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**A War on Two Fronts: How *Jarhead* is Reflective of and Impacted by the Gulf War and the War on Terror and the Periods in Which They Happened**

**By Nicolas Piacente**

In his memoir of the 1991 Gulf War, *Jarhead*, former U.S. Marines sniper Anthony Swofford concludes by saying, "This will never end. Sorry."[1] The film adaptation of the same name directed by Sam Mendes concludes with the line, "We are still in the desert."[2] Though similar, these lines reveal a change in conditions between mid-1990s America and that of 2005, after the U.S. military returned to Iraq. The film, while retaining some of the themes from the memoir, adapted these to a new context with the War on Terror. The purpose of this paper will be to examine these themes in the film, these messages that can tell us about the Gulf War, the subject of the film, and the time in which it was made. In effect, the question we will be asking is, can the film *Jarhead* be utilized as a primary and secondary source, and to what degree does it serve those purposes?

Though brief, the Gulf War stood out from the more controversial conflicts that came before and after it in that it faced less resistance from organized anti-war movements, such as those during the Vietnam war. Around-the-clock coverage from television journalists often critical of the George H.W. Bush administration's prosecution of the war also set it apart from Vietnam and War on Terror coverage. With it came many advancements in modern warfare, as well as questions about the future of American involvement in the Middle East. Should the U.S. remain involved in the area's conflicts? Is it right to invade nations with the goal of removing terrorism? Following the September 11 terror attacks, these questions would be answered in force on October 7, 2001 with the invasion of Afghanistan by Coalition forces, initiated by the George W. Bush Administration of the US. The specific question of Saddam Hussein would be answered beginning on March 20, 2003 with an invasion of Iraq, also by Coalition forces. This paper will focus on how Jarhead connected the two separate military actions in Iraq. Though distinct, the Iraq Wars of 1991 and 2003 share common themes. Both took place in the Middle East, in the same general region, and both were punctuated by changing military and political situations in the United States. The 1990s were a decade of prosperity, of renewed hope. Americans felt that they could do no wrong, and with emerging mediums like video games and the Internet, their hopes for the future knew no bounds[3]. In contrast, the early 2000s were marked with a new despair in the United States. Terrorism emerged as a legitimate threat, rights were restricted to combat it, and new wars were on the horizon. Similarly, both wars had different results. The Gulf War was considered a rapid military success, while the Iraq War's result is still being debated over today.[4]

*Jarhead*, whilst taking place in the Gulf War, offers commentary on both conflicts. Swofford's memoir was written and published before the Iraq War even began, but the film adaptation was released in 2005, two years after the beginning of the Iraq War. *Jarhead* also lies in a unique time in comparison to other Gulf War films. *Three Kings* and *Courage Under Fire* were produced between 1991 and 2001.*Courage Under Fire* in particular was less critical of the mission itself. These conditions place *Jarhead* in a unique position to commentate on multiple wars and multiple time periods in U.S. history. Differences between the novel and the film also shed insight into *Jarhead's* usefulness as a primary and secondary source.

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[1] Swofford, Anthony, Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles (Scribner, New York, New York 2003) 255

[2] *Jarhead*. Directed by Sam Mendes. Universal City: Universal Pictures, 2005.

[3] Berman, Milton, and Tracy Irons-Georges, *The Nineties in America* (Salem Press, Pasadena, California, 2009)

[4] Kaufman, Joyce P., *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy* (Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Maryland, 2010), 149

The ultimate purpose of this paper will be to analyze *Jarhead*'s effectiveness as a primary and secondary source, and what it specifically says about the time it takes place in, and the time in which it was made. This paper will combine analysis from the film text, analysis of the memoir in which it was based on, outside analysis of the film and other Gulf War films, the screenplay of the film, and several historical sources that analyze both time periods of focus in this paper, and changes between those periods. To analyze the historical accuracy of the film text, I will compare military strategy between American and Iraqi forces in the two wars and examine how the events in the film measure up to the events as described from Swofford's memoir. Differences between the screenplay and original memoir will be analyzed to accurately contrast the times in which both were made, respectively, and if the time in which the film was made affected the final product. Finally, the messages of the film will be decoded in order to gain insight into how it comments on and portrays the Iraq War despite being set in the Gulf War. I will conclude that *Jarhead* can serve as an accurate primary source for the Gulf War in showing the experience the average U.S. soldier faced and the overall strategies and notable events during the war. I will also conclude that *Jarhead* shows the general disapproval of the Iraq War by the American population at the time in which it was made, the frustration the military faced in failing to quell the subsequent insurgency, and how the film implicitly references what occurred during the Iraq War.

The Persian Gulf War, consisting of the preceding Operation Desert Shield, and the main combat operation Desert Storm, had all the buildup and participation necessary to become a major conflict. On August 2, 1990, after failed talks regarding a settlement for oil drilling in Iraq on behalf of Kuwaiti oil companies, the fourth largest army in the world under direct command of Saddam Hussein of Iraq invaded Kuwait and crushed all resistance within twelve hours. The U.S. and a coalition of major world powers (this pairing being henceforth referred to as "the Coalition") countered this move with a massive aerial campaign beginning on January 16, 1991, with a ground invasion a little over a month later, only taking four days for Kuwait to be liberated. Iraq was not prepared to handle the massive aerial and mechanized assault posed by the Coalition forces and soon retreated after suffering heavy losses. Saddam Hussein's formerly intimidating army now whimpered back to its home country in defeat and shame. The Coalition suffered 1,000 casualties, less than 1% of Iraq's total.[5] Perhaps it is because of the short time span and lack of lost soldiers from the war that it is often overlooked or never deeply discussed in the American conscience, despite taking place less than 30 years ago. Perhaps it is fitting then that the soldiers in *Jarhead* do not get to experience much of the war despite being directly involved in it. The film depicts no battles, and the protagonist does not even get a chance to fire his rifle. Indeed, much of what happens in *Jarhead*, and what makes it unique compared to other war films, is this lack of conflict and focus on an individual soldier's menial tasks. That is not to say the film glosses over history or historical allusions. The protagonist visits the famous "Highway of Death", and the film contains the famous images of the burning Kuwaiti oil fields. However, to understand why this film depicts infantry during the Gulf War the way it does, we first must examine strategy and tactics during the war as well as the original autobiographical source.

Swofford's memoir offers readers a glimpse into the life of an average American soldier during the Gulf War, and because the film is directly based off of it, the potential use of *Jarhead* as a primary source can be analyzed in comparing both. Is the film reflective of the historical events depicted in the memoir? In terms of major events, the film captures most of these accurately. Smaller things that are inaccurate that contribute to the overall theme of the film will be discussed later in the paper. Ironically, nothing much happens in the film that is reflective of the events in the war itself, however this stays true to what actually happened to Swofford, as he did not experience any combat during the war. As a result, there is not much to comment on regarding overarching historical accuracy. Coincidentally, much of what is remembered about the war in our current cultural consciousness is covered by Swofford's experience in

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[5] Atkinson, Rick, Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War (Houghton Mifflin, New York, New York 1993)

the war. Swofford's visit to the infamous "Highway of Death", a Kuwaiti highway in which retreating Iraqi forces were bombed by Coalition air forces[6], is depicted in the film. Swofford visited the burning Kuwaiti oil wells, lit by retreating Iraqi forces[7], and this event can be seen in the film as well. One event that was slightly changed for the film was a friendly fire incident that actually happened to Swofford. He and his fellow soldiers, while advancing in the deserts of Kuwait were fired upon by friendly tanks, who destroyed a vehicle and injured a few soldiers[8]. In the film, the outcome is the same, but the tanks are changed to an air attack by A-10 jets. This is representative of the many friendly-fire incidents during the war, which caused a quarter of U.S. deaths[9]. Swofford's mission to assassinate the Iraqi commanders was real, as was his denial by his commanders to fire a shot. The airport where the commanders were, however, was never levelled by an air strike as in the film, but was rather assaulted and secured by U.S. infantry. Despite changes in this event, it is still representative of the overall use and focus on air power during the war.

In taking these depicted events and changes into mind, I contend that *Jarhead* does serve as an accurate secondary historical source of the Gulf War. The film shows many of Swofford's experiences during Operation Desert Storm accurately and gives the viewer an understanding of several effects of the war. In this sense, the film can be viewed as an accurate primary source because any changes, most minor, do not change the understanding the viewer has about the war into something that contradicts what actually occurred. Many small details are omitted or added in the film that cause a different interpretation of Swofford than what is present in the memoir. For example, an actual incident where Swofford contemplated suicide and put his rifle in his mouth, only to be discovered by a fellow soldier, is omitted.[10] The Christmas party scene that shows Swofford in a jovial, social manner never actually happened, nor did the scene where he encounters a horse near a burning oil well. It is unknown as to why these scenes were added, perhaps to make Swofford more enjoyable to watch for the audience and to add a profound moment to make the film seem more interesting, respectively. In the sense of analyzing Anthony Swofford historically during the Gulf War, the film does not accurately depict the man, both in terms of his experience and thoughts, so it does not serve as an accurate primary source in this regard.

Before continuing to the next topic of this paper, to show the accuracy and usefulness of *Jarhead* as a primary historical source, a comparison to other Gulf War films can be made. The Gulf War is not a popular setting for film, but there are still a few major productions that use it as a setting or plot device. *Courage Under Fire* is a completely fictional film that tells the story of a U.S. Army lieutenant trying to solve the mystery of what happened to a downed helicopter crew during the war. The film takes place after the Gulf War and is mainly concerned with the tragedies of war itself, only using the war as a setting to place these ideas in. The other major film besides it and *Jarhead* is *Three Kings*, a satirical story that takes place after the Gulf War and involves U.S. soldiers searching for Kuwaiti gold held by Iraqi forces. While Kuwaiti gold was stolen by Iraqi forces and returned, the story of the film is entirely fictional. Technically, *Jarhead* is the only one of these films to actually take place during the Gulf War for longer than five minutes. What makes it thematically different from these other two films? What does it say about the Gulf War that differs from these films?

When the Gulf War began, Americans were at a high point in their history. The 1990s were a period of great prosperity for the country, the economy was booming, burgeoning industries such as the Internet and video games showed new promise for an emerging digital-based society, and things were relatively peaceful for the nation.[11] The war seemed completely justified to the American people:

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[6] Atkinson, *Crusade*
[7] Atkinson, *Crusade*
[8] Swofford, *Jarhead*
[9] Atkinson, *Crusade*
[10] Swofford, *Jarhead*
[11] Berman, Milton, and Irons-Georges, *The Nineties*

Kuwait was an ally, they were attacked, so the natural response was to push the enemy back to their own country. With the war being so far away from home as well, Americans figured their daily lives would not be changed and did not have much of an issue with it. Vietnam had passed nearly two decades before and the scars seemed to heal, although not completely, protests still persisted on a much smaller scale than that war, though American support for the war was still very high.[12] These feelings would persist through the end of the war. Little American casualties, a completion of the main objective to liberate Kuwait, and the swiftness with which it was accomplished all served to ease American minds about intervening in Kuwait's affairs. In media, particularly film, as a result of these factors, the Gulf War became something of what I refer to as a "forgotten war", that is, a war not often explored in American media, especially compared to more "popular" wars like Vietnam, or World War Two. The Korean War and World War One are also examples of wars not commonly explored in American media, or in the latter's case, from an American perspective. Films to explore the Gulf War made before *Jarhead*, as with the examples previously stated, do not delve deep into the inner workings of the war, specifically how soldiers felt during the war and what experiences they went through.

*Jarhead* provides the audience, through Anthony Swofford, a view of what the average U.S. soldier was like during the war. Swofford's lack of combat during the war was not an uncommon experience for U.S. soldiers. Characterizing the war was a large focus on vehicular, instead of infantry, combat by the Coalition forces, specifically tanks and aircraft. In fact, the war saw the largest ever tank battle fought by U.S. marines, as well as several other large tank battles[13]. There is a cut in *Jarhead* between a scene of Swofford being briefed about Operation Desert Storm and a tank moving towards the screen and to the battlefield, no doubt a representation of their large use in the conflict. Air power, however, is perhaps even more influential on the conflict and Coalition soldiers than ground vehicles. The aerial campaign that began the war is one of the largest in history, it's images famously being broadcasted live across major news networks at the time. The aerial attacks crippled much of Iraq's air capability and caused chaos on the ground, which would persist throughout the ground campaign.[14] Air strikes did not cease once Coalition ground forces advanced through Kuwait, and this proved problematic even for Coalition soldiers, both in mental and tragic ways. Several Coalition soldiers were killed during the war by friendly fire from aircraft mistaking them for Iraqi soldiers. The scene in which Swofford's unit is fired upon by friendly A-10s is surely reflective of this fact, with it's previously mentioned change from tanks to jets perhaps reflecting the dominance of air power in the Gulf War. This dominance is hinted at throughout the entire film. One visual motif that can be seen in the film is the frequent presence of aircraft in the background (although sometimes cluttering the frame, such as when the U.S. soldiers arrive in Saudi Arabia at an airport), whether it be helicopters or jets alike. The Highway of Death shown in the film is in of itself a symbol of air power, since it was a frequent target for Coalition airstrikes with the name itself being a reference to how many were killed by airstrikes while travelling on it. A line said by a soldier in the film likewise illustrates this dominance by aircraft: "Zoomies are going to win the war all by themselves."[15] The dominance of vehicular combat as well as the rapid retreat of Iraqi ground forces soon after the ground campaign began prevented several infantry units from even firing their rifles at the enemy. One soldier in the film says "by the time we dial in our rifles, the war will be a mile down the road."[16] Indeed, for many the war simply moved too quickly for them to ever get the chance at combat. Swofford himself never is able to fire a shot or get the kill he so desires, coming so close to the chance only to have his commanding officer order him not to fire a shot. The film provides a solid overview of the frustration U.S. soldiers faced during the war over their lack of action.

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[12] Atkinson, *Crusade*, 493-494

[13] Atkinson, *Crusade*

[14] Schneider, Barry R, *Deterrence and Saddam Hussein: Lessons from the 1990-1991 Gulf War* (USAF Counterproliferation Center, Air University) 2009.

[15] Broyles, William. *Jarhead*: Script Fly, 2004.

[16] Broyles, *Jarhead*

As a result of this lack of action, much of the film is dedicated to life within military bases. Soldiers are seen bantering with each other, frequently reading books, and even playing several football games. Much of these events are ripped straight from Swofford's actual experiences during the war and serve to show the boredom that soldiers had to face. *Jarhead* overall shows an accurate portrayal of the day-to-day life of an American soldier during the Gulf War, highlighting their frustration, boredom, and their seeming rejection from the war itself through the use of air and ground vehicles. The film is an effective primary source for the Gulf War in this regard.

When the Gulf War ended, the Coalition of western nations seemed to return to normal. After all, support existed for the war and it was fought nowhere close to their borders. Kuwait suffered thousands dead militarily but the country did not require much rebuilding after the war. The oil well fires caused by Iraqi forces were soon capped and the resulting pollution cleaned. Iraq, especially it's civilian population suffered greatly, however. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 Iraqi civilians were killed, mainly due to air bombings, with as many as 35 thousand military deaths. Iraq's infrastructure, specifically it's electrical power stations and factories, was heavily damaged by bombings. This, in combination with UN imposed sanctions, caused hyperinflation in the country and led to widespread poverty. Iraq was also forced to undergo UN weapons inspections, to ensure that it was not hiding any WMD's, weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear missiles and chemical weapons.[17] The latter kind was used during the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran War (also commonly referred to as the "First Gulf War") and the U.S. wanted to ensure that these weapons could not be used, especially towards Israel, a long-standing U.S. ally in the region. The inspections resulted in what was believed to be all of Iraq's WMD's destroyed, but Iraq impeded inspectors frequently and withdrew cooperation completely in 1998. On the same day in 1998, the U.S. passed the Iraq Liberation Act, which stated the official view of the U.S. to be the removal of Saddam Hussein from power and to support any groups attempting to do so.[18] The hostile relationship between the United States and Iraq was cemented.

After the September 11 attacks, then newly elected President of the U.S., George W. Bush, initiated an invasion of Afghanistan in order to find Osama Bin Laden, the man believed to be the mastermind of the attacks. Later, Bush sought an invasion of Iraq in order to remove Hussein from power. The U.S. government claimed Iraq possessed WMD's, weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear and chemical weapons, despite evidence from even the UN in 2002 stating there were none.[19] Sentiment for an invasion in the public decreased compared to the Gulf War for this reason, yet the majority of the American public supported an invasion. Iraq was invaded without a declaration of war by another coalition of allied nations on March 20, 2003.[20] Swofford's original memoir was released sixteen days before.

The war ended shortly, much like the Gulf War, however, the United States military wanted Iraq to become crippled much more quickly. The U.S. Department of Defense coined the term "Shock and Awe" to describe the new doctrine of rapid simultaneous ground and air assaults utilized in the war.[21] U.S. military strategy up until this point focused on utilizing air power to first soften resistance, then bringing in ground forces to clear the remaining enemy out. However, this doctrine scrapped the time difference and had both forces attack at once, to increase confusion among the enemy. Ultimately, it would prove successful. U.S. military technology advanced considerably in the period since the Gulf War. The M4 rifle largely replaced the ageing M16 rifle as the primary service weapon, offering a considerable upgrade in terms of range, accessory options, and an assortment of others. The Javelin rocket launcher

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[17] Atkinson, *Crusade*, 492-496

[18] Murray, Williamson, and Robert H. Scales, *The Iraq War: a Military History* (Belknap Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2005)

[19] Murray, Williamson, Scales, *The Iraq War*

[20] Murray, Williamson, Scales, *The Iraq War*

[21] Murray, Williamson, Scales, *The Iraq War*, 75

was introduced, which was able to lock onto ground vehicles from afar and did not need to be focused on the target once fired, referred to as a "fire and forget" launcher. Perhaps the most substantial advancement was the introduction of the B2 bomber.[22] Although rarely used since it's introduction, the bomber has massive range, stealth, and ordinance capabilities, and serves as a symbol of America's continued innovation and focus on air power. With these new tools being available, the U.S. military had little trouble in securing the country.

