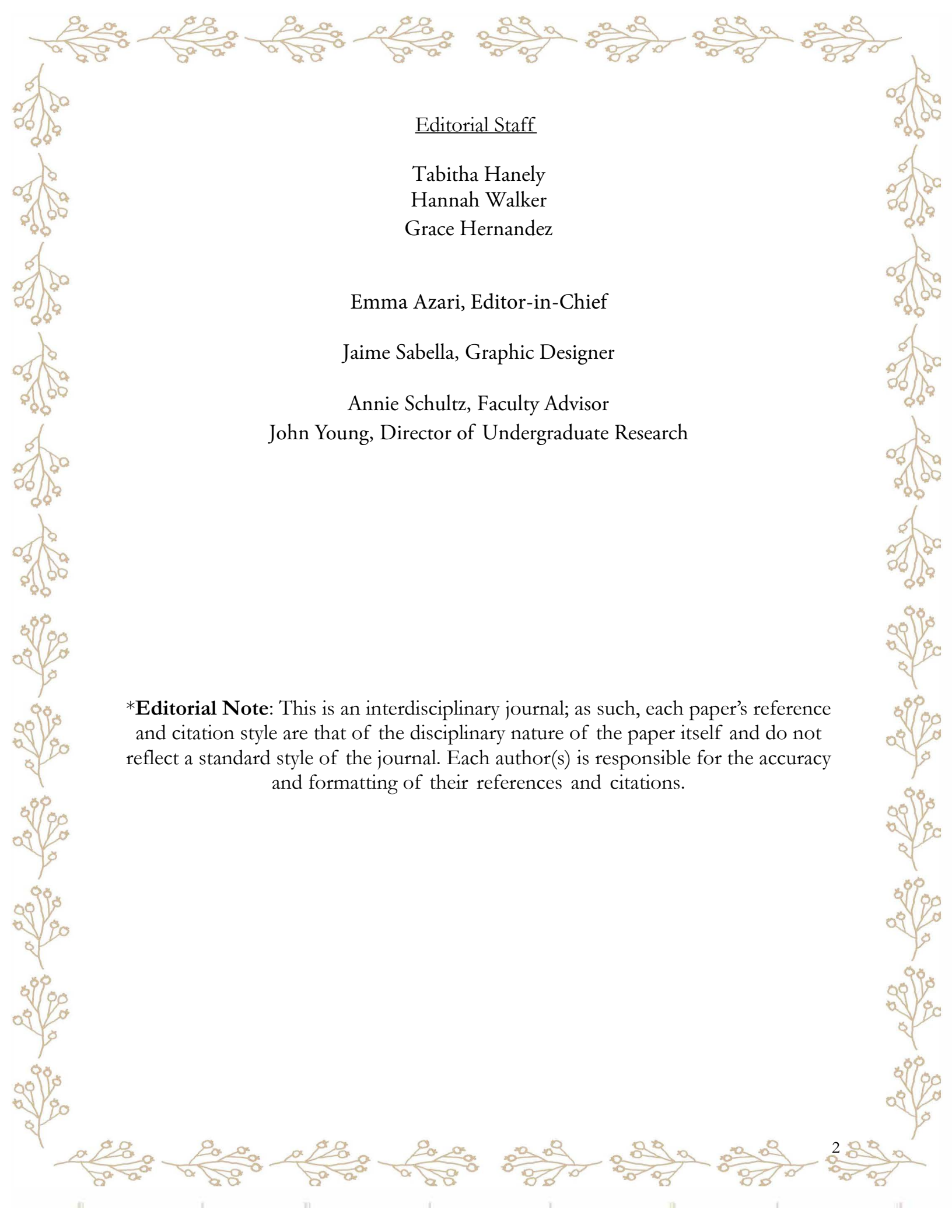


# Saints Academic Review



A Journal for Undergraduate Research by  
the Flagler College Honors Program

Volume III  
2025-2026



Editorial Staff

Tabitha Hanely  
Hannah Walker  
Grace Hernandez

Emma Azari, Editor-in-Chief

Jaime Sabella, Graphic Designer

Annie Schultz, Faculty Advisor

John Young, Director of Undergraduate Research

**\*Editorial Note:** This is an interdisciplinary journal; as such, each paper's reference and citation style are that of the disciplinary nature of the paper itself and do not reflect a standard style of the journal. Each author(s) is responsible for the accuracy and formatting of their references and citations.



