one needed to consult a magical dream text to find out whether the dream was a good or bad portent. The use of punning as a rhetorical device is consistent among the recovered Akkadian and Egyptian dream manuals. In his Nocturnal Ciphers, Scott B. Noegel identifies written puns as the most prevalent form of written wordplay in Egyptian dream interpretations, as well as in that of other ancient Mediterranean cultures.

This paper will address whether or not the use of written punning in ancient Akkadian and Egyptian oneirocritic texts renders dreams as riddles for the dreamer to solve. This is by necessity an interdisciplinary study. It requires a combination of philological, anthropological, and philosophical methodologies. In order to understand the dream texts, it is necessary to place them in their anthropological contexts, but the issues raised in this paper requires the application of philological techniques. The questions that arise from this study are philosophical in nature, and are answered with the help of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s concepts of primary and secondary meanings of words.

The primary text from Mesopotamia is the Zaqqû. The name Zaqqû refers to the Akkadian dream deity, translated into English as “Light Breath”\(^5\). This word can also refer in general to blowing winds, storms, or a breeze\(^6\). This compendium likely included 11 tablets in total, with tablets three through 10 pertaining exclusively to dream interpretation (the first two tablets and the last tablet were about exorcism)\(^7\). Each tablet included approximately 400 to 500 dream interpretations, totaling up to 4,000 total interpretations. However, only about one-fifth of this number has survived to the present\(^8\). The

\(^4\) Noegel 93
\(^5\) Bottéro 108
\(^6\) Oppenheim 233
\(^7\) Bottéro 114
\(^8\) Ibid.
texts are arranged according to the dream topics. Each dream is constructed as an *if...then* conditional statement. The protases are linked with their respective apodoses by a written or auditory pun. Specific examples of these puns are included below.

The format of the Egyptian dream manuals is nearly identical to the Akkadian *Zaqīqu*. Both cultures viewed dreams as messages conveyed by the gods which needed a professional interpretation. Noegel adds that both cultures “refer to enigmatic dreams as ‘knots’ or ‘performative spells,’ that one must ‘untie’ or loosen” (Akkadian *kisru*, Egyptian *ts.t*). The primary difference between Akkadian and Egyptian dream texts is that many Egyptian dream manuals include qualifiers (i.e. “good” or “bad) between the protasis and apodosis of a dream entry.

In both cultures, the dream manuals were tools of “rhetorical, hermeneutic, and illocutionary… ritual power.” Firstly, dream manuals were considered rhetorical tools because they had an impact upon the individual seeking an interpretation. One would have to visit a trained specialist, known as the *šā‘ilu* in Akkadian. Gilgamesh’s mother is an example of such a specialist. Since these manuals are rhetorical, persuasion is necessary to convince the individuals consulting the manuals. The likelihood that an individual would accept the interpretation of the dream manual depended upon the authority of the interpreter and their rhetorical ability. Rhetorical and literary devices such as punning are a necessary element in a dream manual to convince the reader of its authority. After all, these texts were written by humans, and even if priests were believed to have contact with the divine, they are still only intermediaries reporting messages.

The use of rhetorical devices pairs with the hermeneutic, or interpretive, function of the dream manuals. The ambiguity of dreams compounded the fear in an individual whose future hung in the balance based upon their dream’s meaning. By consulting a dream manual, an individual could find answers that were not immediately

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9 Noegel in Szpakowska 96
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid. 196
12 Bottéro 111
clear to them upon waking up from a dream. An individual could trust in the interpretation an authoritative source provided.

The description of dream manuals as an illocutionary (speech act) tool is related to their use in oneiromancy. An illocutionary act conveys meaning: when one utters something significant, one is conveying sense and reference. The person speaking/writing intends for the listener/reader to grasp the speaker’s/writer’s intention in making the speech. This is the relationship between the šâ’ilu and the individual seeking a dream interpretation.

This is an example of an interpretation that a šâ’ilu might have read aloud: “If a man dreams that he is eating a raven (arbu); he will have income (irbu)." The pun in this example occurs between the words in parentheses, and is known as an auditory pun. Arbu and irbu both sound alike when spoken aloud, an example of a punning device known as paronomasia. This device is important because the similar sounds of the words emphasize what is significant in this interpretation. The pun is drawing attention to what elements in this dream are most important.

Another common auditory punning device in the Zaqqû is antanaclasis, an extrapolation of paronomasia. Rather than relying solely upon homonyms for connecting the protasis to the apodosis, antanaclasis plays upon the sound of a single word in two separate contexts. For example,

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\text{[If] one gives him the head (SAG) of a pick-axe; his head (SAG.DU) [will be cut off].}
\]

In this case, the singular sound (SAG) in the protasis is duplicated in another phrase in the apodosis (SAG.DU.) The word “SAG” could have a variety of meanings depending upon the context. It can mean “head,” as it does in the protasis, but it can also mean “corpse,” which lends itself to the interpretation of the head being cut off. That the word “SAG” can represent two separate ideas is similar to how in English the word “foot” can mean both a literal foot and also a unit of metrical measurement. One can only know which sort of foot is at issue by the context in which the word is used.

\[\text{13 Noegel 20.}\]
\[\text{14 Ibid.}\]
The punning devices in the Zaqițu also encompass strictly written puns, which require the interpreter to have a keen knowledge of the written language (this strand is known as “visual puns”). Written puns are particularly intriguing due to the fact that they play on the relationship between cuneiform characters and the syllables they could likewise represent. For example, the cuneiform syllable “ID” could likewise be read as “Á.” This dual relationship is used to connect the protasis and apodosis in the following dream interpretation:

If a man dreams that he is traveling to Idran (id-ra-an= Á-ra-an); he will free himself from a crime (aran.)

Because the cuneiform sign “ID” also represents the syllable “Á,” it is possible to reinterpret Idran in someone’s dream as Áraan, leading towards one last lexical leap of combining the double “a” in Áraan into a single syllable, which leaves one with aran. This lexical hopscotch is only possible using the written word, because when spoken aloud, “ID” and “Á” do not sound alike. However, since they are both represented by a single cuneiform syllable, it is possible to work one’s way from Idran to aran. The two words are not at all related, but by playing upon their similar orthography, one can extrapolate to a totally unrelated word in order to interpret the dream. Noegel argues that “the apodosis thus illustrates the high level of erudition that informed such interpretation,” which is what makes visual puns so much more difficult to interpret.

At face value, a pun is simply a play on words. However, there are many possible explanations for their inclusion in the dream manuals. One explanation is that the puns were meant to “shock” the reader into a new awareness. For example, when an individual hears a pun for the first time, there is a moment where the pun’s meaning “clicks.” But shock factor alone does not indicate a compelling reason for the inclusion of puns in oneirocritic texts.

The variety of punning devices could provide a more satisfying answer for puns’ presence in dream manuals. However, examining puns alone does not provide a complete answer as to why

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15 Noegel 20
16 ibid. 22
the Mesopotamians or Egyptians would have decided upon punning as the appropriate literary device for oneirocriticism. As tools of rhetorical, hermeneutic, and illocutionary power, puns have the ability to refer, to mean, to suggest, to stir up emotions, to call up images, or to serve ritual purposes. In the case of oneiromancy, any combination of these powers can be called upon for the purpose of interpreting omens. Since puns are powerful devices, their employment in dream manuals perhaps provides boundaries for the interpretation of dreams. As Noegel states, the use of a pun in Mesopotamian oneirocriticism means that “the dream cannot now mean anything, but only one thing. The employment of puns... constitutes an act of power.”17 To be specific, this power is held in the hands of the priests who have access to the dream texts. Not only do puns help limit the meaning of dreams, but they also serve as a porous barrier between the lay person and priests who held the special knowledge of language that allowed for interpretation of dreams.

As previously mentioned, Egyptian dream texts provided more than just an interpretation, they also included a qualifier stating whether a dream was good or bad. For example, a line of interpretation from an Egyptian dream manual would read,

If a man sees himself in a dream losing his teeth: Bad omen. It means one will die by means of his dependents.18

As is evident in the above example, the Egyptian oneirocritical texts offer no hints as to why exactly losing teeth is a bad omen, and why it means one will die by his descendants. Here, the protasis and apodosis are not clearly connected with puns, but the conditional phrase is split apart by a qualifier. However, defining a dream as simply good or bad cannot answer all the questions one may have about a dream. Most questions one may ask about a dream cannot be categorized as questions expecting a yes or no answer. Further explanation and interpretation are necessary to provide a satisfying answer.

17 ibid. 40-41
18 ibid. 94
Accepting that puns are a means of interpretation does not answer all the questions remaining about their significance in dream manuals. Dreams do not contain simple answers to their meanings, and the dreamer has no knowledge of what kinds of questions to ask. For example, a man who dreamt that he has eaten a raven does not automatically realize that this is an omen signifying he will have an increase in income, as a dream manual may well tell him. What in his dream would have indicated to him that he would even need to attend to the raven? Without the explanation from the dream journal, perhaps the man would have only focused upon the fact that he was eating in his dream, and try to find significance in that action. Or there could have been other elements present in the dream besides eating the raven that he could question. It is not until he has consulted the dream manual that he realizes that the eating of the raven was the matter of interest.

In many ways, dreams are like personal riddles about one’s own life. Just as with dreams, riddles are elusive and it is difficult to know what questions to ask to determine a riddle’s meaning. Imagine if the dream of eating a raven were a riddle. Without settling on an answer to the riddle, how would one know to focus in upon the raven as particularly salient? There is nothing in particular about the dream as riddle that leads one to the conclusion that the answer must focus on the raven. Even if this riddle were posed in its original language and the listener could hear the pronunciation of income (irbu,) how would they know the answer must be a word that rhymes with it in particular (such as arbu, raven)? Even if the individual did realize that they needed to use rhyming to figure out the answer, how should they know to find a word rhyming with irbu and not some other word in the sentence?

Cora Diamond, in her work on Wittgenstein, discusses the nature of riddles and how we are (un)able to conceive of them. She states, “it is only when one has the solution [to a riddle] that one knows how to take the question, what it is for it to have an answer.” Diamond’s explanation is easily applicable to the example of the raven (i.e. not knowing to question the raven’s significance until already having the interpretation presented,) and to the other examples from dream manuals above. When an individual consulted

19 Diamond 269
a dream manual, they were provided with an interpretation for their dream they would not have known to look for otherwise. The interpretation of dreams in these manuals is analogous to the solving of riddles. One cannot understand the sense of the question posed in riddles, and it is not until one has the answer that they can interpret the question with certainty. Diamond explains further that riddles are “a linguistic expression put together by continuing familiar patterns, so the question or request looks like those we know how to use.”

Riddles appear identical to ordinary questions that one encounters, like math word problems. Despite their unassuming appearance, riddles are not at all like ordinary questions, because one cannot use standardized formulae to come upon a specific answer.

Even though dream interpretation is similar to riddle solving, it appears that it required more erudition than is required to solve a riddle. In some ways, dream interpretation is also similar to the process for solving a math word problem. A common formula employed is:

Read problem > Identify Variables > Write Equation > Solve for the answer

This is a straightforward formula which applies to nearly every math word problem. Once one has learned this formula, they are able to apply it successfully to different word problems. The word-problem formula is relevant because math problems have a single specific answer. As anyone who has taken a math class knows, one must correctly solve a problem and calculate the same answer as all of their peers. One may receive partial credit for correctly solving parts of the problem, but unless one comes upon the exact answer, their work is incorrect. In this way, solving a math problem is like dream interpretation. In the dream manuals, there is only one interpretation for a dream. As evidenced in the Egyptian dream texts, a dream is either “good” or “bad.” There is no interpretation in between these two qualifiers.

However, this does not mean that dream interpretation is exactly the same as a math word problem. Unlike a math assignment, dream interpretation does not offer partial credit for an individual

20 ibid. 273-274
who is partly correct in their interpretation. As mentioned, a correct interpretation of a dream was a potentially life and death matter for some ancient peoples. Misinterpreting the portents in a dream could possibly have dire consequences. While oneiromancy does share some qualities of mathematical problem solving, it is not completely analogous. Riddles do not employ algorithms to produce an answer. There is no way to know what interpretive procedure to follow to solve a riddle until one has settled on a satisfying answer. That is not to say that there do not exist some riddles which do have definite answers (e.g. “Four cars are at a four-way stop. They all move at the same time, but no cars collide. What happened?”).

This is not the case for all riddles. Some riddles do not have a single answer which an individual may quickly puzzle out. Take for example Lewis Carroll’s famous riddle, “How is a raven like a writing desk?” Carroll later conceded that this riddle has no answer, the unsuspecting reader assumed there was in fact an answer, and had no way to intuitively understand just exactly how a raven is like a writing desk. It was never Carroll’s job to come up with a satisfying answer, but rather it was up to the reader to interpret the question and find meaning in it. Diamond explains this through the example of a fairytale about the king who told a princess to come to him neither naked nor dressed. The princess had no clue what he wanted, and even the king did not know how the girl should arrive while meeting these requirements. When she showed up to him in a net, he was satisfied by her interpretation of his request. Even though he was the one who posed the riddle, he did not know the answer to it until he saw the princess’ interpretation of the riddling question.

Another famous example is the Sphinx’s riddle in Oedipus Rex: “What walks on four feet in the morning, two in the afternoon, and three at night?” Without knowing the answer to this riddle, there is no obvious clue that the Sphinx is looking for “a human” as an answer. There could potentially be more than one correct answer. In the mind of the Sphinx, it is unclear if there was a specific answer the traveler was supposed to get. If there was a definitive answer,

21 Answer: all four cars turned right, so no cars crossed paths as they moved.
22 Diamond 267
23 Answer: a human.
there was no procedure for solving the riddle. Once one finds a satisfying answer to this riddle, the Sphinx’s enigmatic phrasing makes much more sense. None of these examples of riddles could use novel or mathematical interpretation alone to come up with an answer, because it is not clear what the riddle-question’s meaning is until a satisfying answer is found. The same is the case for oneiromancy, because there are many possible interpretations for a dream, but the dream manuals are trying to find the sort of answer that would satisfy the dreamer.

Without a formula to depend on, a dreamer had a number of options. They could potentially just make up nonsense answers to every imaginable dream and offer those as solutions to dreams’ meanings. If that were the case, then dream manuals would likely not be written as they were with such attention to detail. Rather, the dream interpreters used puns as a way to solve the riddle of individuals’ dreams. In all of the examples of dream interpretation from the oneirocritic texts mentioned above, punning is used as a way to demystify the language of a dream’s events to provide a concrete answer to the dream’s meanings. In this way, dreams are like riddles because one cannot form a pun connecting a protasis to an apodosis without knowing the answer provided in the apodosis.