Elsewhere in the world, asymmetrical warfare became ever more popular. Asymmetrical warfare is a blanket term for guerilla warfare tactics, used against a highly advanced army by a smaller army. This could involve ambushes, surprise attacks, attacks by smaller military units, and infiltration tactics.[23] This strategy was used by insurgents all over the world prior to the Invasion of Iraq, even used in Afghanistan by insurgent forces following the U.S. invasion there. Often it was used mainly to discourage enemy forces from continuing to fight, rather than to destroy the enemy army. Ironically, colonial forces during the American Revolution even used it, leading to America's victory. Iraqi commanders considered using this tactic during the invasion, but ultimately used conventional warfare strategies. They fought similarly as they had in the Gulf War, poorly. The Iraqi military was plagued with desertions, infighting, and reports of executions within the ranks, the large technological disadvantage and surprise of the invasion did not help matters. The invasion lasted one month before major combat operations ended, with Saddam Hussein in hiding and Iraq defeated. Following the invasion, U.S. soldiers remained in the country to ensure a peaceful transition towards democracy in the country, although this would not come to pass.[24] A massive insurgency soon embroiled the country that would occupy U.S. forces there for 8 years. By 2005, hundreds of U.S. soldiers had been killed, with no end in sight for the insurgency. American support of the initial invasion had fallen to record lows and the majority of the population viewed it as a mistake. The post-invasion insurgency sparked major protests across the nation, and many became disillusioned with the U.S. military actions in Iraq in general.[25] *Jarhead*'s release occurred during this tumultuous period.

Released on November 4, 2005, over 2 years since the insurgency in Iraq began, *Jarhead* was sort of an anomaly in the current cultural landscape. A war with Iraq was the subject, but not the one that had recently happened, rather the Gulf War of 1991. To the movie-going American audience, this may have seemed a strange choice. However, despite being about a different conflict entirely, *Jarhead* offered much to say about the Iraq War, both the invasion and following insurgency. Can Jarhead be used as a secondary source on the Iraq War? What does it tell us about the social conditions in which it was made?

To start off, some themes Jarhead has that applied to the Gulf War can still apply to the Iraq War. However, the context in which these themes are analyzed changes, and thus their meanings differ. The previously discussed dominance of air power shown in the film also applies to the Gulf War because of the prolonged aerial campaign in that war, but also applies to commentary on the Iraq War because air power was also dominantly used there. Similarly, the frustration of the individual soldier can also apply to the Iraq War, specifically the ongoing insurgency at the time. As discussed previously, this theme manifests in the Gulf War due to the lack of action an average U.S. soldier faced. During the Iraq War, however, there was no shortage of combat because of the ensuing insurgency. Soldiers had to constantly be alert, ready to fend off an insurgent ambush, or be on the lookout for traps, such as bombs placed on frequently travelled roads. Frustration stemmed from the sheer endurance of the enemy and the seeming failure of U.S. forces to stop insurgent attacks. The Iraq War was not just a conflict of Coalition versus insurgents, but rather of conventional warfare versus guerilla warfare. We know now that the U.S. was

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[22] Murray, Williamson, Scales, *The Iraq War*, 76

[23] Haney, Eric L., and Brian Thomsen, *Beyond Shock and Awe: Warfare in the 21st Century* (Berkley Caliber, Berkeley, California, 2007)

[24] Murray, Williamson, Scales, *The Iraq War*

[25] Haney, Thomsen, *Beyond Shock and Awe*

never able to stop the insurgency utilizing traditional overwhelming force, especially "Shock and Awe" tactics, however this was not considered before the war began. As a result, soldiers felt helpless, and support for the war against the insurgents in Iraq waned domestically.[26] These feelings manifested in several scenes in *Jarhead*. Swofford not getting his kill as mentioned before represents his "lack of action", or, in the context of the Iraq War, his lack of contributing to quelling the insurgency. The first scene in which this theme occurs is when Swofford is almost branded by his fellow soldiers. However, the brand was never lit and was used to scare Swofford, who is never shown ever receiving his brand. Another scene that reflects this theme is when the U.S. soldiers are at a Christmas party and one soldier accidentally lights some explosives on fire, setting them off. The soldiers rushed to the scene, expecting enemy soldiers, but are dismayed to find nothing of the sort.

Another theme present in the film, although to a lesser extent is the dehumanization of the individual soldier. The film is somewhat ambiguous over why Swofford joined the Marine Corps in the first place. In real life, Swofford joined because of his father being in the military and wanting to not disappoint him, but this is omitted from the film, as is much of Swofford's background before and during his military service. Shortly after the September 11 attacks, military recruitment soared, so much so that the military draft did not need to be put into effect because so many Americans volunteered to join. The ambiguity over why Swofford joined the military in the film serves as a thinly veiled reference to this recruitment boom. Swofford's dehumanization is represented in two key events in the film. In one scene, Swofford and many other soldiers are watching a screening of *Apocalypse Now*, a 1979 Vietnam War film. The part they are watching during this scene involves U.S. soldiers gunning down Vietnamese civilians and soldiers alike. The U.S. soldiers watching the film cheer and laugh, and Swofford joins in, symbolizing his final step into becoming dehumanized, he does not show remorse for inhuman actions. Similarly, there is a scene where a soldier plays a videotape he received from home to show other soldiers, but it turns out to be a video of his wife having sex with another man instead of the movie he expected. The soldier is distraught and leaves the room, and Swofford encourages the other soldiers to watch the film again. This shows he does not show common decency anymore and seeks to engage in vices, this being watching others have sexual intercourse. So, what does this theme show about the Iraq War? The Iraq War was rife with many controversies over how Coalition forces handled the insurgency. Civilian casualties were caused and the poor treatment of Iraqi prisoners in prisons like Guantanamo Bay, such as the use of waterboarding and beatings, was a hot subject of debate.[27] The theme could show how U.S. soldiers became less concerned with upholding the initial objectives of the conflict and losing their principles that the country represented, thus causing heinous acts such as torture and occasional civilian killings (accidental or otherwise).

With *Jarhead* being an adaptation of a previous work set in a completely different time period from which it was made, much of the commentary on the period in which it was made would have to stem from differences from the actual source material. There are several minor additions to the film that never happened in real life that make implicit reference to the Iraq War. The line "One day soon, Saddam Hussein is going to regret pulling this sorry shit," follows a lieutenant colonel briefing U.S. soldiers who mentions Iraq's previous use of chemical weapons.[28] This briefing never actually occurred. The inclusion of these two elements in succession is no doubt a reference to Saddam Hussein's fall from power during the Iraq War, a war caused by the claim that Iraq still possessed chemical weapons. A similar line is stated towards the end of the film by a U.S. soldier, who says "We took out Saddam, he's history!".[29] Of course, Saddam Hussein still remained in power after the Gulf War, this line being a reference to his later deposition during the Iraq War. In the same scene, a soldier says, "we'll never have to come back to this shithole ever again," this being a thinly veiled joke about how the U.S. would soon

[26] Kaufman, *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*, 156
[27] Kaufman, *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*, 156
[28] Broyles, *Jarhead*, 30
[29] Broyles, *Jarhead*, 114

return to fight Iraq 12 years later.[30] The friendly fire scene described previously in this paper may show to reflect how civilian casualties were caused by air attacks, although it is most likely commentary on the Gulf War rather than the Iraq War. Perhaps the most telling addition to the film is the final scene. Swofford narrates over several vignettes of the characters in the film's lives after the war. Swofford is shown at the funeral of a fellow soldier, symbolizing that despite serving alongside him, he could not prevent his friend from being killed. Similarly, another brief scene shows Staff Sergeant Sykes, a major character in the film, actually serving during the War on Terror. This shows that despite his involvement in the Gulf War, he was not able to prevent another war from occurring, thus pulling him back into military service. This could offer a criticism into how the U.S. intervenes into Middle Eastern countries' affairs, a popular discussion topic at the time the film was made. Most of the other omissions and additions from the memoir do not serve as commentary or analysis of the period in which *Jarhead* was made.

Differences from the screenplay of the film also serve as a commentary on the Iraq War. A scene in the screenplay but not the film showed Swofford shooting targets of a terrorist, a Russian general, and a Chinese general was cut.[31] This scene could have been cut because it does not accurately reflect current U.S. foreign policy goals at the time, being that they were focused on the War on Terror rather than combating Russia or China. There are several lines cut from the final film that would show Swofford's attitude towards war, lines that were taken straight from the memoir.[32] These lines would have detracted the focus of the film from being specifically about the Gulf and Iraq Wars and to being a critique of war itself, much like the original memoir. Other than this, none of the changes from screenplay to final film are related to the film's commentary on either war.

Can *Jarhead* be used as a secondary source for the Iraq War and the period in which it was made? Certainly. The film thematically represents several psychological and historical elements of the Iraq War, whether through cut or added scenes, or through visual motifs. Similarly, these themes reflect on the domestic view of the war at the time in which it was made. Overall, *Jarhead*, helps represent what many were feeling and what was happening in Iraq at the time in which it was made, showing it can be used as an accurate secondary source on the subject.

*Jarhead* was well received upon its initial release, but ultimately failed to make a profit at the box office. It's impact on war films following its release, however, is undeniable. Its cinematography of the Middle Eastern deserts would be replicated, and its themes would be expanded upon in Iraq War films such as *The Hurt Locker* and *American Sniper*. Saddam Hussein was eventually captured by U.S. forces and given over to the interim government of Iraq, who executed him on November 5, 2006. In the Middle East, the U.S. would ultimately withdraw from Iraq, only to return in a smaller role several years later to fight terrorist groups there, and the U.S. presence in the Middle East has yet to stop. It appears that we as a nation truly are still in the desert, perhaps it will, in fact, never end.

This paper served to analyze the film *Jarhead*, specifically its ability to be used as a primary source for the Gulf War. The film can be used as one in regards to showing major events and how the average soldier felt during the war, but cannot be used as an accurate source in depicting the historical character of Anthony Swofford. The other main objective was to analyze how *Jarhead* can be used as a secondary source on the Iraq War and the period in time in which the film was made. The film represents themes of the Iraq War such as air dominance, the frustration average soldiers and civilians back home felt with the war, and the futility of fighting such wars. Differences between the original memoir and the film and the screenplay and the final released cut of the film also highlight these themes. *Jarhead* contains a wealth of

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[30] Broyles, *Jarhead*, 114
[31] Broyles, *Jarhead*, 24-25
[32] Broyles, *Jarhead*, 42-43

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**The "Talbot Boys": A Confederate Memory of Maryland's Eastern Shore**

**By Rachel Jessee**

The fate of Confederate monuments in the United States have been in question in recent news, including the "Talbot Boys" statue in the county seat of Talbot County in Eastern Maryland. The "Talbot Boys" statue honors Confederate soldiers from Talbot County; however, this statue is not representative of Talbot County's role in the Civil War. The statue was created with the intent to continue the ideology of the Confederacy and stand as a symbol of white supremacy. It has contributed to a public memory of Talbot County as a Confederate stronghold and erased the memory of Talbot County's participation in the Union army. By reviewing original documents from the statue's creation, I will demonstrate how the statue was intended to be a symbol of oppression. I will compare the original documents to current ones to display how public opinion has changed over the past 100 years but also show how the statue has framed public memory to only include the Confederate contributions.

## Background

The "Talbot Boys" statue is a confederate monument that was created to memorialize the 84 men from Talbot County who fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War. In 1914, Joseph Seth, a local lawyer, started a committee to discuss creating a memorial for those who had fought in for the Confederacy almost 50 years prior.[33] The rectangular granite base of the statue was erected in 1914, while the statue of the young solider was added two years later in 1916. The copper statue depicts a young soldier who is holding a confederate flag proudly. He is also wearing a Confederate States Army (C.S.A.) belt buckle. The young boy stands on top of a pedestal that has 84 names engraved on two sides, one for each of the men who were from Talbot County and fought for the C.S.A. On the front of the piece of granite, it reads "TO THE TALBOT BOYS", the nickname for Talbot County Confederate soldiers.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought an influx of mass-produced war monuments across the United States, the "Talbot Boys" being one of them.[34] This turn-of-the- century impetus to establish Civil War monuments was described as a way for veterans to "relive the glories of a dimming past" and "remember their fallen comrades".[35] The high number of Civil War monuments established in the first decades of the twentieth century were designed to conserve the Confederate ideology and participation in the war. The monuments were mass-produced; many were made by the same companies and many even depicted the same sculpture. This resulted in similar statues across America. The "Talbot Boys" statue was created by W.H. Mullins Sheet Metal Manufacturing Company, whose monuments were all designed from the same catalogue and the same sculptor, John Segesman.[36] The similarities between the statues at this time can be seen in comparing the "Talbot Boys" statue and the Doughboy statue in Funkstown, Maryland.[37] The Doughboy statue was created to memorialize those who had served in WWI. Both were made by the same company, sculptor, and time period but memorialize different events. They also share a similar young solider on top of the statue, memorializing the young lives lost but the "Talbot Boys" memorializes the Confederate soilders while the Doughboy statue honors the WWI veterans. The fact that the "Talbot Boys" statue was a product of mass-production rather than a

[33] Capital News Service, "Legacy of Slavery, segregation influences debate over removing Confederate statue in Maryland," *Baltimore Fishbowl*, August 20, 2018.
[34] Nancy Kurtz, "T-934 Easton Confederate Monument", *Maryland Historical Trust*, 2004.
[35] Dick Wootten, "His gods and heroes were everywhere", *Yesteryears,* Vol. 1, No 42, March 23, 1992, 3.
[36] Wootten, "Gods", 3.
[37] Nancy Kurtz, "WA-I-527 Funkstown World War I Doughboy Monument", Maryland Historical Trust, 2004.

monument designed or manufactured by local residents indicates that the statue itself is not representative of the history of Talbot County. The statue is merely just a part of an effort to continue the Confederate ideology rather than display Talbot County's role in the Civil War.

In order from left to right: [38]*The Talbot Boys Statue* and [39]*Funkstown World War I Doughboy Monument.*

The fate of these mass-produced Confederate monuments has been in question recently. The death of George Floyd and the prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement has sparked debate on whether Confederate monuments should remain in public spaces. The debate over the future of the "Talbot Boys" statue is a part of a national issue of Confederate monuments, questioning whether all Confederate statues should be left as they are or if they should be removed and replaced with symbols of who fought in the Civil War that did not fight to keep slavery institutionalized. The argument for removal focuses on how the monuments uphold the racist ideologies of the C.S.A. and stand as a symbol of white supremacy. Those who wish to keep the "Talbot Boys" argue that it is a part of Talbot County's history and we should reflect on the town's history. Regardless of personal opinions on the matter, it is clear that the "Talbot Boys" stands as a reminder of those who supported and fought to continue slavery even after the North won in the Civil War.

**Historiography**

The debate over the "Talbot Boys" statue is emblematic of a broader academic and public debate about the symbolism and role of the Confederate monuments in the United States. Historians debate how Confederate statues should be interpreted and understood by society. Some argue that the monuments should be interpreted as a reminder of racial injustices and removal would erase the United States' history

[38] Mike Sunnucks, "The Talbot Boys Statue in Easton" Photograph. 2020. Talbot County Courthouse, Easton, Md.
[39] Kurtz, *WA-I-527 Photograph.*

with slavery. Rather, they contend that Confederate monuments were created in order to memorialize figures or events during the Civil War, and these monuments should be interpreted as pieces of history to reflect on. For instance, historian Ryan Newson argues that suggesting the removal of Confederate monuments as a way to combat racism is "both dangerous and theologically insufficient" since it is driven by white guilt and a need to erase history rather than use the statues as a reminder.[40]

While Benjamin Forest and Juliet Johnson have argued that the removal of Confederate statues leads to the forgetting of history, giving reason for keeping Confederate monuments even if they represent parts of history that Americans wish to forget.[41] While it is important to recognize and reflect on historical events, it is also important to compare a monument's interpretation of historical facts to indicate whether its representation of history is factual. I argue that the "Talbot Boys" statue intentionally showcases only part of history, ignoring the duality of Talbot County's role in the Civil war.

In contrast, other scholars also have argued that Confederate monuments stand as a symbol of racism and should be interpreted in a modern-day sense in order to reflect their impact on public memory. Travis Timmerman, a professor of philosophy at Seton Hall University, states in his research that Confederate monuments inflict harm to undeserving groups due to the racist ideology behind the creation of the statue.[42] The symbolism that stands behind the statues is intended to support the advancement of whites and the ideology of the C.S.A., and this symbolism continues to oppress African Americans years later. Similarly, historian Adam Domby states in his book, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory,* that Confederate monuments have been used as a mechanism by white people to "employ a fabricated past, including numerous lies and falsehoods, to celebrate and justify white supremacy."[43] The glorification of Confederate soldiers has affected public memory by representing a side of history that fits their agenda.

As a symbol of the Confederacy, the "Talbot Boys" is in conversation with the historical discourse about Confederate monuments. The statue could be interpreted as a piece of history that should stand as a reminder but also as a symbol of racism that should be removed. However, this paper will argue that the "Talbot Boys" statue is an example of a fabricated past that is falsely memorialized, affecting public memory for years to come. Due to the statue's memorialization of the Confederacy and not the Union, it is unrepresentative of Talbot County's history and stands as a symbol of racism by celebrating the fight to continue slavery.

## Primary Source Analysis

The "Talbot Boys" statue was intended to continue the ideology of the Confederacy and to be a form of intimidation to African Americans living in Talbot County. The driving force behind the creation of a statue to memorialize the men who served from Talbot County was Joseph Seth, a local lawyer in Easton, Maryland. In an article in the Confederate Veteran in January 1916, Seth announced the statue's creation and describes the motivations behind it.[44] He began his article by stating that Talbot County has a

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[40] Ryan Newson, "Epistemological Crises Made Stone: Confederate Monuments and the End of Memory", *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 2. (2017): 1-3.
[41] Benjamin Forest, Juliet Johnson "Confederate Monuments and the Problem of Forgetting", *Cultural geographies 26*, no. 1 (January 2019): 127-131.
[42] Travis Timmerman " A Case for Removing Confederate Monuments", in Bob Fischer (ed.), *Ethics, Left and Right: The Moral Issues that Divide Us* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 513-522.
[43] Adam Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 13-15.
[44] Joseph Seth "Sons of Maryland" *The Confederate Veteran* 24, no .1 (January 1916): 185.

