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Editor's Introduction

The journey to create the Texas State Undergraduate Research Journal was a rewarding and enlightening experience. Beyond giving me useful knowledge of the publishing industry, this thesis production taught me the importance of collaboration and the value of creative freedom.

Actualizing this journal was important not only for me, but for the entire university. In a January 2012 presentation, University President Denise Trauth said, "Texas State is deeply committed to undergraduate student success even as we broaden our mission to include doctoral programs and an expanded research agenda." It is my desire that TXSTUR will provide an outlet for all undergraduate students to publish their research in this push toward Texas State becoming a Tier One Research Institution.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to making this journal a reality, in particular my thesis adviser John Hood and Honors Dean Heather Galloway, without whom I would never have heard about this amazing opportunity. The members of my editorial board contributed their time, knowledge, and creativity, and they made the process of starting this journal efficient and enjoyable. I am grateful for the contributions of all the professors who were willing to serve as subject matter experts. Finally, I appreciate all the students who submitted their research to TXSTUR. Reading those articles was a learning experience, and I am honored to have been a part in bringing those studies into the public eye.

The following articles research the 9/11 attacks, the Civil Rights Movement, factors facing nontraditional students, the life of Grover Cleveland, and loss of religion. Although the articles in this issue are related to history and the social sciences, the journal invites submissions from any field of study, ranging from the fine arts to the laboratory sciences and engineering. I hope the information compiled in this issue serves to instruct and illuminate its readers. Any views expressed in these articles do not necessarily concur with those of the Editorial Board or Texas State University. For more information on article submissions and journal guidelines, visit the TXSTUR website at <http://journals.tdl.org/txstate/>.

Rachel Barnett, TXSTUR Editor-in-Chief



About the Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief

Rachel Barnett is the founding Editor-in-Chief of TXSTUR. She is a senior at Texas State University studying English-professional writing and journalism. She currently works as a copy editor for *The University Star* newspaper and as a Front Line Manager for Textbook Solutions. After graduating, Rachel hopes to become an editor for a publishing company.

Associate Editor

Thomas Kloss is the associate editor of TXSTUR. A sophomore majoring in psychology and English, he hopes to provide excellent undergraduates a platform for their research, and as a result, contribute to the academic environment of Texas State University. After graduation, he hopes to pursue a graduate degree in psychology.

Copy Editor

Casey Torrance is a copy editor for TXSTUR. She is a senior studying journalism and fashion merchandising at Texas State University. Upon graduation, she hopes to become an editor at a magazine or similar publication. She currently works at the Writing Center at Texas State and as a merchandise associate at Marshalls.

Graphics Designer

Adam Chalupa the graphics designer for TXSTUR. He is a junior who is currently working on two degrees at Texas State University. One B.A. will be in physics, and the other will be in mathematics. When he is done at Texas State, he will be applying to graduate programs overseas with high hopes for Oxford or Cambridge University. The field he hopes to go into will be high energy physics. Adam will most likely solidify his specialization in this field with a Doctorate of Philosophy.

Reviewing Editor

Samantha Holley is a reviewing editor for TXSTUR. She is a sophomore at Texas State University majoring in political science and minoring in theater. She is an active member of the Texas State University Chapter of the Pre-Law fraternity, Phi Alpha Delta. Upon graduation, Samantha hopes to attend law school at the University of Texas at Austin.

Reviewing Editor

Cecil Weller is a reviewing editor for TXSTUR. He is a junior at Texas State University studying English. After graduating, Cecil hopes to teach.

The Early Life of Grover Cleveland

Christian Penichet-Paul

ABSTRACT

Stephen Grover Cleveland's life up to the age of forty-two transformed his character and defined the path of the United States during his two non-consecutive presidential terms. Through a number of primary and secondary sources, it is possible to reconstruct Cleveland's early life and note the development of his politics and worldview. The first democrat elected to the presidency after the Civil War, Cleveland was never recognized as a man of superior intellect. However, he was known for his strong work ethic and personal integrity. Cleveland managed to become one of the most prominent lawyers in Buffalo, New York, and began to move up the political ladder with his election as sheriff of Erie County and, consequently, to the mayoralty of Buffalo. Cleveland's two presidencies symbolized reform and honesty, which were influenced by the teachings and experiences in his early life. In turn, the examination of Cleveland's life to the age of forty-two years is important because it transformed him into the statesman who would become the President of the United States.

Keywords: Grover Cleveland, American history, American presidents

The first Democrat elected to the presidency after the Civil War, Grover Cleveland was a man of character, recognized for his personal honesty and numerous political reforms. The late nineteenth century was an era of social change and rapid national growth. Cleveland's character, formed throughout his early life, played an imperative role in his judgments and solutions to the problems and changes of the day. Cleveland's childhood, studies in law, and early adulthood to the age of 42 would form his character and influence the direction of the United States. During his two, non-consecutive terms as president, Cleveland's early life would weigh upon the presidency and nation.

Born Stephen Grover Cleveland on March 18, 1837, Cleveland was the fifth of nine children to Richard and Ann Neal Cleveland. Residing in Caldwell, New Jersey, the Cleveland family subsisted on a precarious income that never reached \$600 a year. Cleveland's father, a minister in charge of the First Presbyterian Church, the only one in the village, would face continuous pressure on his insufficient salary. Regardless, the family maintained a profound connection with their Presbyterian faith. Cleveland was named after Stephen Grover, whom his father had succeeded in the village church. The family lived in a two-and-a-half story house with "a general air of comfort and peace" (Nevins, 1932, 10). The financial situation, however, remained dire.

In 1841, Richard Cleveland accepted a position in Fayetteville, a village in central New York. Cleveland grew up in the village for ten years, playing pranks around town and forming a fondness for fishing. Family discipline was strict; worship was held every evening and the children were required to become familiar with Greek and Latin classics, as well as works by Milton and Shakespeare. Cleveland's official schooling began in a district schoolhouse; at the age of eleven, he entered the town's "Academy," managed by a teacher who lived to shake his hand as president. Cleveland also worked a number of jobs, at one time slicing the tip of his left middle finger when running a corn-cutting machine. Cleveland's parents taught their children numerous ethical lessons centered on their Presbyterian faith. Through these teachings, Cleveland inherited a foundation of duty and self-improvement (Nevins, 1932).

Cleveland's maturation in a Presbyterian environment influenced the development of his character. Religion was a significant part of the family, and Cleveland was rigorously taught the faith. While he would not attend a church in his adulthood, he continued to show the strong persistence of his early training, maintaining a sense of duty in his work and responsibilities. In the years of Cleveland's youth, western New York was an important area for religious revivals. The region contained a large number of different religions seeking to expand their teachings. In the Presbyterian faith, the dominant teachings were the exaltation of God and the belief that God had a plan for the world. The themes promoted a strong sense of duty and a conviction that laws are fundamental to the order of the universe. Presbyterians were taught to be stalwart, diligent souls. In the end, Cleveland's faith helped to shape his character. He was described by his contemporaries as a man devoted to his duties and inexhaustible in patience and courage. The religious teachings of his youth transformed his character and influenced his life (Kelley, 1966).

Cleveland became the clerk of a general store in Fayetteville at thirteen years old. He was paid \$50 for the first year and promised, if he proved trustworthy, double the amount in the second year. Cleveland's position included room and board, and his earnings supplemented the family income. Cleveland proved to have a strong work ethic, rising at five in the morning in summer and half-past five in the winter. He would open the store and sweep it out, dust the merchandise, and run errands throughout the day. The position taught Cleveland the enduring

value of hard work, even if it was performed in a humble post (Nevins, 1932).

Richard Cleveland accepted a new position in 1851 and moved the family to Clinton, New York. Cleveland's father would become the new president of the American Home Missionary Society, which comprised of a higher salary (\$1,000 per year) and the ability to utilize the educational facilities afforded by Hamilton College. The family's eldest son, William Cleveland, would start and finish his education in Hamilton College, while the younger boys were enabled to take advantage of the Clinton Academy in preparation for college. The educational opportunities provided by Richard Cleveland's new position illustrate his desire to endow his sons with an appropriate education. Cleveland, then fourteen years old, entered the academy, where he was known as a persistent studier but without brilliance. The family moved again in September, 1853, to Holland Patent, another village in New York. Richard Cleveland became minister of the local Presbyterian Church and died in the succeeding month, leaving his wife and children in financial strain. For Cleveland, the death of his father was a tragic loss, as he was an influential person in his life. Cleveland praised his father, noting that, through limited resources, he brought up and educated a family so that they might work and not suffer deprivation in his respect (Parker, 1909).

The family remained in Holland Patent, but Cleveland accepted a position with a small salary as an under-teacher in an institution for the blind in New York City. Cleveland's oldest brother William was the principal male teacher in the literary department of the institution. Cleveland remained in the position for one year, satisfying his employers with "the faithful and efficient performance of his duties" (Dieck, 1888, 31). In a letter to his sister Mary, Cleveland described his desire to "get into some business" because he could not see himself getting an education "with nothing to start on and no prospect of anything to pay [the] way." Cleveland wanted to create a solid foundation for his life, and until he did, he would not let his sister catch him "inside of college walls." The letter, written in the winter of 1853-54, also reveals that Cleveland, only sixteen years old, was maturing physically. He noted people asked him if he had voted at the election, and he attributed the questions all to his "whiskers," which had become "so unmanageable that...in consequence I now sport quite – indeed a *very* – respectable goatee" (Cleveland and Nevins, 1933, 3-4). Cleveland's letter demonstrates the maturation of his character and his belief in a concrete financial foundation.

Cleveland left the institution in the winter of 1854 and returned to Holland Patent. He intended to resume his schooling, but the family's financial stress obligated him to find employment. Cleveland sought work in the towns of Utica and Syracuse but was unsuccessful. In turn, Ingham Townsend, a Presbyterian elder in Holland Patent, offered to finance Cleveland's education on a promise that he enter the ministry. Cleveland refused the offer but asked for a loan of \$25 for a journey to the west. He had decided to find his destiny in Cleveland, Ohio, named after his distant relative, Moses Cleveland. However, Cleveland's first stop was Black Rock, a small town close to Buffalo, New York, where his uncle Lewis Allen and his family lived. Allen, one of the first stockmen in America, suggested that Cleveland remain in Buffalo and help edit the American Shorthorn Herd Book. He offered Cleveland \$60 for five months of editing and arranging the text. Furthermore, Allen promised to apprentice Cleveland in one of the city's law firms. Cleveland, having decided on the law as his profession, agreed and remained in Buffalo (Brodsky, 2000).

The city of Buffalo was a main element in Cleveland's future success. Buffalo was a western city, a part of the frontier that was rapidly growing due to commerce in the Great Lakes. The city's character possessed rough and elemental traits, as well a sense of a simpler and gentler nature. Cleveland's personality, including his observance of duty and hard work, resembled the character

of the city. In other cities, such as New York and Chicago, Cleveland's lack of intellectual passion and his honest character would have worked against his advancement. Buffalo would help to define Cleveland in his young adulthood and prove to be indispensable in his political career (Nevins, 1932).