In his work on the philosophy of language, Wittgenstein touches upon the concept of the secondary uses of words. This concept is much like a riddle. As quoted in Stephen Mulhall’s work *The Great Riddle: Wittgenstein and Nonsense, Theology and Philosophy,* Wittgenstein uses the words “fat” and “lean” as examples of secondary words. In the example, Wittgenstein states that these words can be used to describe the days of the week Tuesday and Wednesday. When an individual calls Tuesday fat and Wednesday lean, the person they are speaking with understands the secondary application of the words in this context. The use of the words “fat” and “lean” are true to their meaning, but their use is different in this case. As Wittgenstein states, “[when] asked ‘What do you mean by “fat” and “lean?”’ I could only explain the meanings in the usual way. I could not point them out by using Tuesday and Wednesday as examples.”

Instead, Tuesday is only called fat and Wednesday is only called lean due to the condition of the human body being

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24 Qtd. in Mulhall 98-99.
transferred to the days of the week. “Fat” and “lean” retain their literal meanings, and it is not a figurative description of the days. This example is related to riddles in that the usage of the language in the oneirocritic texts depend upon word association through a number of semantic principles, as evidenced in the above example.

This concept applies to the dream in which the head of a pick-axe predicts the death of an individual (see page 6.) The pun in this interpretation relies upon the primary meaning of a word, head (SAG) in the protasis, and uses a semantically different form of the same word in the apodosis (SAG.DU.) In each part of the conditional statement, the word for “head” remains the same (SAG.) This is like Wittgenstein’s example of the uses of “fat” and “lean” in different semantic contexts. The primary meaning of the word for head is easy to understand, but its secondary meaning as a metaphor for corpse is not so clear unless one has the context provided by the interpretation.

While the primary-secondary associations of words do not explain the uses of all the puns in Near Eastern oneirocritic texts, it is a helpful model for dreams whose interpretations rely upon semantic and metaphorical properties of words. Having a model for understanding at least some entries in oneirocritic texts helps modern readers to understand the thought processes of ancient individuals with regards to their dreams.

The manuals represent a quotidian aspect of life for many people. As Bottéro explains, this method of interpretation “was valid for everybody. There was no longer a question about the extraordinary dreams and explicitly supernatural messages… but of ordinary, current, daily dreams of ‘the man on the street.’”25 The dream manuals provided a mediated connection to the divine for the ancient people of all classes who consulted them. While there is an abundance of evidence for the daily practices of communities in the ancient Near East, the puns in these dreams texts provide a tantalizing look at an intimate part of their lives.

25 Bottéro 113.
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Tangled Up in Bad Relationships: Rapunzel’s Unhealthy Tendency of Dependency

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Introduction

Disney has long had a reputation for feel good movies and inspiring messages of friendship and working hard. Their 2010 release Tangled is no exception. The princess movie starring Rapunzel shows viewers the powers of being brave and following dreams. Its example of a strained mother-daughter relationship may even resonate with some children in the audience and serve as encouragement to stand up for themselves or get help if needed. However, a message lurks below the surface of this “inspiring” example of escaping a poor relationship: Rapunzel never really escapes. I argue that Rapunzel blindly transfers her child-like dependency from one unhealthy relationship onto another unhealthy relationship through her dualistic nature of being both confident and vulnerable.

This analysis contributes to rhetorical theory by exposing that morally correct hegemony which should be supported in society may not always be supported by the best examples or artifacts. My main points of this analysis address Rapunzel’s semi-opposing characteristics of confidence and vulnerability. First, I examine how her self-confidence and bravery enable her to take risks and expose her trusting nature. Next, I explore how her state of vulnerability is exposed through three constant themes: openness with her thoughts and feelings, naïve responses to many signals and experiences in the “real world,” and her constant need for confirmation and support from others. I then discuss how my findings reveal how artifacts that appear to positively further hegemonic agendas may be harmful examples within a culture.
The movie *Tangled* tells Disney’s version of the story of *Rapunzel* by the Brothers Grimm: a girl who was locked away from the world in a tower and had ridiculously long flowing locks. Disney’s tale explains that the little girl is a princess with golden hair harboring magical healing powers who was kidnapped from her noble parents by the selfish Mother Gothel, an old hag who uses Rapunzel’s hair to stay young and beautiful. Rapunzel lives a solitary life in a hidden tower until wanted thief Flynn Rider climbs into her tower and strikes a deal to takes Rapunzel to see floating lights she sees annually in the sky. The rest of the film shows the new pair’s journey to see the lights as their friendship slowly turns to romance before Rapunzel discovers the truth of her childhood, attempts to break ties with self-centered Mother Gothel, and marries Flynn. Disney’s interpretation of this tale aligns with a running theme of contemporary feminism seen in many of their modern movies: young princesses are empowered through emboldened, meaningful actions while still staying within the confines of storybook tales. This negotiated pairing of tradition and revolution has drawn in and perpetuated the trust of millions of people worldwide film after film.

The social context surrounding this artifact captures peoples’ tendencies to look for characters and relationships in movies that they can relate to. As a multinational media conglomerate, Disney produces and reinforces cultural norms and values for wide swaths of the population in the United States and abroad. They have recently updated the way female characters are depicted, giving them more powerful stances that echo the global uprising of feminism. The situation of a woman being imprisoned for most of her life—an overwhelming majority of the time by a man—is also familiar to many cultures, which gives *Tangled*’s storyline a base for recognition and relevance. However, Disney’s choice to keep the antagonist captor a woman as was originally written by the Brothers Grimm displays a denial of contemporary misogynistic reality, therefore conflicting with the company’s appeal to modern feminism. As Disney is widely known and respected, an analysis that questions the impact of *Tangled* as encouraging and motivational may impact the lens through which the movie is viewed.
The Power of Hegemony

Hegemony has been used in rhetorical analysis to examine how social norms and dominant beliefs are upheld within society through distribution of artifacts. Palczewski, Ice, and Fritch define hegemony as “the dominant ideology of a society, exerting social control over people without the use of force.”¹ Hegemony controls what people can or cannot say or do but is primarily unconscious — it is a product of logic and already accepted ideals.² Hegemony is not forced but is accepted; if it was forced upon a population, it would be ineffective.³ That is not to say that hegemony is never encouraged; subtle encouragement may be used to align specific thoughts or opinions with a dominant ideology. This technique is useful because it is able to be believed naturally. If an idea was not supported by the people, it would not be within societal norms. It is these “seemingly given ways of being and behaving” that consistently enforce the ways a society defines its most important values.⁴

Ideal ways of behaving and thinking within a collection of people are normalized and stabilized through production and distribution of artifacts such as stories, laws, and visual representations of the values that are held in high regard.⁵ The maintenance of these artifacts — and therefore the hegemonic values

— can be strategic in order to maintain power hierarchies.\(^6\) This may be when encouragement comes most into effect. However, Killian argues that the hegemony can be a conduit for advancing just, humane ideals in a powerful way.\(^7\) This advancement turns the thoughts that a society finds to be morally superior and idealistic into expectations of behaviors that should be enacted by the population. The promotion of hegemony creates moral leadership and identifies the values that are being supported by these leaders in times of question or social struggle.\(^8\) The ideals that are being recognized as dominant are constructed and combined through interventions using artifacts that support the ideals, thus intertwining the ideals as fundamental components of a culture.\(^9\) Kaplan explains that hegemony does not take the place of a totality, a firm right versus wrong, but is instead a multi-layered construction of (usually) moral values that society chooses to praise.\(^10\) This demonstrates that supporting hegemony is not necessarily bad and that hegemony does not have to be an “overbearing” ideology that must be rebelled against or broken. Being that hegemony is made of ideals that guide and influence attitudes and behaviors, it is important to understand that the dominant values are often agreeable and seem to be enforced through common sense.


Hegemony in Rhetorical Analysis

The connection between hegemony and rhetoric is a circular one. Hegemony is recognized as a useful theory of rhetoric, while rhetorical practice itself serves as a “theoretical model” for hegemony as a theory.\(^\text{11}\) Thus, the close relationship between hegemony and rhetoric is often observed in rhetorical analyses while appearing from different angles. A constant practice of hegemony is its application as supporting evidence for any rhetorical argument. The strength of hegemony is exposed within rhetoric to explain the normative view, or the views that a specific population holds as normal standards or beliefs. The casual mention of hegemony within a rhetorical analysis is a common way to expose the reader to important background information necessary to interpret the artifact and its context properly.

In contrast, hegemony as a theory is used as a main perspective for furthering a rhetorical argument when an artifact’s social context is integral to the analysis. Societal implications connected to an artifact impact the artifact’s perceptions both inside and outside the culture that attaches hegemonic value to the story, law, music, text, adage, or other type of recognizable artifact. Hegemonic theory is used to uncover the insider understanding or hidden propaganda surrounding an artifact.\(^\text{12}\) The use of hegemonic theory as a primary investigative tool is as common in rhetoric as any other communicative theory and is supplemented in soundness through hegemony’s role in explaining societal importance of an artifact within any rhetorical analysis.

Entanglement: *Tangled’s* Dependent Main Character

In this analysis, I focus on the character of Rapunzel and her personality traits, mannerisms, conversational and talking style, and her relationships with characters Mother Gothel and Flynn Rider. After analyzing *Tangled* and Rapunzel’s character through a hegemonic viewpoint, two main themes emerge in support of my argument that Rapunzel transfers her dependency from one unhealthy relationship — with Mother Gothel — onto another

\(^{12}\) Khan and Blair, *Writing Bill Clinton*, 56-71.
unhealthy relationship — with Flynn Rider. The themes of confidence and vulnerability are inherent products of her atypical upbringing, which lead her to depend on another person at all times. Rapunzel’s character development throughout the movie demonstrates that although she does escape the toxic relationship she has with her mother, she only does so by becoming blindly dependent on Flynn.

In order to understand how confidence and vulnerability come into play in shaping Rapunzel’s relationships, one must first understand the content of those relationships. Initially, the audience is able to see that Mother Gothel and Rapunzel’s relationship does contain love based off of mutual care and small showings of affection, components seen within an ideal mother—daughter relationship. However, the relationship is wrought with more dependency than one would expect from a 17-year-old girl. This dependency on Mother Gothel is brought upon by Rapunzel’s physical and social isolation and Mother Gothel’s manipulative comments which deviate from the hegemonic norm of parenthood. For example, in one scene Mother Gothel draws Rapunzel over to the mirror and says, “I see a strong, confident, beautiful young lady.” Rapunzel’s brightened face almost immediately turns to shock and then hurt when Mother Gothel continues, “Oh look, you’re here too,” implying that Mother Gothel was referring to herself as the young, beautiful woman. The mother-daughter relationship is also riddled with small acts of defiance from Rapunzel, such as when Rapunzel groans or rolls her eyes in response to her mother’s frequent critiques.

Derogatory comments come often from Mother Gothel, producing a visible pattern of Rapunzel’s fearful or disappointed reactions to her mother. However, because Rapunzel has only ever interacted with her mother, she knows no better than to believe that their relationship is a typical one. These belittling exchanges coming from a woman instead of a man provide an unexpected angle of representation in the scenario of captivity identified by society. Mother Gothel’s role of antagonist is revealed as both captor and perpetuator of stereotypical woman-on woman verbal abuse, with the latter furthering a misogynistic worldview. This scenario evokes a hegemonic oxymoron in relation to the perpetuation of violence: while society deems domestic and personal abuse immoral, these practices are still a common part of life. Thus, one could argue that while physical and mental manifestations of misogyny are not
morally supported, they are still woven into the social ladder made up of hegemonic values that continue to oppress women.\textsuperscript{13}

Once Flynn enters the picture, a relationship with many elements similar to the mother-daughter relationship emerges. Friendship is established between him and Rapunzel, but Flynn uses manipulation under the guise of concern to try to convince Rapunzel to give up on her quest to see the lights and return back to her tower. Rapunzel’s quest brings her out into the “real world” which requires her to rely on Flynn almost by default, as he is the only person she knows who can help her navigate the foreign place. This echoes the familiar storyline of a man as a rescuer, the only one fit to properly lead a girl in the right direction. The common “princess plot” of Disney culture continues as Rapunzel’s dependency on Flynn gradually solidifies into genuine, mutual attachment, which then turns to romance. Again, Disney’s storyline reverts to misogyny by portraying a man as the physical and romantic savior of the girl. This portrayal also denies the common reality of men being perpetrators of violence.

In response to Rapunzel escaping a harmful relationship with her mother, hegemonic ideals would support this situation. Rapunzel separates herself from her verbally abusive and physically constraining mother, which appeals to the moral view that one should not stay in abusive relationships. The end result is also acceptable because she develops a mutually romantic attraction that fosters support, drawing on hegemony that normalizes healthy social support groups and encourages romantic relationships. However, I argue that this is a deceiving perspective because Rapunzel transfers her feeling of love, pattern of dependency, and tendency to be manipulated from her mother onto Flynn, the first person she comes into contact with from the outside world.

\textsuperscript{13} Greene and Hiland, Aune’s Leadership, 228-233
Ledwith, Margaret. Antonio Gramsci and Feminism: The Elusive Nature of Power, (Educational Philosophy & Theory, 2009), 684-697
Perpetual Pattern of Confidence

The theme of confidence is evident in Rapunzel’s personality in her internal and external dialogues. She has many moments where she is sure of herself and what she is attempting to do. This is often seen in conversation with her mother. Despite Mother Gothel’s attempts to shut down Rapunzel’s inquiry about seeing the floating lights, Rapunzel interjects multiple times, attempting to get her words out no matter how many tries it takes. Her self-confidence also allows her to intermittently defy her mother and gain some ground for herself. Later in the film, Mother Gothel tries to convince Rapunzel that she has imagined her romance with Flynn, to which Rapunzel strongly responds, “You’re wrong!” The audience can see her facial expressions doubting her mother’s words before she boldly stands up for herself. This and other acts of defiance gradually build upon one another until Rapunzel transfers her trust and love over to Flynn. These moments support the rise in the societal value of verbal women: women who are unafraid to use their voices and stand up for their rights, beliefs, and feelings. This is a positive dominant ideology that has gained traction recently as feminism encourages bold actions and words as movement toward empowered womanhood.14

In addition to interactions with her mother, Rapunzel also faces unknown situations with confidence and bravery. For example, after capturing Flynn in her tower, Rapunzel boldly states “I’m not afraid of you” before circling the restrained stranger, wielding a frying pan. She negotiates with Flynn, convincing him to be her guide to the lights, and ensures that she is getting the last word in the conversation by putting herself in charge of the situation. These personality features of bravery and self-assuredness contribute to her adventurous spirit and sure-footed nature, which in turn create a trusting tendency — she takes the words of others at face value. While those characteristics themselves are seen as “good” and socially supported, they lead her to trust in and fully depend on a stranger she has just met. This is a problem because she starts out her friendship with Flynn on the basis of blind trust and complete comfort in her plan. The audience sees Flynn breaking some of this trust as he tries to

14 Ledwith, Antonio Gramsci and Feminism, 684-697.
persuade her to return home, which she interprets as empathy for her indecisive situation.