"just pride in her contribution of men to the Confederate cause."[45] This opening statement shows that even 50 years after the end of the Civil War, members of Talbot County still supported the Confederacy and were pleased with their participation in the Civil War. Seth indicated that the "Confederate Cause," or the continuation of the institution of slavery in the United States, was still supported by many in Talbot County in 1914. Additionally, in stating that the county was only proud of their work for the Confederacy, Seth suggested that the community did not feel as if the Union contributions were worth celebrating as the Confederacy was. Later in the article, Seth stated that the statue would be "erected in the public square;" this also indicated that the statue and the ideology it stands for was wildly accepted in the county, since it would be located in the middle of town.[46]

The article announcing the creation of the "Talbot Boys" statue explains how the statue was created in order to show public support of the Confederacy's mission. By promoting the "confederate cause," it showed that the main reasoning for the statue was to remind the region of the Confederate ideology and Talbot County's role in the Civil War. Talbot County Council member Pete Lesher stated that the statue cannot "be seen as anything other than imbued with racism" and called the language Seth used "cringeworthy." [47] The "Talbot Boys" statue was created as a reminder of the Confederacy and stands today as a symbol of racism in Talbot County, Maryland.

However, Talbot County was not just comprised of Confederate supporters as the statue suggests. But the lack of memorialization of those who fought for the Union creates a collective memory around Talbot County's role in the Civil War that is not representative of the actual events. Maurice Halbwachs' study *On Collective Memory* explains how memories are socially constructed and reflect a group's experiences.[48] The "Talbot Boys" statue has contributed to a collective memory of Talbot County as a Confederate stronghold; however, this collective memory is unrepresentative of the County's contributions to both the Confederacy and the Union. The presence of Union soldiers and their creation of Unionville prove that Union soldiers were left out of the collective memory of Talbot County's participation in the Civil War.

Unionville is a town in Talbot County that was founded by 18 Talbot residents who were Union veterans and all formerly enslaved. Unionville was created by former slaves and soldiers who put their lives at risk in order to protect their freedom. The slave sale records of one of the founders, Joseph Gooby, proves that the presence of these Union veterans and freed slaves was ignored in the memorialization of the war.[49] Henry Roberts, another founder of Unionville, stated that upon the return of the Union soldiers there were "no public celebrations, no welcoming party" for their contributions and victory in the war.[50] The lack of celebration for the Union veterans indicates that, as a collective, Talbot County did not support the Union cause. This public opinion continued years later with the memorialization of Talbot County's Confederate efforts, even though there were also Union contributions. Even today, the only memorial to Unionville is a single historical sign. The lack of

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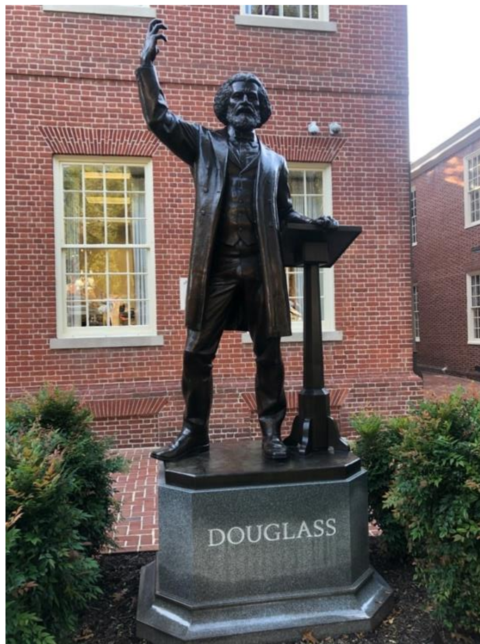
[45] Seth, "Sons."
[46] Ibid.
[47] Justin Moyer, "Purge of Confederate symbol comes for Maryland's 104- year-old 'Talbot Boys' Statue," *The Washington Post*, July 3, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/purge-of-confederate-symbols-comes-for-marylands-104-year-old-talbot-boys-statue/2020/07/02/f7b39edc-bbb3-11ea-86d5-3b9b3863273b_story.html.
[48] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
[49] Gabriella Demczuk, "Unionville Today," photograph. From Natalie Hopkinson, "After the Civil War, African-American Veterans Created a Home of Their Own: Unionville," *Smithsonian Magazine,* September 2017. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/civil-war-african-american-veterans-town-own-unionville-180964398/
[50] William Henry Roberts, "Unionville Ceremony, November 11,1998" *Hunter Papers* (Easton: The Maryland Room of the Talbot County Public Library, 1998).

memorialization of the 18 Union veterans affected the collective memory of the Civil War, shaping public memory to only include the Confederate contributions of Talbot County.

Unionville was not the only legacy of Talbot County's participation in the Union cause. Prominent abolitionist Frederick Douglass was also a native of Talbot County. Douglass was born into slavery in Easton (the county seat of Talbot County), but escaped slavery early in his life. He then became a well-known abolitionist and returned to Easton 60 years later, as a free man, to speak against the former slave owners at the courthouse where he was once imprisoned. A statue of Douglass stands across the walkway from the "Talbot Boys" on the courthouse lawn. The statue honors Douglass' *Self-Made Man* speech given at the Talbot County Courthouse in 1878. *Self-Made Man* reflects on the impact of a racist society on the success of formerly enslaved men and the contributions of former slave owners.[51] The Douglass statue faced difficulties in its creation- difficulties that were not faced in the creation of the "Talbot Boys" statue. This debate over the Douglass statue demonstrates how the "Talbot Boys" statue has shifted the collective memory in Talbot County to reflect only the county's Confederate legacy and demonstrates the divide in public opinion of who deserves memorialization. [52]




*The Frederick Douglass Memorial Action Coalition, otherwise known as "Fred's Army", began the fight to memorialize Douglass in 2007.*[53]

However, the creation of the statue sparked controversy and debate with community members, delaying the statue's dedication until 2011. Advocates for the statue saw it as a way to memorialize Douglass for his abolition efforts but also to recognize Talbot County's history with slavery. One community member stated that the "Talbot Boys" "certainly didn't fight for my freedom," and communicated his desire for representation of Douglass in places of memorialization.[54] However, not everyone agreed with Fred's Army; those in opposition argued the courthouse lawn was "reserved for

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[51] Fredrick Douglass, *Self-Made Man* (Carlisle: Indian Print, 1878).
[52] Rachel Jessee, Fredrick Douglass, Photograph. 2020. Talbot County Courthouse, Easton Md.
[53] " Frederick Douglass Memorial (Easton, MD)" *Contemporary Monuments to the Slave Past*, https://www.slaverymonuments.org/items/show/1186
[54] Sherrilyn A. Ifill, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the 21st Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), 50-54.

military dead".[55] The "Talbot Boys" is the only memorial on the courthouse lawn dedicated to the dead, there is a Vietnam memorial on the outskirts but not technically on courthouse property. The opposition to the Douglass statue displayed that even in the twenty-first century, people in Talbot County still feel the need to preserve and protect the ideology of the Confederacy. The Douglass statue would challenge not only the racist symbolism of the "Talbot Boys," but the public memory of Talbot County as a Confederate stronghold in the Civil War.

The extensive efforts and debate over the Fredrick Douglass statue compared to the ease of the creation of the "Talbot Boys" statue exemplifies how the importance of preserving the ideology of the Confederacy to members of Talbot County is still relevant today. Sherrilyn Ifill, President of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, stated that the opposition to the Douglass statue is due to whites unwilling to "to face the county's past and give tangible recognition in the county's public space to honor local black heroes".[56] The "Talbot Boys" stands as symbol of those who fought to uphold slavery, while Fredrick Douglass stands as a symbol of freedom and justice. However, despite the debates, the Frederick Douglass statue was eventually created in 2013 and still stands on the Talbot County Courthouse lawns today.

## Conclusion

In the wake of conversations surrounding the place of Confederate monuments in today's society, the fate of the "Talbot Boys" has been in question. Resolution 290, introduced to the Talbot County Council by City Councilmen Pack and Lesher, calls for the removal of the statue off of the courthouse lawn and into private preservation.[57] The resolution also prohibits future statues that are associated with military action from being placed on the courthouse lawn.[58] While the resolution failed to pass, the debate about whether or not the statue should stay is still ongoing. The debate over the statue's removal emphasizes the polarization of public opinion today; some see it as a symbol or racism while others see it as a piece of local history. The "Talbot Boys" reflects how Confederate monuments can leave a lasting impact on communities.

Overall, the "Talbot Boys" is not representative of Talbot County's role in the Civil War and frames an incomplete narrative of Talbot County's history. It stands today as a reminder of the support that Talbot County had for the Confederate States Army and as a symbol of racism upheld by the statue's presence. The statue was created to celebrate the efforts of the Confederacy and as a reminder of the public support for the Confederate ideology, seen through the statement by Joseph Seth. However, the statue ignores the service of union soldiers from Talbot County in its pursuit of continuing the Confederate agenda. The presence of Unionville proves that the "Talbot Boys" does not fully represent the role of Talbot County in the Civil War and has created an incomplete collective memory that ignores the presence of Union support in Talbot. The debate over the Douglas statue in comparison to the creation of the "Talbot Boys" also shows how public opinion still stands behind the meaning of the Confederacy. All in all, the "Talbot Boys" statue is a faulty representation of Talbot County historically and stands as a symbol of racism.

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[55] Brian Witte, Statue of Frederick Douglass arrives after years of debate" *The Associate Press*, June 16, 2011.
[56] Ifill, "On the Courthouse Lawn" 45.
[57] Pete Lesher and Corey Pack, "Resolution 290" *Talbot County Council* (June 2020).
[58] Ibid.

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## The Navajo Long Walk: A Cultural History of Genocide

### By Rohan Laljani

In the early 1860s, as the Civil War raged on in the east, America was moving west. Tensions naturally flared as the various Native American tribes inhabiting the southwestern territories, modern day New Mexico and Arizona, defended themselves against the encroachments of white frontiersmen and the sparring armies of the Civil War. The Arizona-native Navajo in particular gained a reputation as being a brutal "tribe of raiders, who reckoned their status and wealth in terms of the number of sheep and captives they possessed."[59] But the counterpunch of the United States military was devastating. During the years 1863-1864 and under the "ruthless direction of General James H. Carleton and Colonel Christopher 'Kit' Carson, the Navajo [...] were hopelessly and relentlessly pursued, rounded up and driven to a wretched disease-ridden reservation," the now infamous Bosque Redondo located just outside of Fort Sumner in New Mexico.[60] Such were the events of the Long Walk of the Navajo, a six-month-long forced march followed by five years of internment in the worst health conditions imaginable; the Long Walk resulted in the deaths of at least 3000 Navajo at Fort Sumner alone, not to mention those that lay down to die during the march or those that were killed by U.S. soldiers because they "could not keep up."[61]

Scholars of the Diné, the Navajo word for themselves, have universally condemned the Long Walk as a genocide. In her 1964 overview of the period, historian Lynn Bailey deemed the Long Walk a "war of extermination," citing Carleton's "scorched earth policy."[62] University of Oklahoma Professor of History Gary Anderson has called the Long Walk an attempt at ethnic cleansing, and in *A Diné History of Navajoland*, Diné activist Harris Francis and anthropology professor Klara Kelley provide a laundry list of academics who concur.[63] The brunt of such castigations rests on evidence of physical suffering—environmental dislocation, forced starvation, and death—as well as attempts to incorporate the period into larger themes of Diné mythology and social justice movements. Modern healthcare activists, for example, have traced the abnormally high incidence of Xeroderma Pigmentosum—a disease characterized by skin cancer, blindness, and neurological degeneration—in Navajo populations to the constriction of the Navajo gene pool caused by the Long Walk and later genetic mutations resulting from U.S. nuclear bomb testing.[64]

While historians have extensively studied the physical hardship of the Long Walk, comparatively little attention has been given to the cultural suffering inflicted upon the Navajo who endured the Long Walk. Cultural studies of the Long Walk period are markedly important considering the intertwined nature of Navajo religion, art, and medicine. Indeed, "there is no word or phrase in the Navajo language that can be translated as 'religion' in the Western European sense".[65] Instead, Navajo religion shares valences with religion, mythology, and medicine, all coalescing into *diné binahagha'*, meaning "'moving about ceremonially.'"[66] Navajo ceremonialism is loosely defined by rituals, many of which have a medical, healing purpose. As psychiatrist Donald Sandner writes, "For the Navaho [sic] healing is not directed toward specific symptoms or bodily organs, but toward bringing the psyche into harmony with

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[59] Lynn R. Bailey, *The Long Walk*. Tucson, AZ: Westernlore Press (1964), 3.
[60] Ibid, vii.
[61] Klara B. Kelley and Harris B. Francis, *A Diné History of Navajoland*. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press (2019), 16.
[62] Bailey, 162.
[63] Gary C. Anderson, *Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: the Crime That Should Haunt America*. Norman, OK: Univ Of Oklahoma Press, 2015; Kelley & Francis, 8-9.
[64] Albert Bender, "Rare Disease Suddenly Arises on Navajo Reservation." People's World, March 6, 2013.
[65] Frisbie, Charlotte J. *Navajo Medicine Bundles or Jish: Acquisition, Transmission, and Disposition in the Past and Present*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press (1987), xxiii.
[66] Ibid, xxiii.

the whole gamut of natural and supernatural forces around it."[67] The Long Walk posed one of the greatest health challenges in Diné history and consequently dramatically distorted the medical practices of Navajo ceremonialism. Examining these changes through oral histories and physical artifacts generates new, culturally-driven markers of genocide.

One of the chief elements of Navajo ceremonialism is the hogan, a building in which certain Navajo medical rituals were performed.[68] The medical rituals performed in the hogan include, among others; the Blessingway, used to "invoke good luck [and] good health;" the Night Way, used to treat "blindness, deafness, or insanity;" and the Enemy Way, used to treat alien infection.[69] Despite the clinical significance of the hogan, or perhaps because of it, hogans were unsparingly burned to the ground in the Long Walk. *Hwéeldi Baa Hané*, an oral history collection compiled in 1990 by Title VII bilingual staff, singles this fact out: "Navajo men who resisted [were] to be killed. Women and children were to be captured, and their fields and hogans were to be burned."[70] Unsurprisingly, there were no hogans during the Long Walk or the Navajo internment at Bosque Redondo. Yet the Navajo persisted in their ceremonialism. In *Hwéeldi Baa Hané*, Joe Benally recalls a story told to him by his grandmother: "We went into a hónooji (rugged area) following a lady. The lady was singing a protection song as she led us. [...] A squaw dance had just been completed the night before, and the chaha'oh (shade houses) were still up."[71] In another story from the same source, Mary Charley relates the experiences of her great-great-grandmother: "many of us women began meeting together to pray and sing chants every night with a man named Hastiin Ch'il Haajini (Manuelito or Man With Slant Streak) who was a medicine man then."[72] Yet, while the Diné were able to practice this ceremonialism in the face of genocide, the physical lack of hogans disrupted the intensely private nature of traditional medical rituals.[73] Any shelters that the Navajo were afforded at Bosque Redondo had the express purpose of housing and warmth, quite literally leaving Navajo medical rituals out in the cold.

Alongside the lack of adequate shelter, a second health essential health challenge that the Diné faced during the Long Walk was malnutrition. On a base level, General Carleton, the architect of Navajo internment, did not have the "necessary funds and sustenance on hand to support those Indians [...] confined at Bosque Redondo."[74] There were not enough seeds or "vital agricultural implements" to even get food production off the ground.[75] Apart from this base inadequacy, however, the Diné faced additional challenges when accessing food. Initially, for example, the Navajo did not know how to cook corn. As Mary Charley recounted, "The soldiers gave out food such as beans, corn, cornmeal, [and] bacon, but we did not know how to cook it."[76] They had learned to grind corn for the Pueblo "to earn food to feed our families," but it seems that they were not used to eating it.[77] "Corn meal was unfamiliar," said Mary Sandoval, speaking on behalf of her grandmother. "They tried cooking it in many different ways. They finally learned how to make tortillas from the corn meal."[78]

The Navajo relationship with corn constitutes an especially interesting cultural thread because corn was an essential element of *jish*. *Jish*, "the collective term for medicine bundle, medicine pouch, medicine bag, and ceremonial bag," existed at the fulcrum of Navajo ceremonialism, the essential tool of

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[67] Donald Sandner, *Navaho Symbols of Healing*. New York City, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1979), 3
[68] Ibid, 48.
[69] Ibid, 44-46.
[70] Title VII Bilingual Staff, *Oral History Stories of the Long Walk = Hwéeldi Baa Hané*. Crownpoint, NM: Lake Valley Navajo School (1991), 8.
[71] Ibid, 33.
[72] Ibid, 60.
[73] Gladys A. Recihard, *Navajo Medicine Man Sandpaintings*. New York: Dover publications, 1977, x.
[74] Bailey, 174.
[75] Ibid, 175.
[76] Title VII Bilingual Staff, 60.
[77] Ibid, 119.
[78] Ibid, 108.

the medicine man.[79] Commonly used in medical treatment, *jish* were vital to the creation of sand paintings and prayer sticks.[80] *Jish* often contained "corn pollen and cornmeal; the powers of blessing inherent in these substances are acquired by inhaling and/or applying the substances to the patient."[81] As such, corn served as a medical treatment and a ceremonial device for the Navajo. At Bosque Redondo, however, corn was a staple of the meager diet with which the Diné were provided. The Navajo unfamiliarity with corn as food not only exacerbated the health issues of the interned Navajo, but also interfered with Navajo medical rituals. Because food was sparse, corn had to be eaten, leaving none for the important medical rituals that called for it. This made it impossible for the Navajo to treat certain diseases with the remaining contents of the *jish*, a certain cultural shock to those living at Bosque Redondo.