Cleveland, at the age of eighteen years old, was contracted as an office clerk in the firm of Rogers, Bowen and Rogers. At once, he was set to work in the office and to master the basic elements of the law. Cleveland worked doggedly in the firm. Although he lived with Allen in Black Rock, two miles from Buffalo, he was always the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave in the evening. Cleveland's hard work was appreciated in the firm and, by the autumn of 1855, he was receiving \$4 a week in payment ("Grover Cleveland," 1884). In early 1856, Cleveland left Black Rock and moved to Buffalo. Ledger-books from the firm reveal that, on June 1856, Cleveland earned \$146.87 for "services to date." The records indicate that by 1856 Cleveland was completely self-supporting. His earnings in the firm were periodically augmented by new work on the Shorthorn Herd Book (Nevins, 1932).

The law firm of Rogers, Bowen, and Rogers exercised substantial influence in Buffalo. The firm had influential connections in the city and was known for its superior practice of the law. Furthermore, President Millard Fillmore was a former associate of the firm. Fillmore, a member of the Whig Party, was elected vice president in 1848 and became president in 1850, when President Zachary Taylor died in office. Fillmore's rapid rise in politics and his role as president during the Compromise of 1850 fascinated the residents of Buffalo and strengthened local support for the Union. For Cleveland, the firm's connection to the city and Fillmore must have encouraged his aspirations. If Fillmore could become president, then it was possible for Cleveland to become a lawyer and form his own law practice (Graff, 2002).

Cleveland's early years in Buffalo are represented in two letters to his sister Mary. In the autumn of 1855, Cleveland wrote to Mary and congratulated her on her marriage and first child, an infant boy. He explained that he set aside the "Blackstone," or law work, for a few minutes to write the letter. Cleveland noted that he had "to work very hard just at present, as the senior clerk is absent"; however, the experience provided an opportunity, since "the more I do the more I learn" (Cleveland, 1933). Cleveland also commented that his employers were kind and that they had promised him another promotion. Cleveland informed Mary that if her son decided to study law, he would, "take him in [his] office...with the greatest pleasure." The letter illustrates Cleveland's strong work ethic and, most notably, his ambition. At nineteen years old, Cleveland's objective appeared to be the creation of his own law firm.

The second letter was sent to Mary on February 14, 1856. Cleveland informed Mary that, at a quarter past eleven, he put aside the law books to write her the short valentine. He noted that he felt neglected by her. Not knowing of "any just cause for such neglect," he inquired if for some reason she was upset at him. Cleveland also updated Mary on his employment, noting that his employers assured him that "if I keep on, I'll make a lawyer," which he told Mary "is a circumstance devoutly to be wished." Cleveland stated that he received a valentine in the morning and repaid his "sweet incognita without delay." The second letter demonstrates that, while Cleveland's desire was to become a lawyer, he still yearned for his family. The letter also reveals that Cleveland had a possible relationship with a young woman. In the end, the two letters disclose Cleveland's life during his first years in Buffalo (Cleveland and Nevins, 4-5 and 7-8).

During Cleveland's early residence in Buffalo, the slavery question became a greater national concern. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854 were

passed by Congress to solve the issue, but the policies augmented the animosity between supporters and opponents of slavery. The Republican Party, which was formed in opposition to slavery, held its first presidential convention in 1856. The party selected General John C. Fremont as its nominee. While Cleveland had aligned himself with the Democratic Party since his youth, it was during the election of 1856 that he officially saw himself as a democrat, because “the party seemed to represent greater solidity and conservatism” (Nevins, 1932, 44). Cleveland considered General John C. Fremont’s candidacy to be flamboyant and theatrical. In addition, his superiors in the law firm were decisively democratic. The election of 1856 resulted in national and local democratic victories. Beginning in the fall of 1858, Cleveland began to participate in the local democratic organization. He acted as a volunteer ward worker and attended local caucus meetings. Cleveland’s democratic leanings, formed during his youth, were cemented by the presidential election and the atmosphere in the law firm (Nevins, 1932).

Cleveland was admitted to the bar in May 1859 at twenty-two years old. For three and a half years, Cleveland diligently studied the material in the law volumes, but it was his experience in the firm that thoroughly prepared him for the assessment. After his admission, Cleveland decided to remain in Rogers, Bowen, and Rogers, where he was promoted to chief clerk at a salary of \$600 per year. By 1862, Cleveland’s salary would increase to \$1,000 a year. With the larger income, Cleveland supported his mother and sisters in Holland Patent. His brothers, including William, subsisted on a low salary and could not contribute to the family. In the outbreak of the Civil War, the family considered whether Cleveland should enlist in the army, but it was decided that two brothers, one older and one younger, should join instead. Cleveland, the only son financially able to assist the family, would continue to practice law (Brodsky, 2000).

The situation would complicate with the Conscription Act of March 3, 1863, which drafted all able-bodied men between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five into the Union army. Cleveland was among the men called on the first day. The only manner to avoid the war was to provide a substitute or pay a commutation of \$300. In turn, Cleveland hired a Polish immigrant, George Benninsky, to substitute him in the war for \$150. The substitution would become a major issue during Cleveland’s campaign for the presidency, with sensationalist newspapers exaggerating Benninsky’s suffering and questioning Cleveland’s patriotism. Cleveland, in his honesty, never claimed that he felt a strong desire to enlist, but it was a heavier duty to his family that kept him in civil life (Nevins, 1932).

Cleveland’s integrity would distinguish him in his profession. As a lawyer, Cleveland did not treat honesty as professionally expendable or undesirable. In fact, his strength of character derived from a spirit of sincerity and independence, which reflected his Presbyterian training as a child. Cleveland also worked with great diligence in the law firm, showing physical energy and a capacity to disregard discomfort. He would carefully examine every item of relative importance. Through his honesty, Cleveland supported President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. Cleveland was a War Democrat, but he found Lincoln’s suspension of the writ of habeas corpus lawful and believed that the Union must resort to every possible method to protect itself. It is believed that Cleveland voted for President Lincoln in 1864 (Merrill, 1957). Cleveland’s work ethic as a young lawyer was defined by the “three traits of indomitable industry, unpretentious courage and unswerving honesty” (Dieck, 1888, 36). In turn, Cleveland’s integrity made him a respected figure in Buffalo.

The political participation of Cleveland expanded during the Civil War. Cleveland began to attend city conventions and, on October 1862, participated as a delegate from the second ward,

a heavily German section of the city. Cleveland proved popular with the German community in Buffalo. In November, he was nominated and elected for ward supervisor. Cleveland won his first public office with 509 votes, at twenty-five years old (Brodsky, 2000). Shortly after the election, Cleveland was offered the position of assistant district attorney. Cyrenius C. Torrance, an elderly Democratic lawyer, had won the election for district attorney and decided to appoint a young democrat for the position of assistant district attorney. The question of who should be selected to the office was discussed in Rogers, Bowen and Rogers. The firm's partners, noting Cleveland's tireless work ethic, decided to employ their influence and proposed Cleveland for the position. In consequence, Cleveland was offered the office, and he accepted (Dieck, 1888).

The acceptance of the position meant that Cleveland's annual income of \$1,000 would decrease to \$500. Cleveland was leaving a prominent law firm to occupy a minor public office. However, the position presented the possibility of a life in public service, whether in Congress or judicial office. The move indicated that Cleveland, in terms of a definite career, was looking at politics. For the next three years, Cleveland's new position provided him with substantial experience and labor. Torrance was infirm most of the period, leaving Cleveland to handle most of the work. In an accurate sense, Cleveland was the real district attorney, not Torrance (Nevins, 1932). Cleveland would begin to work at eight in the morning, meticulously examining every detail of the judicial matters. At eight in the evening, Cleveland would sit down to prepare for the next day, remaining in his desk until three in the morning. He was known for working a day and a half without sleep. Cleveland attended all thirty-six grand juries performed during his term, personally trying half of the cases. In one occurrence, he argued four different cases at the same time and won all four of them. Cleveland's work as assistant district attorney earned him a reputation as a person of legal talent and integrity (Brodsky, 2000).

Cleveland's dedication to his profession reduced his time for recreational activities. While political enemies alleged that Cleveland lived a life of carouse, his main focus centered on the duties of his public office. However, Cleveland did maintain friendships with a number of male companions. With them, he relaxed and drank in the saloons of Buffalo. On the contrary, Cleveland's sex life appears to have been "confined to a few brothel visits and a brief affair with a widow named Maria Halpin" (Welch, 1988, 23). Cleveland, a bachelor in his late twenties, had few prospects for marriage and felt uneasy without his independence. Cleveland also preferred the familiar, presenting little interest in other localities and favoring the study of law to music and poetry. Cleveland's official duties required most of his attention (Welch, 1988).

In the local elections of 1865, Cleveland received the democratic nomination for district attorney. The democratic press enthusiastically supported his candidacy, noting his legal ability and strong work ethic. However, Cleveland would not win the election, despite carrying seven of the thirteen wards in Buffalo. His opponent, Lyman Bass, won the remaining wards in the city and the district's rural communities. Cleveland's election defeat "closed his political career for half a dozen years" (Nevins, 1932, 53).

For the next six years, Cleveland returned to the practice of law. First, he entered in a partnership with Isaac Vanderpoel, a politically well-connected lawyer, and later, with Albert Laning and Oscar Folsom. Cleveland became one of Buffalo's most prominent lawyers, deciding to argue cases on the merit of their honesty. In 1868, Cleveland successfully defended the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* from libel. The paper publicly accused a wealthy Buffalo grain dealer of obtaining fraudulent receipts for stored grain. The grain dealer sued for libel and was deemed to get large damages, but Cleveland assumed the defense and defeated the suit. The case proved

difficult because the grain dealer was a man of high political and social standing. The jurors held the grain dealer with esteem; nonetheless, Cleveland won his argument. The prominence of the case contributed to Cleveland's growing reputation outside of Buffalo. He was seen as a man endowed with the powers of industry and common sense. In a short period of time, Cleveland would resume his political career (Brodsky, 2000).

In 1867, Cleveland repaid an old debt to Ingham Townsend. Cleveland sent Townsend a short letter enclosed with a sum of money, which accounted for \$25 and years of interest (Dieck, 1888). The letter demonstrates Cleveland's integrity and long memory. In the letter, Cleveland noted that he was, "now in condition to pay my note...for money borrowed some years ago." Cleveland informed Townsend that the loan was the start of his life and that he would always "preserve the note as an interesting reminder of your kindness" (Cleveland and Nevins, 1933, 10). Cleveland's desire to reimburse Townsend revealed his belief in the importance of honor, which he would still hold in his next public office.

The Democrats nominated Cleveland in 1870 for sheriff of Erie County. Cleveland actively campaigned for the general election, delivering three speeches in Buffalo and two more in the countryside. His speeches were lackluster, but the activity revealed his desire to become sheriff. In accepting the nomination, Cleveland contended a position that was seen disdainfully by a number of people. Unlike the position of district attorney, which held a sense of dignity, the office of sheriff was associated with corruption. Cleveland publicly stated that the position of sheriff might offer more time to study law than he found in his law practice. However, the most probable scenario was an attraction to the service fees, which could yield \$40,000 in three years. In the ensuing campaign, Cleveland won the election with a majority of 303 votes, but he underperformed the democratic candidates for governor and Congress. Cleveland's low victory margin was attributed to an uninspiring campaign (Nevins, 1932).