While the relationship between Flynn and Rapunzel ends healthily, this was not the only option. As Flynn is a high-profile thief, Rapunzel unknowingly put her faith and confidence into one of the kingdom’s most wanted criminals. Her confidence shields her from adopting a wary persona. Additionally, she is comfortable with the experience of leaving the tower because she is adventurous, but she still must rely on Flynn for guidance and navigation. This literal dependency fosters a sense of connection to Flynn, demonstrating her unhealthy need to constantly rely on someone else for physical and emotional comfort as she has found in her mother since childhood. This reliance itself may not be a terrible practice but is viewed as anti-hegemonic due to its inherently unhealthy foundation built upon a lack of communicated truth.

**Multiplicity of Vulnerability**

The theme of vulnerability seems to contradict Rapunzel’s self-confidence, as she is receptive to others’ comments and often takes them to heart. It is this dualistic nature that anchors her child-like need for support in various forms. She is confident in front of Flynn and freely expresses her feelings and thoughts. Although these healthy and socially-encouraged practices are demonstrators of comfort in the friendship, they indicate her tendency to be open and vulnerable with her emotions. For instance, after she has explored the world outside of her tower, Rapunzel enters a conflicting monologue by repeating the phrase “I can’t believe I did this” with both positive and negative inflection, indicating both pleasure and grief. She becomes distraught and cries, only looking up when Flynn comes over to comfort her as she explains her internal confusion. Rapunzel’s ease of crying in front of a stranger indicates her delicate yet comfortable relationship with showing emotion. She is also incredibly naïve to many social cues, signals, and experiences. When a nearby bush begins to rustle, she shrieks and leaps onto Flynn’s back before he explains that the danger was only a rabbit. Her captive-like upbringing shielded her from understanding social and natural situations. These mannerisms are frequently seen and encouraged in women, furthering the hegemonic connection of emotion and
femininity. Another dimension of her vulnerability lies in her constant need for confirmation of her feelings and ideas — a need that encourages her to actively look to others for support. She often bases her dispositions off of others’ support or lack thereof. For example, Flynn calms her split feelings over leaving her tower by explaining that this sense of rebellion is “part of growing up.” This validation of her feelings allows Rapunzel to carry on with her adventure guilt-free.

These characteristics of emotional openness, naivety, and seeking validation influence her inherent needs to express herself freely while being supported, thus encouraging child-like dependency on another person for emotional satisfaction. Her overall vulnerability makes her susceptible to the manipulation of others because she does not see the influence of the attention — she sees only the attention itself. This counters hegemony because while one should be open and care about other’s thoughts to some extent, one should not let these factors completely direct one’s life. Rapunzel’s tendencies never allow her to completely escape relationships that are unhealthy on the outside but seem normative to her. Although she is able to recognize that Mother Gothel is controlling, manipulative, and damaging, Rapunzel fails to notice that Flynn is cunning and self-serving. Therefore, when she realizes that she is no longer able to draw support from her mother, she hastily switches to Flynn as a source of comfort and love.

Overall, this argument demonstrates how the often positively-viewed personality traits that contribute to Rapunzel’s character combine to form a dualistic nature of confidence and vulnerability. These conditions play off one another to create a weak nature that seeks a constant source of dependence. Rapunzel is first manipulated by and dependent on her mother; later, she is caught in a similar — albeit safe-looking — relationship with Flynn. This transfer contradicts the hegemonic ideals required to have truly supportive relationships. Although Rapunzel is characterized as a strong young woman unafraid to make decisions and take risks, it is questionable if she is ever truly independent. One may conclude that her confidence in both exploration and personal expression fail to paint Rapunzel as her own person despite being portrayed as a “role model character” by Disney. The attempt to describe her as a character of free-will and
bravery is shrouded by the manipulation and lack of choice offered to Rapunzel, discrediting her as a vision of social ideals.

**Contribution to Rhetorical Theory**

This analysis of *Tangled* and its character relationships reveals another dimension of hegemony through understanding the use of artifacts to promote moral ideals. Although hegemony is often supported within a population, the propaganda through which hegemony is continuously spread and supported may not necessarily support the virtues it claims to support. This is an important consideration because hegemony is maintained through artifacts that exemplify what values the public finds acceptable.\(^{15}\) Hegemony can be supported or challenged, and the articles that provide evidence for either position allow the argument to be taken seriously.\(^{16}\) In order for a society to maintain its normative ideals, artifacts appearing to support or challenge those ideals must be carefully examined to ensure they serve as adequate examples for their own cause.

Corporations such as Disney must be held responsible for the values they attempt to perpetuate, as companies and name brands have a large amount of social influence and power\(^{17}\). For example, this analysis reveals that while the movie *Tangled* appears to be an example of encouragement to leave toxic relationships, it actually fails as a good example because Rapunzel’s harmful environment is only transferred to a less obvious source. Instead of the current reputation that surrounds the film with positive messages and pushes its status as an example of how to break free from oppression, the reputation of the movie should reflect the reality of its messages. Denial of the film’s content would create distrust in the company, potentially causing harm to the beloved monolith that is Disney. Even if the public chooses to ignore the lack of positive example the movie

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\(^{16}\) Killian, *Benevolent Hegemony*

provides, Disney as a company should not deny its literal material when confronted with its true translations.\textsuperscript{18}

As this analysis demonstrates, popular movies, books, or other forms of storytelling often appear to be publicly backing hegemonic values — especially those that come from a popular source. The stories we tell are told for a reason; they resonate with people by representing ideas that people support. People learn life lessons about themselves, relationships, and cultures through what they see and hear. Thus, it is natural to promote dominant ideals through characters and stories that can be loved and understood, that resonate with the public.\textsuperscript{19} Artifacts are integral in circulating hegemony within society and should continue to do so, yet I suggest that these artifacts be held true to their own meanings. Disney does not have apologize for their content but should simply not deny the evidence that \textit{Tangled} harbors some unhealthy themes. In order to maintain a pure dominant ideology, society must scrutinize the artifacts that are praised publicly as examples of hegemonic ideals. This avoids the perpetuation of unhealthy practices disguised as life choices to be encouraged.

**Conclusion**

In summary, I argue that \textit{Tangled’s} Rapunzel blindly transfers her child-like dependency from one unhealthy relationship onto another unhealthy relationship through her dualistic nature of being both confident and vulnerable. Her self-confidence leads her to adventurous situations in which she unwisely trusts in a new relationship while her vulnerability solidifies her need for an external source of validity and emotional freedom. These anti-hegemonic values combine to show why examples of simple solutions to serious problems should be carefully inspected before being raised to hegemonic status — no matter how perfect or princess-like examples may seem.

\textsuperscript{18} Grushina, \textit{Corporate Social Responsibility}
\textsuperscript{19} Cloud, \textit{Hegemony or Concordance}, 115.
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A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE THROUGH THE #METoo MOVEMENT

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Weinstein, Cosby, O’Reilly, Ailes, Spacey, Bush—all names added to a list that is changing how people are talking about sexual assault. “Sensational stories of rape are no longer confined to tabloids but are now part of ‘normal,’ ‘everyday’ news for a large section of the population.”¹ The age of online and social media sites has altered not only when and how people get news but redefined what is and is not public. The #MeToo movement appeared on Twitter in the fall of 2017 in the aftermath of the Weinstein allegations and spurred several other male Hollywood power players to face similar allegations. These “Silence Breakers” went on to claim the 2017 Person of the Year cover of Time magazine for “giving voice to open secrets, for moving whisper networks onto social networks, for pushing us all to stop accepting the unacceptable.”² I argue that the #MeToo movement confronts the issues of sexual assault and consent within the public sphere by providing a space for those impacted by the rape culture to counter the dominant discourse and potentially alter the future narrative.

#MeToo works to create a broader understanding of violence and the relationship between sex and power within the contemporary

public sphere. The hashtag prompts what Sowards and Renegar call a “consciousness-raising,” which is “central to the process of creating a critical awareness of our culture.” The worldwide attention Twitter provides for the topic of sexual violence reveals in a public way, the scale of the problem and need for a cultural change. This essay explores how the presence of interpersonal, social, and association validation brings sexual assault from the shadows to the center of public conversation where the silenced refuse to be silenced anymore. First, I will examine how #MeToo grants interpersonal validation to sexual assault victims by providing a place for sharing stories and support. Then I will look at how the hashtag socially validates sexually assault as a cultural issue. Finally, I will illustrate how those critiquing #MeToo are validating it through association.

#MeToo: Emerging and Evolving

#MeToo has pushed the topic of sexual assault and harassment to the forefront of conversation, reaching millions of people in more than 80 countries since Alyssa Milano resurrected the hashtag in October of 2017. In a Twitter post, the actress, explained that if all the women who have been sexually assaulted or harassed used #MeToo “we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.” While Milano’s tweet encouraged many hereunto silent or silenced to share their experiences with assault and harassment, #MeToo was first created in 2007 by activist Tarana Burke as a way to support women of color who have survived sexual assault. Burke told Ebony “it wasn’t built to be a viral campaign or hashtag that is here today and forgotten tomorrow. It was a catchphrase to be used from survivor to survivor to let folks know that they were not alone and that a movement for radical healing was happening and possible.”

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5 Zahara Hill, “A Black Woman Created the “Me Too” Campaign Against Sexual Assault 10 Years Ago,” Ebony, October 18, 2017,
Compounded with what began with Burke, Milano’s tweet has acted as a call to action for people to speak up and “stand in solidarity with other survivors.” With around 32,000 replies in 24 hours to Milano’s tweet, Milano told *Time* magazine, it seemed to only be an “opening of the floodgates.” Suddenly there was a place for survivors to challenge the culture of secrets and silence and stereotypes. The rebirth of #MeToo created a public dialogue about the issue of sexual assault and harassment that acknowledged people’s experiences and united millions through a viral conversation that had previously been reduced to whispers.

Since the initial tweet encouraging the use of #MeToo, the hashtag has not only filtered through Hollywood but made its way into Congress and beyond U.S. borders. Rep. Jackie Speier “encouraged Capitol Hill staffers to share their stories using the hashtag #MeTooCongress.” #MeToo also took on many forms across the world as it crossed language barriers, including #BalanceTonPorc, #YoTambien and #Ana_kaman. A broader understanding of violence and the relationship between sex and power within the contemporary public sphere has been created by the conversation spurred by the hashtag. #MeToo is important because it is an example of a changing public sphere and of a potential permanent shift in the sexual assault discourse. It illustrates a, “willingness to engage in behaviors against sexual assault in a public opinion climate that many have been


described as a ‘rape culture,’”\(^9\) which makes it a valuable resource for studying the process of a feminist counterpublic discourse moving from the fringes of the public, to center stage.

There is a clear linkage between the #MeToo movement and feminist counterpublic discourse that presents a great opportunity for further research. Rhetorical scholars have only recently started to explore the realm of social movements and hashtag activism. Thomas Salek studied firestorming on Twitter with #WoodyAllen and explored the impact of a “sudden discharge of larger quantities of messages containing negative WOM [word of mouth] and complaint behavior against a person, company, or group in social media networks.”\(^10\) However, with #MeToo, the ‘firestorm’ of tweets didn’t seek to disparage a particular person or bombard Twitter with damaging heresy. Rather, the movement seeks to connect people through shared experiences and provide a voice to an important and very real issue. Twitter, like many social networks, is “a means to locate private thoughts in a public setting”\(^11\) and these new ways of communication illustrate how the public and private spheres have changed as well as prompt the need for further research on the impact of discourse in the future. With social media, nothing is safe from being ripped from the shadows and brought into the bright scrutiny of public dialogue. Whether or not #MeToo dismantles the patriarchal power structure, its seemingly overnight ability to move a taboo topic from private sphere to public is something deserving of further examination. As seen with #MeToo, hashtags have power and those who utilize them are the ones who drive that power.

**Feminist Counterpublic Discourse**


Sexual assault and harassment have not always been discussed in such a public way. Historically rape was not even portrayed as a crime. Though rape is now seen for the violent act it is and is a triable offense, we still live in what Schwartz and DeKeseredy (1997) refer to as a, "'rape-supportive culture' which objectifies women and teaches both sexes that women are responsible for men's violent behaviors." There has been a "sexist rhetoric" within contemporary culture that undermines victim credibility and aids in constructing certain myths that encourage shared accountability between victim and attacker. Mass media accounts of intoxication, provocative dress, and erotic domination repeatedly reinforce that rhetoric and often go unchallenged. Recurring representations of women’s behavior acting as "triggers for male behavior" perpetuates a gender dominance/dependence hierarchy in which women must "fear men, but they also must rely on men for protection."

Feminists have continued to fight to redefine sexual violence and shift the surrounding discourse away from victim-blaming. They have gone further to suggest that "rape is a metaphor for oppression in patriarchal culture made possible by social attitudes that regard women as possessions," which reinforces a "social domination in which men can control women and keep them in fear." "Previous

feminist generations have made it clear that the boundaries between public and private sphere must be blurred for women to have a voice.\[^{18}\] and contemporary feminists have realized that in order to break through the oppressive patriarchal culture, they must not only take on a more confrontational approach but challenge the dominant rhetoric of sexual assault on a public stage. Twitter recently provided that stage, from which millions brought the public’s attention to the subject of sexual assault.

According to van Dijck (2009), “Twitter allows users a platform to project short messages into the public sphere where they can circulate and constitute a virtual discourse community through collaboration with other users”\[^{19}\] which allows for potentially emotionally rich discussion that until recently, would’ve probably found a place outside the public sphere. Public sphere is a place where “citizens come together to share information, to debate, to discuss, or to deliberate on common concerns”\[^{20}\] but “the growth of mass media has itself changed the way the public sphere functions.”\[^{21}\] “Television and the Internet…have fundamentally transformed the media matrix that constitutes our social milieu, producing new forms of social organization and new modes of perception”\[^{22}\] that “intensify the speed of communication and obliterate space as a barrier.”\[^{23}\] Social media networks are proof that the line between public and private

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\[^{21}\] Constantinescu, “Public,” 96.


have been blurred and that anyone with something to say now has a place to say it.

However, “not all people have equal rhetorical power”24 and for those groups that fail to be represented within the public, there are “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourse to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs”25 otherwise known as counterpublics. Counterpublics are “oppositional ideologies”26 that “engage in potentially emancipatory affirmative practice with the hope that power may be reconfigured.”27 Feminist discourse is counter to the dominant patriarchal power, but social media networks have altered the public sphere in such a way that grants subordinated groups the potential to drive the discursive narrative in ways that they have not been able to in the past.

Validating a Movement

Twitter users quickly produced a wide-spread and candid discourse on the reality of sexual assault and harassment using #MeToo. Millions have used the #MeToo platform to project their experiences into the public sphere in a way that allowed them to steer the narrative instead of the mainstream media’s long sung tale of victim shaming. Until recently, media coverage, while minimal, reflected the “dominant norms and values in a society”28 which for years has encouraged a culture of don’t ask/don’t tell, he said/she said when it comes to sexual violence. This shift in understanding is

due in large part to the movement of the public sphere from something tangible to something virtual, meaning “the community members probably will never know one another face-to-face; however, they may have similar interests.” Survivors and supporters and even critics, can now share experiences and opinions from behind a screen rather than to someone directly. This veil of ‘anonymity’ has the power to produce both more truth and more criticism within a social platform that is “a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself.”