In addition to hogans and *jish*, a third physical artifact crucial to understanding Navajo health experiences during the Long Walk is the Navajo rug. Per Will Evans, a trader who worked alongside the Navajo throughout the first half of the 19th century, "Navajo women are known for their beautiful handwoven rugs and blankets."[82] He continues, "Usually when weaving a blanket with a solid border, the woman runs a thread of a different color through the border, near one of its corners [...] to provide a 'road' to release any evil spirits [...]. This thread is called the Devil's Road."[83] Franc Newcomb, wife of another New Mexico trader in the early 19th century, detailed the creation of a "rug with a ceremonial design" by the noted medicine man Hosteen Klah.[84] This and other rugs woven by Klah and his sister were often used in medical ceremonies performed by Klah, speaking to the ceremonial rather than practical use of Navajo rugs.[85] While not all tradespeople had as sophisticated an understanding of Navajo rugs as Will Evans or Franc Newcomb, most at least appreciated their beauty. Frontiersmen and soldiers would have seen promotions such as the one in *The Ogala Light*, which touted a fine assortment of "native and genuine" Navajo rugs.[86] Another issue of the paper featured an ode dedicated to the mystical simplicity of a "blanket wove with patient art."[87] A nationally-run campaign saw Navajo rugs described as "*a gorgeous riot of colors*," and sold them in a bundle with Omar Cigarettes.[88]

Such a booming market for Navajo rugs provided an economic incentive for their creation in addition to the cultural significance the Diné themselves ascribed to their weaving. Yet for the Navajo at Bosque Redondo, the economic meaning of such rugs completely superseded the cultural as they met with the most basic of needs: survival. Speaking of his mother's journey on the Long Walk, Hoskie Juan tells the story of a woman who had lost her path to the sheep camp: "She said, 'There is no surviving now. I will freeze to death.' She wasn't wearing heavy clothes at the time, just her buckskin dress and moccasins, and her blanket which was a woven rug and goatskins sewed together".[89] It is difficult to

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[79] Frisbie, 11.
[80] Ibid, 115.
[81] Frisbie, 115.
[82] Will Evans, Susan Evans Woods, and Robert S. McPherson, *Along Navajo Trails Recollections of a Trader, 1898-1948*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press (2005),193.
[83] Ibid, 194.
[84] Newcomb, 157.
[85] Ibid, 141-156.
[86] *The Oglala light. [volume]* (Pine Ridge, S.D.), 01 Nov. 1914, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.
[87] *The Oglala light. [volume]* (Pine Ridge, S.D.), 01 July 1910, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.
[88] *Rock Island Argus*. (Rock Island, Ill.), 17 July 1913, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; *The Bennington evening banner.* (Bennington, Vt.), 12 July 1913, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; *The Lake County times. [volume]* (Hammond, Ind.), 18 July 1913, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.
[89] Title VII Bilingual Staff, 78.

fathom such a complete subversion of the identity of the Navajo rug. Not even the beauty that American traders valued can be seen in the patches of goatskin quite literally obscuring the ceremonial significance of the rug's design. Jane Begay, another interviewee of the *Hwéeldi Baa Hané* project, speaks of the economic value of the rugs: "Another story was about a group of people playing with a black ball. Upon closer observation, it was found that the ball was made of wool. The ball was taken apart, and the wool woven into rugs which were sold for money."[90] In another time, these rugs may not have been sold to finance basic necessities, but rather used to wrap patients before they entered the hogan for a medical ritual.[91]

The Long Walk of the Navajo has been repeatedly condemned as a genocide in contemporary historical literature. Strategies employed by the U.S. military—burning Navajo crops and food stores, killing Navajo who did not cooperate, and interning the Navajo at Bosque Redondo—ensured the material and medical suffering of the Navajo in the 1860s. Yet such methods of physical destruction also diminished the ability of the Navajo to respond to the trauma of the Long Walk by perverting the cultural-medical complex inherent in Navajo ceremonialism. The Navajo at Bosque Redondo were denied access to hogans, forced to use corn (customarily a medical treatment) as a food staple, and were confounded in their attempts to stitch cultural comfort in the form of traditional rugs and blankets. These neuterings of Navajo spiritualism, medicine, and art crystallize the lived experience of thousands of human beings under a regime of generational trauma.

[90] Ibid, 20.
[91] Reichard, x.

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## On the Sidelines: The Political Repression of Labor in Menem's Argentina

**By Jack Singelstad**

President Carlos Menem of Argentina (1989-1999) came into power in the midst of a dire hyperinflation crisis that threatened to cripple the economy. As a response, and in the vein of neoliberal reforms espoused by the *Washington Consensus* in 1989, Menem and his economic minister Domingo Cavallo radically transformed the Argentine economy to fit the modern reality of globalization. Through deregulation and other policies that favored free trade and private enterprise, the economy experienced a dramatic turnaround, and Menem's policy became a template for other Latin American countries to emulate. The years that followed brought continued prosperity, until the economy that Menem pledged to stabilize faced two more crises at the end of the century. Past study of the Menem years in Argentina has focused intently on his drastic economic policy, in addition to his illiberal style of rule and populist charisma. Yet, even in the context of historiography's shift towards socially minded research, the impact of Menem's policy upon labor forces in relation to these factors remains understudied. Labor unions, the traditional beneficiaries of state-sponsored regulation, lost influence throughout the 80s and 90s as neoliberal policies took hold. Coupled with the decentralization of labor across the country, political mobilization became increasingly difficult under Menem.[92] President Menem's focus towards private enterprise through neoliberal economic policies devalued the political representation and influence of Argentine labor unions in the 1990s.

This research is in many ways reflective of past and recent scholarship regarding the struggles of labor unions against neoliberalism under Menem and his contemporaries in charge across Latin America. Daniel James documents how Argentina's working class attained better working conditions by joining together with political leaders, beginning with President Juan Peron in the 1940s.[93] Viviana Patroni's analysis in *Labor Politics in Latin America* delves into the historical expansion and regression of labor unions in Argentina in an attempt to answer how they were unable to maintain their previously established rights after Peron's policies were replaced with neoliberalism. For Patroni, a multitude of economic factors at the heart of Menem's version of neoliberalism contributed to the unions' decline. In addition, she sees in Menem an authoritarian ruler who pushed forward his agenda without regard for labor.[94] Further research has linked these assertions to earlier work by journalists, such as Beatriz Sarlo and Horacio Verbitsky, who looked to Menem's consolidation of power and suppression of the abilities of traditional government institutions, as well as his domineering public persona designed to achieve political consensus, as the primary factors in undermining the Argentine government's democratic values.[95]

A report by researchers at Yale Law School extensively details Menem's tendency to bypass traditional institutional channels, providing him the opportunities to reverse Peron's equitable labor laws and suppress attempts by labor to regain these results of their political activism.[96] In general, this paper follows the thematic developments of its predecessors while fleshing out some underdeveloped aspects of

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[92] CEPAL, *Panorama Social de America Latina 1999-2000 (Santiago: United Nations 2000).*
[93] Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine working class, 1946-1976* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
[94] Viviana Patroni, *Labor Politics in Latin America: Democracy and Worker Organization in the Neoliberal Era* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2018)
[95] Beatriz Sarlo, "Argentina Under Menem: The Aesthetics of Domination," *Nacla,* 1994; Horacio Verbitsky, *Un Mundo Sin Periodistas* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1997).
[96] Susan Rose-Ackerman, Diane Desierto, and Natalia Volosin, "Leveraging Presidential Power: Separation of Powers Without Checks and Balances in Argentina and the Philippines," *Faculty Scholarship Series* Paper 31 (March 2010): 1-58.

Menem's relationship with labor unions. Specifically, I emphasize the role of U.S. involvement, both theoretical and institutional, in the entrenchment of neoliberalism in Argentina. This can be seen in the contributions to neoliberal theory by thinkers such as John Williamson, crafter of the *Washington Consensus* plan for economic development in Latin America, a manifesto to which the International Monetary Fund subscribed in its financial support for Menem's neoliberal reforms.[97] Furthermore, Menem's firm relationship with the IMF led him to contradict himself in posturing as an advocate for human rights and economic prosperity while many of his own citizens struggled financially. Overall, this research will characterize Menem by his policies and methods, and evaluate how these contributed to the diminishment of labor unions in the political sphere.

**The Peronist Legacy:**

To explain the contradictions embodied in Menem's populist construction, we must look to Peron as a leader whose policies generally sought to improve the life of the average, working-class Argentine. After his initial election in 1946, Peron was supported by the collective strength of labor unions, chief of which was the General Confederation of Labour (CGT). This political backing was achieved through the foundation of the Justicialist, or Peronist, Party, an organization which claimed to represent working-class people as union members. With loyalty to Peron and a willingness to cooperate with state-sponsored economic development, union members could hold rights to collective bargaining which gave way to increased wages, healthcare, and safer, more flexible working conditions. As those outside the union system were subjected to mistreatment from employers, union membership became an enticing prospect for workers. A mutually beneficial relationship developed between Peron and the unions, whereby members achieved political representation and Peron tapped into a massive base of political support. By politicizing the issues facing labor, Peron was able to incorporate the CGT and its leaders into his patronage-driven political machine.[98]

The dependence of these two entities upon each other made them highly influential, but also susceptible to collapse if separated. Peron was exiled by the military in 1955 for accusations of corruption and the CGT struggled to bargain with the string of governments that followed. As a result, the status of workers' wages in relation to GDP, which had once reached 50% under Peron, fell drastically.[99] Economic crises during the administration of Peron's wife, Isabel, in the 1970s turned Argentina away from the highly regulated, state-controlled system of Peronism. By 1976, corporations and military leaders felt it was time for a change towards an economy driven by private capital. That year, the military staged a coup and began a "dirty war" against the CGT and other dissident voices. From 1976-1983, the CGT and other unions were outlawed, while thousands of their members were jailed or killed for anti-government protests. Even with the return of a democratic government along with rights to collective bargaining and legalized striking under the Alfonsin administration, the labor unions struggled to regain the economic advancements of the Peronist era. However, the national economy faced continual challenges, culminating in the hyperinflation crisis of 1989, the year of Carlos Menem's campaign for the presidency.[100]

Menem ran on a platform intentionally designed to evoke the populist image that had been crafted by Peron many decades earlier. As a member of the Peronist Party, Menem appealed to the people through aligning himself with its tradition of support for 'the people' in their pursuit for financial well-being. In public speeches and television appearances, he developed the meticulously engineered charisma

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[97] Williamson, John, "A Short History of the Washington Consensus," Paper presented at *"From the Washington Consensus towards a new Global Governance," Barcelona, September 24–25, 2004,* https://piie.com/publications/papers/williamson0904-2.pdf.
[98] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 105-108.
[99] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 108.
[100] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 109-111.

that would define his leadership style, assuring that the nation would escape from its current crisis.[101] With the support of unions including the CGT, which had made strides in recovering from the previous decade's disaster, Menem won the election and signaled a return to populism across Latin America.[102] All over the continent, from Perez in Venezuela to Menem in Argentina, populist leaders ascended to presidential office. Unfortunately for labor unions, these leaders were elected in the context of increasing foreign interest in the region, manifesting in a dramatic shift towards more capitalist economies inspired by the fashionable economic philosophy known as neoliberalism.

**Neoliberalism Under Menem:**

It is difficult to discuss neoliberalism in Latin America without crediting the influence of the U.S. and other foreign powers. In a broad sense, this theory was a rejection of the idea that state-run enterprise alone could control and drive economic growth, a policy which had traveled throughout the region in prior decades. With many Latin American economies in shambles following numerous debt crises in the 1980s, the IMF sought to provide financial relief in the hopes of opening new markets to global trade. According to John Williamson, a leading economist in Washington, D.C., a general set of principles to bring these countries out of debt and into prosperity was agreed upon by economists and lawmakers in the city. He dubbed this the "Washington Consensus," and its ten points would be widely adopted by many Latin American countries during the 1990s. As a neoliberal manifesto, the Consensus advocated for free trade, privatization, and deregulation, among other policies.[103] With modifications, it was this general plan which served as a guide for the response to hyperinflation by President Menem's administration. The reformation of the Economic Ministry, headed by Minister Domingo Cavallo, would prove transformative to the Argentine economy.

Cavallo was clearly a student of neoliberal thought. Many of his most championed policies, including the Convertibility Plan, a 1:1 exchange rate between the Argentine peso and the U.S. dollar, were derived directly from the Washington Consensus. As Menem's chief economist, he was hugely influential in laying out a plan, relying on neoliberal ideals, to convince the IMF to provide billions of dollars in loans to Argentina through the Brady Plan for debt relief, one of the nation's first and most crucial steps towards recovery.[104] Next on Cavallo's list was a monumental reform of Argentina's labor markets through flexibilization, a policy which reduced employers' payroll tax by changing many long-standing rules for employment. This overhaul created many shortcuts for employers to keep the costs of labor low, including reduced severance, temporary and fixed time employment of non-unionized workers, and a general ability to decide the terms of work, including unpaid overtime hours. A more hierarchically structured economy, geared towards attracting wealthy investors, emphasized private enterprise and cut down on public sector employment, releasing a large labor force into the market with few opportunities for suitable employment.[105] For corporations, both foreign and domestic, and for investors looking to capitalize on the booming national economy developed by Menem and Cavallo, these reforms were massively positive. Early returns at the end of 1991 showed a 9% increase in GDP, reflecting an economy on its way to financial stability.[106] Yet, the combination of unemployment and underemployment figures never dipped below 30% during the Menem era. In fact, the trend towards neoliberalism across the region led to a 66% increase in the informal sector of the job market, including workers on temporary or fixed-term contracts.[107] This was great for corporate profit margins and as an appeal for continued foreign

[101] Sarlo, "Aesthetics."
[102] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 111.
[103] Williamson, "Washington Consensus," 1-3.
[104] Cavallo, "Argentina's Convertibility Plan and the IMF," 17.
[105] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 111-116.
[106] Cavallo, "Argentina's Convertibility Plan and the IMF," 17.
[107] Patroni, *Labor Politics in Latin America,* 112.

investment, but wrought disaster on the health of the working-class as many could not find well-paying, or even long-lasting, jobs. For union workers already employed, change would come in other ways.

**Neoliberalism's Effect on the Unions' Decline:**

It warrants consideration that Argentina's highly organized labor unions were deeply rooted in the corporatist legacy of Peron's Justicialist Party. The Peronists, as the political party was popularly referred to, were the traditional representatives of labor's interests across the country. For Menem and the shift towards privatization, these interests no longer aligned with the economy's desired course. Gradually, his government removed incentives for union membership in an effort to decentralize their existing power bases. Early on, in order to remove inefficient barriers to profit in the form of constant collective bargaining by national union leaders, Menem took this process out of their hands and enforced bargaining on local factory levels. This worked twofold in eliminating the leverage in negotiations that national union leaders possessed and allowing private corporations the ability to deal with less experienced and organized local union representatives. From 1991 to 1998, the amount of bargaining at the local factory level rose from 18.3% to 88.3%.[108] The practical effects of this policy shift were realized in less generous retirement benefits. Menem's process of decentralization continued in 1996 with the repeal of the Union Health Plan, a Peronist era measure that fed dues obtained from union members into collective health care funds. Members of the CGT and other groups were now given the option to opt out of their health care plans for private alternatives.[109] With this action, Menem removed a critical incentive of union membership and contributed to the decline of unions around the nation.

Despite large-scale investment in the Argentine economy by way of the World Bank, IMF, and the influx of private corporations with dreams of profiting in Latin America's second largest nation, numerous crises emerged which challenged the Menem administration's brand of neoliberalism. While external factors certainly influenced the periods of inflation in 1995 and 1998, the strict adherence of President Menem and Minister Cavallo to their Convertibility Plan played a central role. By equating the Argentine peso with the U.S. dollar, the administration at times overvalued its own currency and tied its financial fortunes too closely with other economies. The Convertibility Plan hinged upon Argentina matching U.S. GDP growth. When the failures of large-scale foreign investments made this impossible, businesses had to minimize domestic costs to avoid tanking. This was best exemplified in Mexico's "Tequila Crisis" of 1995, in which devaluation of the Mexican peso reverberated to Argentina in the form of lost Mexican investments. Argentina's spike in inflation forced employers to cut costs and unemployment rose as a result.[110] True to form, Menem's economic ministry responded to this dilemma with another wave of reforms, including the policies of fixed-time contracts and private health care described above, and received over a billion dollars in further subsidies from the IMF. Cavallo emphasized this steadfast commitment to reform in an economic treatise in favor of neoliberalism, stating "While unemployment is a problem, the Menem administration is determined to fight it the 'old-fashioned way' (i.e., by introducing greater flexibility in labor markets)."[111] By pledging himself to these policies, especially flexibilization, Menem showed a keen disinterest in the working-class for whom he had promised to fight. His efforts only further degraded the lives of his people by way of insufficient employment prospects.

After a brief economic recovery, mostly evident in rising GDP, Argentina once again was faced with a crisis in 1998. In the fall of that year, the nation was in the midst of another recession due to inflation. Disagreements among the CGT's leadership had reached a breaking point, impelling Hugo Moyano, head of the Movement of Argentinean Workers (MTA), to pursue a more aggressive approach in dealing with the government. As unions became increasingly incensed and strikes mounted amid the

[108] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 118.
[109] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 117.
[110] Cavallo, "Convertibility," 18.
[111] Cavallo, "Convertibility," 18.

administration's third crisis, Menem was finally forced to make concessions. With the approval of Law 25,013 by the Argentine Congress in September 1998, the pre-Menem laws of collective bargaining and unionized health care were restored and temporary employment according to the 1991 National Employment Law was minimized.[112] This was a clear victory for the unions and demonstrated that Menem could be held to their demands. Still, his commitment to convertibility and other neoliberal policies remained despite increasing inflation. In an October 1998 speech to his long-time sponsors who had helped build up this neoliberal Argentina through massive financial support, the IMF and World Bank, Menem refuted any suggestions of tearing it down.[113] He spoke in realistic and delusional tones at once, acknowledging the nation's current troubles with unemployment without drawing so much as a remote connection between them and his policies. A greater deal of blame was instead directed at the difficulties of accelerating the process of neoliberal reform against existing barriers, both political and institutional. In stressing these obstacles, and in his many efforts to eliminate them, Menem failed to appreciate the fundamental principles of democracy.