The office of sheriff in Erie County was not simple. Cleveland was in charge of an area with a large concentration of sailors, vagabonds and other malefactors who produced a considerable volume of crime. In addition, Buffalo had 673 saloons and a large number of brothels. The jails in Erie County had the distinction of holding more prisoners per square foot than any other county jail in the state of New York. Cleveland's main concern, however, was to eradicate the disorder and corruption left by his predecessors. For example, to confirm that all corkwood contractors supplied the full amount, he personally measured the deliveries. For Cleveland, it was no concern that many of the contractors were democrats.

Cleveland also served in his official duty as hangman during two executions. He did not hire a replacement because he believed it was his moral responsibility to perform the charge (Brodsky, 2000). In the first execution, which concerned a case of matricide, Cleveland performed the job with adequate solemnity. The second execution centered on a saloonkeeper who shot and killed a friend. Cleveland felt sympathy for the man's family and enlisted a jury to determine his guilt. The jury's decision was execution, which Cleveland conducted with strict precaution. The reforms implemented by Cleveland in the office of sheriff impressed the residents of Erie County and expanded his reputation in the state (Nevins, 1932).

The death of two of Cleveland's brothers in 1872 left him as the main source of income for his mother. Lewis Cleveland, the younger brother who was also unmarried, owned a summer resort in Fairfield, Connecticut, which he left to his mother and favorite sister, Louise. However, the management of the estate fell to Cleveland. In turn, he made himself familiar with all aspects of the hotel and, in a few years, sold the property and passed the earnings to Louise. In 1873,

Cleveland declined to run for a second term as sheriff. The position earned him a substantial income and recognition as a reformer and man of law. However, Cleveland believed that a second term with the questionable associations of the position would be politically disadvantageous. He decided to return to the practice of law (Brodsky, 2000).

Cleveland's political philosophy was apparent during his administration as sheriff. He believed that rigid restrictions on public expenditures would relieve the burden of taxation and result in greater savings for the community. Cleveland also suggested that local public officials should promise the people improvements in their municipal government. In a speech to one of the city's conventions, Cleveland stated that there was, "no reason why the affairs of [the] city should not be managed with the same care and the same economy as private interests" (Cleveland and Parker, 1892, 1-2). Cleveland's reputation for honesty was evident in his work to reduce corruption and patronage. He eschewed corrupt contracts and unnecessary appropriations, noting that public officials were the trustees of the community. Cleveland believed that, for public officials, "there should be no higher inducement [than] a faithful and honest discharge of public duty" (Nelson and Lamont, 1908, 164-166). Cleveland performed his official duties with the objective to improve the public office and assist the community.

After his term as sheriff ended in 1873, Cleveland returned to the practice of law. For the next six years, Cleveland would continue to cement his mark as a prominent lawyer. He joined Lyman K. Bass and Wilson Bissell, a friend who would remain his confidant in the White House, to form a law partnership. Cleveland's persistent industry and integrity elevated the firm into one of the most important law offices in Buffalo. The majority of the firm's cases concerned corporations. Business men trusted Cleveland's conservative principles and industrious work ethic. In the courtroom, he would deliver long speeches from memory, which added to his formidable reputation. Although Cleveland was not an intellectual individual, he would concentrate on the main points in question and win the case without grandiose rhetoric. For one, he radiated integrity in the courtroom. Cleveland remained in private practice until his election to the mayoralty of Buffalo in 1881 (Nevins, 1932).

During the period, Cleveland frequented the saloons and hotel lounges with his male companions. He enjoyed the company of his friends and relaxed in the environment of tobacco smoke, glasses and cards. Cleveland's fondness for beer and lack of exercise caused him to gain weight; however, his first impression to numerous observers was of strength. Cleveland remained a bachelor and, in response to a question on the issue, noted that, "the more I think of it the more I think I'll not do it" (Nevins, 1932, 72). Cleveland also refrained from participating in the civic affairs of Buffalo. His work in the firm occupied the majority of his time. However, Cleveland maintained his affiliation with the bar association and the City Club. The institutions integrated the most prominent business men and professionals in Buffalo. In addition, Cleveland preserved his standing in the Democratic Party by attending ward meetings and city conventions, and serving on a number of party committees. At forty-two years old, Cleveland formally assumed the headship of his law firm (Brodsky, 2000).

Stephen Grover Cleveland was known for his persistent hard work and strong integrity. Never a man of outstanding intellect, Cleveland nonetheless managed to become one of the most prominent lawyers in Buffalo. In 1881, Cleveland's political career would flourish with his election to the mayoralty of Buffalo. From there, he would be elected governor of New York, and later, president of the United States in 1884 and 1892. Cleveland's two presidencies, symbolized by reform and honesty, were influenced by his early life. In turn, the examination of Cleveland's

life to the age of forty-two years is important. From his early days in a Presbyterian household to his position as sheriff in Erie County, Cleveland's experiences transformed him into the statesman who would become the president of the United States.

About the Author:

Christian Penichet-Paul is a senior at Texas State University studying history.

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Motivating a Nation to War: An Analysis of Bush's Address to Congress after 9/11

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ABSTRACT

The events of September 11, 2001, changed the way Americans felt about their sense of security. For the first time in a while, American citizens had become the target of foreign attack on American soil, a catalyst that would lead them into a foreign campaign to eradicate a new enemy—terrorism. Following the tragedy that occurred in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, President George W. Bush delivered an address to Congress discussing these events and how the nation would move forward. This address is the rhetorical artifact I will examine using the Pentadic method found in the writings of Kenneth Burke. The essay concludes with an assessment of George W. Bush's motives and effect this address had on our nation's response the transgressions of that fateful morning in September.

Keywords: 9/11, George W. Bush, Terrorism, United States Defense, Speech Analysis

Introduction

Many Americans remember what they were doing and where they were when the World Trade Center and Pentagon were attacked. They remember the shock and confusion of that moment; it was the moment Americans realized they were not impervious to being targeted by those who wish to cause harm: "In an unprecedented sequence of destruction, terrorist crashed two planes into the World Trade Center in New York, causing the famous twin towers to collapse. An aircraft also crashed at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and a fourth plane crashed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in an apparently coordinated series of attacks that spread fear across the nation."¹ It was this unprecedented orchestration of terrorism, carried out on an otherwise peaceful morning in September, that shook our nation's resolve to its core; as President George W. Bush would later state, "Americans have known the casualties of war—but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack."²

The magnitude of these attacks was instantly realized by audiences around the world. The attacks acted as a galvanizing force, uniting nations around the world. Even former adversaries of the United States extended condolences for these horrific events; "Russian president Vladimir Putin expressed his condolences to the American people over the terrorist attacks, calling them terrible tragedies."³ In the following days, America learned more about exactly what had happened that fateful morning in September and set the wheels in motion for how the world's most developed nation would react to this unprecedented attack on its own soil.

On September 14, 2001, Congress authorized "President George W. Bush to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or person he determined planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons."⁴ News reports foregrounded the White House's call for action: "President Bush says U.S. troops will hunt down terrorists and 'smoke them out of their holes.'"⁵ With the 'green light' given by a nearly unanimous number of members of Congress, President Bush was now ready to set the tone for the response that eventually would define his presidency.

Once the decision was made as to how the United States would respond and by what means, it was time for the American people to be made aware of what was to come next. On the 20th of September, President Bush addressed a Joint Session of Congress regarding the attacks America had witnessed just nine days before and what would be the course of action for the nation's response. This address will be the rhetorical artifact that this paper will examine. Utilizing the process of Pentad Criticism, this paper will explore the creation of two separate Pentads and their implications in relation to Bush's conscious or unconscious motives for this address, as well as the perspective that is presented from his depiction of the events and his proposed actions.

1 "World watches in horror as terror unfold in New York." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, September 12, 2001.

2 George, Bush. American Rhetoric, "George W. Bush Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks."

3 "Terrorists Attack America." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, September 12, 2001.

4 PBS, "Flashpoints USA Post-9/11 Timeline."

5 Breaking News.ie, "Developments After Terrorist Attacks."

Rhetorical Situation/Context

According to Bitzer, "Rhetorical discourse comes into existence as a response to situation, in the same sense that an answer comes into existence in response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem; a speech is given rhetorical significance by the situation."⁶ In the case of Bush's address to Congress on the 20th of September, his address to Congress stands as the response to the situation, with the terrorist attacks of 9/11 being the situation or problem calling for the rhetoric to be delivered. Also stated by Bitzer, "There are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: the first is the exigence; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the audience to be constrained in decision and action, and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience. Any exigence is an imperfection marked by urgency."⁷

For Bush, all three constituents were present; his 'imperfection marked by urgency' was the terrorists attacks of 9/11. As former Republican Party chairman Rich Bond stated, "We used to define the Western World as BC and AD... Now the world is going to be defined as before 9-11 and after 9-11."⁸ The second constituents in this rhetorical situation are the modifiers of change, in this case America's allies as well as the American people. According to Cruz, a columnist from the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, "President Bush is caught between the Devil and the deep blue sea. He has a very difficult choice to make: War or no war? War is the first impulse. The American people expect it. They want revenge. America's allies expect it. The world expects it."⁹ The audience for this address was not only the American people, but also nations around the world, including those who aided and abetted the terrorists responsible for the attacks.

Lastly, considering that constraints are the constituents that influence the rhetor and have the power to limit the rhetor's action, it is understandable how these intricate factors can influence the rhetoric delivered. In the words of Bitzer, "Besides exigence and audience, every rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence."¹⁰ For Bush's situation, while an extensive list of constraints could be made, arguably the most important were his selected delivery of the speech to the joint session of Congress and the time lapse between the attacks and this address.

During the time between the terrorists' attacks and Bush's Congressional address, another constraint became a crucial factor in forming how the nation would respond to his proposal. In this nine day time span, Bush's approval rating sky-rocketed from barely 50% to over 85%, which would continue to rise until reaching his peak of 92%, just days after his address to Congress, giving him the highest approval rating of any president still to this date.¹¹ It can be presumed that due to the elevated approval rating, Bush's address gained a large degree of acceptance simply because it was required by the situation.

6 Lloyd Bitzer, *The Rhetorical Situation*. (University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1966), 5-6.

7 Bitzer, *The Rhetorical Situation*, 6.

8 Kornblut, Anne, and Susan Miligan. "An Emotional Bush Promises." *Boston Globe*, Third edition, sec. National/Foreign, September 14, 2001.

9 Cruz, Neal. "Bush caught between the devil and the deep blue sea." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, sec. Opinion, September 19, 2001.