With each tweet using the hashtag, another layer is added to the conversation. Another chapter in the ongoing #MeToo story. Sifting through four days of tweets using #MeToo revealed that while the movement predominantly consisted of language that validated victims of sexual assault, their stories, and courage to come forward, there were those who criticized victim’s hereunto silence and the overall effectiveness of #MeToo as a social movement. While tweets echoing support, optimism, the expectation of silence, validation and various personal narratives vastly outweighed those more negative, doubtful, skeptical and shaming discourses, each use of #MeToo served a purpose. That purpose being to acknowledge sexual violence as a topic worthy of further conversation. The #MeToo movement works to counter the dominant victim-blaming discourse and the ongoing conversation asserts that engaging in the sexual assault dialogue not only validates it as a social issue but validates those affected by it. This idea of validation became an overarching theme throughout the tweets analyzed and each was found to validate #MeToo in some way, from those expressing support to those accusing and critiquing.

**Interpersonal Validation**

The #MeToo movement on Twitter allows individuals to share their personal stories of sexual assault and their support in a way that is public but avoids the traditional face-to-face

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communication prior to social media networks and the Internet. Twitter and other social media networks easily blur the line of what is public and private. In the case of sexual assault, there’s something freeing about putting a story out into the abyss of the Internet especially since it has been a private and socially ‘shameful’ secret many have held onto for so long. People like Panda // ANIM were encouraged by the hashtag to admit, “I never usually share things like this on twitter, but #MeToo” (@PandaPowerEdits, November 2, 2017).

The movement helped Susan Weber find the courage to share “I was in college. Raped by a football player. No one listened-no one cared. #MeToo” as well as Jaiden Lee Williams who tweeted, “#MeToo I finally told my mom last year after 7 years of hiding it from everyone” (@sueweber1, October 15, 2017) (@Jaidenlee, November 2, 2017).

One of the biggest reasons that people felt encouraged to speak up was due to tweets like “It can happen to anyone. It is NEVER your fault. You’re not alone. It’s happened to #MeToo” (@TheShowOff85, October 15, 2017). The Twitter movement went viral not because the experiences victims shared were necessarily new information, but because it gave people a platform to talk about and support victims in a new way.

In the past, the kind of interpersonal support victims of sexual violence received took place in private, within friend groups, families, support groups, and in private online forums. The #MeToo movement opened those private conversations to the public which created an outpouring of support for those affected. Tweets like, “Whichever way your body chose to respond during and after the trauma helped you survive and cope. It never indicates weakness or blame,” work to counter a history of victim-blaming discourse (@CalmCollectiveP, October 16, 2017). The Calm Collective was not alone in their response as others like Miss Kitty tweeted, “The thing is that you are perfect, fucking brilliant and pure magic. You are not wrong, or bad, or asking for it. #MeToo” (@Cerridwenssheart, November 1, 2017). This supportive language was one of the most popular uses of the hashtag as people came together to validate victims’ experiences in a public way that had not, to this degree, been done before.

There was a rich pattern of belief and support discourse that continued throughout the movement where people encouraged victims to keep sharing, that they were believed, and not alone in
what they had been forced to deal with. Stee Loves Mere tweeted “Support victims. Believe their stories. Listen. Be supportive. Hold the monsters who did these things accountable” and Barbara Stojanovic shared “2those sharing: I’m so damn proud of you! 2those who still can’t: I <3 u & I’m not the only one! Ur most definitely not alone,” which were just a couple examples of the support for those affected by an issue that has long plagued our culture (@tidalwavestyler, October 15, 2017) (@barbarastoja, October 15, 2017). Gillian Falchrie reminded people that “you should know that it’s incredibly difficult for any woman to come forward with an allegation. No-one does it lightly” because though people are speaking up now, for so long sexual assault has been about male power and victim blaming (@GillianF, November 1, 2017).

Social Validation

Through the #MeToo movement victims of sexual assault are not only getting their experiences validated and finding support for their struggles, but the public is unifying to confirm that the rape culture needs to change. HeForShe tweeted an image of a quote from @MattMcGorry saying “We need to not only speak out against abuse, but also demonstrate how our culture perpetuates and normalizes this violence through sexist jokes, ‘locker room talk,’ slut shaming, and talking about women in dehumanizing ways”31 (@HeForShe, November 1, 2017). Barbara spoke about the breadth of the issue in a tweet saying, “You’d have a hard time finding a woman who hasn’t been sexually harassed, at work, school, or basically anywhere.” (@liszella, October 15, 2017). The immense scale of the issue not only disappointed and saddened people, but many seemed surprised by how many were impacted.

Many people used #MeToo to confront their experiences of shaming and silencing in the past, proving that it was not that sexual assault was not happening, it was that no one was talking about it or confronting it. Sarah Ann Masse called for action, tweeting “#MeToo Obviously. And basically every woman I know. No one should be surprised. Stop being surprised. Start doing something”

31 HeForShe, “By @MattMcGorry #HeForShe #MeToo. From: bit.ly/MMcGorry.,” Twitter Photo, November 1, 2017.
(®SarahAnnMasse, October 15, 2017). This call for action and change was echoed throughout the movement with some calling out the bystanders like Irsa saying, “#Weinstein is scum but so r all the bystanders who knew & didn’t tell,” while people like James Melville argued that “for real change to happen, it requires men to genuinely stand together with women” (@sdrloo2, October 16, 2017) (@JamesMelville, November 1, 2017). Many also used the hashtag to confront how they were treated when they had talked about their experience with sexual violence in the past. Victoria Derbyshire shared how “Over a period of months I was sexually harassed by one of my managers. I threatened to report him then I was sacked.” (@VictoriaLIVE, November 1, 2017) Scott Schmidt also spoke out admitting, “Spoke. Ignored. Spoke. Ridiculed. Spoke. Punished. Spoke. Turned away. Silent. Spoke. ‘Why did you take so long to speak up?’” (@scott_schmidt_c, November 2, 2017). Tweets like these speak to the victim-blaming and silencing way assault was handled previously, and sparked tweets like Joan d’Arc saying, “just because it happens every day, does not make it okay” which turned into questions about what can be done to change the rape culture (@JoanArc1936, October 16, 2017).

Conversations went beyond victim support to confront the public about how to make real tangible change happen, implying that the #MeToo conversation is only the beginning. White Ribbon Canada asked, “How can we work together to prevent sexual violence & sexual harassment?” and UN Women asked, “How can we use this social campaign to drive social change?” (@whiteribbon, November 2, 2017) (@UN_Women, October 31, 2017). Anna Amy Ho took the opportunity to voice the issue of consent, tweeting “Let’s hash out what #consent really looks like in real life,” which spoke to a societal miscommunication on what is and is not consensual behavior—a large contributor to the sexual violence epidemic (@AnnaAmyHo, November 2, 2017). There were multiple examples like these of praise for ‘finally talking about it’ and a popular question of ‘how do we fix this’ which, while spurring many into action, created a sense of skepticism from others.

Association Validation
While there has been a widespread amount of support and positivity surrounding the #MeToo movement, not everyone is entirely on board. For those who did not voice support, their issues lay either with victims or the movement itself. Far Rainbow Dash criticized victims’ choice to come forward online saying, “don’t tell me you’re ‘too scared’ to come forward about being raped, when you’ll happily do so on Twitter for millions of people to see” (@FarRight_Dashie, October 15, 2017). Others seemed to direct their critique toward the #MeToo movement itself, asking things like “Y do you need a hashtag to openly talk about your sexual assault?” or questioning the impact some feel the hashtag will have tweeting, “This #MeToo thing won’t do what people think it will. Just make a bunch of people feel like they made a difference” (@lilith_blank, October 16, 2017) (@WWWeaver, October 15, 2017). Regardless of how these criticisms are intended, they actually further validate the issue by recognizing and responding to something that has previously been silenced and ignored.

By speaking up and engaging in the #MeToo conversation, they are confirming that sexual assault is worth talking about and are contributing to the public conversation. So, when people like Spiked tweet “how ridiculous the #MeToo hysteria has become,” and Senti Sojwal says how “tired and sad and exhausted by all of this” they are and “how many times do we have to yell the same shit over and over,” all they are doing is continuing the conversation and reiterating its cultural importance (@spikedonline, November 1, 2017) (@senti_narwhal, October 16, 2017). They are going out of their way to critique something they claim is not doing anything, but by doing so they are saying that it is in fact doing something. Ultimately, #MeToo has proven to compel even those opposed to it to talk about an issue that until recently has been pushed to the fringes of public discourse and allowed go unchanged.

The #MeToo movement not only provides a public platform for sexual assault to be discussed to a degree it has not been before, but it gives victims a united voice, a wide response of support, and validates sexual violence as a cultural issue. #MeToo puts a spotlight on those impacted by sexual assault and drags those doing the harassing under the microscope. No matter what people are saying, they are using the hashtag to say it and by doing so the conversation keeps happening. As long as the conversation continues, the sexist
rhetoric, victim blaming and shaming, and culture of rape can begin to change for future generations.

**Contribution to Rhetorical Theory**

The above findings indicate a relationship between how social media popularizes counterpublic discourse, and how association validation has the potential to keep hashtags like #MeToo relevant and impactful. This relationship is something that warrants further research as it points to an obvious change in the public sphere that will impact the future of public and counterpublic discourse, as well as alter the definition of what is and is not private. “Counterpublic theory challenges the idea that a single, universal public sphere is an ideal toward which a diverse society should strive” because a “universal public sphere intensifies the subordination of marginal groups’ needs.” #MeToo, in the same way, challenges the idea that sexual assault and harassment is something that should stay silent and the movement’s driving force is association validation.

The analysis revealed a considerable amount of evidence that sexual assault victims’ needs have not been met under the patriarchal public sphere. Feminist discourse has a history of being subverted in favor of the dominant patriarchal culture, however, the “consciousness-raising” of social movements like #MeToo, which has worked to “enable women to share personal experiences of gender discrimination,” counters that of the patriarchal culture in a public way that promises real change. Social media networks move public conversation away from elite groups in coffee houses to online platforms that are open to everyone. Networks like Twitter have created this public screen of sorts which acts as a “supplement to the

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public sphere”36 and has become the “current place for participatory democracy.”37 These social platforms are designed for communication and encourage responses or comments, reactions or likes, retweets and the sharing of information.

This modern culture of likes and retweets quickly created a new breed of hashtags referred to as viral. Not every hashtag reaches this status of rapid sharing, yet #MeToo seemingly achieved it overnight. In a time when survivors had finally had enough, “social media acted as a powerful accelerant”38 spreading the hashtag and its message across the world quick enough to turn heads. However, the #MeToo impact would not be nearly as powerful if only those who had experienced assault were the ones using it. What elevated this hereunto whispered conversation to viral status was not the magnitude of survivor stories, but that in combination with the support and criticism of everyone else. #MeToo maintains three ingredients that keep it relevant months later: a place to report abuse for survivors, the support of the public, and the voice of the skeptics. The doubters and critics establish an important validation for social movements like #MeToo, which differentiate it from support groups and help provide recognition to topics that have long been neglected in the dominate public sphere. Every conversation worth having has more than one side and the #MeToo conversation continues due to its multifaceted nature.

It is important to note that social media and hashtag activism have changed and will continue to change where people are communicating and what they choose to divulge. The conversation prompted by #MeToo proves a shift “from a one-way mode of communication to a more collaborative experience”39 due largely in

37 DeLuca and Peeples, “From,” 145.
39 Thomas A. Salek, “Controversy Trending: The Rhetorical Form of Mia and Ronan Farrow’s 2014 Online Firestorm Against
part to social platforms like Twitter. The relationship between the popularization of counterpublic discourse and the validation of hashtag impact uncovered by the analysis of the #MeToo movement through a feminist counterpublic lens, revealed that viral social movements such as this “exist by virtue of being addressed.” With each use of the hashtag users are addressing the topic of conversation and validating it to be worthy of further discussion. However, this validation is only the beginning for movements like #MeToo.

Conclusion

The future of #MeToo is moving the conversation offline and turning it into tangible change. While there is evidence that it has moved sexual assault into the spotlight of public discourse, reaching trending status on Twitter and sparking international conversation, it is still unclear what permanent change the movement will produce. Sure, it has helped many survivors finally see justice for what happened to them and sparked a trend of increased gender equality, but can it do more? Will this powerful and necessary conversation eventually fade out and allow the victims to once again be silenced? The main goal of a counterpublic is to enact change within the dominant discursive arena. #MeToo has been publicly confronting the stigma of sexual assault to alter the victim-blaming discourse and sexist rhetoric of the rape-supportive culture since the beginning. It is only through the continued bravery of the silence breakers and the validating actions of those positioning themselves within the conversation that social movements like #MeToo will continue to breakdown the status quo and revolutionize the way the public sphere functions.


Bibliography


“THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN’S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS” PLANNED PARENTHOOD’S RHETORICAL RESPONSE TO THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

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“The mission of Planned Parenthood is to provide comprehensive reproductive and complementary health care services in settings which preserve and protect the essential privacy and rights of each individual; to advocate public policies which guarantee these rights and ensure access to such services; to provide educational programs which enhance understanding of individual and societal implications of human sexuality; to promote research and the advancement of technology in reproductive health care and encourage understanding of their inherent bioethical, behavioral, and social implications.”

- Planned Parenthood’s Mission Statement

In the midst of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign, during a Republican debate in Houston on February 25, 2016, he promised to defund Planned Parenthood “because of the abortion factor, which they say is 3 percent.”¹ Now, as the President of the United States, he has not forgotten his promise. The Trump Administration has proposed many legislative actions that would severely impact Planned Parenthood’s governmental funding. He proposed a 2018 budget that contained “provisions prohibiting certain

abortion providers from receiving Federal funds from [the Department of Health and Human Services].”² This includes organizations that receive funding from Title X, the nation’s “only dedicated source of federal funding for family planning.”³ Furthermore, their proposed GOP health care bill states in Section 103 that, for an entire year, federal funding may not be available to family planning organizations that provide abortions, including Planned Parenthood.⁴

According to Dr. Chloe Ciccariello (2017), Planned Parenthood would lose “more than $500 million in government funding per year, about two-fifths of its total revenue” as a result of the Trump administration’s efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.⁵ Since Medicaid funds “cannot be used for pregnancy termination unless the mother’s life is in danger,” these defunding efforts would actually prevent Planned Parenthood from “billing the federal government for contraception and other reproductive health care services” they provide, including general health care, pregnancy testing, LGBT services, patient education, and STD testing, treatment, and vaccination, something that would largely threaten the health and safety of millions of men and women.⁶

The issue that has been recently threatening Planned Parenthood is the enforcement of Trump’s Global Gag Rule. On President Donald Trump’s fourth day in office, he “signed an executive order imposing the global gag rule, an anti-abortion policy that under other conservative presidential administrations has caused

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serious disruptions to U.S. overseas family planning efforts.” The overall goal of the domestic gag rule is to attempt to reduce the number of abortions by either making it illegal for family planning organizations to discuss abortions with their patients or by taking away Title X funding.