**Menem Asserts Dominance:**

Examples of the authoritarian strategies employed by Menem in manipulating existing government institutions and practices throughout his two terms in office are easily distinguishable. As they relate to labor, these reforms point to a blatant disregard for oppositional voices in his overhaul of the Argentine economy and the nation as a whole. From the onset of his presidency, Menem displayed a tendency to enforce his will in times of dispute. When the Planning Secretariat, an advisory agency in charge of setting economic policy, failed to provide an effective plan to privatize the economy before a second wave of inflation set in, Menem made drastic changes. At the end of 1990 he eliminated the Secretariat and fired all of its members, transferring all authority on economic matters to Cavallo and appointing him head of the Economy Ministry. In doing so, Menem streamlined the reform process, allowing only Cavallo to influence his decisions. This created a hierarchical structure for economic policy making with Menem at the top and Cavallo as the only significant voice under him.[114] By employing such measures early on in his first term, President Menem set a tone of dominance over the government.

As this structural reform was occurring, a much greater controversy loomed over the presidency. In his first months, Menem intervened in the court system by pardoning officers convicted of mass murders during the "dirty wars" of the previous decade's military dictatorships despite protests by citizens collectively numbering in the hundreds of thousands around the country.[115] While executive pardons were legal according to the Constitution of Argentina, this action demonstrated a lack of respect for the anger felt by the families of murdered civilians and gave legitimacy to the much-maligned military dictatorships. With the massive military parade in Buenos Aires thrown a year later, Menem signaled that his word was final.[116]

The state of the three branches of the Argentine government throughout his presidency is indicative of Menem's largely unquestioned authority. His Peronist Party consistently held a significant

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[112] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 118-120.
[113] Carlos Menem, "Statement to the 1998 Joint Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group," Speech, Washington, D.C., October 6, 1998, IMF.org.

[114] Alejandro Bonvecchi, "Crises, Structures, and Managerial Choice in Economic Policy Making: Presidential Management of Macroeconomic Policy in Argentina and the United States," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (September 2016): 507-30
[115] "Eighty thousand protest military pardon in Argentina," *UPI,* September 9, 1989, https://www.upi.com/Archives/1989/09/09/Eighty-thousand-protest-military-pardon-in-Argentina/7546621316800/
[116] Sarlo, "Aesthetics."

majority of seats in Congress, a coalition which could be relied upon to fall in line with his desired course. The Supreme Court was equally subject to Menem's lead, as it was expanded from five to nine members, nearly all of whom were political supporters of Menem and the Peronist Party. When the Court's corruption was identified by journalist Horacio Verbitsky in his book, *Robo Para La Corona* (*I Rob For The Crown*), he was convicted of contempt according to gag law and sentenced to a month in prison, supposedly at the discretion of Menem, who had made public attacks at Verbitsky after the book's publication.[117] The ruling was a landmark moment in Menem's quest to stamp out dissident voices.

As opposition to reform persisted, whether from the general public or the nature of Argentina's institutions, Menem made a bold move to amend the latter. In 1994, he proposed numerous changes to the Constitution in conjunction with his supporters in Congress. Among many changes, the legality of "Necessary and Urgency Decrees" was introduced. These stipulated that the president could make executive orders in times of emergency, "When...the ordinary procedures foreseen by this Constitution for the enactment of laws are impossible to be followed."[118] These "decree laws" were to be enforced for at least ten days until Congress could approve them, but, while a subsequent clause declared that Congress would create a law to guide the approval process, this issue was not revisited until 2006, nearly eight years after Menem left office.[119] This allowed Menem to essentially legislate without the involvement of the legislative branch, an ability which he wielded often and for a variety of purposes. It is this constitutional amendment which gave him the power to remove labor regulations, increase privatization, and generally move Argentina in a neoliberal direction. From Decree 2184/90, which banned strikes by employees in public industries, to 1477/78, dealing with private enterprise tax reform, Menem implemented this law 545 times, more than any other Argentine president.[120] When Congress or the courts hesitated along the path to reform, decree laws acted in substitution. The existence of this executive power and the absolute lack of obstacles to its implementation eliminated any doubt that pushes for neoliberal reform would succeed under Menem. More than any of his practices, the amendment and its frequent use revealed Menem's view of government institutions as malleable entities rather than obligatory channels of reform. For the CGT and other unions, it created a barrier to representation that only overwhelming political opposition could overcome.

Labor forces were restricted in their political activism, whether through shrinking membership or marginalization by the Menem administration's repeal of labor regulations. Yet, resistance to such policies did take place around the country. As collective bargaining became limited, workers' strikes re-emerged as the primary method of political advocacy. Demonstrations of small to moderate scale had been staged since Menem's election, against issues such as military pardons and deregulatory decree laws. In the aftermath of the Tequila Crisis, as unemployment rose to 17%, much larger protests occurred with greater frequency. In September 1996, a general strike was held in which millions of both unionized and non-unionized workers refused to work in protest of increasing labor flexibilization and reduced severance pay. Menem's reaction to the outcry, recorded in Calvin Sims' article, "Argentina Stops for a Day as Millions Strike," was lacking in the eyes of many, as he remained committed to his policies: "These protests have accomplished nothing," he said. "At a minimum, the Government will continue on the same course."[121]

Menem never wavered. Even as pressure from labor mounted and he reinstated collective bargaining and unionized health care, the core tenets of this Argentine brand of neoliberalism,

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[117] Verbitsky, *Un Mundo Sin Periodistas,* 232-234.
[118] "Constitution of Argentina (revised version of 1994)," Wipo.net, accessed October 3, 2018.
[119] Rose-Ackerman, Desierto, and Volosin, "Leveraging Presidential Power," 8-10.
[120] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 114; Capriata, Laura, "Kirchner signed a decree of necessity and urgency every six days." *La Nación,* April 13, 2008.
[121] Sims, Calvin. "Argentina Stops for a Day as Millions Strike." *The New York Times,* September 28, 1996. https://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/28/world/argentina-stops-for-a-day-as-millions-strike.html

privatization, deregulation, and convertibility were largely unchanged. It did not matter that these policies had once again contributed to inflation in the 1998 recession. Neither did it matter that unemployment had reached disastrous levels. Only when political support for a third term in office was extinguished, both by Peronist Party unrest and the sheer unconstitutionality of the idea, did he blink. In July 1999, after 10 ½ years and two terms, President Menem relinquished his control over the government and economy. Just two years later, Argentina experienced the greatest economic depression in its history, depicted by mass riots in Buenos Aires and chants of "out with them all" in reference to the many politicians who were deemed responsible.[122] The people made one thing very clear: the neoliberal experiment in Argentina was over.

**Conclusion:**

Carlos Menem is not unique in the historical pantheon of Latin American demagogues. Like all anointed populists, he ascended to power through charisma and appeals to the people, painting himself as their representative and savior from the corruption of politics. As with his contemporaries, he embraced television to reach wider, more diverse audiences and followed the region-wide trend towards neoliberalism. This takes us to Peron and the inevitable comparison drawn between them. Menem was supposed to be the champion of the Peronist legacy, a man of the people who would invigorate the working class as Peron once did. The end result was clearly different than expected. Sure, they belonged to the same political party, but economic policy differences betrayed that now superficial tie. Yet, perhaps their similarities close this divide. For populist scholar Kurt Weyland, populism is simply defined as "the quest for political power."[123] In Argentina, these two leaders upheld that notion. Labor flourished under Peron because integrating the unions into his party was the most politically expedient path to power. In Menem's case, the weakness of the unions, exacerbated by his policy, prevented them from appearing as a viable ally. Outside influences, including the IMF, World Bank, and international, private corporations, were more likely allies because of the financial support they could offer. With increasing resistance from labor leading up to the 1999 election, Menem felt pressure to appease the unions. In granting their demands, he demonstrated a desire to maintain his position more than true concern. Through this lens, Menem and Peron may not have been so opposed to one another. It is therefore easy to see both, ultimately, as demagogues, searching for the perfect political complement to their methodology of populism, the maintenance of power.

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[122] Patroni, *Labor Politics,* 122.

[123] Weyland, Kurt. "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics." *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 1 (October 2001): 18.

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## “Freedom is Not Free”: The American Collective Memory of the Korean War

**By Grace Kaseta**

Approximately the same number of American soldiers were killed in the three years of the Korean War as in the decade of the Vietnam War; yet in 2011, only 22% of high school seniors knew basic facts about the Korean War.[124] Americans are unaware of the sacrifice Korean War veterans gave to their country, since the war was wedged in between World War II and the Vietnam War—two wars that gained an incredible amount of media attention. Due to the lack of media attention and recognition by the United States government, combined with the desire to return to a state of normalcy, veterans of the Korean War were almost forgotten for half a century until, as I argue, the national recognition of the Korean War Memorial in Washington D.C.. This memorial showcased a moderate improvement in American collective memory of these veterans. First, I will explain the contrast between the military and presidential, and therefore general public, perspectives in the 1950s. I will then compare the perspectives of Korean War veterans in the 1990s, when the memorial was built, to those of the 1950s. Finally, I will discuss the historiography of the memorial, and how the national memorial is not always acknowledged as progress towards public remembrance of veterans.

The bloody “Forgotten War” of the 1950s proved to be a complicated war that sent 1.5 million Americans to the battlefield.[125] Beginning in the summer of 1950, the United States entered a conflict between the Communist forces in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Southern Republic of Korea. The conflict began when the South invaded the North in an attempt to stop communism from spreading. As a country that values freedom and democracy, the United States entered the conflict along with many other Western countries in support of the South.[126] The war began under the leadership of President Harry S. Truman and General Douglas MacArthur, although by the end of the war both men had been replaced. As Commander-in-Chief, President Truman had removed General MacArthur from his military position in 1951 after disagreements regarding nuclear policies, while Truman’s term had ended in 1952 when he was replaced by President Eisenhower.[127] In just three years, the United States lost more than just its leadership. The war left about 2 million soldiers and civilians, from a multitude of countries, dead. Finally in 1953, an armistice was established, which gave neither side the result it wanted, and left Korea divided with no real solution to the problem.[128] American veterans of the Korean War returned to a country that knew almost nothing about the conflict and thirsted for normalcy following the end of World War II. One veteran stated,“I came back on a Friday, and I started back up at work the following Monday.”[129] By the time Americans seemed to heal, another war, the Vietnam War, began with an incredible amount of media attention, leaving Korean War veterans lost from the American collective memory.

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[124] “Korea: Forgetting and Remembering,” Korean War Legacy Foundation Inc., December 18, 2019, https://koreanwarlegacy.org/chapters/korea-forgetting-and-remembering/.;
Lena H. Sun, "Veterans of 'Forgotten War' Get their Memorial," *The Washington Post* (Washington D.C.), Jul 28, 1995, https://search.proquest.com/docview/903294756?accountid=14696.
[125] "Remembering America's Forgotten War: A Tribute to Korean War Veterans," *The Washington Post* (Washington D.C.), July 25, 1995, https://search.proquest.com/docview/904891182?accountid=14696.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Bruce Cumings, “Why Did Truman Really Fire MacArthur? ... The Obscure History of Nuclear Weapons and the Korean War Provides the Answer,” History News Network, accessed October 11, 2020, http://hnn.us/articles/9245.html.
[128] "Remembering America's Forgotten War: A Tribute to Korean War Veterans."
[129] Anthony Faiola and Lena H. Sun, "Out of History, Onto the Mall: Korean War Memorial to be Dedicated," *The Washington Post* (Washington D.C.), Jul 23, 1995, https://search.proquest.com/docview/904907431?accountid=14696.

Broadcasting across America in the third year of the Korean War, President Eisenhower shaped the public perspective of the Korean War with a 27-minute address regarding national security that failed to mention U.S. soldiers fighting in the Korean War. During the 1950s, radio broadcasts were a meaningful way to reach a large American audience. Many Americans would tune in to presidential addresses to understand the state of the country beyond their scope. On May 19th, 1953, when President Eisenhower broadcast his address, he had just entered his first term as president following the presidency of Harry S. Truman, and the Korean War was coming to an end. Eisenhower missed the opportunity to recognize the thousands of lives lost and harmed throughout the war—a recognition that had also not been made during the Truman administration. Instead, Eisenhower focused on economic policy and taxes for the duration of his address. He decisively put value over the economy rather than Americans' lives, when he stated, "[p]rolonged inflation could be as destructive of a truly free economy as could a chemical attack against an army in the field."[130] This attitude became the common view among American civilians of the Korean War—an economic conflict, instead of a bloody conflict. Eisenhower's words encouraged a society that forgot the sacrifices of other American citizens. Throughout the 27-minute broadcast, Eisenhower never mentioned Korean War soldiers or even the word "Korea," despite the fact that the economic issues he spoke about were directly correlated with the Korean War.[131] Instead, the focus was shifted to the hardships at home and the state of the economy. Americans were therefore concerned with the economy rather than their fellow Americans fighting overseas. Taxes and inflation were given precedence over death and trauma. America seemed to move on from a war that was not even over.

Just two years earlier, in 1951, General Douglas MacArthur delivered a strikingly different speech in front of Congress that emphasized the importance of remembering those fighting in the Korean War.[132] General MacArthur was a decorated war general who had great responsibility over the military during the Korean War. He had seen first hand the experiences of soldiers fighting in Korea, and he understood the pain and torment among these men. In front of Congress at the end of his military career, MacArthur reminded America of the importance of soldiers and the serious threat of war. He began his speech acknowledging conflicts in policy, which ultimately led to his removal from his military position. He continued by discussing policy, and stated, "[w]hile no man in his right mind would advocate sending our ground forces into continental China, and such was never given a thought, the new situation did urgently demand a drastic revision of strategic planning." He explained that fighting the war was necessary, and that America's intervention was justified. In his last moments in his powerful position, he spent his time having to remind the United States government of the value of American soldiers' lives.[133] This reminder is extremely telling. A general leaving office should not have to remind his country's Congress that they should be concerned about the lives of their soldiers. MacArthur closed his speech saying, "[a]nd like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away, an old soldier who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty."[134] MacArthur's experiences and words give us a way of understanding how Korean War veterans felt returning home. MacArthur understood, before the war was even over, that soldiers were disappearing from America's memory. Regardless of how moving his words were, their impact was almost non-existent. The next two years of the war would see the same attitude towards its soldiers.

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[130] Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Address to the American People on the National Security and Its Costs," May 19, 1953, Washington D.C., sound, 27:06. https://www.wnyc.org/story/president-eisenhower-address-to-the-american-people-on-the-national-security-and-its-costs/.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Douglas MacArthur, "General MacArthur's Speech Before Congress," April 19, 1951, Washington D.C., sound, 41:01,
https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_80-902z3z9z.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.

The stark difference between General MacArthur and President Eisenhower's speeches reveals the typical struggle between Korean War veterans and civilians. President Eisenhower had served in the First and Second World Wars, and was a decorated veteran. Despite his previous military service, Eisenhower's address lacked concern for the troops serving in Korea.[135] General MacArthur had also served in World War II, but continued his service in Korea.[136] This continued service is where the difference lies. When American veterans of the World Wars returned home, they wanted to return to normalcy. Many veterans suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which can be triggered by anything from an explosion to a report of war on the radio. World War II veterans with this disorder would not want to hear of the violence in Korea. Even civilians did not want to continue to worry about another war following all the changes that had happened during the First and Second World Wars.[137] General MacArthur had continued his service following World War II, and never returned to a society searching for peace. Both President Eisenhower and General MacArthur exhibit incredible bias; however, that is precisely the reason to look at the difference between their perspectives. General MacArthur represents the typical Korean War veteran, while President Eisenhower held the opinions of the typical American. Most Americans wanted to forget about the violence and conflict of their country, but soldiers were not allowed this luxury.[138] Some Americans were still thrust into the Korean War. Soldiers were done a disservice and were forgotten from the American collective memory. Because Eisenhower had a larger reach than General MacArthur, and those with his perspective were more vast in numbers, the Korean conflict was erased from the American collective memory. Soldiers, like General MacArthur, noticed and attempted to fight back but would have little luck for several decades.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the United States suddenly saw a huge push for recognition of Korean War veterans following the end of the Vietnam War. Eli Samuel Belil, a Korean War veteran, was just one of the many Americans pushing for recognition of these veterans. Belil began his efforts to create a national memorial in 1978, stating that "...our time has come, and I became involved because, like others, I got tired of sitting on my hands waiting for something to happen."[139] America began to see an influx of Korean War veterans who refused to let being 'forgotten soldiers' continue to be their legacy. These veterans had not been outspoken the way Vietnam and World War II veterans had.[140] Korean War veterans had never achieved national recognition until 1986—43 years after the end of the Korean War—when President Reagan finally signed legislation for the construction of the monument following the vocalness of many Korean War veterans in the prior years.[141] Marek Tamm writes, "[t]he present is "haunted" by the past and the past is modelled, invented, reinvented, and reconstructed by the present."[142] Likewise, Korean War veterans attempted to reinvent their history and their role in American collective memory. They wanted to feel seen and appreciated for the sacrifices they had made. The failure to acknowledge these veterans had led to many of them struggling to close that period of their lives. For many veterans, the war had never ended until this memorial gave them a sense of closure.[143]

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[135] Eisenhower, "Address to the American People on the National Security and Its Costs."
[136] Cumings, "Why Did Truman Really Fire MacArthur?...The Obscure History of Nuclear Weapons and the Korean War Provides the Answer."
[137] "Korea: Forgetting and Remembering," Korean War Legacy Foundation Inc., December 18, 2019, https://koreanwarlegacy.org/chapters/korea-forgetting-and-remembering/.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Albert J. Parisi, "In Pursuit of a Korean War Memorial," *New York Times* (New York, NY), July 10, 1988, https://search.proquest.com/docview/426874919?accountid=14696.
[140] Michael D. Gambone, *Long Journeys Home : American Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2017), 59.
[141] Parisi, "In Pursuit of a Korean War Memorial."
[142] Marek Tamm, "Beyond History and Memory: New Perspectives in Memory Studies," *History Compass,* (2013): 464, doi:10.1002/HIC3.12050.
[143] Sun, "Veterans of 'Forgotten War' Get their Memorial."