Table of Contents

*From the Ocean to the Land: The Evolutionary Journey of Armadillidium Vulgare*  
by Christina Mark.....4

*From Dracula to Cullen: The Average Vampire* by Callum Hardy .....16

*Historiography on the Florida Civil Rights Movement* by Hillary Neumann  
.....32

*The Dialect of Propaganda: How Power is Perpetuated from Mass Media to Social Media*  
by Gabriel James .....42

*Beyond the Binary: Drag as a Tool for Nonbinary Identity Formation* by Jena Bouchard  
..... 50

*Questionable Loyalty: The Fractured Brotherhood of Amis and Amiloun* by Becca Frank  
..... 57

*Shakespeare and Marlow: Friends or Foes* by Samantha Hohnhau.....63

*Behind the Hall: Internal Debates within the Daughters of the American Revolution*  
*Following the Marian Anderson Incident* by Rachel Wall .....77

*Forgotten Fears: A Historiography of Black Community Massacres in Florida* by  
Sarahannah Synder .....90

# FROM THE OCEAN TO LAND: THE EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY OF ARMADILLIDIUM VULGARE

Christina Mark

## Introduction

Pillbugs (*Armadillidium vulgare*) are taxonomically classified according to the Linnaean classification system as follows: the domain Eukarya, the kingdom Animalia, the phylum Arthropoda, the class Malacostraca, the order Isopoda, the family *Armadillidae*, the genus *Armadillidium*, and ultimately the species *Armadillidium vulgare*. *A. vulgare* is one of the members of the suborder Oniscidea, or woodlice, which is the only suborder of Crustacea to be composed of essentially all terrestrial species (Broly et al., 2013a). This makes pillbugs exceptionally remarkable in the fact that their habitats differ so greatly from their lobster and shrimp cousins that have remained in the ocean for all of their evolutionary lifetime. During their day-to-day life on land, pillbugs spend a majority of their time aggregated in humid shelters, often under moist rotting logs that create an ideal moist microhabitat (Broly et al., 2013a). Their foraging activity is limited to cooler, more humid hours of the day, when they will primarily feed on detritus and attempt to evade avian and insectile predators (Broly et al., 2012).

As far as the distribution of *A. vulgare* goes, they are everywhere! Along with many other terrestrial isopods (specifically the most evolved forms), *A. vulgare* is a cosmopolitan species and can be found on every continent, except Antarctica (Broly et al., 2012). As will be discussed throughout this paper, this fact is indicative of the ancient origins of terrestrial isopods. Another fact to support this claim is the development of a multitude of biological and behavioral adaptations that allowed oniscids to become better fit to colonize terrestrial environments.

Through the analysis of fossilized remains of terrestrial isopods and the morphology of extant species, the understanding of these adaptations helps to explain how pillbugs came to be the mighty colonizers of the terrestrial world.

## The Origin of Oniscidea

Oniscidea is the only suborder of Crustacea, a subphylum of Arthropoda, that is nearly composed of entirely terrestrial species of isopods (Broly et al., 2013b). The colonization of terrestrial environments by descendants of marine organisms is an exemplary feat that influenced the development of a variety of behavioral and morphological adaptations that shaped the success of terrestrial isopods. Genera of the suborder Oniscidea are classified by an array of terrestrialization that sorts members into genera from *Ligia*, being the least terrestrial, to *Armadillidium*, containing the most terrestrially adapted forms (Broly et al., 2013b). Fossil evidence, which will be further discussed in detail in succeeding sections, suggests the origin of terrestrial isopods in Europe, specifically classifying the autochthony of *Armadillidids* to the Mediterranean region (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017).

As previously mentioned, woodlice are a cosmopolitan species as their geographic range

spans much of the entire globe excluding the poles. The vast current distribution of terrestrial isopods coupled with the multitude of morphological adaptations in extant species reveals that the terrestrialization process in isopods has ancient origins. According to amber inclusions and other fossilized evidence, the major families of Oniscidea were present and widely distributed as far back as the Cenozoic (Broly et al., 2013a). In the following section, I will analyze the present fossil evidence documenting the evolution of terrestrial isopod forms, with an emphasis on the fully terrestrial species *Armadillidium vulgare*; and discuss the dating of Oniscidea origins.