While this order caused widespread concern, there was large disagreement about what the implications of the legislation would mean for the United States and for the world. Starrs (2017) details the effects of the gag rule in other countries. As one example, the gag rule imposed in Ghana actually caused the abortion rates in poorer areas to be higher than usual because of the lack of available contraceptive services. Furthermore, it has been proven that the largest implication of the gag rule is its attempt to take away women’s rights to easily accessible contraceptive services, increasing the likelihood of unintended pregnancy thus increasing the use of abortion.

Bingenheimer and Skuster (2017) lay out three objections that critics generally raise when responding to Trump’s gag rule: “(1) that the rule fails to accomplish its presumed objective of reducing the number of abortions; (2) that it negatively affects the health and wellbeing of individuals and populations in affected countries; and (3) that it interferes with government’s ability to meet their international obligations.” This article details an interesting study by Bendavid, Avila, and Miller in which they examined data from 261,116 women from 20 sub-Saharan African countries between the years 1994 and 2008. They categorized the interviews based on whether the gag rule was inactive (1994-2000) or active (2001-2008) and determined that activation of the global gag rule in 2001 resulted in a “2.55 times

9 Starrs, 1.
11 Bingenheimer and Skuster, 280.
greater increase in the odds of self-reported abortion”¹². This is a prime example of one of the concerns many experts have of the Trump administration reinstating this order.

There is one thing that critics can all agree on, however: Trump’s global gag rule will have serious implications for Planned Parenthood. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Planned Parenthood would not be allowed to “perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning.”¹³ Planned Parenthood’s goal as an organization is to defend and protect the reproductive rights of women; this policy places restrictions on those rights. This would largely prevent Planned Parenthood doctors, nurses, and staff from having an honest, open, and transparent relationship with their patients, restricting their ability to refer their patients for abortion—even if the patient asks.

These attacks on Planned Parenthood have created a divided political and social environment, with those in support of Planned Parenthood on one side and those in opposition on the other. Furthermore, the crises in discussion have mandated a response from Planned Parenthood as an organization in order to garner support in their fight against the Trump administration. Since President Trump’s election, they have received “nearly 80,000 donations,” which Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards called “unprecedented.” The day after his inauguration, millions of men and women marched in the Women’s March, marking it the largest protest in United States history. These are just a couple examples of how Planned Parenthood has successfully called upon lawmakers, politicians, and United States citizens to accomplish their main objectives.

The goal of this analysis is to show how Planned Parenthood has responded to the Trump administration’s recent efforts to defund their organization, and how they have successfully utilized “call to action” rhetoric. Furthermore, this analysis will shed light onto the

¹² Bingenheimer and Skuster, 280.
rhetorical strategies other organizations can utilize in order to properly respond to a crisis.

The History of Planned Parenthood

Pearl S. Buck, American writer and novelist, once said, “If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.” Planned Parenthood’s 101-year history is extensive, impactful, and pertinent to understanding their values and goals as an organization today. The 1916 political climate, which Primrose (2012) described as “not friendly to the rights of women,” sparked Margaret Sanger to create the American Birth Control League in 1921—an organization that would later transform into what society today recognizes as Planned Parenthood. The concept behind this organization began when feminist activists Margaret Sanger, Ethyl Byrne, and Fania Mindell were put in jail for spreading information regarding birth control and pregnancy—something that was illegal at the time. They fought for years to make birth control legal, and, in 1937, the American Medical Association “formally recognized birth control as a fundamental part of medical care.” Indeed, a 1938 Ladies Home Journal survey reported that seventy-nine percent of women supported the use of birth control. However, it was not until the 1960s that women gained easy access to contraception. Marked by the Women’s Rights Movement, the FDA approved the first birth control pill where women were offered an “easy, relatively safe, and effective means of personally controlling their reproductive systems for the first time.” This same movement also made abortion reform a hot topic of discussion. In 1973, the Supreme Court granted women a constitutional right to

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16 Primrose, 182.
17 Primrose, 182.
18 Primrose, 184.
abortion through the court case Roe vs. Wade—a prominent decision that would ultimately be frequently referenced well into the present.\textsuperscript{19}

Since the legalization of contraception and abortion, Planned Parenthood has grown into a global organization that offers a variety of services including Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing, pap smears, breast exams, cancer detection tests for men and women, counseling, and abortion services. Since its foundation in 1916, the overarching mission to defend the reproductive and sexual rights of women around the world has remained unchanged. With growing support came growing opposition, and protesters have done everything from peacefully rallying outside clinics to setting fires to them, to mobilizing defunding efforts. With the recent election of Donald Trump, Planned Parenthood has had to alter their message and fight harder than ever before to keep their doors open and provide basic health services to adult or adolescent women and men around the world.

**Planned Parenthood’s Crisis Rhetoric**

Hoffman and Ford (2010) define an organizational crisis as “a specific, unexpected, and nonroutine event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten an organization’s high priority goals.”\textsuperscript{20} The issues that Planned Parenthood has faced in recent news certainly matches this definition and warrants a response. The Trump administration’s recent defunding efforts (including the 2018 budget, their proposed GOP health care bill, and the global gag rule) are all challenges to Planned Parenthood as an organization because they have the potential to disrupt their ability to provide services, and ultimately threaten the ideals and values that are at the heart of their organization.

Hoffman and Ford (2010) also split a crisis into three pertinent stages: pre-crisis strategies, crisis response strategies, and post-crisis response strategies.\textsuperscript{21} Planned Parenthood’s organizational responses

\textsuperscript{21}Hoffman and Ford, Organizational Rhetoric: Situations and Strategies, 188.
fit in the context of the crisis response stage because they must “coordinate activities, disseminate information, and reduce uncertainty.” I analyze Planned Parenthood’s organizational response to this crisis through multiple texts they used to gather support in their fight against Donald Trump’s legislation and the recent defunding actions in the form of promotional videos, targeted emails, and Planned Parenthood’s website.

Three promotional video artifacts are analyzed. The first is a Chicago Tribune interview with Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Illinois, and the second is an interview with Cecile Richards, the President of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Here, both women respond to the opposition of Planned Parenthood and discuss some of the misunderstandings people have about the organization. These are crucial videos in understanding how the Trump administration’s defunding efforts, specifically with the proposed GOP health care plan, is going to negatively impact their organization and the women who seek their services. The third video is a personal memoir released about a Planned Parenthood patient, Christy, and how their services saved her life. This is a personal experience that is supported with heavy emotion, providing an excellent contrast to the other two rather official videos. All three of these videos were released in early 2017 when defunding threats were at their highest.

A work week’s worth of emails—five total—are also analyzed as artifacts. These emails are pertinent because they are centered around what is relevant at the time of their release. For example, when Trump made progress with the gag rule, Planned Parenthood sent out multiple emails in a row about the consequences of this order. These messages are tailored towards their supporters because they are sent to those who have signed up to receive their emails and promotions.

Finally, Planned Parenthood’s official website is analyzed to examine their appeals to ethos, pathos and logos, their call to action, their goals and values, and their services.

These artifacts were chosen because they appear to directly address the rhetorical situation. The main exigency at hand is the defunding efforts brought forth by the Trump administration. These

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22 Hoffman and Ford, 189-90.
artifacts are all trying to prove the same message: the defunding actions taken by the Trump Administration are detrimental to Planned Parenthood and should be prevented. Furthermore, the different artifacts address three target audiences: the enabling, functional, and diffused audiences. The enabling audience can be one of two entities: the legislative bodies and their donors. Planned Parenthood needs government funding in order to provide a plethora of their services, and they also need proper laws and policies to be in place in order for them to operate as an organization.

The second enabling audience is the donors. Without donations, Planned Parenthood would not be able to operate; since they are a nonprofit organization, they rely on donations to help their organization run efficiently. The functional audience consists of the employees that help Planned Parenthood run on a daily basis as well as the executive officials that manage those employees and manage the organization as a whole. Planned Parenthood’s patients are considered the most important functional audience. They are the central purpose of the organization and the ones who are affected by any negative legislation brought forth by the Trump administration that could potentially hurt Planned Parenthood. Finally, the diffused audience plays a major role in the situation. These are the people who activate for women’s rights in support of Planned Parenthood. The media is also considered a diffused audience, and they can choose to conduct interviews with them, spread the truth about their organization, or create fallacious arguments for or against them.

To further establish the rhetorical situation, one must keep in mind Planned Parenthood’s constraints and assets. Time, in this case, is both a constraint and an asset. Planned Parenthood has been a successful organization for over 100 years, which means that they have had a long time to learn how to handle crises and issues that arise. They have also had a long time to gain supporters. However, while they were gaining millions of supporters, they were also gaining millions of opponents.

The ways in which Planned Parenthood has responded to past rhetoric or experiences also affects how the message is interpreted by different audiences. For example, according to a recent article published by the Communications Network, Planned Parenthood was recently under scrutiny from an anti-choice organization called the Center for Medical Progress (CMP)—an
organization in name only created for publicity purposes. They captured “undercover videos of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) executives allegedly discussing the sale of fetal tissue.”

What happened was “actors posing as buyers from a fictional medical company met with a PPFA official while hidden cameras rolled. CMP then sliced and diced three hours of footage to create an eight-minute clip” that made it appear as though PPFA was acting in an immoral manner. Planned Parenthood was applauded at the proactive way in which they handled this crisis. Their response was an excellent example of how to deal with a crisis. First, they acted quickly and effectively. Second, they engaged through social media. Third, they emailed Congress about their concerns. This recent example is certainly an asset to the company. Of course, the law is also an asset. Court cases such as Roe vs. Wade and the Hyde Amendment protect Planned Parenthood to some extent.

Lastly, Planned Parenthood’s constraints are religious and/or moral beliefs. Major religious groups that oppose abortion are the Roman Catholic Church, Hinduism, the Southern Baptist Convention, certain Methodist churches, and certain Lutheran churches. Even though Planned Parenthood offers a variety of services, many people who have strong objections regarding abortions will not support it as an organization. The artifacts were chosen because they address how Planned Parenthood has responded to the Trump administration’s efforts to defund their organization, particularly how they utilized “call to action” rhetoric to address elements of the rhetorical situation.

Evaluating Planned Parenthood’s Rhetoric

In order to analyze the artifacts, I utilized the framework of neo-Aristotelian criticism where I “used classic rhetorical concepts (modes of proof, canons of rhetoric) to analyze how well a rhetor selected from what Aristotle (trans. 1932) called the ‘available means

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24 “Crisis Communication Lessons from Planned Parenthood.”
of persuasion.’”25 I performed an evaluative reading, defined by Hoffman and Ford (2010) as “seek[ing] to evaluate the rhetoric’s ability to meet its goal” and to “determine effectiveness by comparing the rhetorical strategies that they found in the artifact with what they have learned about the rhetorical situation.”26 The first step is to analyze the artifacts and describe the general rhetorical strategies present throughout them. Once the rhetorical strategies are laid out, the critic can “compare the rhetorical situation and strategies” in order to determine which strategies address the situation, “conduct a preferred reading” in order to “use your knowledge of the rhetorical strategies and the rhetorical situation to make an argument about what you think the rhetor wanted the audience to think, feel, or believe after receiving the rhetoric,” and, finally, “draw conclusions about how well the rhetoric met the demands of the situation and consider how it might have been more effective.”27

Analyzing Planned Parenthood’s “Call to Action” Rhetoric

In addressing the Trump Administration’s recent defunding efforts, Planned Parenthood has incorporated a plethora of rhetorical strategies in their responses. In order to address the community, Planned Parenthood often utilizes appeals to ethos. On their website, there exists a “Who We Are” section that states two of their main goals as “providing trusted community health care” and “informing and educating the community,” where they can provide high-quality and affordable medical care.28 Furthermore, they claim that their services reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections, appealing to the overall health of the community.29 The goal of appealing to the community in such a way is to earn organizational credibility. They are trying to prove that their policies and procedures are an asset to society through the claim that they are improving quality of life.

26 Hoffman and Ford, 105.
29 “Planned Parenthood, “Mission.”
In the third video, Christy acts as a member of Planned Parenthood’s community and has utilized their services as her primary health insurance.30 She is vouching for the organization’s credibility and how it has impacted her life, therefore by extension of Christy’s story, one can see how they impact many lives within the same community. The appeal being made here is that she trusts the organization enough to go there for primary care, so others should trust the organization too. By proving their competence as an organization and that they are directly benefitting the community, Planned Parenthood can illustrate the need for their services. The implicit message is that if the Trump Administration defunds their organization, they would be harming the millions of patients and all of the communities who benefit from their services. Thus, these artifacts provide evidence against Trump’s proposed GOP health care bill.

Planned Parenthood also achieves an emotional response from their audiences through their utilization of appeals to pathos. All of the rhetorical artifacts analyzed appeal to the same basic need: the need for safe and affordable health care. Their website specifically states that “Planned Parenthood delivers vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information to millions of people worldwide.”31 Their main goal is dedicating their time to provide all people, both men and women, high-quality, affordable, and reliable medical care. This need is at the heart of the mission of the organization, making people feel like their health and their security as individuals is pertinent. When this need is threatened by other organizations, or, in this case, the Trump Administration, it is evident that Planned Parenthood is fighting to uphold services that addresses that need.

The two other main appeals to pathos that directly respond to the Trump administration are common values and identification strategies. In video three, Christy says, “I didn’t go to Planned Parenthood to make a political statement. I went to see my doctor.”

31 Planned Parenthood, “Who We Are.”
And that doctor saved my life.” In videos one and two, leaders Jennifer Welch and Cecile Richards emphasize two things: (1) the value that reproductive and sexual health care services are basic human rights and (2) the value that Planned Parenthood puts women’s health and well-being ahead of politics. “Politics” are not at the center of their organization. Christy experienced these two values during her Planned Parenthood experience, and it is evident that Planned Parenthood feels as though these values are being threatened by the Trump administration.

Planned Parenthood also utilizes the identification appeal of the transcendent/ assumed “we.” In their rhetoric, this appeal is most prevalent in the emails. In each one, Planned Parenthood assumes a position of “we.” For example, in an email sent on May 20, they say, “We’ve seen this scheme before...our answer now is the same as it was then: NO WAY.” This quote is in direct response to one of the Trump administrations attempts to bargain with Planned Parenthood. First, as noted by Grossman, President Trump nominated Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court with an agenda to overturn Roe vs. Wade. In order to support his desire to defund Planned Parenthood, he hired Gorsuch who “has a troubling record of hostility on women's equality and reproductive rights, having ruled in favor of employers imposing their religious beliefs on employees by denying them access to contraception, and he has been highly critical of abortion jurisprudence.”