Situated on the National Mall in Washington D.C., the Korean War Memorial features a multitude of meaningful designs that reveal the truth of the forgotten Korean War veterans. Frank Gaylord, a veteran of World War II, is the sculptor responsible for the 19 seven foot tall soldiers that capture the attention of visitors.[144] Each of the statues appear to be walking through the fields of Korea in ponchos, which vividly recreates the experience of many veterans. The statues are made up of multiple branches of the military as well as ethnicities and races.[145] The Korean War was the first American war with integrated troops, so diversity within the troop is an important aspect of the memorial.[146] Louis Nelson, a muralist and architect, was responsible for the mural wall next to the statues. Featuring about 2,400 photographs of the Korean War, the mural wall shows what Americans were not exposed to during the war. The wall is also made of a reflective granite which creates the illusion of 38 statues instead of the 19 that are actually tangible. The number 38 represents the 38th parallel, the line that divided the North and South of Korea, and the 38 months of the Korean War. The entire memorial is in the shape of a triangle which comes together at a pool of remembrance, where the words "Freedom is Not Free" are written. The memorial also features a kiosk with all the names of American soldiers who died in the Korean War, a curb with all the names of the other nations that assisted in the war, and a dedication stone.[147]

Fig. 1 The 19 Statues by Frank Gaylord at the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C.

(Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith. *Korean War Veterans' Memorial, Washington, D.C.* 1995)

[144] Bart Barnes, "Frank Gaylord, who sculpted Korean War Veterans Memorial, dies at 93," Washington Post, accessed December 6, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/frank-gaylord-who-sculpted-korean-war-veterans-memorial-dies-at-93/2018/03/29/c63e255c-336b-11e8-8abc-22a366b72f2d_story.html.; "Korean War Memorial," American Battle Monuments Commission, accessed December 2, 2020, https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/history/korean-war-memorial.
[145] "Korean War Memorial."
[146] "African-Americans in the Korean War," Korean War Legacy Foundation Inc., December 18, 2019, https://koreanwarlegacy.org/chapters/african-americans-in-the-korean-war/.
[147] "Korean War Memorial."

Fig. 2 Aerial View of the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith. *Aerial view of the Korean War Memorial, Washington, D.C.* 1995)

One of the biggest signs of change and improvement regarding the monument was President Clinton's recognition of loss. Veterans had gone through decades of underappreciation and disregard by their presidents and the United States government. At the dedication of the memorial, United States President Clinton was joined by South Korean President Kim Young Sam.[148] Finally, President Clinton not only thanked Korean War veterans for their service, but apologized for the underappreciation of these veterans. He said to the veterans, "let us all say, when darkness threatened you kept the torch of liberty alight. You kept the flame burning so that others all across the world could share it."[149] Clinton recognized the bravery of these veterans despite the fact that America was not watching them. He also recognized that the United States had not made efforts to find out what happened to the 8,000 still missing American soldiers of the Korean War, and made a promise to work towards finding out what happened to them.[150] Within the next decade, 220 individuals' remains would be found in North Korea.[151] In contrast with President Eisenhower's disregard, President Clinton's speech at the dedication of the memorial demonstrated the attempted change in American collective memory. President Reagan, about a decade earlier, had started the push for recognition when he allowed the construction of the memorial, but Clinton continued this change. Newspapers across the United States began printing stories about the "Forgotten War" and its veterans.[152] American collective memory had shifted and started making moves in the direction of appreciation.

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[148] Faiola, "Out of History, Onto the Mall."
[149] William J. Clinton, "Remarks of President Bill Clinton: Dedication of Korean War Memorial," July 27, 1995, Washington D.C., print, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/1995/07/27/334/remarks-of-president-bill-clinton-july-27-1995-center-for-american-progress/.
[150] Ibid.
[151] "North Korea Agrees to Talks on Searching for Remains of Missing U.S. Soldiers," *New York Times* (New York, NY), August 19, 2011, https://search-proquest-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/nytimes/docview/2216655625/E6E1109EA4B4D10PQ/12?accountid=14696.
[152] Faiola, "Out of History, Onto the Mall."; Sun, "Veterans of 'Forgotten War' Get their Memorial."; "Remembering America's Forgotten War: A Tribute to Korean War Veterans."

Although President Clinton's dedication was a sign of progress, his possible motives are important to take into account as well. South Koreans were very invested in the dedication of the memorial. Most of the funds to build the memorial actually came from South Korean corporations.[153] The United States most likely saw the opportunity to improve their relationship with the country which had a lot of potential for their economic relations. Following the dedication of the memorial, South Korea has become a vital trading partner for the United States.[154] President Clinton was also facing reelection within the next year, and gaining the votes of veterans could also have been a partial motive in the dedication. Despite these possible motives, Clinton's dedication and speech still pushed the Korean War veterans into the news cycle, restoring them in the American collective memory.

The impact of this memorial is debated by many historians. Suhi Choi, a professor at the University of Utah, argues that the national monument is not particularly interesting in historiographical debates due to the prevailing "Freedom is Not Free" debate.[155] "Freedom is Not Free" is an inscription written on the Korean War Memorial, meant to signify the loss and sacrifice of soldiers due to their fight for freedom. Choi argues that the typical narrative, which showcases America fighting for freedom against communism, is an inaccurate narrative to describe the war. Instead, Choi found other memorials and monuments of the Korean War more effective in memorializing the events in Korea.[156] Although the typical narrative portrayed in the memorial is inaccurate, Choi's assumption about the impact of the monument does not account for the reaction among veterans or the impact of national recognition. Choi argues that because the monument fails to give an accurate narrative, it does not help the American collective memory.[157] Although it is true that many Americans still do not know much about the Korean War, or what it was even about, this monument has allowed for national recognition and progress in the American collective memory by introducing many Americans to the conflict. The memorial, admittedly, does not do the best job of portraying the politics behind the war, but it does accurately portray the experience of the soldiers. Veterans found themselves weeping at the vividness of the memorial and the accuracy of the experience of soldiers in the field. One veteran stated, "I've lost lots of guys, guys who didn't get to see this. That's why I had to be here, whatever it's worth. It's way overdue."[158] The memorial might have not changed American collective memory overnight, but the national recognition still reiterates that this is something America values and acknowledges. The narrative may have restricted its impact, but the impact was still noticeable.

Larry Blomstedt, a professor at Texas A&M University, offered a more compelling argument to explain Americans' forgetfulness—it is a product of their lack of understanding.[159] Many Korean War soldiers did not know why they were fighting the war they were. The ambiguity around the end of the war also led Americans to struggle to understand. Historians still argue about why the United States intervened in the war, and the armistice did not lead to definitive solutions. Michael J. Devine, a professor

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[153] Jada F. Smith, "Korean War Memorial Group Finds More Aid in Korea than in U.S.," *New York Times* (New York, NY), November 10, 2015, https://search-proquest-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/nytimes/docview/1732143805/6436546BFE8943AFPQ/1?accountid=14696.
[154] "Korea and the United States: Postwar Perceptions," Korean War Legacy Foundation Inc., December 18, 2019, https://koreanwarlegacy.org/chapters/korea-and-the-united-states-postwar-perceptions/.
[155] Suhi Choi, *Embattled Memories: Contested Meanings in Korean War Memorials*, (Reno, NV: Univ. Nevada Press, 2014), 40.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Sun, "Veterans of 'Forgotten War' Get their Memorial."
[159] Larry Blomstedt, *Truman, Congress, and Korea: The Politics of America's First Undeclared War*, (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2016), 9.

at the University of Wyoming, explained that "[e]ven when peace came to Korea, it left Americans feeling less secure and in no mood to remember or memorialize an unpopular and unresolved conflict."[160]

With a lack of interest about the period, America never invested the academic or intellectual time in understanding the conflict. The simplified explanation of a "war against communism" contributes to today's students struggle to understand the war. The director of the Korean War Legacy Foundation, Jongwoo Han, stated, "I am surprised that these textbooks only cover a maximum of one page about the Korean War."[161] Students still do not have a substantial grasp on the Korean War and its implications for our current reality. Many Americans did not understand how historic the 2018 Winter Olympics were when North Korean and South Korean Olympians entered the arena together as Korean athletes.[162] The absence of peace motivated Americans to attempt to forget about the conflict instead of struggle with the lasting effects of it. Forgetting about the conflict also left veterans forgotten from Americans' memories.

Although the Korean War Memorial did not create the remembrance Korean War veterans deserve, it did create national recognition that was a step in the right direction, but only the beginning. This lack of understanding comes from the incorrect narrative within the memorial. The memorial can not replace the valuable education students should receive, and is not enough in the hopes to memorialize these veterans. Although this memorial has proven not to effectively teach Americans about the war, its purpose is different. Its purpose is that it is a symbol of what Americans value. The understanding of the war and its events should instead come from schools and through education.

In conclusion, in the decades following the war, veterans were left as the forgotten people in a forgotten war.[163] Confusion, lack of media attention, and a desire to return to normalcy made a tired nation overlook the millions of soldiers who fought in the Korean War.[164] However, through increased attention by presidents and media outlets, Korean War veterans have seen their legacy change. Memorializing the men and women who fought for the United States was a step taken too late after many veterans had already passed away. Even so, Korean War veterans have not been able to move past the step of getting a memorial on the National Mall, which has proven not to be enough in memorializing these veterans. Following the dedication of the memorial, students still lack the same education they receive for other wars.[165] Americans need to understand the conflict, which would be possible only through improved education. The memorial should not just take up space on the National Mall; it should be an indication of Korean War veterans' legacy. The Korean War still has the risk of being forgotten, despite the moderate progress, along with the thousands of men and women who died in the battlefields of the war.

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[160] Michael J. Devine, "The Korean War, American POWs and the Legacy of Brainwashing," *Transactions of the Royal Asiastic Society, Korea Branch* 92, (2017): 167, http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=20&sid=593f62ec-0636-44e5-8973-809022303767%40sdc-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=bas&AN=BAS914392.
[161] Smith, "Korean War Memorial Group Finds More Aid in Korea than in U.S."
[162] "The Legacy," Korean War Legacy Foundation Inc., December 18, 2019, https://koreanwarlegacy.org/the-legacy/.
[163] Sun, "Veterans of 'Forgotten War' Get their Memorial."
[164] Faiola, "Out of History, Onto the Mall: Korean War Memorial to be Dedicated."
[165] "Korea: Forgetting and Remembering."

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**In the Garden**

**By Elana Morris**

*Author's note:*

*The following text is fictional. My aim in writing it was to explore the everyday life of an upper-middle class Victorian woman. My concentration in history is socio-cultural—it's a broad title that often means my understanding of history is made up of what people watched, wore, ate, and read—essentially, the substance of normal life. So when given the option in Professor Julie Taddeo's Victorian history class to experiment with form, I jumped at the opportunity to write historical fiction. I drew from different aspects of Victorian popular culture to write this story, a series of vignettes from the perspective of Maggie Jennings, an upper middle class Victorian woman with an interest in botany and the natural sciences. My goal was to demonstrate the influence of the British empire on daily life in Maggie's musings, which are partly inspired by the story "The Yellow Wallpaper." I decided to weigh the content over the structure, so I took certain liberties with my language; for example I used the present tense, which I haven't observed very much in writing from the 1880s (the approximate time period of this piece.) I do think "Bleak House" employs the present tense, so it certainly wasn't unheard of. I hope my writing educates and entertains.*

*Elana Morris*

**////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////**

When the weather is good, and when Roger is gone clerking, I garden. The truth is—the truth that I don't bother to tell Roger or his mother or my mother or anyone else that comes poking around—is that I do more than garden.

On good weather days, when the sky is clear and bright and when Grace is straightening up inside, and the baby is fed and sleeping, I classify. A little brown leather-bound notebook tucked into my bodice, my name etched into the inside cover, a wide brimmed hat, sturdy shoes. The week before last, I spent three hours with my little notebook outside, muddying my skirt. Weekends are devoted to church, but weeks—they are free for anything. Roger came home earlier than usual that day—an easy day at court, he said, though he appeared, as is customary, rather disheveled upon his arrival.

I myself was clean enough from the waist up, though the bottom of my dress had dragged through a flower bed and was thus quite filthy. I smiled at Roger from behind the rosebushes and flashed him a resolute smile, attempting to look engaged with my planting. He wore an expression of perplexed weariness and seemed almost as if he was to walk over. The little leather-bound book lay open on the ground in front of me, taunting me from my feet. I considered stepping on it and crushing it into the ground, destroying the evidence of my secret pastime. Roger is more religious than I, and would recoil at the way I have classified certain species of flora, at the references to Darwin's work. The page lying open at my feet bore evidence of my studies:

> *"Hence it is the most flourishing, or, as they may be called, the dominant species,—those which range widely over the world, are the most diffused in their own country, and are*

*the most numerous in individuals,—which oftenest produce well-marked varieties, or, as I consider them, incipient species." – Darwin on 'Variation Under Nature'*[166]

But the drawings, I'll admit with some pride, were attractive and precise. Beside this quote lay a reproduction of the strange overlapping vines in the garden which dwindle every passing year—the "incipient species" that Darwin speaks of. I could not bear to ruin my hard work.

Instead, I lied to Roger. "I am just finishing my work here," I said. "I must trim a few of these bushes, which have grown quite a lot due to the rain."

There was, inconveniently, not a garden tool in sight. But Roger could not see anything from where he stood.

"Well for the sake of all that's holy," Roger said, "clean yourself up. You are absolutely haggard."

A breeze brushed through the garden, sending a chill through me. The pages of the notebook flipped violently, straining against the spine that held them. The book moved with the wind, sliding to the right, just to the edge of the bushes. I lifted my skirt and pressed my boot on the corner of the notebook, forcing it to stay still.

Roger turned his back to me and started toward the door of the house. He stopped then, and stood still and turned around with a jerk, his brow troubled. "I really do wish you would stop with this gardening," he said. "You seem distracted and unwell. You'll have no energy for the baby."[167] He paused. "And all that scribbling in that notebook. I begin to think you're simply avoiding the world."

I felt the small of my back damp against the cloth of my chemise. My fingers were frozen and numb.

"I am quite alright," I responded. "I will come inside in just a moment."

"Please hurry," Roger said. "I can smell supper on the table, and you know how Grace chafes when the food is left uneaten."

Grace would be waiting, stern, brow furrowed, with a bar of Pears for me and a disapproving stare at my tanned complexion.[168]

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[166] Though Darwin's writing was incorporated into popular culture, the Catholic and Protestant church still found many of his ideas blasphemous. I am imagining Roger to be a moderately religious protestant, who takes a more literal interpretation of the bible—he would not approve of Maggie's special interest in Darwin's theories on the natural world.
Darwin, Charles, and Leonard Kebler. Variation Under Nature. In *On the origin of species by means of natural selection, or, The preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life*. London: J. Murray, 1859. Pdf. https://www.loc.gov/item/06017473/.

[167] Conservation of energy theory. A popular belief at the time, this theory suggested that women should take part in few other activities besides child-rearing and domestic duties. Maggie's gardening and scientific hobbies, though related to the beautification of her household, fall outside the most traditional occupations expected of Victorian women. (from lecture)

[168] Pears was the number one soap brand for Victorians, and its advertisements featured images of black babies transforming into white babies, invoking the ideal of pure, white, ivory skin. "The White Man's Burden" was a cultural touchstone for the Victorians, who associated cleanliness with whiteness. Maggie's maid acts as the Victorian voice of reason here, viewing Maggie's tan and muddy appearance as inherently inferior. (from lecture)

"Yes, of course," I said. Roger turned around again and walked brusquely into the house, the door creaking shut behind him, trapping the warmth inside with him and the baby and Grace. I much preferred the cold.

At the Circus

Roger has convinced me that I'd do well out of the mud and among the people. Today we are going to see a show. He has not told me very much—only that it is an exhibit of the exotic sort, and that his brother William and young niece Violet will be there. That can only mean this will be a gaudy affair, for William has an unsavory interest in the more speculative side of the scientific arts, and is always blabbering on about the beautiful shape of my skull.[169] I find William to be on occasion quite disgusting, but I endeavor to keep my feelings from Roger. He is already cross with me about my peculiar botany habits, and has been watching the way I feed the baby rather closely. I don't want to ruffle him more than is necessary. He and his brother do not get on very well, and I suspect that Roger disapproves of William's behavior just as much as I—though perhaps for different reasons.

I do not want to imply that Roger is a rude man or a bad husband, for he is neither, and really a kind man at his core. But he is terribly nervous about things, and is very concerned that we conduct ourselves "the right way," and that I not waste my energy on unnecessary diversions. I don't know what "the right way" is, but I can infer it excludes my little leather notebook.

We arise at dawn, and Grace spends a long time fussing over me. She is upset that I have scuffed my elbows while gardening, and that my fingers bear little cuts from examining the thorned flowers that populate my growing bed of plants. Grace has never been a gentle woman, but I find her giving me disapproving looks more of late, and she always seems to be grumbling around some corner of the house. I give her a wide berth in the hopes that I will not induce one of her tempers.