10 Bitzer, *The Rhetorical Situation*, 8.

11 Simon, Jeffery. *The Gaurdian*, "George Bush's approval ratings: 2001-09."

Method

For this criticism, this paper will utilize Pentadic Criticism, which is rooted in the work of Kenneth Burke. This method seeks to understand the motives of the rhetor by analyzing how he or she describes the situation, using the application of the five elements of drama—act, agent, agency, scene, and purpose. According to Sonja Foss, “How we describe a situation indicates how we are perceiving it, the choices we see available to us, and the action we are likely to take in that situation... Once you know how rhetors have described situations, you are able to discover their motives for action in the situations and how they justify, explain, and account for that action.”¹² President Bush stated, “We are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.”¹³ Bush’s description of what he perceives to be America’s situation indicates his intentions and his motive for addressing Congress are to move America from peace to war. According to David Ling, “The way in which a speaker describes a situation reflects his perception of reality and indicates what choices of action are available to him.”¹⁴ It is clear from this perspective that the option Bush deemed as an appropriate form of response was swift and immediate retaliation by any means necessary.

This artifact suggests there exist two separate Pentads created by President Bush, which can be separated into time frames—one Pentad providing an account of the past and the other focusing on the future. The first analyzes the explanation and depiction of the events that occurred on 9/11 and who was responsible for them. The second Pentad consists of how the nation would move forward from this tragedy and what would be done in response.

9/11 Attacks

The first of the two Pentads emerges during the beginning of this speech, or paragraph five of the transcript, in President Bush’s address to Congress regarding the events that occurred on September 11th. These five elements can be identified:

Act: America was attacked

Agent: Terrorist organization (Al Qaeda/Osama)

Scene: America and the American way of life

Agency: Hijacked planes and hatred

Purpose: To attack freedom and disrupt/end a way of life

Once the five elements of the Pentad have been identified, applying the ratios in order to discover Bush’s motives reveals that the dominant term for this Pentad is the Agent, or the Terrorist organization responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Bush states, “Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have

¹² Sonja Foss, *Rhetorical Criticism Exploration and Practice*, (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2009), 355-365

¹³ George, Bush. American Rhetoric, “George W. Bush Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks.”

¹⁴ David, Ling. “A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Edward Kennedy’s Address to the People of Massachusetts,” 1970.

gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as Al Qaeda.”¹⁵ Bush goes on to clarify specifically whom he deems responsible, Al Qaeda and its leader Osama Bin Laden, when he says “This group and its leader—a person named Osama bin Laden.”¹⁶ Next, Bush attempts to familiarize his audience with what this organization is capable of: “They are some of the murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.”¹⁷ He states exactly why they are a threat to civilization, not just Americans: “there are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries,”¹⁸ and “Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime.”¹⁹

Bush's description of the terrorist organization responsible then leads him to discuss how this organization is relevant and the second element of the Pentadic ratio, the Act. He states, “On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country.”²⁰ In his brief discussion of this event, Bush's motive is to—in the minds of individuals around the world—link the group Al Qaeda and its leader Osama Bin Laden, along with regimes that support terrorism, to the image of the enemy, while contrasting them with the United States in order to gain support from other nations around the world. He states, “Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war... and the great hope of every time now depends on us.”²¹

By linking anyone who is against the United States with the tragic and ‘emotionally charged’ devastation of 9/11, Bush bridges a gap in the two Pentads and transitions his speech into the second Pentad, which will address moving forward from this point, and the second function of this address.

War on Terror

In this second portion of his address to Congress, Bush identifies an entirely separate Pentad discussing what will soon be known as the ‘War on Terror.’ In this section the following elements can be identified:

Act: War on terrorism

Agent: American military and America's allies

Scene: Afghanistan/terrorist-aiding nations

Agency: Use of every American resource and means of diplomacy

Purpose: To defeat the global terror network

In this second Pentad, President Bush begins by explaining to his audience the response to these attacks, or the Act of the second Pentad—a long and difficult War on Terror: “Now this war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory

15 Bush, Address to Congress.

16 Bush, Address to Congress.

17 Bush, Address to Congress.

18 Bush, Address to Congress.

19 Bush, Address to Congress.

20 Bush, Address to Congress.

21 Bush, Address to Congress.

and a swift conclusion... Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike others we have ever seen."²² The act as the dominant term of this Pentad emphasizes the idea that this war is necessary because of the situation American has been placed in, and whatever must be done in order to secure a victory should be done.

Due to this emphasis on the act of the Pentad, and that this War on Terror was necessary, Bush was able to create a 'Machiavellian' justification, implying that 'the ends justify the means.' This justification exemplifies the second aspect of this Pentad's ratio, Agency, or the use of every American resource and every means of diplomacy to win this war.

In this Pentad, agency takes the form of an American response to the attacks of September 11th. Bush states, "Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network."²³ Through this statement, President Bush attempts to forecast the effects these measures will have on the terrorist network: "We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism."²⁴ Following this explanation, Bush then uses this element as an ultimatum for furthering support from nations around the world. He states, "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."²⁵

Evaluation of the Pentads

Through the application of the Pentadic Criticism method and the analysis of the two emerging Pentads, the effects of President Bush's address to Congress begin to surface. President Bush began this address with two motives, and by the conclusion of this speech, his intentions are realized and accepted by his audience. The first motive of President Bush was to paint the Acts of September 11th as not only a tragic event in itself, but caused by an organization called Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden, who became the main target of American retaliation. Secondly, President Bush attempted to rally support for the American cause through a directly worded ultimatum, while at the same time justifying the use of every means necessary to the hunting down and eliminating of all terrorist networks.

In addition to understanding of motives, the Pentadic criticism method also reveals the reliance on the enthymeme of 'an eye for an eye.' This can be identified in the organization and similarity of the ratios. The first Pentad reveals an Act/Agent ratio with the dominant term being the Act, the terrorist attacks, and the second Pentad reveals an Act/Agency ratio with the dominant term again being the Act, or the War on Terror. Through the utilization of similar Pentadic ratios, President Bush was able to achieve a causal relationship of the events that

²² Bush, Address to Congress.

²³ Bush, Address to Congress.

²⁴ Bush, Address to Congress.

²⁵ Bush, Address to Congress.

transpired and have yet to transpire, giving the sense of a natural flow of events. To put it into a simple statement: America was attacked by terrorists using our own resources, thus the justified response is that America will attack the terrorists back, using all of our resources.

Conclusion

Knowing for certain what the motives of others are is not an exact science, but through the utilization of Pentadic Criticism and careful scrutiny of the language used by the rhetor, motive prediction is possible. However, there are certain events that give us specific insight into the motives of others. The motive of the September 11th terrorist attacks was clear: to cause harm to America. The same can be said about the motives of the address President Bush gave to Congress: to justify and explain the future War on Terror. One reporter noted a typical response to this address: "Wisconsin lawmakers said, 'President Bush struck just the right notes Thursday in his speech on terrorism, rallying the Congress, the country and the world.'"¹ While President Bush was met with resistance regarding the legitimacy of the War on Terror, the overall success of his rhetoric can be identified by this rhetorical achievement of dual Pentadic utilization, which created a feeling of completeness to his course of action.

Similarly, Bush's success can be attributed to the rhetorical strategies he was able to utilize during this address. These strategies can be exemplified through the 'villainization' of the agents of the terrorist attacks, the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and Osama bin Laden. Bush's audience responded positively to this strategy: "Democrats and Republicans heaped praise on the speech, saying Bush rose to the serious occasion by outlining the challenge of fighting terrorism, putting terrorists on notice and rallying the public here and abroad."² In coupling this example with the shock and devastation of the first attack on American soil since Pearl Harbor, Bush's strategies proved to be more than sufficient to persuade the nation to support the offensive against 'Terror.' Finally, what can be taken away from this artifact is not only that persuasion may be achieved in a multitude of ways, but that with the correct presentation of perspectives and concealment of motive, persuasion is just a matter of highlighting specific elements for the audience to accept.

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¹ Schultze, Steve. "Bush rises to occasion delegates say." *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Final edition, sec. Attack Aftermath, September 21, 2001.

² Schultze, Bush Rises to Occasion.

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**Traditionally Nontraditional:
The Barriers College Students with Children Face while Pursuing a Degree
in a Traditional Undergraduate Program**

Ronny Washington, Jr.

ABSTRACT

Traditionally Nontraditional explores the relationship between college students with children and their level of educational achievement. Many college students have dependent children, and the challenges that student parents face while pursuing an undergraduate degree can cause many to fall short of reaching their academic goals. Research suggest significant retention increases of this population can be achieved through program and policy adjustments, flexible class schedules, and specialized support services. The data in this study showed that there is a significant negative relationship between the number of children one has and the highest level of education completed. Also, there is a significant positive relationship between the age when a person first had a child and the highest level of education completed. Some of the challenges that nontraditional students face are explored as well as a review of past research on nontraditional students pursuing an undergraduate degree.

Keywords: student parents, children, nontraditional students, education, undergraduate program

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to observe the relationship between college students who have children and their level of educational achievement. One of the top reasons people choose to pursue a college degree is to put them in a better position to provide for their family and especially children. Studies show there is a direct correlation between a person's level of education and the amount of income earned. Studies also suggest that once a person has a child, a multitude of challenging factors arise that can hinder from achieving goals in higher education. If parents seeking a college degree fall short of their goals because of these overwhelming challenges, they can be left with little to no opportunity to increase income by traditional means.

This study will focus on undergraduate degree programs. Most graduate degree programs have been tailored to serve and meet the needs of working adults. But many undergraduate programs, especially those offered at traditional public schools, are designed for traditional students.

This topic is sociological because it relates to the quality of life that a person is able to have, as well as the ability to provide for family. These issues are connected to a plethora of other social issues such as welfare, crime, physical and mental health, parenting, etc. More importantly, research suggests many of the challenges student parents face can be removed by adjustments in the policies, structures, and programs of college institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the research focuses on nontraditional students as a whole and not specifically students with children. Having a child or dependent while pursuing an undergraduate degree is just one of many characteristics that can classify a person as a nontraditional student.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (Choy, 2002; Horn, 1996), a nontraditional student is one who has any of the following characteristics:

- Delays enrollment (does not enter postsecondary education in the same calendar year that he or she finished high school).
- Attends part time for at least part of the academic year.
- Works full time (35 hours or more per week) while enrolled.
- Is considered financially independent for purposes of determining financial aid eligibility.
- Has dependents other than a spouse (usually children, but sometimes others).
- Is a single parent (has dependents and is either not married or married but separated).
- Does not have a high school diploma (completed high school with a GED or other high school completion certificate or did not finish high school).

Students are considered to be "minimally nontraditional" if they have only one nontraditional characteristic, "moderately nontraditional" if they have two or three, and "highly nontraditional" if they have four or more.

The Growing Population of Nontraditional Students

Virtually all researchers agree that the percentage of nontraditional students has increased dramatically over the past few decades, and the numbers are expected to remain the same or increase. Based on the criteria mentioned above, about 73% of all enrolled college students are nontraditional (Choy, 2002). Although there are several different types of institutions, the majority of college students continue to enroll in traditional public colleges and universities. Of the 18 million undergraduate students in the U.S. in fall 2010, 76% attended public schools, 15% attended private nonprofit, and 10% attended private for-profit institutions (Aud, 2012).

Based on these facts it seems necessary for public institutions to develop better ways to retain nontraditional students. Nontraditional students are twice as likely as traditional students to drop out of college within their first year (Brown, 2012).