32 “Christy’s Story: Planned Parenthood Video.”
35 Appendix A.
Second, according to the May 20th Planned Parenthood email, Donald Trump told Planned Parenthood to “stop providing abortions or we’ll get Congress to block access to care at Planned Parenthood health centers.” Through their repetitive use of the word “we,” they are aligning themselves with their audience to create that same sense of shared values. It is the implication that Planned Parenthood is not going to give into Trump’s ultimatum; their audience values their health rights and so does Planned Parenthood.

These appeals to needs, values, and identification create a passionate atmosphere that draws out different emotions from different people. Those who regularly utilize Planned Parenthood’s resources likely will be in full support and trust the organization entirely. Someone who went through something similar to Christy in the third video might get emotional and empathetic. Others might be sympathetic to her case. Those in opposition of abortion might have strong feelings of anger, distrust, or resentment towards the organization for providing that service. Therefore, these appeals will not have a moving effect on them. The rhetorical appeals utilized by Planned Parenthood are specifically director towards their supporters as seen through their use of the transcendent “we.”

An important way that Planned Parenthood has responded to the Trump administration crisis is by clarifying some of the misconceptions surrounding their organization, funding, and the services they provide. They clarify these through appealing to logos. On their website, under the “About Us” section, Planned Parenthood provides anyone access to the annual reports from the last four years; these are the most comprehensive evidence of this appeal. In the 2016-2017 annual report, they provide a number of interesting statistics about their company. In 2016, Planned Parenthood health centers served 2.4 million Planned Parenthood patients, 9.5 million services, 4,434,039 STI testing and treatment, 2,701,866 birth control information and services, and 617,677 breast exams and pap tests. They also broke down their services into percentages: 47% STI Testing and Treatment, 28% Contraception, 14% Other Women’s Health

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37 Appendix A.
38 Planned Parenthood, “Annual Reports.”

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Services, 7% cancer Screenings and Prevention, 3% Abortion Services, and 1% Other Services.³⁹

Furthermore, this report comes with a detailed breakdown of how government funding and donation money is spent, and clarifies that due to the Hyde Amendment, passed in 1976, federal funding cannot be used for abortion services unless the woman’s life is in danger or if the pregnancy is due to rape or incest.⁴⁰ Many people in society believe that abortion services are the majority of what Planned Parenthood does. The organization provides these statistics as evidence that they do more than that. A lot of people do not realize that federal funding does not provide money for abortions, and that if the government defunds Planned Parenthood, it is going to be the ability to provide STI testing and treatment or the ability to provide “55 million women to no copay birth control” that will be negatively affected.⁴¹

One of Planned Parenthood’s values is education, and many people are not aware of what Donald Trump’s policies mean for women around the world and how it will affect Planned Parenthood. In their emails, Planned Parenthood utilizes appeals to logos as they explain in detail what Trump’s gag rule will mean for Planned Parenthood and its patients. For example, in the second, third, and fourth emails, they state:

“The administration's gag rule includes two unprecedented attacks on patients and doctors: 1) Doctors and nurses across the country are forbidden from referring patients for abortion. Even if someone asks for information, even if their health is at risk, even if a safe and legal abortion is their best option; 2) There's no guarantee that you're getting full and accurate information about your health care. If someone discovers they’re pregnant after being diagnosed with cancer, for example, their health care provider may not tell them that abortion is even an option. This rule is designed to block access to preventive care at Planned

³⁹ Planned Parenthood, “Annual Reports.”
⁴⁰ Planned Parenthood, “Annual Reports.”
⁴¹ “Cecile Richards Speaks out Against the Bill to ‘Defund’ Planned Parenthood.”
Parenthood health centers, which serve more than 40% of the four million patients who rely on Title X (the nation's program for affordable birth control and reproductive health care).”

In order to have a strong argument and to prove why their organization does not deserve to be defunded, they needed factual evidence alongside the emotional appeals and the claims towards their organizational credibility. Furthermore, in order for people to be able to take a stand on the issue, they need to make sure their audience understands the implications of the policies and are well-educated and well-versed on the topic at hand. These rhetorical appeals properly address the exigency at hand and place the audience in an emotional state ready to accept their message and fight back against their common enemy: The Trump administration.

Planned Parenthood’s successful utilization of “call to action” rhetoric is profound. It addresses different aspects of the rhetorical situation in a variety of ways. This “call to action” rhetoric addresses the exigency, Donald Trump’s defunding efforts, and the three audiences. On the homepage of Planned Parenthood’s website, there is a pink banner that reads, “Trump’s Gag Rule – What You Can Do,” with a “Take Action” button to the right. This links to an information page with options to donate, to sign a petition, and to submit an official comment to the Department of Health and Human Services. If you scroll down on the same page, there is another pink banner that reads, “Birth Control is Under Attack,” with a button to the right that says, “Fight Back.” This button also links to a page with an informative video and an option to sign a petition and donate money to Planned Parenthood. The appeals on these two pages are incentives for their audience to take action against the threats against Planned Parenthood. At the top of their homepage, there is a button that says, “get Involved,” with a drop down of ways to donate, give, volunteer, or take action. They offer so many options for donations: one-time donation, monthly donation, memorial donation, specific donation, and even donation by mail. Their goal here is for everyone

42 Appendix A.
43 Planned Parenthood, “Homepage.”
44 Planned Parenthood, “Homepage.”
who feels the inclination to donate to have an easily accessible way to contribute.

However, even if a member of their audience cannot donate, they give them options to volunteer their time. Time is valuable, and they call upon their volunteers to assist in “meaningful work,” be part of a “collaborative team,” and contribute to their organizational “innovation and research.” These are all examples of Planned Parenthood utilizing “call to action” rhetoric in order to maintain a strong volunteer base, a strong donor base, and provide employment to those who support their organization.

Their website largely reaches out to their donors (the enabling audience) to donate more money in order to keep their doors open if the government takes away their funding. Furthermore, their website reaches out to their patients (the functional audience). As a Planned Parenthood patient, you respect their organization, you recognize the fact they are your primary health care, and it is likely you want to make sure that other men and women who are struggling are able to have access to the same care you receive. They are the ones that will be able to make the most impact and spread the message to the diffused audience (other women’s rights activists). Their incredibly large network of supporters is such an asset to the company, and they do a phenomenal job at making sure their supporters feel empowered to take a stand against an issue.

The week’s worth of emails Planned Parenthood sent out also addressed the enabling, functional, and diffused audiences. There are links to take action by “texting ‘NOGAG’ to 22422 or signing this online petition” and a link to “advocatesaz.org.” There is an image at the top of a woman holding a “Don’t Take Away Our Care” sign in a march for Planned Parenthood against Trump’s efforts. There are links to “Donate Now” to Planned Parenthood to show your support and stand united. There are options to “add your name and voice your opposition to this attempt to force doctors to break their code of ethics.” It is also important to know that on May 18, May 20, and

45 Planned Parenthood, “Jobs and Volunteering.”
46 Appendix A.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
May 22, Planned Parenthood sent out the same email except with added detail each time. This is proof that they felt a sense of urgency to get their message across and to encourage people to listen to their call to action rhetoric. These emails are calling upon their supporters to voice their opinion and making them feel like they have the power to make a difference. Many want to make their voices heard and to stand united with something—to feel like they are part of something bigger than themselves. These emails do just that. Furthermore, it is important to note that by signing these petitions or contacting the local senators or members of Congress that the audience is calling upon the legislative bodies to listen, to stand in opposition to the Trump administration, and to stop rulings that will impact the health of millions of Americans.

In the first two videos, the “call to action” rhetoric lies more in the stylistic strategies each speaker chose. In videos one and two, Welch and Richards spoke clearly and confidently. Welch’s interview held a conversational tone and it did not feel rehearsed—it felt personable. Both of them also chose to use powerful words in order to arouse emotion from their audience. They used words like “committed,” “proud,” and “threatening,” and phrases such as “we would do anything to serve our patients,” “we will not turn our backs on women,” and “put women’s health and well-being ahead of politics.” Powerful words and phrases are also commanding words and phrases. The goal of using them is to make the audience feel powerful and inspired to make a difference.

The “call to action” rhetoric also addresses some of the constraints. None of these artifacts specifically target a religion for being opposed to their organization. When Planned Parenthood specifies the fact that they differentiate politics from the general well-being of the public, they are not strictly appealing to those that are on their side. When they utilize appeals to logos and explain the services they provide, or the statistic that “1 in 5 women will come to Planned Parenthood for care in their lifetime,” they are addressing the people opposed to their organization by trying to make them realize that they

50 Ibid.
51 Antonio Perez and “Cecile Richards Speaks out Against the Bill to ‘Defund’ Planned Parenthood.”
are more than just an agency that provides and refers abortions. By appealing to the general needs of human beings to have reliable and affordable health care, they are appealing to society as a whole.

Preferred Reading and Effectiveness

Overall, Planned Parenthood wants the audience to feel like they can put their trust in the organization, and wants them to believe that they are an organization there to benefit and save the lives of the general public by providing easy access to affordable and high-quality health care. It appears they want their audience to feel empowered to stand up for what they believe in. I think that they want their audience to be proud to stand with Planned Parenthood. I also believe they want people to know the truth about Planned Parenthood and the services they provide; they want everyone to be knowledgeable citizens. They are very conscientious in explaining the impacts of Trump’s policies, explaining where funds are allocated, explaining facts regarding their outreach into the community, and explaining how their organization works and who will be most affected by these defunding efforts. Finally, they want people who might need STD testing... who might need help understanding the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship... who might need pap smears or breast cancer screenings... who might be confused about their sexuality... who might want to get an abortion... who might need to know more about what it means to be pregnant to feel like they have a place to go—a place where they can be open and respected.

Planned Parenthood effectively utilizes rhetorical strategies in order to address their constraints, take advantage of their assets, and minimize the exigence. They tailor their messages to the people they know will be willing to accept it. In this case, it is crucial that they do so. If they can increase their donation amounts, convince millions of people to sign petitions in their defense, and call upon bipartisan elected officials to protest Trump’s policies, then they have accomplished their goal. Planned Parenthood’s mission statement, as quoted in the beginning of this article, rests at the heart of the organization. By not giving into the “bribery” from the Trump

52 Antonio Perez, "Planned Parenthood of Illinois Chief Fights Opposition."
administration to get rid of abortion for an increase in funding, by utilizing proper “call to action” responses from their supporters, by educating the general public on the facts and fallacies regarding these new policy proposals, by being a transparent organization who can literally break down their services into percentages, they have continued to fulfill their mission. By continuously hammering the press and sending repetitive emails to my inbox, they have stood by their convictions. Their utilization of general rhetorical strategies of appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos is extensive, and it has made me feel passionate about what the organization provides for communities around the world.

Conclusion

According to Hoffman and Ford (2010), the term rhetoric “often has negative connotations, as we hear people label some statement as ‘just rhetoric,’ or we hear them say, ‘The action doesn’t match the rhetoric.’ In reality, though, rhetoric is a neutral term that simply refers to the strategic use of symbols to generate meaning.” This analysis discusses the rhetorical strategies implemented by Planned Parenthood related to the Trump administration’s recent defunding efforts by placing emphasis on their response and efforts to generate meaning—in contrast to the research available on the technicalities of the policies alone. It is important to examine how an organization responds to crisis and by what means the organization does so successfully and unsuccessfully. An organization in crisis can be a model on what to do and also it can be a model on what not to do. Understanding rhetoric is the first step in viewing organizations from an entity to an entity with power—the power to shape their image and their brand, the power to act with their ideals and values in mind, and the power to break stereotypes or play into them. Organizations have influence, and their ability to mentally and emotionally manipulate their audience to gain support is largely due to their rhetoric. While further research can be done to examine how the Trump administration has issued their own type of rhetoric in response to Planned Parenthood or surrounding their recent policies, this analysis of Planned Parenthood is a perfect example of how a

53 Hoffman and Ford, 2.
company can efficiently get their message across and utilize their resources at hand to promote their opinions and lead a revolution against administrative power.
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https://escholarship.org/content/qt38f952g1/qt38f952g1.pdf


The recycling of wastewater has been practiced for over 3 millennia in order to irrigate or fertilize crops.\(^1\) Over the past 20 years, the practice of wastewater recycling has become much more common as society seeks to solve the issue of water-scarcity, a problem partly attributed to lack of freshwater as well as the contamination of some freshwater sources due to the rapid growth of urban areas.\(^2\) When the need for freshwater becomes too great, authorities would rather direct the freshwater resources to urban centers that have more economic value than toward rural agricultural pursuits which may not be as lucrative. Today, the use of wastewater for irrigation has become a viable alternative that not only allows the urban areas to have enough freshwater but also provides agricultural communities with a water source for irrigation.

Over time, various treatment techniques have been devised in order to protect citizens from the harmful elements within wastewater, but in some parts of the world this technology has either gone unused or has only been partially implemented.\(^3\) Because of the

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\(^3\) T. Rutkowski, L. Raschid-Sally, and S. Buechler, "Wastewater Irrigation in the Developing World--Two Case Studies from the
varying degree of water treatment, there are different wastewater typologies throughout the world. In most developed countries, direct use of treated wastewater is extremely common. In this case, the water is treated in a plant and transported to a collection area in order to be used for irrigation. In other contexts, the treated wastewater is not sent from a treatment plant but instead taken from a body of water where treated wastewater has been deposited. Because of this, the water source contains a diluted amount of the purified wastewater and is considered indirect wastewater use. In such situations, the wastewater is diluted in the water sources while the contamination of the water resources is still detectable. In less developed countries, it is more common to see direct use of untreated water. This is usually due to lack of water treatment infrastructure or an overflow of wastewater that cannot be managed by existing treatment systems. Additionally, indirect use of untreated water is seen when farmers utilize public waterways that have been contaminated by drainage of untreated wastewater originating from large urban centers. In many cases, farmers in these regions have no other choice than to use contaminated sources, and in some situations, are even highly appreciative of the perennial source of water in climates that prevent natural, permanent waterflows. In this analysis, I will focus on the last two cases of wastewater use as they are most common in developing countries, those in most need of water scarcity solutions.