We are off to the show by the late morning, and arrive at midday. A crowd of well-dressed people have suffocated the entrance to the London Aquarium, an imposing semicircular building, a marvel of architecture. Roger is unusually quiet, and stoic this afternoon, even more so than is to be expected. It is not his usual pious silence, but one that speaks more than words themselves. I touch his elbow with a gloved hand and he turns toward me, his countenance strained. He will not tell me the reason for his discomfort, but I know—it is William.

And I have summoned the man, like the devil himself. He is parting the crowd, his tall hat yet taller than the rest of the men, Violet in tow like a little dog. They are inseparable, Violet and William, a strange pair indeed. Violet's mother, delicate as she was, died in childbirth. It was a dreadful thing to behold, a gloom which engulfed the family. Now I am the sole bearer of Jennings, unless William decides to wed again. That is unlikely, given that he is such a cad. There will be no Jennings, at least none of which we are aware. But William is well known for his jaunts out at nighttime, trips to darkened alleys

[169] William is presumably a believer in phrenology, that practice which claimed to be able to judge the weight of one's character by the shape of their skull. By associating this race science with William, I imply that he is susceptible to those theories which place Englishmen on the top of the so-called evolutionary ladder. His interest in Krao is also justified, though one would not have to be considered villainous in Victorian England to take open and accepted interest in freakshows. There's also a hint at William's lechery in this passage, as taking interest in Maggie's skull implies a certain unwanted hint at eroticism. Ironically, though Maggie claims to be a woman of science and admirer of Darwin, the naturalist himself succumbed to the irrational art of phrenology. In that same vein, Darwin did not believe in the equality of the sexes—so Maggie's devotion to his text is both ironic on her part, and perhaps an attempt to subvert that narrative on my part. (From Darwin lecture)

and stinking taverns. Violet is too naive to understand where her father goes at night— but I am not. And neither is Roger.[170]

"Roger, brother," William yells, and places his hand on Roger's shoulder. They greet each other, one brother jovial, the other somber and stiff. William takes my hand in his large glove and leans down to brush his lips against the black silk, looking me in the eye as he does so. A chill runs through my body, not dissimilar to the one I felt in the garden many weeks ago. I cannot bear to stand within an arm's length of this man.

William straightens his back and looks at Roger with a flash of white teeth. He reaches into the pocket of his coat and draws out three pamphlets, which he doles to Roger and me, ignoring Violet, who has materialized at his side. On the paper, a most unsettling image materializes before me: a girl, nearly naked, her large eyes peering into mine from underneath a generous mop of black hair, hair that covers her entire body, including her face. "KRAO," the pamphlet reads, emblazoned upon the top of the page. My eyes drift down, past the girl's bare feet, the foliage surrounding her like she is a creature not of civilization, but of nature itself. A smattering of text frames the girl, like the strict lines of a building.

"The usual argument against the truth of the Darwinian theory, that Man and Monkey had a common origin, has always been that no animal has hitherto been discovered in the transition state between 'Monkey' and 'Man.' This 'Missing Link' is now supplied in the person of KRAO, a perfect specimen of the step between man and monkey."[171]

Of course. Darwin. William knows that I am partial to the naturalist's words— he caught me reading a copy of *On the Origin of Species*, when he showed up at our home last month, unannounced, asking for money. This is more than a mere family outing— this is an attempt to curry my favor, and thereby that of his brother for whom I am the sole confidante. This is as transparent an attempt to manipulate as any I have ever witnessed. My grip on Roger's elbow tightens, and his eyes widen as he too reads the contents of the pamphlet. He does not know the reason we are here.

It is a failure, this scheme of William's. I know of the exhibit we are about to witness— the freak show, and the little girl, the supposed link to the primitive. But it is a bastardization of Darwin, the work of a conman capitalizing off of those twin emotions shock and titillation.

One of the pamphlets has fallen to the ground, and Violet reaches down, her dress puddling around her in the dust of the London street. She lifts the paper with thin fingers— so like her mother's— and holds it up to her face. She cannot be much older than the girl in the pamphlet. What must she think of this other girl, who mirrors her in age and stature and yet so completely repels those standards to which

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[170] Prostitution, though looked down upon, was an inevitability in Victorian society, as well as a way for poor women to earn a living. This story would be set just a few years before the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, which subjected women suspected of prostitution to invasive, painful exams. Though women were punished for their sex work, men faced no similar consequence for seeking services from these women. Men like William, despite their equal role in the Victorian sexual ecosystem, went unchecked.
Walkowitz, Judith. The Making of an Outcast Group: Prostitutes and Working Women in 19th Century Plymouth and Southampton. In *A Widening Sphere.* Routledge Revivals. 2013.
[171] Krao was taken from Laos at a young age and exhibited in freak shows by Guillerno A. Farini. In 1883, she and Farini came to the London Aquarium in Westminster, to fascinated crowds interested in both the shock of the exhibit, and the pseudoscience.
Tromp, Marlene. 2008. The Missing Link and the Hairy Belle. In *Victorian Freaks : The Social Context of Freakery in Britain*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Violet must subscribe for the rest of her young life? It is a thought I cannot bear to entertain or dwell on. "Come," I tell Violet, and gently remove the pamphlet from between her fingers, letting it float back down to the street. "A girl such as yourself can glean no benefit from reading papers such as these."

William looks up from his own copy and into my face, anger corrupting his sharp features. "She can read them if she wants," he says.

"Surely," I respond. "But the street is dirty, and she'll get soot on her skirt kneeling like that. Let us go inside, shall we?"

William looks at me, the corner of his mouth puckering in a slight show of aggression. He nods curtly, and turns his gaze towards his brother, whose concentration is trained absently towards the pamphlet on the ground.

"Roger?" he says. "Are you ready to see the greatest show you've ever witnessed?" William smiles, and the façade is back. He takes Violet's hand and squeezes it. "The most fantastic exhibition after the Great Exhibition?[172] The *Missing Link*?"

Roger smiles weakly and lets out a breath- and we enter the crowd of people, swept along in a tide of Englishmen. To the freakshow, despite best laid plans.

A Day Reflecting at Home

It is a somber day today outside, rain pelting the window, a grayish hue over the garden, and nothing to do but listen to the baby cry. It has been a week since the freak show, and one of the worst in recent memory. I was too confident that day, too stubborn. William, of course, was enthralled by the exhibit, and barely tried to conceal his fascination with the young Krao. I took Violet's hand and led her to another part of the show, Arthur trailing silently behind us. But William would not let up with his constant jabs at Arthur, his derisive stares. So.  I made a decision I will always regret—I feigned illness.

It seemed an innocent thing to do at the time, a way to leave without causing further conflict. But Arthur did not realize the disingenuousness of my affliction, and proposed we go to see Dr. Browning for medical advice. Reluctantly, and so as not to cause further upset, I agreed.

His office was stark and cold, the walls covered with thick books whose names I did not comprehend: *On the Curability of Certain Forms of Insanity, Epilepsy, Catalepsy, and Hysteria in Females; On Melancholia; Insanity in Females, a Physical and Mental Affliction; Medical Treatments for Madness…*

Dr. Browning asked that I described the symptoms I had been experiencing. Without serious consideration, I provided a list of the tamest afflictions I could imagine; faintness, fatigue, and slight irritability. I assumed the doctor would prescribe bedrest and leave me to my devices.

But Dr. Browning seemed rather inquisitive, and unwilling to let Arthur and I return home. He peppered me with a series of increasingly unrelated questions, to which I could only offer the faintest

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[172] The Great Exhibition opened in London in 1851—these characters would have been much younger when they saw it, if we are to place this story around the early 1880s. But the exhibition strikes me as a quintessential moment in Victorian London, a demonstration of empire and industry and the perceived superiority of English innovation and industry. I wanted William to reference the exhibition in a casual, and almost offhand way. It is a, like Pears Soap, another cultural touchstone, and a subtle acknowledgement of the role of empire in shaping these characters' recreations, and reality.

replies. "Do you often find yourself daydreaming? Do you experience pain in the abdomen or sudden fits of restlessness? Do you have trouble sleeping? Do you experience irritability of the bladder or feelings of 'bearing down,' during your monthlies? (To this I could only communicate mortification). Are you eating well enough and do you often lose motivation to perform your wifely duties? Are you unsatisfied with the company your husband keeps? (I could not find a rational explanation for this question, and answered it in the negative, though my expression might have betrayed another story entirely.)

After this humiliating barrage of questioning, Dr. Browning concluded that I had a mild case of hysteria, with melancholic tendencies, and that I should confine myself to the home until a significant change in symptoms. He prescribed a poultice of olive oil, to be applied to the chest twice daily, and advised against the use of stimulants. Finally, I was discharged, poultice in hand, dignity stripped—or at least lessened.[173]

Now, with the rain thrumming in my ears and the baby finally drifting off, I let myself daydream. Dr. Browning is right—maybe I am prone to melancholia. But only on days when the garden is out of reach. I remove my little book from the box I keep it tucked away in, and examine the finely penciled diagrams, the painstakingly copied quotes.

"Missus," calls Grace from the kitchen, and I snap the book shut out of habit. Now, especially, is not the time to reveal my hobby, at least while those around me monitor my behavior so closely. I slip the book into the box and open the top drawer of the armoire beside me, fitting the box snugly in its place.

Grace walks into the parlor, casting a disapproving glance at the baby and around at the room, no doubt finding some speck to dust or polish.

"I've made some clear soup," she says, and looks at me with a strange intensity. Arthur has told Grace about my 'affliction,' no doubt, and she sees it in her duties to nurse me back to health—and close every window, lest a slight breeze invite a cold, or a ray of sun colour my complexion.

"Clear soup?" I ask, hoping for something a bit more flavourful than the usual bland fare afforded to the sickly.

"It has a bit of that Indian spice you like," Grace says with a grumble.

"Ah," I respond. "Mulligatawny." [174]

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[173] I base Maggie's experience with the physician on the accounts of Isaac Baker Brown on treating women with hysteria and other specifically female conditions. Dr. Browning is a proxy for Brown, who often used treatments like olive oil and chloroform to (ineffectively) cure women of their ailments. Maggie's experience at the doctor's reflects the way that empire has seeped into even the clinical aspect of everyday life. Women's bodies became a landscape for displays of scientific innovation, often at the expense of their health.
Jeffreys, S. (Ed.). On the Curability of Certain Forms of Insanity, Epilepsy, Catalepsy, and Hysteria in Females; On Melancholia; Insanity in Females by Isaac Baker Brown. In *The Sexuality Debates*. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis. 2013.

[174] The English enjoyed Indian cuisine, but often tempered it to fit their bland appetites. The ingredients Maggie describes are based off of the recipe in *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management*, which appears in Modhumita's article on the role of empire and gender in the popularization of Mulligatawny.
Roy, Modhumita. "Some Like It Hot: Class, Gender and Empire in the Making of Mulligatawny Soup." *Economic and Political Weekly* 45, no. 32 (2010): 66-75.

Grace knows I am partial to the soup, and makes it the way I like it, with a bit of veal stock and a generous pinch of cayenne and curry powder.

And then I am happy to be inside on this rainy day, the baby asleep, my little book also in its crib, the water nourishing the garden, the hot soup casting fragrant wafts of scent around the house. I follow Grace into the dining room and rejoice in this feeling of solitude. Tomorrow I will start again on my cataloguing.

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**Progressive-Era Racism's Impact on Black Midwifery in the Mountain and Rural South**

**By Rigby Philips**

**175**

Midwife Mary Francis Hill Coley bathes a newborn baby in Albany, Ga., 1952.

[175] "Reclaiming Midwives: Pillars of Community Support," *Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum* (2006).

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## Introduction

In 1915, two out of every ten American nonwhite infants died before their first birthday.[176] Ten nonwhite mothers died per thousand between 1900 and 1930.[177] Infant and maternal mortality was so common in their community that southern African Americans accepted deaths related to childbirth as God's will and believed that little could be done to stop them. Most black women relied on traditional midwives, sometimes known as "Granny midwives" and affectionately called "Aunt," to help them through pregnancy and delivery. Black midwives brought traditional folk methods and expertise to women's bedside and offered housekeeping, wisdom, and advice as well as healthcare. Their services went for a small fee—often between two and ten dollars or in the form of crops or livestock—or they offered their services as a gift, as many black women could not afford the services of a physician or were too remote to access one.[178]

While white women faced about half the rates of infant and maternal mortality at the time, they still took issue with the current state of women's and children's health across the country.[179] Pregnancy and childbirth—historically deemed women's business and kept very private—became public issues as progressive women entered politics at the turn of the century. At the beginning of the 20th century, maternalist progressives urged medical professionals and the government to take action to prevent infant and maternal mortality in the U.S., and in 1912, the Children's Bureau was founded.[180] Headed by Julia Lathrop, the Bureau was instrumental in the passage of the 1921 Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection Act, which offered services to rural women including midwife training and licensing, data collection, nurse visits, and women's health education.

The Sheppard-Towner act was hugely successful and saved countless women's and children's lives across the country, but black communities in the south and Appalachia did not see such success. Within two years of the Sheppard-Towner Act, they recorded the following statistics: "594,136 babies examined… 74,659 mothers advised, 1,706 infant welfare stations established… 39,910 midwives instructed, 162,073 mothers attending mothers' classes."[181] While these programs certainly benefited white mothers, death rates remained constant among black mothers and babies. Seven years after the Sheppard-Towner Act was passed, infant mortality among babies of color had only fallen from 108 deaths-per-thousand to 106, compared to 64 deaths per thousand for white babies.[182] Molly Ladd-Taylor speculates that these numbers may even be too low, as several states with high African-American populations were not included in the data set.[183] By 1920, most white women had abandoned midwives because they considered them "inadequate, dangerous and outdated."[184] Meanwhile, black women in Mississippi reported that midwives attended 87.9% of their births in 1910. Women in Appalachian Kentucky reported 85% in 1922, and non-white women in North Carolina reported 67.4% as late as 1936.[185]

While many maternalists viewed African American mothers and midwives as more dangerous and incapable than new immigrants and their midwives, the child welfare movement nevertheless focused on the high infant mortality rates in urban immigrant neighborhoods, not in rural black ones. For a while, the child welfare movement seemed to conveniently ignore the high mortality rates among African American mothers and babies.[186] So, for most rural black women, discrimination and unaffordable medical treatment affected their birthing process more than their

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[176] Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 18.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Molly Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters': Midwife Education under the Sheppard-Towner Act," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 22, No. 2, (Winter 1988), pp. 255-275.
[179] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 18.
[180] Maternalism was a belief common among middle-class progressive women that argued mothers' natural giving and gentle instincts qualified them to act as effective leaders and actors in the public sphere.
[181] Elizabeth Tilton, "Better Babies By the Bushel," Child Welfare Magazine, The PTA Magazine, Volume 20 (Lancaster, PA: 1925), 374.
[182] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 187.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Shauna Scott,"Grannies, Mothers, and Babies: An Examination of Traditional Southern Midwifery," *Central Issues in Anthropology*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (December 1982), 17-18.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 25.

location ever did.[187] Communities of color's reliance on midwives provided maternalists and civic leaders with "a convenient scapegoat on which they could blame the high infant and maternal mortality rates in certain areas."[188]

Why did African-American mothers in the rural south and Appalachia see fewer results than white mothers? This essay will analyze how racist attitudes among public health nurses and white maternalists, as well as the government's role in Sheppard-Towner funding, limited its effectiveness in communities of color. Additionally, it will explore how resistance to public health measures also came directly from southern African American women's desire to preserve the deeply personal traditions of black midwifery.

This essay relies heavily on secondary sources. Access to useful primary sources was limited due to the pandemic and the nature of the material, as many midwives were illiterate and did not leave behind their own sources. To supplement my argument without in-person access to the Library of Congress, I used Chronicling America digitized newspapers to find information about midwifery, grannies, and infant and maternal healthcare between 1900 and 1930. Using only newspapers from western North Carolina and eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, I was able to find a surprising variety of articles on the Children's Bureau, the Sheppard-Towner Act, and midwifery. However, those articles seldom mentioned race. I also used various 1920s Children's Bureau publications and several editions of *Child Welfare Magazine* as evidence of white women's attitudes. Without many good primary sources by black women themselves, I rely on secondary sources to bridge the gaps between race and midwifery.

**Historiography**

This essay relates greatly to the work of the women's historians Molly Ladd-Taylor and Kriste Lindenmeyer, both of whom have written extensively on child welfare and the state. Ladd-Taylor's book *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* and Lindenmeyer's *A Right to Childhood: The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-46* were powerful secondary sources. *Mother-Work* examines the politicization of motherhood and childcare with an emphasis on women's lived experiences. *A Right to Childhood* also analyzes the politicization of childcare, but does so more through a political lens than a personal one. These books provided me with evidence and data from Children's Bureau and Sheppard-Towner records while my access to those documents was restricted due to the pandemic.

**The Role of Government**

The establishment of the Children's Bureau and the subsequent passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act were milestones in white maternalist efforts to bring women's issues into the public eye and demand government support in solving them. J. Stanley Lemons called it "the first venture of the federal government into social security legislation."[189] Though it passed through the Senate 63-7, the Sheppard-Towner Act was met with anger and controversy by several congressmen, extreme conservatives, and many medical professionals who feared that the Act would compromise states' rights, was a Bolshevist communist plot, or was a threat to private medicine, respectively.[190] These doubts required the Sheppard-Towner Act's authors to compromise their goals in order for it to pass. Anna Rude, a physician in the Children's Bureau, wrote that "certain desirable but minor provisions of the act have been omitted and a few new stipulations added, [but] the original purpose of the bill remains unchanged."[191] Unfortunately, the seemingly small changes to the bill greatly reduced its reach and effectiveness.