Multiple Roles and Role Strain

Students with children often have more obligations, responsibilities, and time limitations than traditional college students. Single parents will always have at least three nontraditional characteristics. Of all “highly nontraditional” students, 80% have children or dependents (Choy, 2002). Adebayo (2006) made this statement:

Students generally are faced with a number of stressors. These include continuous evaluation, pressure to earn good grades, time pressures, unclear assignments, heavy workload, uncomfortable classrooms, and relationships with family and friends (Ross, Niebling, & Heckert, 1999). In addition to these, nontraditional students are faced with employment demands and social and family responsibilities. No doubt, combining work commitment, family responsibilities, and school obligations may be very complex and tasking. Ultimately, the struggling and juggling inherent in this may create tension and health-related problems for the individual concerned (p.126) .

One of the main factors contributing to this “role strain” is the need for the student to work in order to earn an income to take care of family and financial responsibilities. About half of married student parents and more than 40% of single student parents spend 40 or more hours per week working.

Work is the top reason young adults give for not returning to college once they leave. In a study conducted to determine the reasons nontraditional students drop out of college, the need to “work full time” and “family commitments” are the major reasons they can’t go back to school (Johnson, 2009). According to these researchers, “The number one reason students give for leaving school is the fact that they had to work and go to school at the same time. Despite their best efforts, the stress of trying to do both eventually took its toll” (Johnson, 2009).

In addition to working to provide for their children, parents must also devote a significant portion of their time to care giving. 68% of married parents and 56% of single parents

spend 30 hours or more per week on care (Garcia, 2011). For some it's easy to understand how working full time and raising children can create challenges to succeeding in education.

Flexibility

Multiple roles and commitments increase the likelihood that nontraditional students will look for degree and certificate programs that provide them flexibility in time and locations for course completion and access to student services. Many institutions in the for-profit sector have been designed to meet the need of adult students, but innovative student support and learning strategies are rarely found in traditional university programs (Ross-Gordon, 2011). One of the easiest ways for an institution or a program to increase flexibility would be to offer more online, night, and weekend classes. 78% of nontraditional students who drop out of college said that different class times would make college graduation feasible (Johnson, 2009).

Another way institutions can offer more flexibility is to provide opportunities for prior learning assessment. Research suggests providing opportunities for prior learning assessment may have a substantial effect on adult student persistence (Ross-Gordon, 2011). Colleges and universities can also incorporate accelerated course formats, such as courses, certificates, and degrees designed to be completed in a shorter time, in which either course duration or contact hours may be modified. These learning formats tend to be more accessible to adult learners.

Role of Counselors and Faculty

In the research there are many references to the type of support counselors and faculty can provide for nontraditional students that could increase their chances of success. Commenting on the role of faculty, Blair (2010) made the following comment:

Faculty can play an important role as change agents in creating supportive learning environments for adult learning both by incorporating theory and research on adult learners into their own classrooms and by advocating for adult-oriented programs and services on their campuses.

The design and delivery of these programs are key to successful undergraduate experiences for nontraditional students.

Counselors should recognize the nontraditional student issues that set them apart from traditional students to make professional services more relevant to their specific needs. Counselors who incorporate this broader context into their evaluations and interventions will more likely match the needs of nontraditional students coping with the transition (Choa, 2004). Counselors should actively solicit information about the multiple external factors that affect nontraditional students' presenting concerns and draw on external support and resources to the extent possible.

Gaps in the Literature

As stated earlier, the majority of the research addresses the challenges of nontraditional students in general. There can be more research done on specific nontraditional characteristics and how to better serve students in each category. For example, for the purpose of this study, little research was found that specifically focused on the needs of student parents. The research that was found on this issue strongly suggested child care on college campuses is critical to alleviating some of the stress of caretaking and easing the strain of juggling competing priorities and obligations.

3.9 million (23%) college students have dependent children (Garcia 2011; Johnson 2009). Childcare would give student parents more time to devote to school, work and earning income. Child care facilities can help increase retention among groups that are likely to drop out of school. According to surveys conducted at Indiana University Bloomington and the University of Michigan, having access to childcare is one of student parents' top concerns (Garcia, 2011). Many colleges and universities have recently begun providing childcare. But according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, colleges and universities are only providing 5% of the childcare slots that student parents need (Garcia, 2011). Childcare is one of the most effective ways that colleges and universities can help their student parents earn a degree.

DATA AND METHODS

Data from the 2010 General Social Survey (GSS) will be utilized. The GSS is a survey done by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) on the attitudes, behaviors, and background characteristics of Americans. Samples are full probability samples. The sample size of the survey is 2,044.

The three variables that will be used for this study are age when first child was born (AGEKDBRN), number of children (CHILDS), and highest year of school completed (EDUC). All three variables have an interval level of measurement. Therefore, a correlation and linear regression analysis to test the hypothesis will be used. The correlation analysis will determine the degree of association between two variables. The linear regression analysis will predict the value of the dependent variable based on the value of the independent variable.

The first analysis will be a correlation between number of children (independent variable) and highest year of school completed (dependent variable). This analysis will allow testing of the following hypothesis:

Null hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between the number of children a person has and the number of years of education completed.

Research hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between the number of children a person has and the number of years of education completed.

The second analysis will be a correlation analysis between age when first child was born (independent variable) and highest year of school completed (dependent variable). This analysis will allow testing of the following hypothesis:

Null hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between a person's age when

the first child was born and the number of years of education completed.

Research hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between a person's age when the first child was born and the number of years of education completed.

RESULTS

Table 1: Description of Variables

	Count	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
NUMBER OF CHILDREN	2,041	1.89	2	0	1.739	0	8 or more
HIGHEST YEAR OF SCHOOL COMPLETED	2,039	13.46	13	12	3.149	0	20

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis Results between
Number of Children and Highest Year of School Completed**

COUNT	PEARSON'S R	P-VALUE	R ²
2,037	-.288	.000 < α (.001)	.083

Table 2 summarizes the finding of the correlation analysis between number of children and highest year of school completed. Based on these results, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is accepted. The P-value of .000 is significant at the .001 level in that there is a 99.9% chance this relationship is not due to chance. This indicates a significant relationship between these two variables. Because the Pearson's R is -.288, this is a negative relationship. As the number of children increase, the highest year of school completed decreases. The strength of this relationship is weak to moderate. The R² value of .083 indicates 8.3% of the amount of years of education people complete can be explained by the number of children they have.

Table 3: Description of Variables

	Count	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
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AGE WHEN FIRST CHILD WAS BORN	1,470	23.92	23	21	6.023	12	55
HIGHEST YEAR OF SCHOOL COMPLETED	2,039	13.46	13	12	3.149	0	20

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Results between Age When First Child was Born and Highest Year of School Completed

COUNT	PEARSON'S R	P-VALUE	R ²
1467	0.356	.000 < α (.001)	0.127

Table 4 summarizes the finding of the correlation analysis between age when first child was born and highest year of school completed. Based on these results, null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is accepted. The P-value of .000 is significant at the .001 level in that there is a 99.9% chance this relationship is not due to chance. This indicates a significant relationship between these two variables. Because the Pearson's R is .356, this is a positive relationship. As the age when the first child was born increases, the highest year of school completed increases. The strength of this relationship is moderate to strong. The R² value of .127 indicates 12.7% of the years of education people complete can be explained by the age when they had their first children.

CONCLUSION

Nontraditional students will continue to be a significant portion of the undergraduate student population. In order for colleges and universities to achieve positive results in increasing retention and persistence, they must adapt to the specific needs of these nontraditional students. Research has proven there are a number of ways to accomplish this. These tactics range from structural program changes to more in-depth training and understanding on how to effectively serve nontraditional students.

Regarding the nontraditional characteristic of having children or dependents, the analysis in this study supported previous research. The results of the analysis indicated a significant relationship between the age when a person has the first child and the years of education completed. The test also indicated there is a significant relationship between the number of children a person has and the years of education completed. The younger a person is

when the first child is born will likely decrease the years of education completed. Also, the higher the number of children a person has will likely decrease the years of education completed.

There is an opportunity for more research to be conducted to examine the challenges that student parents face. This is an important social issue because multiple areas of social life are affected by a person's ability to obtain a college degree. Although it's the individual attempting to achieve the goal, the outcome of his/her efforts will affect children, family, the economy, and the entire society.

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We Shall Overcome: The Long Road from “Strange Fruit” to Equality

Jennifer Davis

ABSTRACT

Music was important to the Civil Rights Movement because it brought protestors together and provided them with emotions needed to stay strong in the face of brutality. Lyrics point at the group or institution to blame for hardships of African Americans, which kept the movement going. Since music provides these three ingredients to a successful movement, it is key to unlock the doors of change. “Strange Fruit” performed by Billie Holiday put the spotlight on lynching and made listeners face the truth of the ugly institution of segregation. A few years later, a fourteen-year-old named Emmett Till was brutally murdered by three white men in Mississippi. It was event so gruesome that it outraged the moderate and liberal community throughout the nation and led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott three months later. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s effort to integrate Birmingham, called Project Confrontation, caused him to be arrested and write the famous “A Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” Lastly, the Selma to Montgomery March had two notable songs sung while the marches were on the road: “The Times They Are A-Changin’” and “We Shall Overcome.”

Keywords: Civil Rights Movement, music, history, lynching, equality

The Civil Rights Movement was pivotal to American history because it brought the hate-filled and disease-ridden institutions of racism and segregation to the forefront of American society and eventually to politics. This grass roots movement was very successful, but without music it would not have been the same. Music is integral to this movement; it has a way of quickly moving through the crowd because singing is contagious, moving, and uplifting. It strengthens a demonstrator’s resolve in the face of intense and brutal adversity, makes brothers and sisters out of total strangers, and resonates in the hearts of all who hear it. It spreads news of the extreme violence and racism in the South and moves those moderates to political activism. This paper is a look at lynching, the death of a boy named Emmett Till; Project Confrontation in Birmingham, Alabama; and the Selma to Montgomery March in regards to what was accomplished and the music that accompanied these events.

In the late 1930s a poem surfaced that revealed to everyone who heard it the evils of lynching. It eventually became such a powerful song that people could no longer look away, and thus the very first seeds of the modern Civil Rights movement grew. After 1865, black people were lynched—violent, public execution where blacks were tortured, burned and usually hung from trees while a white crowd looked on. Even more horrible was the fact sometimes the crowd took pieces of the heart or other body parts as souvenirs. By the 1950s, Mississippi alone reported they had 534 lynchings, although there are reports that there were probably around 3,500 in total throughout the South.¹ Although lynching was concentrated in the South, it was not contained there. In 1930, two men were lynched in Marion, Indiana, and a gruesome picture was taken and published, which cemented the horrific scene. This picture probably inspired Abel Meeropol, under the pen name of Lewis Allen, to write and publish a poem titled “Bitter Fruit” in the January 1937 issue of *The New York Teacher*. Meeropol was a Jewish English teacher from the Bronx who secretly participated in the Popular Front movement and was part of the Communist Party USA. When the newly titled “Strange Fruit” was first put to music and performed, it was done so in circles of leftists and was sung by Meeropol’s wife. In 1939, he approached Billie Holiday, an African-American jazz artist, at Café Society in New York City, asking her to sing the song for the integrated audience. After her first performance, which seemed to stun the audience momentarily, she started making “Strange Fruit” her closing song.