While wastewater irrigation has helped to solve the lack of freshwater in unindustrialized countries, it has also created new concerns related to the health of both the farmers and consumers. Qadir et al. enumerate the difficulties that are associated with

4 Raschid-Sally, "Global Surveys for Assessing Wastewater Irrigation," 7.
5 Raschid-Sally, 8.
6 Raschid-Sally, 9.
7 Rutkowski, Raschid-Sally, and Buechler, “Wastewater Irrigation in the Developing World,” 1.
wastewater use in developing countries. Because of deficient infrastructure and improper treatment methods, the public is often exposed to water contaminants of two varieties. The first category includes fecal pathogens such as parasitic worms, bacteria, and viruses within the water which can cause infection in the farmers as well as the consumers. The second category consists of organic and inorganic compounds contained in industrial effluent or chemical runoff which can be toxic at high concentrations when the irrigated crop is consumed. These toxic compounds can cause a variety of symptoms such as anemia, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever in addition to many others. Untreated or partially treated water has varying degrees of such contamination, and in some cases becomes a health risk to the farmers as well as the individuals who consume the agricultural products. Qadir et al. also identify the fact that women are often significantly more affected by the contamination due to the nature of their household labor and food preparation. Hanjra et al. have attempted to summarize both the positive and negative aspects of wastewater use in addition to detailing ideas for future policy changes. These sources and others have written of the negative effects of untreated wastewater, but few have considered the

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sanitation issues and offered a double-pronged comprehensive solution. This solution includes not only sanitation programming for the individuals involved but also implementation of GMOs which would lessen exposure to harmful wastewater components through selected survival traits. Because freshwater sources are in most cases decreasing, water-scarcity and the use of wastewater will only become more important as time goes on. A 2010 information kit published by the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Development Research Center stated that there is a need for non-treatment based solutions in regions where water treatment is impossible or simply not feasible.\textsuperscript{12} Additionally, within the kit there was a call for support of a manual that outlined Sanitation Safety Plans.\textsuperscript{13} As water-scarcity becomes more widespread and increases the need for wastewater irrigation, it is imperative that concrete solutions are developed to combat the health risks associated with reuse of wastewater.

As mentioned earlier, there are certain health risks to the farmers that utilize the untreated wastewater, and these risks mainly consist of exposure to parasitic worms and other harmful microbes. Though the untreated wastewater may contain toxic industrial metals and organic substances, the farmers themselves are for the most part unaffected as dangerous exposure to these elements mainly occurs due to ingestion.\textsuperscript{14} One of the most pervasive problems throughout wastewater irrigation communities is the higher than usual incidence of helminths infections, or those associated with parasitic worms.

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contained in unsafe water. These parasites are especially dangerous as they can survive under unfavorable conditions for a significant amount of time, which in turn results in a higher chance of infection. Researchers conducted a study in Kumasi, Ghana where not only the soil and water was tested for these parasites but also the farmers themselves. The individuals were tested by the quantification of helminth ova, or eggs, in the farmers’ stool. A control group was tested as well that coexisted in the same community, where the individuals used the same resources but did not participate in any of the farming which utilized untreated wastewater. Through the course of the study, the researchers found that the farmers that dealt with the wastewater were three times more likely to contract a helminths infection. Although the wastewater attempts to solve one problem, that of freshwater-scarcity, it also risks the farmers’ health by exposing the vulnerable population to wastewater pathogens. In order to solve the water problems for the cities, the health and wellbeing of farmers in rural areas is potentially sacrificed. The intention to help may be there, but it is vital that sanitation practices are utilized on the farms that use untreated wastewater in order to protect the workers from exposure to the contaminated water. Sanitation programming sponsored by the government or foreign aid groups would mitigate the health risks for these farmers in areas where it is simply not feasible to treat the water before it is utilized. The morphology of such programming will be detailed later on in this analysis.

In addition to the farmers and those that work in the fields irrigated by untreated wastewater, other members of these communities can be adversely affected by the microbial contaminants as well as possible toxic industrial compounds in the water. In another study conducted throughout the Mezquital valley in central Mexico, three test groups from three different communities were surveyed and sampled, each utilizing different water sources. One group used untreated wastewater, another drew from industrial

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15 Amoah et al., “Contribution of Wastewater Irrigation to Soil Transmitted Helminths,” 2.
16 Amoah et al., 1.
17 Amoah et al., 9.
18 Cifuentes, “Epidemiology of Enteric Infections,” 203.
effluent reservoirs, and a third collected natural rainwater for irrigation.\textsuperscript{19} Similar to the study in Ghana, the fecal matter of the test subjects was collected, while the respondents in this study also completed surveys detailing various questions about lifestyle. In this case, the researchers tested for both helminths parasites and fecal coliforms, microbes which can cause enteric diseases or diarrheal infections.\textsuperscript{20} The results of the study revealed that children under five in households exposed to either untreated wastewater or reservoir effluent are often at much greater risk for diarrhea than those in communities that make use of rainwater for irrigation.\textsuperscript{21} A child in an untreated wastewater household had a 33\% higher chance of experiencing bouts of diarrhea compared to those in rainwater households.\textsuperscript{22} Additionally, there is some risk to consumers as the researchers associated some of the incidence of infection with consumption of foodstuffs that were grown and/or washed with contaminated water.\textsuperscript{23} In another study, vegetables grown in wastewater had an 83\% chance of testing positive for helminth eggs.\textsuperscript{24} Industrial heavy metals can also leech into crops irrigated by untreated effluent, posing a risk to consumers. One study performed in China found every sample collected of both wheat and rice contained a concentration of lead higher than standard limits.\textsuperscript{25} The researchers also observed serious contamination levels of cadmium, nickel, and zinc, each posing serious health risks to rice and wheat consumers.\textsuperscript{26} This, in turn, reveals that not only are the farmers and their families at risk but other members of the community that purchase and ingest the food are also exposed to the waterborne pathogens and industrial effluent materials. Again, although there are advantages to using wastewater in place of the depleted freshwater supply, there are serious health risks to both the individuals directly

\textsuperscript{19} Cifuentes, 204.
\textsuperscript{20} Cifuentes, 206.
\textsuperscript{21} Cifuentes, 212.
\textsuperscript{22} Cifuentes, 208.
\textsuperscript{23} Cifuentes, 212.
\textsuperscript{24} Gupta, Khan, and Santra, “Prevalence of Intestinal Helminth Eggs,” 943.
\textsuperscript{25} Chen et al., "Heavy Metals in Food Crops," 145.
\textsuperscript{26} Chen et al., 148.
participating in the agricultural activities as well as those who consume the food products. In an attempt to decrease or curb these risks, public health programing should be put in place to provide awareness within the local population as well as to supply the farmers with methods of sanitation such as water filters or gloves. In doing this, one of the disadvantages of untreated wastewater could be avoided without disrupting the freshwater-untreated water balance.

One way to decrease microbial risks to farmers is to employ carefully created GMOs, or genetically modified organisms, that are resistant to drought or need less water than other varieties of the crop. This can be accomplished using different strategies. Selective breeding is one particular method for preparing drought resistant plant varieties, or more specifically called a cultivar in the case of selective breeding. Scientists begin this process by first identifying plant species that already seem to thrive in low water conditions. Once this has been accomplished, scientists attempt to pinpoint the traits that enable the plant to perform better and use this information to breed new varieties of the crop with even better ability to thrive in drought. This method is particularly lengthy and can have insufficient effect on desired crop performance due to different soil and geographical characteristics. These drawbacks can be avoided through the use of crop models that predict future yield changes due to selective breeding. Such modeling technologies are specifically tailored to the conditions of a crop’s region and allow researchers to produce efficient and accurate crop data before even beginning a long-winded selective breeding study. In one study conducted in Brazil, the traits that were thought to contribute to drought resistance in soybeans were tested using modeling technology to understand which were most helpful in drought-like conditions. In the study, it seemed that plants bred with a combination of certain drought resistant traits, rather than just possessing one, would perform the best after selective breeding. The helpful traits for this particular

29 Battisti et al., 4.
30 Battisti et al., 12.
cultivar of soybean were deeper roots, limit of transpiration by vapor pressure deficit, and reduction of grain filling in response to lack of sufficient water. Now, these traits are specific to this soybean cultivar, but the ability to quickly model the yield of a crop cultivar is important to better ensure the success of that future crop variety before selectively breeding for those traits. Another faster alternative to traditional selective breeding is the use of gene editing tools, each employing a different type of site specific nucleases, or SSNs. These nucleases are enzymes capable of cutting DNA sequences in order to directly edit the target gene sequences of a specific plant genome. The most popular gene editing technologies are meganucleases, zinc-finger nucleases (ZFNs), transcription activator-like effector nucleases (TALENs), and type II clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeat/CRIOSPR-associated protein 9 (CRISPR-Cas9). The CRISPR-Cas9 system is not only the most site-specific gene editing technique but it is also relatively easy to use and involves less expensive materials than its alternatives. If the gene sequence of a desired trait is already known, CRISPR-Cas9 allows for more rapid manipulation of a plant’s traits compared to traditional selective breeding. In one study, a CRISPR-Cas9 genome edited maize cultivar produced five more bushels per acre of land than its wildtype counterpart under drought-like conditions. Each of these techniques make it possible to isolate and breed for certain traits of a plant that decrease its need for water, and this, in turn, has the power to reduce the water need for agriculture on a global scale. Genetically modified drought resistant crops could also be used in situations where untreated wastewater is the only water source available. Because the plants themselves have a lesser need for water in general, it would follow that farmers’ risk of infection would decrease as they

32 Arora and Narula, "Gene Editing and Crop Improvement," 16.
34 Shi et al., "ARGOS8 Variants Generated by CRISPR-Cas9," 210.
would need to use less water to keep the crops alive. In this way, the farmers would have a lesser threat of infection without disrupting the freshwater-conserving routine they have developed.

Traits that support drought resistance are not the only ones that agricultural scientists selectively breed for, and they are not the only traits that could be beneficial to farmers or communities forced to use wastewater to irrigate. Recently, there has been a great push in the energy and agricultural industries for the production of biofuels, or those created through the degradation of biological matter of plant or animal origin.\textsuperscript{36} These fuels are desired, because they are environmentally conscious alternatives to the decreasing supply of fossil fuels. Desire for biofuels and biomass, the energy containing biological matter itself, has prompted the scientific agricultural community to genetically modify crops in order to create cultivars that are more suitable for use in the production of biofuels.\textsuperscript{37} Liquid biofuels such as biodiesel and bioethanol are particularly desirable in the energy sector.\textsuperscript{38} Biodiesel is produced from vegetable oils, while ethanol is synthesized using fermented sugar from plant species.\textsuperscript{39} Due to the diverse nature of biofuels, I will focus on ethanol in particular here to demonstrate the nature of the genetic work performed on crops in order to produce better biomass and consequently more biofuel. Corn and maize are two of the main crops used to synthesize ethanol; the abundant sugar stores in the kernels are fermented in order to manufacture the ethanol product. Multiple projects have been conducted to generate a cultivar of corn that is better suited for biofuel synthesis. In one study, the amount of lignin in the plant was reduced in order to decrease the amount or concentration of chemical treatment needed to ready the corn for


\textsuperscript{38} Ruane, “Bioenergy and the Potential Contribution,” 1430.

\textsuperscript{39} Ruane, 1429.
fermentation. Additionally, the enzymes intended for cellulose degradation have been increased in some varieties of corn. During fermentation, it is necessary that cellulose degrades into sucrose, a simple sugar. When the enzymes for the degradation of glucose are present in higher quantities, it is easier and quicker for the fermentation process to occur, thereby making the cultivar a more efficient candidate for ethanol production. These two genetic modifications number among the many strategies that food scientists have used to create efficient, high-energy biomass that can be converted into fuel. The utilization of these GMOs is another way to protect the community, namely those that consume the foodstuffs, where untreated wastewater is used. Because the crops would not be consumed but instead broken down in order to produce fuels, the community would not be threatened by food-based pathogenic risk from the untreated wastewater. By using these plant varieties modified for the effective use of bio-energy, health risk to consumers is avoided without the need to utilize more of the ever-scarce sources of freshwater. It warrants mentioning that the widespread conversion of food crops to bio-energy crops can deplete local food supply, and so it is with careful consideration of local environmental and economic climate that those forced to use untreated wastewater should make the shift to biomass production. Not all food crop production should transition toward biofuel generation as it is necessary to find a responsible balance that not only considers the benefits of safer use of wastewater but also the nutritional needs of the local population. This balance is specific to the needs of the region, and this emphasizes the importance of generating crops that maximize biomass production per hectare, leaving enough arable land for edible crop growth. With this, the suggested education programming should also include a component that explains the need for discretion when transitioning to biofuel crops.

The aforementioned educational programming will decrease the prevalence of disease due to the contaminated water by creating awareness in the local population of the health risks associated with wastewater irrigation in addition to introducing and explaining the option of GMOs. Many of the farmers, families, and consumers are

not aware of the severity of the health risks associated with the use of untreated wastewater. In order for the farmers to implement changes in sanitation habits, they must first know that there is a problem. This awareness would likely encourage the application of improved sanitation practices, as it would be in the better interest of the workers’ families and community to be more sanitation conscious. This increased awareness in farmers could be accomplished by educational programming, which would be sponsored by local or international organizations with ties to agriculture in developing countries. These organizations would also introduce concrete sanitation techniques meant to substantially decrease the threat of infections. The methods of sanitation would be simple, such as wearing gloves or handwashing with spare amounts of freshwater, but small efforts like these can make a marked difference in communities that lacked the measures previously. Distribution and utilization of filters can also be effective for point-of-use filtration of both microbes and toxic trace elements. Additionally, drip-irrigation

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43 Pay Drechsel et al., eds., Wastewater Irrigation and Health: Assessing and Mitigating Risk in Low-income Countries (London, UK: Earthscan; Ottawa, Canada: IWMI; Colombo, Sri Lanka: IDRC, 2009), 43.


techniques have been proven to limit the pathogen transfer to farmers, because the water is applied more locally to the plant itself. This reduces the contact between the farmers and the contaminated water, in turn restricting the water’s pathogenic ability. To address the health risks for those consuming the produce, the sanitation programming should also suggest cooking the food product before consumption; in cases where the food is eaten raw, the outer part of the produce should be peeled or removed to reduce pathogenicity. Such seemingly small suggestions are not only effective for minimizing health risks, but farmers are also more likely to be receptive to these methods as they necessitate little to no effort or monetary investment. In order for the GMO technology to be implemented, the educational programming should also suggest the use of GMOs as well as explain the benefits that such technologies can have for the health of the farmer and their community. Additionally, it is imperative that officials work with the farmers to implement these technologies while keeping in mind the necessity for the continued growth of sufficient food crops. While it remains the farmer’s choice which crops to grow, the programming should help the individuals to learn about responsible biofuel cultivation and its impact on the food supply of the community. After these public health programs are implemented, the farmers, their families, and the community will not only understand the risks of wastewater irrigation but will also be equipped with low-effort techniques to decrease those risks. This

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allows the wastewater to still be utilized without sacrificing the health of the local population.