The funding that Sheppard-Towner ended up receiving was minuscule and regulated. States received $1,480,000 for the 1921-1922 fiscal year and $1,240,000 for the next five years. Each state received $5,000 automatically and $5,000 more if they provided matching funds.[192] The rest of the money was allocated based on population or additional matching, and had to be channeled by the Children's Bureau through state-level health or

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[187] Ibid.
[188] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 259.
[189] J. Stanley Lemons, "The Sheppard-Towner Act: Progressivism in the 1920s," *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 4 (1969), 776.
[190] Lemons, "The Sheppard-Towner Act," 776.
[191] Anna E. Rude, "The Sheppard-Towner Act in relation to public health," U.S. Dept. of Labor: Children's Bureau (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923) 2.
[192] Tilton, "Better Babies By the Bushel," 374.

child welfare divisions.[193] States were required to pass their own legislation and have a plan before receiving funding. They were also able to reject aid if they wished (though no southern states did so). Mothers also had the option to accept or deny service.[194]

Southern states used their ability to create their own funding plans to discriminate against women of color. They had the option to either provide inferior services to communities of color, or to simply not give them funding at all. For example, one qualification found in nearly every state's plan stated that "the mother shall be a proper person to have the care of her children."[195] This requirement allowed social workers and Sheppard-Towner agents to define "proper," and therefore made it very easy for those agents to discriminate based on their own personal moral codes. Poor, black, and unmarried mothers—demographics with significant overlap—suffered the most from this loophole. While the Children's Bureau did recognize this phenomenon, there was very little they could do to change it.[196] Even if maternalists could have prevented discrimination against black mothers, they might not have. They were often blind to the intersections of race and class as it related to motherhood and did not see childbirth or child welfare as racial issues, even though white and black mothers often had very different lived experiences.[197]

While white women on the local and national levels had little power to influence Sheppard-Towner funding, black women had even less. Because of their race, gender, and role in society, black women found it exceedingly difficult to influence policy in the progressive era. They were also excluded, whether intentionally or not, from a great deal of policy created by white women. Thus, black women focused their political efforts more on direct action than legislation. Some black women found a way to do both; in 1908, Lugenia Burns Hope combined her community activism with legislative action through her work at the Atlanta Neighborhood Union.[198] Here, Hope and other black women led community-wide classes about prenatal and infant care and focused on influencing public policy.[199]

**Class and Poverty**

The Children's Bureau cared a great deal about the effects of class and poverty on child welfare, and they had research to back it up. Grace Abbott, a director of the Children's Bureau, wrote that studies showed a relationship between "high infant mortality [and] low earnings, poor housing, the employment of the mother outside the home, and large families."[200] She also indicated great variation of infant mortality rates in the U.S., in different parts of the same state, and "the same city, town, or rural district. These differences were found to be caused by different population elements, widely varying social and economic conditions, and differences in appreciation of good prenatal and infant care and the facilities available for such care."[201] One can understand Abbott's description of "population elements" and "appreciation of good prenatal care" to mean black or immigrant communities who relied on midwives over white physicians.

Because they had collected a great deal of data on the effects of poverty on maternal and infant health, the Children's Bureau originally planned to address poverty directly in order to guarantee safer pregnancies, births, and childhoods for poor and rural women and children. However, the Children's Bureau found that addressing poverty was unattainable for them. Instead, they turned their attention toward a new plan: assimilation and a middle-class ideal. Over time, the Children's Bureau and other child welfare groups focused less on poverty eradication and more on assimilating black and immigrant mothers into the so-called American way of mothering. Mrs. Henry Osgood Holland, Chairman of the American Citizenship Committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, a well-

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Lemons, "The Sheppard-Towner Act," 776.
[195] Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood: The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-46*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 157.
[196] Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood,* 157.
[197] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 63.
[198] Lugenia Burns Hope was an Atlanta-based community organizer and black women's rights activist who focused on traditional social work, community health campaigns, and political pressure for better education and infrastructure. Juan Cardoza-Oquendo, "Lugenia Burns Hope (1871-1947)," *New Georgia Encyclopedia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010).
[199] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 62.
[200] Grace Abbott, "Ten Year's Work For Children," U.S. Dept. of Labor: Children's Bureau (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923), 3.
[201] Ibid.

known child welfare organization, wrote that her colleagues were working to "raise the standards of the Afro-Americans: The problems of indifference among the native-born towards the responsibility of citizenship is a difficult one."[202] The Congress worked to educate foreign-born mothers on American government, patriotism, the flag, and the importance of naturalization. Mrs. Summer Whitman, Chairman of the Child Hygiene Department of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, wrote that the Congress ought "to Americanize those who are strangers to our land; to educate, not only his children who manage to survive, but the parents so that home and school standards shall be more nearly akin." The Congress even offered a scholarship to the immigrant mother who was most successful in her citizenship class. The winner, a Russian Jewish woman, eventually returned to Russia with $250 "to specialize in Americanization work."[203] "Americanization" emphasized disapproval of unmarried mothers and working mothers; it required that women do not work and rely on the earnings of their husband. Staying home was not an option for many black mothers, whose husbands were unable to earn a living wage.

### Cultural Failure, or Inherited Trauma?

The Children's Bureau saw the black community's high percentage of working mothers as a cultural failure as much as an economic necessity. White maternalists disapproved of mothers in the workplace and argued that the only reason a mother should work was because there was no male breadwinner in their family unit or he did not make enough to support them. They believed black culture was more supportive of working mothers than it should be. This was not the case, however; black women had similar ideals of traditional motherhood as white women, but they lacked the resources to attain that ideal.[204]

In order to provide for their families, black women and girls, including mothers, had to work in white homes to help with childcare and other daily chores. Billie Douglass went to work as a babysitter at only 14 years old. She noted that she had no choice; "that was what you did."[205] Some county or city governments required women on welfare to do housework or else they would lose their benefits.[206] These arrangements, which upheld white supremacy in astoundingly obvious ways, were never questioned by white families but devastated black women. Douglass told historian Jaqueline Dowd-Hall that while she was fond of the white children she cared for, she eventually resented having to leave her own children home alone. "We'd fall in love with those kids and they would love you. You'd raise those children, and sometimes they'd come home with you. But when my children were born… it seemed like I would be away from [them] all day taking care of somebody else's."[207]

The cycle of black women leaving their children behind to care for white children was a reflection of slavery, and it reinforced generational trauma in the black family unit that separated black and white cultures of motherhood. Enslaved women who went through pregnancy mostly ended up producing more slave labor or having their babies—often conceived from rape—taken from them immediately after birth to be sold. Meanwhile, they were forced to care for their masters' white children.[208] Along with the extremely high rates of black infant mortality, motherhood and trauma were intertwined for black women. Black culture was not failing black babies, white supremacism was. Mary Church Terrell, a prominent black activist and the first president of the National Association of Colored Women, expressed her thoughts this way:

> "Contrast, if you will, the feelings of hope and joy which thrill the heart of the white mothers with those which stir the soul of her colored sister. Put yourselves for one minute in her place, (you could not endure the strain longer) and imagine, if you can, how you would feel if situated similarly – As a mother of the

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[202] Mrs. Henry Osgood Holland, "American Citizenship," Child Welfare Magazine, The PTA Magazine, Volume 20 (Lancaster, PA: 1925), 142.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood,* 155.
[205] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James L. Leloudis, Robert Rodgers Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, Christopher B. Daly, and Michael H. Frisch, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 157.
[206] Dowd Hall, *Like a Family,* 157.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 60.

> weaker race clasps to her bosom the babe which she loves as fondly as you do yours, her heart cannot thrill with joyful anticipations of the future. For before her child, she sees the thorny path of prejudice and proscription which his little feet must tread."[209]

Where black women saw history, hardship, and racism, white maternalists saw a cultural moral failing. Because of their ability to deny infant or maternal health services to a mother whom they deemed "improper," Sheppard-Towner agents continued the cycle of trauma.

**Dismissal of Traditional Midwifery Practices**

Despite good intentions, public health nurses and Sheppard-Towner agents held racist beliefs about midwives and the women who hired them. Not only did they view midwives' practices as superstitious and dangerous, they also viewed midwives as "dirty" and "untidy."[210] In fact, cleanliness was the most emphasized lesson in midwife classes. Rural black women's traditional practice of giving birth on old quilts in their husbands' clothing was discouraged in favor of sterile environments and thorough scrubbing and shaving pre-birth.[211]

While the switch to a more sterile birthing environment was based in scientific fact and benefited public health, many nurses' also voiced concerns over the appearance of black midwives' bodies. This idea was unscientific and racist, rooted in the notion that African Americans were dirty or unclean. Grace Abbott, the head of the Chicago Immigrants' Protective League, believed that "careless, *dirty,* and dangerous" midwives were responsible for higher infant and maternal mortality in communities of color.[212] With a focus on cleanliness, women like Abbot and white public health nurses paid close attention to midwives' dress and appearance. They believed that to effectively care for a newborn, a woman must be "spotlessly clean."[213] Thus, Sheppard-Towner midwife classes sought to transform black midwives into white nurses. One nurse described the transformation of "one 'disorderly' group of tobacco-chewing midwives wearing fancy hats and wool dresses into an eager, well-behaved class wearing starched dresses."[214] Molly Ladd-Taylor argues that this transformation "symbolically cleansed [the midwives] of their race, their sexuality, and their motherhood."[215]

Public health nurses were harshly judgmental not only of black midwives' appearances, but of their traditional practices as well. Progressive maternalists and public health leaders blamed traditional "granny" midwives for the high infant and maternal mortality rates in black communities.[216] They believed that by educating midwives on newer, more scientific birthing practices, infant mortality would decrease in black communities.[217] They also believed that preventing the oldest granny midwives from practicing altogether would be effective, even though the oldest were often the most experienced.[218] Nurses knew that the oldest midwives were the least receptive to "new law" regulations that Sheppard-Towner agents set forth.[219] Jessie Marriner, director of Child Hygiene and Public Health Nursing in Alabama, claimed that midwives who insisted on following "old law" were "unteachable, unruly and vicious and constitute a serious menace to infant life and the lives of mothers."[220]

Black midwives' practices were deeply rooted in religion and ritual; they believed they were merely assisting God by "catching babies" while God did the hardest work during birth.[221] Many of the practices had both European

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[209] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 60-61.
[210] Ibid, 183.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood,* 96.
[213] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 183.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Traditional or lay midwives were often called "grannies" or "granny women." Grannies and spinsters
[217] It is worth noting that, while mothers were free to accept or refuse government assistance, midwife classes were compulsory. Midwives had to be licensed post-Sheppard-Towner, and they could lose their licenses for any number of violations of their teachers' rules. The classes were not all bad, though. Many women enjoyed them and traveled great distances on foot or horseback to attend. Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 182.
[218] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 182.
[219] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 255.
[220] Ibid, 260.
[221] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 61.

and African origins, and some were solely African-American traditions. Despite the diversity and rich history of black American birthing tradition, white midwives dismissed it as "superstitions of the African jungle," rather than respecting the religious and traditional practices.[222] Such practices included placing an axe or a pocket knife under a birthing mother's bed to "cut the pain;" instructing the mother to wear a hat of the baby's father during birth; and prescribing buttermilk, gun powder, dirt-dauber tea, black pepper, and red onions to hasten labor.[223] They also believed that placing the ashes of hen feathers underneath the mother's bed would hasten labor.[224] Some practices, like applying cobwebs to stop hemorrhaging and prescribing herbal teas, were based on African medicinal traditions. Prayer and massage were also common.[225] Many midwives were even experienced in turning breech babies around and could effectively manipulate the baby's position by hand.[226] No matter how scientific or effective their practices were, granny midwives' skills were dismissed as superstition by public health nurses and fervently discouraged, thus furthering the cleansing and medicalization of childbirth.

## The Medicalization of Birth

Progressive physicians, Sheppard-Towner agents, and public health nurses viewed childbirth as a scientific medical procedure that required a trained, professional physician and contemporary knowledge and techniques. Meanwhile, most midwives and black mothers still viewed childbirth as a ritual with religious and symbolic implications.[227] While most nurses had good intentions and believed that they were helping both mothers and midwives, they ended up disrespecting black culture and denying the benefits and value of traditional healing practices.[228] It is difficult to say whether most public health nurses actually dismissed folk healing so wholeheartedly, and Molly Ladd-Taylor speculates that they may have disavowed the benefits of traditional midwifery simply to appease conservative southern leaders. However, Ladd-Taylor also notes that even liberal Sheppard-Towner nurses likely shared the racial prejudice of their time, and white supremacist thought could have easily translated through their work without pressure from their supervisors.[229] Grace Abbott, mentioned earlier as the Head of the Chicago Immigrants Protective League, claimed that traditional midwives were responsible for high death rates among immigrant and black mothers, and that a physician was always superior.[230]

The Children's Bureau pushed the message that scientific births were superior, and that idea soon became the norm in white communities, including working-class ones. Anna Rude of the Children's Bureau wrote that "the relatively highly developed knowledge concerning practical obstetrics is so meagerly diffused and ineffectively applied practice, that certainly…it is not brought to bear with sufficient force to prevent the occurrence of…unnecessary maternal deaths."[231] In the same document, Rude referred to midwives as "problems" and called for more public health nurses instead.[232] Appalachian newspapers including *The Jackson County Journal* in Sylva, NC, began addressing their community's infant mortality issues with public service announcements about midwives and child welfare. One read: "Protect your babies from ignorant midwives, nurse-maids, and old-fogy neighborhood grandmothers. Call in a good doctor if you want to know something about baby quickly. Don't take chances with a superstitious, old-fogy granny."[233] There are two problems with this rhetoric: stereotypes of "granny" midwives were often related to race, and black women in particular could not afford a doctor (midwives usually charged between three and five dollars; doctors charged between 10 and 30).[234] Appalachian black women especially had trouble paying

[222] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 261.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work,* 61.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Scott,"Grannies, Mothers, and Babies," 22.
[227] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 256.
[228] Ibid, 259.
[229] Ibid, 260.
[230] Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood,* 96.
[231] Rude, "The Sheppard-Towner Act in relation to public health," 2.
[232] Ibid, 3.
[233] "Do's and Don'ts For Mothers," *Jackson County Journal* (Sylva, N.C.: 19 June 1914), Chronicling America.
[234] Scott,"Grannies, Mothers, and Babies," 20.

for a doctor; because industrialism and wage labor arrived late to the region, many of Appalachia's residents possessed wealth in crops, not cash.[235]

**"New Law" vs. "Old Law:" Categorizations of Black Midwives**

Southern midwives called Sheppard-Towner midwife regulations the "New Law." New law required training and certification of midwives, which had to be renewed every year. The classes were run by state health departments with Sheppard-Towner funding, and they were supervised by the Children's Bureau. In the classes, public health nurses taught midwives to use sterile procedures and new technologies instead of traditional remedies. For example, the use of silver nitrate eye drops was recommended for the prevention of gonococcal blindness (a very common issue in babies at the time).[236] Traditionally, midwives had used breastmilk to prevent blindness.[237] Many of the lessons taught in midwife classes were truly beneficial to public health, and the new law led to the elimination of many folk practices. However, many midwives—especially older ones—chose to continue practicing old law.

Public health nurses divided new law and old law midwives into categories and recorded racist observations about both groups. New law midwives were the preferred group, as they were more receptive to public health teachings and apt to move away from tradition. They were often younger midwives with less experience and—though they were adult women—were viewed as childlike. A Sheppard-Towner agent in Georgia wrote that new law midwives were "kind-hearted, loyal and sympathetic, earnest, and with all, indispensable."[238] Old law midwives were still viewed as "dirty" and "dangerous."[239]

Nurses also equated intelligence with literacy, and most old law midwives could not write and did not live by the clock.[240] A report on childbirth in Louisville wrote that "midwives... as a rule are uneducated."[241] Deemed inferior, instructors tried to replace them with younger women. One Mississippi nurse wrote that "The negro women, although illiterate and ignorant, are natural nurses and are tractable, teachable, and for the most part, eager to learn the 'white folks way."[242] Even the most positive views of new law midwives were marred by racism; nurses speculated that new law midwives were teachable in that they could learn lessons and memorize information, but they would not execute the lessons without supervision. They also worried that new law midwives were deceiving them by imitating white nurses and acting eager to please.[243]

**Conclusion**

The Sheppard-Towner Act was a quintessential piece of social-security legislation and a defining moment in American women's history. The Children's Bureau was able to revolutionize women's healthcare and introduce once-private issues of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood into the public sphere. Their actions saved many lives and set a precedent that the government has a responsibility to take care of its most vulnerable people, but while the Sheppard-Towner Act took care of many poor, rural white women, it largely failed black women.

Highly regulated legislation and maternalist attitudes about race, culture, and tradition prevented the Sheppard-Towner Act from succeeding in giving adequate care to black and immigrant mothers who needed it most. States had the right to limit or prohibit funding to black communities. Public health nurses with very little sensitivity to racial issues offended black midwives time and time again by dismissing folk healing practices in favor of a physician-assisted medical birth. Disrespected, black women were less receptive of help from medical professionals.

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[235] Ibid, 25.
[236] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 255.
[237] Ibid, 262.
[238] Ibid, 260.
[239] Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood,* 96.
[240] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 264.
[241] "The Promotion of the welfare and hygiene of maternity and infancy: the administration of the
Act of Congress of November 23, 1921, Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1926," U.S. Dept of Labor: Children's Bureau, No. 156 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1926), 34.
[242] Ladd-Taylor, "'Grannies' and 'Spinsters,'" 260.
[243] Ibid.

Political and social flaws in the execution of the Sheppard-Towner Act prevented tangible decrease of black, southern infant and maternal mortality.

Black women and babies face similar issues to this day; black women are three to four times more likely to die in childbirth than white women.[244] The World Health organization reports that black women in America die from childbirth at rates similar to women in Uzbekistan and Mexico, countries in which the poverty levels are significantly higher than in the U.S.[245] Contemporary public health wisdom is still affected by racist ideologies. The field blames high rates of African American maternal mortality on the community's high levels of teen pregnancy, but it ignores most other systemic factors that contribute to those deaths, mirroring the flawed and racist thought processes of progressives. Despite its many successes, the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act is a prime example of how, for decades, white women, the American healthcare system, and the government have left black women behind.

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[244] Amy Roeder, "America is Failing Its Black Mothers," *Harvard Public Health* (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Winter 2019).
[245] Ibid.

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