To go beyond merely a set-closer, she had special rules for this song to gain maximum impact: a few minutes before this song, all service was stopped and all people stood still. Every light in the club was turned off, save for one light trained on her face. When she finished singing, everyone simply walked off stage; there were to be no bows, no encores, and no reappearances, no matter how thunderous the applause or how much they called to her. Barney Josephson, the owner of the Greenwich Village nightclub that had Communist sympathies, tells us she sang “Bitter Fruit” with such conviction, contempt, and bitterness that these rules were established to maximize the shock value of the song. She wanted to make sure people listened to the lyrics and remembered them when they left the club.² The lyrics described a lynching scene, and Meeropol was trying to get across how inhumane it was. The lyrics are full of imagery, such as “the scent of magnolia sweet and fresh, and the sudden smell of burning flesh,”³ meant to leave a feeling of disgust or outrage on one’s palette. The best lines in the song are “pastoral scene of the gallant South, the bulging eyes and the twisted mouth”⁴ because it juxtaposes the picturesque Southern small town where people attend their local church every Sunday with the absolutely horrifying

¹ Bruce J. Dierenfield, *The Civil Rights Movement*, Revised Edition, (Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), 9, 100.

² David Margolick, “Performance as a Force for Change: The Case of Billie Holiday and “Strange Fruit,” *Cardozo Studies in Law and Literature* 11, no. 1 (1999): 94-99, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27670205>.

³ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁴ *Ibid.*

image of a tortured and hanged man, his face twisted with agony as his body swayed in the breeze.

Meeropol wrote this poem to create a sense of outrage, a realization these horrifying acts were really happening in the South. This sensation is called ‘moral shock.’ It happens when a person receives unexpected information regarding an event that causes outrage within them, and that sense of outrage is the first step toward getting involved in political activism.⁵ Nowhere is moral shock more visible than in a quote by Billie Allen Henderson, a Broadway actress who once starred in *A Raisin in the Sun*: “I was trying to be sophisticated and all of a sudden something stabs me in the solar plexus and I was gasping for air... it was felt so deeply. I understood it... I could smell the burning flesh; I felt it. It was startling, and I’ll never forget it.”⁶ Other artists and producers have hailed the song as being the first true Civil Rights song, the first to bring lynching to the forefront of human consciousness. However, “Strange Fruit” was not often sung after the 1940s due to its depressing feeling, because later Civil Rights Movement songs were more hopeful and uplifting, but the song lived on in the Peoples’ Songbook and in the minds of the people that had the fortune to hear it performed by Billie Holiday.⁷

In 1955, the modern Civil Rights Movement was just beginning to be organized, but it needed a catalyst to push people into activism. The death of Emmett Till became the match that lit the fire of activism. Emmett Till was a typical fourteen-year-old boy from Chicago who had no experience with Southern racism. So, when his mother sent him to stay with his great uncle in Money, Mississippi, she warned him to willingly do whatever was needed to please white people. Unfortunately, some local boys dared him to say something to a white woman who was working as a cashier in her husband’s store, and he took that dare. Accounts differ as to what was said and done. The woman, twenty-one-year-old Carolyn Bryant, said that Till grabbed her wrists, wolf-whistled, and spoke lewdly to her, but his cousin stated that Till said “bye, baby” as he was leaving the store. Either way, it was enough for Roy Bryant, Carolyn’s husband, and his half-brother, John Milam, to take action. They abducted Emmett Till in the night, forced him to strip naked, and, when Till refused to grovel at their feet, they lynched him and dumped his body in the Tallahatchie River.⁸

When his body was recovered, his mother opted to ship his body back to Chicago and had an open casket funeral for the entire world to see what happens to young black men in the South. Many black men and women came to the funeral to see the repulsive Southern destruction on youthful innocence. Many more saw his picture in *Jet* magazine, and still more people read about it in black and white moderate newspaper publications. There was a trial in which Till’s great uncle pointed out Bryant and Milam as the perpetrators, but they were found innocent by a jury of their peers—racist white men. All of these factors brought Till’s case to the forefront of society and fanned the flames of activism.⁹ Rayfield Mooty, a second cousin to the Tills by marriage, claimed the gruesome, bloated corpse of a fourteen-year-old boy was so ugly that many historians overlook this brutal murder because they do not want to deal with it. Instead, they focus on Rosa Parks and her refusal to give up a bus seat to a white man as the start of the Civil Rights Movement, although that happened three months after the lynching of Emmett Till.

When people are presented with awful information, such as the intentionally brutal murder of a child, they become outraged and start to take those first steps toward political action. Emmett Till became a martyr for the cause of equality even though he never meant it. This lynching opened people’s eyes and made them want to act; it made them want to stop these types of

⁵ James M. Jasper, “The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and around Social Movements”, *Sociological Forum* 13, no. 3 (1998): 409, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/684696>.

⁶ Margolick, “Performance as a Force for Change: The Case of Billie Holiday and ‘Strange Fruit’” 104

⁷ *Ibid.*, 104-109.

⁸ Dierenfield, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 28-29.

⁹ *Ibid.*

heinous crimes that were going unpunished. They wanted to stand up for Civil Rights.¹⁰

Bob Dylan was one of those men who stood up for equality. He decided he wanted to become a musician in the late 1950s and early 1960s. So, when he learned about Woody Guthrie, he tried to become like him.¹¹ On July 2, 1962, Dylan performed a yet unreleased song called "Death of Emmett Till," in which he reminded people of the tragedy that took place seven years prior and how the trial was a mockery, merely a play to keep the voices of protest silent. The song was released in 1963 to a much wider audience whom he called out to keep fighting for what is right, not only for themselves, but also for their fellow man and for America. The sixth stanza is the most important. He calls out to people who are turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed and accuses them that "If you can't speak out against this kind of thing, a crime that's so unjust... for you let this human race fall down so God-awful low!"¹² He is outright blaming people who are not part of the movement for the crimes being committed in a 'if you are not with us, you are against us' notion in the hope they will see the work that needs to be done and join the movement. Every movement needs someone or something to shoulder the blame, and Dylan points the finger at the racist white Southerners and those who, though not completely racist, have not fallen in with the movement yet. He is stating that they are bringing everyone down, that those who ignore injustice are to blame. In this way, his song provided not only a memory of what happened to a boy from Chicago, but also helped the movement keep going because finding the blame is important to protest. It creates a sense of outrage toward a particular group of people or institution and unites the protestors in an even more tight-knit group against the perceived villains.¹³ In the final stanza, he says there is hope for a better future as long as everyone works for it: "This song is just a reminder to remind your fellow man/ That this kind of thing still lives today in that ghost-robed Ku Klux Klan/ But if all of us folks that thinks alike, if we gave all we could give/ We could make this great land of ours a greater place to live."¹⁴

By 1963, a great orator named Martin Luther King, Jr. had taken on a leadership role in the non-violent Civil Rights Movement. He was often called upon to help failing protests, such as the Albany Campaign in Georgia. However, he hadn't won a victory since the Montgomery Bus Boycott six years earlier. He needed a win because the Civil Rights Movement was running out of money and losing members due to the Black Muslims and a new leader named Malcolm X. Malcolm X called for separation, rather than integration, which was reminiscent of Garveyism. It was time King organized a mass movement that would be covered by the media, and his eyes were set on Birmingham, Alabama. Birmingham was the largest industrial city in the South and had a long history of racial violence. A majority of the blacks who lived in the city were unemployed and intimidated by the local KKK who bombed their churches, burned crosses and murdered those who tried to protest. The neighborhood occupied by these fearful blacks dubbed the district "Dynamite Hill" and the city "Bombingham." King organized a mass non-violent protest that included sit-ins at the library and restaurant counters and boycotts of certain racist white establishments, which he called Project Confrontation, or Project C for short. He counted on media presence to catch violent suppression from klansmen and city police in the act of brutality.

The many different groups involved with Project C worked together, calculated the time it would take activists to walk downtown for maximum business and traffic disruption, and asked Harry Belafonte, a popular musician, to help raise thousands of dollars for the expected

10 Clenora Hudson-Weems, "Resurrecting Emmett Till: The Catalyst of the Modern Civil Rights Movement" *Journal of Black Studies* 29, no. 2 (1998): 179-187, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2668088>.

11 Robbie Lieberman, "My Song is My Weapon" *People's Songs, American Communism, and the Politics of Culture, 1930-50*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 154.

12 Bob Dylan, "The Official Bob Dylan Site," bobdylan.com (accessed April 12, 2012).

13 Jasper, "The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and around Social Movements," 410-411

14 Bob Dylan, "The Official Bob Dylan Site," bobdylan.com (accessed April 12, 2012).

bail costs. However, Project C almost did not happen at all. The protest kept being pushed back due to Easter and elections. Then a group led by A.D. King, M.L.K. Jr.'s younger brother, marched downtown, where they were attacked by police dogs and arrested for parading without a permit. There were a few cameras focused on the scene that caught the nightstick beatings and attacking dogs. These images were released, which caused a union to back the movement. A few days later on Good Friday, King had an epiphany that he needed to obey the higher law, the Word of God. He decided to lead an impromptu demonstration to Birmingham City Hall, where he was arrested and put into solitary confinement. During his incarceration, the *Birmingham News* ran a full-page spread written by moderate white clergymen on the ill timing of Project C. In response to this, King wrote his "Letter from Birmingham Jail." When he was bailed out, he called for not only the adults to organize, but for the children as well because the movement was fighting for all future generations. On May 2, 1963, hundreds of children showed up to do their part in bringing Project C to fruition. They stayed strong and brave while fire hoses were turned on them, police dogs attacked them, and civilians and police beat them. Finally, they were arrested in droves until the jails were completely filled. Just as King had wanted, all of this violence toward adults and children was publicized to a shocked audience. Project C was successful. King's demands for desegregation in the city and in jobs had been met, and by the end of the summer, a staggering fifty cities in the northern South had desegregated to avoid all of the turmoil that Birmingham experienced. However, there was one last act of violence by white supremacists. In retaliation to King's victory, they bombed the hotel his brother was staying in. Riots erupted through the city, instigated by the head of the KKK. Many blacks were beaten, and property damage was costly.¹⁵

A year prior to Project C, Bob Dylan released his sophomore album called *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. The album contained an excellent song called "Blowin' in the Wind," which poses some very good questions about exactly how long injustice must continue before someone rises up to stop it, yet gives no answers. The answers are for the listeners to ponder, dwell on, and create. The answer is always "blowin' in the wind,"¹⁶ meaning there is no answer until people stand up for what is right and create one. Dylan wanted his audience to take a stand when he wrote "how many years can some people exist/ Before they're allowed to be free?"¹⁷ He saw racial inequality and called for people to start thinking for themselves instead of simply following the establishment.¹⁸

King penned "Letter from Birmingham Jail" in 1963, a year after Dylan released *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, but it has a similar tone to it. "For years now I have heard the word 'Wait!' ... This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.'"¹⁹ Here is a prime example of a call to action because when someone constantly tells you to wait for justice, then it will never come. He emphasized this by quoting, "Justice too long delayed is justice denied."²⁰ This is the same feeling Dylan invoked in "Blowin' in the Wind." Also, King wrote about the way blacks were treated in the South: "your first name becomes 'nigger,' your middle name becomes 'boy' (however old you are) and your last name becomes 'John,' and your wife and mother are never given the respected title 'Mrs.'"²¹ This same sentiment is found in the opening lines of Dylan's song. The words might not be the same, but the feeling and desired reaction is the same: they both want people to be moved into political activism. What is interesting is the rhythm from the song to the spoken word. It is possible to tap the beat to "Blowin' in the Wind" and actually keep the same rhythm when reading the more popular portions of "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

¹⁵ Dierenfield, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 80-84.