The use of wastewater for irrigation seems like an environmentally astute answer to the water-scarcity problem that is only becoming more and more serious in our world. Although it does decrease some of the need for freshwater, it too is accompanied by its own drawbacks. I have focused here on the pathogenic risk that is incurred when untreated wastewater is used in developing countries, a phenomenon that occurs as a result of insufficient or non-existent water treatment capabilities. The farmers themselves are at risk for helminth infections as well as fecal coliforms due to their close interaction with the contaminated water and insufficient sanitation practices. In addition to the farmers, their families and communities are at risk when the unhygienic, contaminated produce is sold and consumed without proper treatment. In order to protect the farmers, their families, and the community in general I argue that it is beneficial to employ various genetically modified crop varieties that lessen the farmer’s and community’s exposure to harmful pathogens of untreated wastewater. On one hand, scientists have been able to create cultivars considered to be drought resistant. These crop varieties require less water to thrive, and therefore the total amount of irrigation water needed is decreased. A lesser quantity of wastewater in general limits the farmers’ exposure to the contaminants. On the other hand, the farmer that uses untreated wastewater can also opt to grow genetically modified plants that are especially suited to be used in biofuel production. By growing crops that will not be consumed, the risk due to ingesting contaminated food is avoided; the farmers do not lose income, and the public is protected. In addition to increasing the use of GMOs, it is also important to sponsor public health programs led by agricultural organizations. These would greatly decrease the chance of infection by raising awareness of the risks as well as providing concrete ways to curb the pathogenic power of wastewater in crop cultivation. The use of wastewater is an ingenious solution to freshwater-scarcity in our current world, although it is necessary to consider the pathogenicity of untreated wastewater that is often used extensively in developing countries. By employing sanitation education programs, farm-based sanitation practices, and GMOs to decrease exposure to untreated wastewater, the pathogenic dangers of wastewater irrigation can be diminished. The issue
remains vastly important as the use of wastewater becomes more prevalent, and it is imperative that the health risks and health needs of those in developing countries are not forgotten or neglected in favor of protecting urban based capital.
Bibliography


α-helices in Prion Protein Monomer and Dimers Drive the Interaction with the Cell Membrane Interface

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Introduction

Prions propagate through the conversion of the cellular form of the protein, PrP<sub>C</sub>, to the infectious form, PrP<sub>Sc</sub> (Prusiner 1991; Büeler et al. 1993; Caughey and Raymond 1991). Prions can replicate without nucleic acids and lead to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE), a form of fatal neurodegenerative diseases in mammals (Prusiner et al. 1998). Cellular PrP<sub>C</sub> is attached to the outer leaflet of the membrane with an extracellular glycoprotein glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) anchor (Stahl et al. 1987). The physiological role of prion proteins remains unclear, however the conformation of PrP<sub>C</sub> has been analyzed using structural biophysics techniques. The N-terminus of the cellular prion protein is flexible, while the C-terminus has a globular domain and includes three α-helices and a β-sheet. The misfolded form, PrP<sub>Sc</sub>, is rich in α-sheet but an atomic level structure has not been resolved yet (Pan et al. 1993). Though the mechanism of prion conversion and propagation is not well understood, polymerization of prion proteins suggests that a misfolded seed triggers the misfolding of PrP<sub>C</sub>. The cell membrane influences the conformational conversion of PrP<sub>C</sub> to PrP<sub>Sc</sub> through lipid raft interactions (Vey et al. 1996). To better understand the conversion of prion proteins from the cellular form to the infectious form, it is essential to examine first the principles that drive prion protein monomer- and small oligomers-membrane interactions. Previous reports have not been conclusive on
the driving interactions at the atomic level between PrP\textsuperscript{C}, small oligomers and the membrane. The factors driving these interactions are complicated by the competition between intra- and inter-protein, protein-membrane, and solvent dynamics at the membrane interface, coupled with effects derived from crowding and ionic strength.

To provide insight into PrP\textsuperscript{C} to PrP\textsuperscript{Sc} conversion, we generated \textit{in silico} a set of PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimers to examine PrP\textsuperscript{C}-PrP\textsuperscript{C} interactions that could lead to the formation of the misfolded seed. In this scenario, we aim at testing how PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimers interact with the surface of the cell membrane. We hypothesize that PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimerization alters the modes of interaction between PrP\textsuperscript{C} and the cell membrane. To test our hypothesis, we investigated the electrostatics contribution to the free energy of the PrP\textsuperscript{C}-membrane interaction. We used a continuum electrostatics approach to implement calculations of the protein-membrane free energy of interaction at various protein orientations with respect to the membrane interface. Our results help elucidate factors that affect initial prion protein oligomerization and will aid in the design of experiments to monitor prion seed formation.

\textbf{Methods}

We downloaded the mouse PrP\textsuperscript{C} structure from the protein data bank (www.rcsb.org, pdb id: 2L39). We used the ZDOCK online docking server (http://zdock.umassmed.edu/) to construct five energetically favorable PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimer structures. The input in ZDOCK was the 2L39.pdb file. Three dimers structures were created using the M-ZDOCK symmetric multimer docking subserver (http://zdock.umassmed.edu/m-zdock/), wherein the 2L39 file was similarly inputted. See Figure 1 and Table 1 for images and complete descriptions of dimers. The visual molecular dynamics software (http://www.ks.uiuc.edu/Research/vmd/) was used to visualize the PrP\textsuperscript{C} monomer and dimer structures.
Figure 1. Dimers generated with the ZDOCK server. Monomer A is colored red for each dimer and monomer B is colored blue for each dimer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monomer A - Monomer B Interaction</th>
<th>Lowest Energy Membrane Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimer 2: Asymmetric. Third α-helices on both monomers interacting.</td>
<td>Monomers A and B asymmetrically interacting with membrane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimer 5: Symmetric. Third α-helices on both monomers interacting.</td>
<td>Monomers A and B symmetrically interacting with membrane.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Dimers generated with the ZDOCK server. The column Monomer A – Monomer B Interaction refers to the main modes of binding between the two monomers of the dimer. The column Lowest Energy Membrane Interaction refers to the main modes of interaction of each monomer element of the dimer with the membrane.

We then used monomer 2L39.pdb and the ZDOCK generated dimers as input into APBSmem (https://apbsmem.sourceforge.io/), a continuum electrostatics software, to calculate the total free energy of interaction between the protein and a model membrane. The model lipid membrane corresponds to a dielectric slab, representing the hydrophobic matrix of the membrane, capped by a polar region, representing lipid headgroups. The resolution of the membrane model is intended to probe an average effect on the protein-membrane interactions and therefore does not account for explicit membrane lipid composition. The parameters used in the
electrostatics calculations were adapted from the continuum calculations done by Latorraca et al. (2014), which are consistent with the standard parametrization used by others to validate the computational protocol we used. Table 2 shows the parameters used in our calculations.

**Free energy calculations**

In APBSmem, the total free energy of the protein interacting with the membrane was calculated using the following equation:

\[ \Delta G_{\text{total}} = \Delta G_{\text{elec}} + \Delta G_{\text{np}} \]

where \( \Delta G_{\text{elec}} \) is the electrostatic cost required to move the charged protein from an aqueous solution with a high dielectric constant into the low dielectric environment of the membrane, and \( \Delta G_{\text{np}} \) is the nonpolar energy gained by removing the protein from an aqueous solution and inserting it into the membrane (Marcoline et al. 2015; Callenberg et al. 2010). In this model, low \( \Delta G_{\text{total}} \) values represent energetically favorable conformations. We calculated \( \Delta G_{\text{total}} \) values of the protein-membrane interaction of the PrP\( ^C \) monomer and dimer structures rotated every 15° and 30°, respectively, around the x- and y-axes. To account for the larger size of the dimer structures, we set a greater angle of rotation for calculations. Data collected from the monomer rotated around the x-axis are compiled in Figure 2(a). Data collected from the dimers rotated around the y-axis are compiled in Figure 3(a). Error analysis showed that error bars are too small for plot visualization.

The electrostatic cost (\( \Delta G_{\text{elec}} \)) is derived from the Poisson-Boltzmann equation and is given by:

\[ \Delta G_{\text{elec}} = E_{P,I} + E_P + E_I \]

where \( E_{P,I} \) is the electrostatic energy of the protein and ions embedded in the membrane, \( E_P \) is the electrostatic energy of the protein itself in the membrane, and \( E_I \) is the electrostatic energy of the ions in the solvent.

The nonpolar energy (\( \Delta G_{\text{np}} \)) is calculated by the following equation:

\[ \Delta G_{\text{np}} = a \cdot (A_{\text{mem}} - A_{\text{sol}}), \]

where \( a = 0.028 \text{ (kcal/mol)/Å}^2 \) is a constant of proportionality, \( A_{\text{mem}} \) is the protein solvent accessible surface area (SASA) in the membrane, and \( A_{\text{sol}} \) is the total protein SASA in solution. All energies were
calculated with respect to the protein interacting with a model membrane in an aqueous solution of pH 7. The software used represents physiological pH as a pH of 7. Physiological ion composition was accounted for using the counter ion concentration of 0.15M (see Table 2). Previous calculations performed in our group showed no measurable effect on the total free energy in a range of 0.05 to 0.2 M ion concentration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APBSmem parameters</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grid dimensions</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Fine grid lengths</td>
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<td>Counter ion concentration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membrane head group dielectric constant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aqueous solution dielectric constant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solvent probe radius</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membrane head group thickness</td>
<td>9.0 Å</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Parameters for APBSmem electrostatics calculations

Determining protein residue interactions

We defined monomer protein residues interacting with the membrane as any residues with a Ca atom at a distance less than 15Å with respect to the midline of the model membrane. For dimers, we used a
Ca$_\alpha$ atom cutoff distance of 12Å. To account for the larger radius of the dimer structures relative to the monomer, we lowered the length set to designate membrane proximity. We then identified secondary structure elements of the monomer and dimers stabilized the protein-membrane interaction.

**Results and Discussion**

**Third \(\alpha\)-helix in monomer PrP\(C\) lies parallel to membrane interface**

For the monomer form of PrP\(C\), the lowest energy conformation when the protein is rotated across the x-axis occurred at 90° of rotation (Figure 2). The lowest energy conformation when the protein is rotated across the y-axis occurred at 345° of rotation. In the most energetically favorable monomer orientation, the first \(\alpha\)-helix (orange) is partially embedded in the membrane, and the third \(\alpha\)-helix (blue) is parallel to the membrane interface (Figure 2b). Polar and charged residues contribute to the favorable electrostatic interactions at the monomer-membrane interface.

![Figure 2](image)

Figure 2. (a) Plot of collected total free energies of monomer rotated around the x-axis every 15°. Red arrow points to the orientation with the lowest total free energy (90°). (b) Overall lowest energy monomer orientation at 90° of rotation around the x-axis. First \(\alpha\)-helix (orange) in PrP\(C\) monomer is partially embedded in membrane. Third \(\alpha\)-helix (blue) lies parallel to the membrane interface. Second \(\alpha\)-helix not interacting.

**\(\alpha\)-helices drive PrP\(C\) dimers-membrane interactions**
For all five dimers, the most energetically favorable orientations show one monomer (monomer A) facing the membrane interface. In monomer A, the second α-helix lies parallel to the membrane interface and the third α-helix is partially embedded into the membrane. The residue that contributes to the favorable electrostatic interactions in all dimer orientations is Glutamate 200, located at the beginning of the third α-helix (in monomer A).

Dimer 2 corresponds to the most energetically favorable orientation of all (Figures 3 and 4). The second α-helix (green) lies parallel to the membrane, and the first (orange) and third (blue) α-helices on monomer A are embedded in the membrane. The first α-helix (orange) of monomer B lies parallel to the membrane. Dimer 5 corresponds to the only dimer orientation in which the monomers interact symmetrically with the membrane. All residues close to the membrane in the second and third α-helices are the same on both monomers. The helix orientations in all other energetically favorable dimer orientations are asymmetrical (Dimers 1-4; see Table 1). In these dimer orientations, the first and third α-helices are partially embedded into the membrane.

Figure 3. (a) Plot of collected total free energies of five dimer structures rotated around the x-axis every 30°. Red arrow points to the lowest energy dimer orientation (30°). (b) Dimer 2 rotated 30° around x-axis relative to model membrane axes. Dimer is colored by secondary structure: α-helices are pink, β-sheets are yellow, and bends are blue.
Figure 4. Dimer 2 is the most energetically favorable PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimer conformation relative to the model membrane. (a) Top view of the dimer. Monomer A (left) features one helix interaction where the first alpha helix (orange) parallel to the membrane interface. Monomer B (right) has all three alpha helices interacting with the membrane. The first \( \alpha \)-helix (orange) and third \( \alpha \)-helix (blue) are partially embedded, while the second alpha helix (green) is parallel to the membrane interface. (b) Side view of the dimer.

**Dimerization favors second \( \alpha \)-helix parallel to membrane interface**

PrP\textsuperscript{C} monomer shows energetically favorable orientations with the first \( \alpha \)-helix partially embedded and the third \( \alpha \)-helix parallel to the interface. In contrast, PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimers show energetically favorable orientations with the second \( \alpha \)-helix parallel to the interface and the first and third \( \alpha \)-helices partially embedded.

The residues common to the monomer and dimer orientations are Aspartate 144, Arginine 148, and Tyrosine 150 in the first alpha helix. These residues in monomer A contribute to the dimer-membrane interactions in Dimers 1, 2, and 4.

The differences in helix residue interactions between the monomer and dimer orientations result in differences in \( \Delta G_{\text{Total}} \) values. The electrostatic cost (\( \Delta G_{\text{elec}} \)) of moving the dimers from the aqueous solvent into the membrane is greater than the \( \Delta G_{\text{elec}} \) of moving the monomer into the membrane. Therefore, more energy is needed to place PrP\textsuperscript{C} dimers at the membrane surface, resulting in increased \( \Delta G_{\text{Total}} \) values for protein-membrane interactions (Equation 1). In contrast, the nonpolar energy (\( \Delta G_{\text{np}} \)) of the dimers favor partial protein insertion, resulting in lowered \( \Delta G_{\text{Total}} \) values. The \( \Delta G_{\text{np}} \)
favoring dimer insertion and $\Delta G_{\text{elec}}$ favoring solvent interactions counteract each other resulting in restricted dimer motion.

**Conclusions**

We performed a series of continuum electrostatics calculations to examine the effect of prion protein PrP$^C$ dimerization on PrP$^C$-membrane interactions. These calculations resulted from a fast sampling of orientations to predict how the prion protein interacts with the cell membrane. We are currently running higher resolution simulations that account for the effects of membrane lipid composition on the protein-membrane interaction.

We propose that dimerization modulates PrP$^C$-membrane interactions by favoring structural elements that were not seen near the membrane in the monomer scenario. The added helix interactions in the dimer orientations lead to increased $\Delta G_{\text{Total}}$ values. Most likely, the orientations with higher $\Delta G_{\text{Total}}$ values have more potential to misfold into the PrP$^{Sc}$ isoform in order to move to lower energy conformations. Therefore, we postulate that the increased $\Delta G_{\text{Total}}$ values arising from PrP$^C$ polymerization results in the protein favoring the conversion to a lower energy PrP$^{Sc}$ aggregate.

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