¹⁶ Bob Dylan, "The Official Bob Dylan Site," bobdylan.com (accessed April 12, 2012).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ JPMorgan Chase & Co., "The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change," <http://www.thekingcenter.org/> (accessed April 12, 2012).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

In 1963 and 1964, there were two major movements, the March on Washington and the Freedom Summer, respectively, but neither one brought any significant changes to fruition, so King helped organized a march for voting rights in Alabama. This key movement caused the federal government to finally step up and enact something powerful. Selma, Alabama was a very violent place to live in if your skin was dark: children were beaten, a pregnant woman was dragged to death, and even ministers and war veterans were bludgeoned, sometimes fatally. The first time activists tried to march from Selma to the capital in Montgomery, many people were clubbed, sometimes by bats or sticks with barbed wire wrapped around them. The violent incident came to be called "Bloody Sunday." On March 21, 1965, King came to the activists' aid and helped organized the Selma to Montgomery March, which took three days at roughly sixteen miles per day. On the journey, the marchers were met with cheers, curiosity, and hate from onlookers, but no physical violence because this time their march was protected by the government. They were tired and sore from marching, but their spirits were high because they sang, clapped, and were joyful. They marched this time for voting rights, and in 1965 they got them. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed and, as a result, literacy tests were abolished. The federal government had direct oversight into states' voting regulations. Within a month, sixty percent of the black men and women in Selma were registered to vote; a year prior, that number was zero.

During the march and subsequent demonstration in Montgomery, two notable songs were sung: "The Times They Are A-Changin'" by Bob Dylan and "We Shall Overcome."²² Dylan writes, "Come senators, congressmen/ Please heed the call/ Don't stand in the doorway/ Don't block up the hall/ For he that gets hurt/ Will be he who has stalled/ There's a battle outside and it is ragin'/ It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls/ For the times they are a-changin'."²³ This powerful message aided the civil rights activists because he was not only telling the lawmakers to start listening to the voice of protest. He was also telling people the institution of segregation was failing and needed more work. The lyrics say "soon," meaning their work wasn't done yet, but it was nearing an end. Also, "As the present now/ Will later be past"²⁴ was important because it called out to people to realize that integration was soon going to become the norm.

"We Shall Overcome" is an easier song to sing because the lyrics are much simpler but still very uplifting. Even children or onlookers who are moved into action will be able to sing this song upon hearing it for the first time, especially if there is a leader calling out the next verses. "We are not afraid, today"²⁵ is a very powerful lyric because when a crowd sings this song together, they are filled with a spirit that resonates through them and bystanders.²⁶ It is a very emotional song, one that would bring the people even closer together until they are reaching out to each other, holding hands or linking arms, possibly with tears welling up in eyes or some just outright weeping. Time has shown that when you have a bunch of people together with a common goal and shared experience, music can either be a great agitator, which may cause a riot, or it can be very mellow, which pulls the crowd together in a non-violent way. This type of song serves not only to create a sense of unity, but also to keep them docile, which was imperative to the non-violent movement.

There cannot be a movement without emotion, and music provides that emotion. The two go hand in hand. Music brings us together. The act of singing unifies a crowd of strangers, drawing them closer, making them friends. Music also helps keep a movement, such as the Civil Rights Movement, going strong; it brings up emotions of outrage or courage. It can even point

²² Dierenfield, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 112-124.

²³ Bob Dylan, "The Official Bob Dylan Site," bobdylan.com (accessed April 12, 2012).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ YouTube by Google, "We Shall Overcome by Pete Seeger," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhnPVP23rzo> (accessed April 12, 2012).

²⁶ Ibid.

at the party to blame for atrocities such as lynching and brutality. "Strange Fruit" was written in protest of lynching by Abel Meeropol who wanted to bring the horrors of what was happening to the public, and Billie Holiday was his voice of protest. Bob Dylan wrote "The Death of Emmett Till" to remind his listeners of a cocky little boy from the North who lost his life in the South due to youthful exuberance by saying "bye, baby" to a white woman. Till became a martyr for the burgeoning Civil Rights cause, but he also went a step further by causing people to wake up and take action against those who follow the evil institution of segregation and racism. Dylan also wrote "Blowin' in the Wind" and "The Times They Are A-Changin'" to get people to think about what was going on and to question how long segregation must go on before it is finally put to an end. Dylan says in the latter that the end is finally coming due, but those who are not helping the solution will not be happy with the result. To him, integration was his only solution. In "We Shall Overcome," the crowd is brought to an emotionally heightened state, which both calms them and brings out the strength they need to face the adversity that Southern white racists were giving. Without music, the Civil Rights Movement would have looked very different. It may never have been supported in the North by the white moderates if they hadn't heard the music that accompanied the movement.

About the Author:

Jennifer Davis has had a love of history from a young age. In her world history course at American River College, she began learning about the Hittites, a study that has become her passion. She is now a senior working toward her bachelor's degree in history at Texas State University. Jennifer is a member of several organizations: Phi Theta Kappa, an international honor society of the two year college; Kappa Delta Pi, the international honor society in the field of education; Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honor society; and TAARII, The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq. She will graduate in December, 2013. Jennifer is interested in continuing her education in the field of Ancient History or Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and wants to become a Hittitologist after college.

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Factors Related to Becoming Less Committed to Religion

Chelsey Meigs

ABSTRACT

In this article, factors that relate to religious commitment were examined. Using the General Social Survey (2010), education, happiness, and religious upbringing were analyzed against having a turning point of becoming less committed to religion. The goal of this article was to see if any of these factors significantly affected the likelihood that someone would become less committed to religion. What was found was that religious affiliation and education both related to the likelihood of having a turning point, while happiness seemed to have no effect on religious commitment.

Keywords: religious commitment, education, happiness, religious affiliation, religion

I. Introduction

This study will be examining religion, specifically what variables influence someone becoming less committed to religion. The topic of religious commitment in general has been studied, but research on variables that could relate to someone becoming less committed has not been explored. Many people who grow up in religious families and consider themselves religious people become less committed or drop their religion as they get older. To discover what factors are related to this, the General Social Survey (2010) will be used to analyze how education, happiness, and religious upbringing relate to a point of becoming less committed to religion.

Literature Review

Religion and happiness

The research on the subject of religion and happiness shows that there is a link between them in a number of different ways. The literature shows that a person's religious affiliation has a direct relationship to the individual's general happiness. In other words, certain religions give the individual more personal benefits. Religions in which people have more costs or invest more also get more out of their religion. Some of these religious rewards include the promise of eternal life, answers to important questions, a relationship with God, and satisfaction from religious ceremonies and relationships with other people within their religion (Mackie and Brinkerhoff, 1986). The rewards they get are related to their overall happiness. Mormons and conservative Christians give and get the most out of their religions and are happier (Mackie and Brinkerhoff, 1986). Religion is one of the higher indicators of happiness, even over socioeconomic status (Mackie and Brinkerhoff, 1986).

Religion is also linked to happiness through religious commitment. Some research shows that certain aspects of religion are more positively correlated with happiness than others, especially when paired with commitment. Aspects that are more correlated with happiness are "spiritual transcendence," which includes prayer fulfillment, universality, and "connectedness." When these aspects of religion are present along with religious commitment, they are more related to a positive well-being and lower levels of anxiety than when they stand on their own (Price and Herringer, 2005). Research also shows that people who convert to another religion or change religions because their beliefs change have very high levels of commitment to their new religion (Carrothers, 2005). Converts feel more importance in their religious identity; they spend more time taking part in their religious activities and more time seeking out opportunities to express or act out their religious identities (Carrothers, 2005). It could be argued that since converts so actively seek out ways to participate in their religion, they are happier and more satisfied with the experiences they get.

Religion and education

Research on the subject of religion has also shown that there is a link between higher education and religious commitment. The general theory on which most research is based is that as education increases, religious commitment decreases, especially after the college level. What the research presents is that education does have a negative effect on commitment but only to a very small degree. College education decreases only some aspects of religious belief. Students who attend and graduate from college feel more skeptical about the existence of "super-empirical entities and occurrences" (Hill, 2011, p. 546) or the belief in a higher power and certain occurrences a higher power might cause. This phenomenon is seen even more when the students are from an elite school, which may relate to their identities and work orientation after graduating from an elite school (Hill, 2011). People with a college education are also more intellectual and are able to think with more flexibility (Petersen, 1994). This leads to a decrease in one aspect of religious commitment. As education increases, biblical literalism decreases. The more education people have, the more likely they are to interpret the Bible less literally; this could be related to the cognitive skills and abstract thinking they receive from attending college (Petersen, 1994).

Religious affiliation influences whether or not education is negatively related to

religious commitment. Education is more negatively correlated with religious commitment with religious minority groups than with religious majority groups. Although education might affect both to a small degree, religious minority groups are more likely to feel skepticism in their religion after college (Small and Nicolas, 2011). Because of their minority status they have fewer people in their environment who share their same beliefs. It is argued that this lack of a peer group in college could be the reason why religious minority groups show more of a negative relationship between education and religious commitment (Small and Nicolas, 2011).

II. Gaps in the Literature

Currently there is a lack of research on the change in commitment of one's religion. Although there are many studies on religious commitment in general and which denominations require more commitment than others, there is a lack of study on what factors would cause someone to become less committed to current religion. In the few studies that touch on this subject, the only factor that is examined is education. The limitations of these studies on education are that they are only done on current college students or students who have recently graduated. A more general study, including people who have had very little school and those who have been out of school for many years, could give more insight into the subject. There is also research missing on the aspect of how general happiness affects a change in one's religion. This study will take a look at how three different factors relate to change in religious commitment: religious upbringing, education and general happiness. A nationwide representative survey will show how these factors are related outside of a sample of college students. The three hypotheses being tested are:

H1: The religion in which someone is raised is related to whether the individual becomes less committed to religion

H2: A person's general happiness is related to whether the individual becomes less committed to religion

H3: A person's education level is related to whether the individual becomes less committed to religion

III. Proposed Research Design

This study will use an analysis of secondary data from the 2010 General Social Survey (GSS). Most of the interviews in this survey were done face to face with an average time of one and a half hours per interview. The other interviews were either done by computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) or over the telephone. Two different methods were used when pulling the sample for the survey. Half was pulled by a full probability design and the other half with a block quota design. A rotating panel was also used in the GSS. Each time a survey was completed, a new panel started, and second- and third-round interviews from previous panels were done. All three panels were included in the sample for that year. The GSS includes Americans 18 years and up living in non-institutional arrangements and speaking either English or Spanish. In this study four variables from the GSS data set were used: the dependent variable RELNEG and three independent variables—RELIG16, HAPPY, and EDUC. These variables will be analyzed using SPSS to do three different Chi-square tests to see if the independent variables are significantly related to the dependent variable. This method of analysis allows for an unobtrusive study on existing data that have a very large and representative sample.

The variable RELNEG is "Has there ever been a turning point in your life when you became less committed to religion?" The response options given for this question were yes, no, don't know, refused, and IAP. RELIG16 is "In what religion were you raised?" The response options for this question were 13 different denominations: Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, none, other, Buddhism, Hinduism, other eastern, Moslem/Islam, Orthodox-Christian, Christian, Native American, Inter-nondenominational and three other options—don't know,

refused, and IAP. HAPPY is “Taken all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say that you are very happy or not too happy?” The response options were very happy, pretty happy, not too happy, don’t know, refused, and IAP. EDUC is “What is the highest year of school you have completed?” The response options were a range of 0-20 years, don’t know, NA, and IAP. All variables were recoded to exclude missing cases (don’t know, IAP, NA and refused). EDUC was recoded to EDUC1 and put into five categories: Less than high school (0-11 years), high school (12 years), some college (13-15 years), college (16 years), and more than college (17-20 years).

IV. Results

Univariate

The table below shows the frequency distribution for the four variables used.

Variables	Percent	Frequencies
RELNEG		
Yes	37.1	751
No	62.9	1,275
RELIG16		
Protestant	52.7	1,066
Catholic	32.0	647
Jewish	1.6	33
None	7.4	150
Other	.5	11
Buddhism	.7	15
Hinduism	.1	3
Orthodox-Christian	.5	10
Christian	4.1	82
Inter-Nondenominational	.2	4
HAPPY		
Very happy	26.4	538
Pretty happy	58.1	1,184
Not too happy	15.5	317
EDUC1		
Less than high school	17.0	346
High school	27.4	558
Some college	25.7	524
College	16.4	334
More than college	13.6	227

From the table it is evident that more people (over half) reported they had not had a turning point where they became less committed to religion. For the religion in which people were raised, most of the respondents fell in either Protestant or Catholic (84.7%), with the next highest response being “none” at 7.4%. A majority of respondents (a little over half) reported that they were “pretty happy.” For the number of years of school completed, a majority of the respondents either fell into high school (27.4%) or some college (25.7%).

Bivariate

Below is the table for the Chi-square analysis of RELNEG and RELIG16.

Any turning point when less committed to religion	Religion in which raised											Significance
		Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	None	Other	Bud-dhism	Hindu-ism	Ortho-dox-Christian	Christian	Inter-nonde-nominational	
	yes	402 37.9%	252 39.1%	6 18.2%	37 25.5%	6 54.5%	4 26.7%	1 33.3%	2 20.0%	35 42.7%	1 25.0%	
	no	658 62.1%	393 60.9%	27 81.8%	108 74.5%	5 45.5%	11 73.3%	2 66.7%	8 80.0%	47 57.3%	3 75.0%	

The relationship between having a turning point in commitment to religion and religion in which raised is statistically significant. The p-value (.021) is less than .05. The religions' Protestant (37.9%), Catholic (39.1%), other (54.5%) and Christian (42.7%) all had a much higher percent of respondents reported they had had a turning point in becoming less committed, compared to Jewish (18.2%), Orthodox-Christian (20%), Buddhism (26.7%), none (25.5%), and Hinduism (33.3%).

Below is the table for the Chi-square analysis of *RENEG* and *HAPPY*.

Any turning point when less committed to religion	General happiness				Significance
		Very Happy	Pretty Happy	Not Too Happy	
	Yes	184 34.5%	443 37.7%	123 39.0%	
	No	350 65.5%	731 62.3%	192 61.0%	

The relationship between a turning point in commitment to religion and general happiness is not significant. The p-value (.315) is greater than .05. A higher percentage of respondents reported they had not had a turning point in commitment to religion regardless of their happiness. Of the people who said they had had a turning point, 34.5% were very happy, 37.7% were pretty happy and 39.0% were not too happy. These percentages are very similar and too close to be significant.

Below is the table for the Chi-square analysis of *RELNEG* and *EDUC1*.

Any turning point when less committed to religion	Years of school						Significance
		Less than high school	High school	Some college	College	More than college	
	Yes	90 26.4%	203 36.6%	217 41.7%	130 39.3%	110 40.1%	
	No	251 73.6%	352 63.4%	304 58.3%	201 60.7%	164 59.9%	

The relationship between a turning point in commitment to religion and years of school is significant. The p-value (.000) is less than .05. As education increases, the percentage of respondents who have had a turning point in commitment generally increases. Of those with less than high school, 26.4% reported they had had a turning point compared to those who have more than college with 40.1%.

V. Conclusion

From this research it is evident that both religious affiliation and education are related to a turning point in religious commitment, confirming hypotheses one and three. Protestants, Catholics and Christians are significantly more likely to have a turning point of becoming less committed to religion. The more education people have, it becomes significantly more likely that they will have a turning point as well. This is similar to the finding in current literature, which shows that college education relates to a decrease in religious commitment. It can also be concluded from this research that we can reject hypothesis two; happiness has no effect on whether people become less committed to religion.

The strengths of this study come from the design. The sample size for the GSS is very large, with half of the sample being pulled with a full probability design. This makes the sample representative and externally valid. This study is also internally valid. The questions asked were accurate measures of what was being studied. Because the interviews were in person, the questions could be explained if needed, which helps verify the questions were being answered accurately. This study was also reliable. The interviewing process is systematic; everyone was asked the same questions. If the survey were to be repeated, it would give the same results. One of the weaknesses of this study was the possibility of a higher level of social desirability bias because of the in-person interviews. Also this study cannot show why the relationships formed and cannot show spurious relationships. More research could be done on other aspects of well-being besides general happiness. Mental health, happiness in marriage or perceptions on respondents' own social statuses could be related to a turning point of becoming less committed to religion. A multivariate analysis could be used to test why some religions give way to a decrease in religious commitment compared to others. It is possible that if the variables, religion in which raised and a turning point in commitment, were tested again while controlling for education, it might be found that people in religions that seem to have more people becoming less religious are also more likely to have more education. This could result in a spurious relationship, along with other possible spurious relationships, with more testing.

About the Author:

Chelsey Meigs is a 21-year-old senior at Texas State. She is originally from Cypress, Texas, and is now living in San Marcos. Chelsey has spent the last four years at Texas State completing her undergraduate work and will be graduating in May 2013. Her Liberal Arts degree contains a sociology major and a minor in mass communication. Chelsey became a lifetime member of the National Sociology Honor Society during her junior year and recently received the academic excellence award from the college of Liberal Arts. She became interested in sociology very early in her college career and greatly enjoys the research aspect of this field.

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Appendix

Frequency distributions

STATISTICS					
		GENERAL HAPPINESS	RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED	ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION	YEARS OF SCHOOL
N	Valid	2039	2021	2026	2039
	Missing	5	23	18	5
Mean		1.89	2.12	1.63	2.8225
Median		2.00	1.00	2.00	3.0000
Mode		2	1	2	2.00

GENERAL HAPPINESS					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY HAPPY	538	26.3	26.4	26.4
	PRETTY HAPPY	1184	57.9	58.1	84.5
	NOT TOO HAPPY	317	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	2039	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	5	.2		
Total		2044	100.0		

RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PROTESTANT	1066	52.2	52.7	52.7
	CATHOLIC	647	31.7	32.0	84.8
	JEWISH	33	1.6	1.6	86.4
	NONE	150	7.3	7.4	93.8
	OTHER (SPECIFY)	11	.5	.5	94.4
	BUDDHISM	15	.7	.7	95.1
	HINDUISM	3	.1	.1	95.2
	ORTHODOX-CHRISTIAN	10	.5	.5	95.7
	CHRISTIAN	82	4.0	4.1	99.8
	INTER-NONDENOMINATIONAL	4	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	2021	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	23	1.1		
Total		2044	100.0		

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	751	36.7	37.1	37.1
Valid No	1275	62.4	62.9	100.0
Total	2026	99.1	100.0	
Missing System	18	.9		
Total	2044	100.0		

Years of School				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid less than HS	346	16.9	17.0	17.0
Valid HS	558	27.3	27.4	44.3
Valid some college	524	25.6	25.7	70.0
Valid college	334	16.3	16.4	86.4
Valid more than college	277	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	2039	99.8	100.0	
Missing System	5	.2		
Total	2044	100.0		

Chi-square tests

RELNEG and RELIG16

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION	2008	98.2%	36	1.8%	2044	100.0%
* RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED						

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION * RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED Cross-tabulation											
PROTESTANT CATHOLIC	RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED										Total
	JEWISH	NONE	OTHER (SPECIFY)	BUD-DHISM	HIN-DUISM	ORTHO-DOX -CHRIS-TIAN	CHRIS-TIAN	INTER-NON-DENOM.			

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION	es	Count % within RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED	402	252	6	37	6	4	1	2	35	1	746
			37.9%	9.1%	18.2%	25.5%	4.5%	26.7%	3.3%	20.0%	2.7%	5.0%	.2%
	No	Count % within RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED	658	393	27	108	5	11	2	8	47	3	262
			62.1%	0.9%	81.8%	74.5%	5.5%	73.3%	6.7%	80.0%	7.3%	5.0%	.8%
		Count	1060	645	33	145	11	15	3	10	82	4	008
Total % within RELIGION IN WHICH RAISED			100.0%	00.0%	0.0%	00.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

Chi-square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	19.517 ^a	9	.021
Likelihood Ratio	20.673	9	.014
Linear-by-Linear Association	.331	1	.565
N of Valid Cases	2008		

a. 6 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.11.

RELNEG and HAPPY

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION * GENERAL HAPPINESS	2023	99.0%	21	1.0%	2044	100.0%

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION * GENERAL HAPPINESS Crosstabulation

VERY HAPPY PRETTY HAPPY			GENERAL HAPPINESS			Total
			NOT TOO HAPPY			
ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELI- GION	Yes	Count	184	443	123	750
		% within GENERAL HAPPINESS	34.5%	37.7%	39.0%	37.1%
	No	Count	350	731	192	1273
		% within GENERAL HAPPINESS	65.5%	62.3%	61.0%	62.9%
Total		Count	534	1174	315	2023
% within GENERAL HAPPINESS		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	2.313 ^a	2	.315
Likelihood Ratio	2.325	2	.313
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.116	1	.146
N of Valid Cases	2023		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 116.78.

RELNEG and EDUC1

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION * years of school	2022	98.9%	22	1.1%	2044	100.0%

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION * years of school Crosstabulation

less than HS HS	years of school					Total
	some college	College	more than college			

ANY TURNING POINT WHEN LESS COMMITTED TO RELIGION	Yes	Count % with- in years of school	90 26.4%	203 36.6%	217 41.7%	130 39.3%	110 40.1%	750 37.1%
	No	Count % with- in years of school	251 73.6%	352 63.4%	304 58.3%	201 60.7%	164 59.9%	1272 62.9%
Total		Count	341	555	521	331	274	2022
% within years of school		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	23.203 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.981	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.994	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2022		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 101.63.			