### **Fossil History of *Armadillidium vulgare***

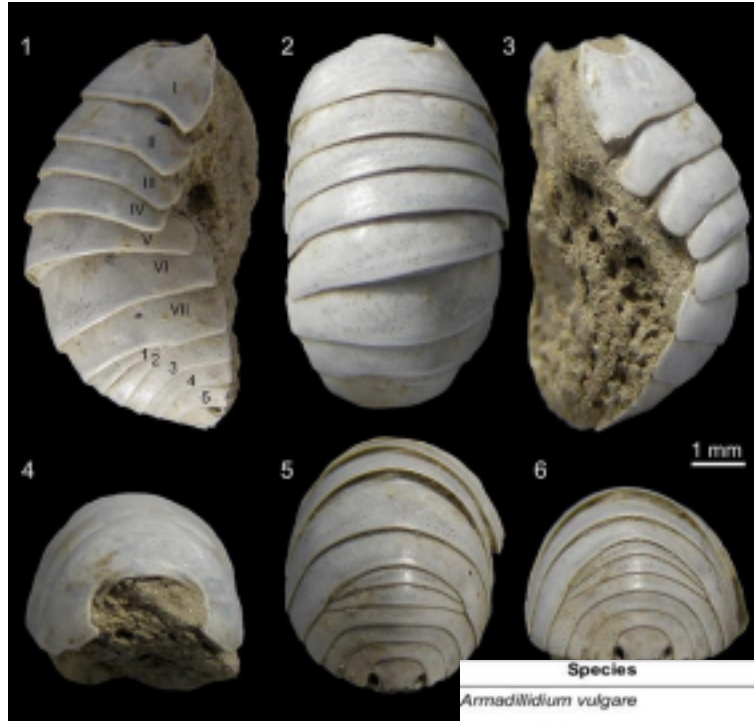
To preface the following discussion of the fossil history of Oniscidea, it is important to acknowledge the caveats of the fossilization process especially with regard to the unique biology and morphology of both marine and terrestrial isopods. Fossilization is a highly specific process that can only occur under optimal conditions of the environment and the biology of the organism being fossilized. Due to the incredibly delicate nature of the exoskeleton of pillbugs, there exists a very limited fossil record of the Oniscidea lineage (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). During the process of fossilization, pillbugs are vulnerable to being crushed or warped by sediments or lose appendages that are crucial to the taxonomic classification of isopods (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). Despite the gaps in the fossil history of isopods, terrestrial isopods remain an extraordinary lineage that provide significant insight into the terrestrialization process over the course of evolutionary time.

Due to the fact that isopods do not possess the ideal biological structure to fossilize, there have been very few fossils discovered to chronologically date the evolution of marine and terrestrial isopods. Specifically, all accepted fossil evidence of oniscid specimens were restricted to the Cenozoic, especially those that had been traditionally fossilized in sediment (Broly et al., 2016). However, a multitude of terrestrial isopods have been better preserved in amber and date as far back as the Early Cretaceous. Two specimens encased in Burmese amber from Myanmar are believed to be classified under the Oniscidean sections of Synocheta and Tylidae (Broly et al., 2016). Additionally, fossilized specimens discovered in amber have provided significant insight into the timeline of speciation of ancient isopods, revealing that Oniscidea had become highly diversified by the Cretaceous (Broly et al., 2016).

Broly and colleagues have conducted thorough research into the origins of Oniscidea and hypothesize that woodlice have a pre-Pangaeian origin, most likely arising during the Carboniferous period of the Late Paleozoic (Broly et al., 2013b). Biological analysis revealed that modern oniscid species share at least eight synapomorphies that distinguish them from their marine isopod ancestors, including but not limited to the reduction of antennules and the modification of the mandible and copulatory organs (Broly et al., 2013b).

The most remarkable terrestrial isopod fossil documented was recently discovered in Hungary in 2017. This fossil is extraordinarily well-preserved, especially considering the incredibly delicate nature of its cuticles and appendages. Due to the fact that the specimen discovered did not possess a fossilized head, it became harder to accurately taxonomically classify it. However, morphological analysis of preserved anatomy evidences that the specimen is likely to

belong to the genus *Armadillidium*, especially because the majority of the species of the family *Armadillidiidae* belong to this genus (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). Thus, it was the most parsimonious action to assume that the Hungarian species falls under *Armadillidium*. Another noteworthy fact is that the specimen was preserved in a marine setting, yet possesses lungs, which is indicative of its



occupancy of a “subaerial” habitat (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). According to the archaeological context in which the fossil was found in siliciclastic sediments, it is likely that the specimen traversed the marine environment while alive and likely did not survive due to high levels of salinity and water concentration that the oniscid was unable to withstand. The nature of the sediment that subsequently buried this Hungarian specimen was ideal to preserve the delicate exoskeleton nearly perfectly after rapid burial (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). Lastly, the position of the specimen is shown in the image to the right courtesy of Hyzny and Dávid in a partially rolled

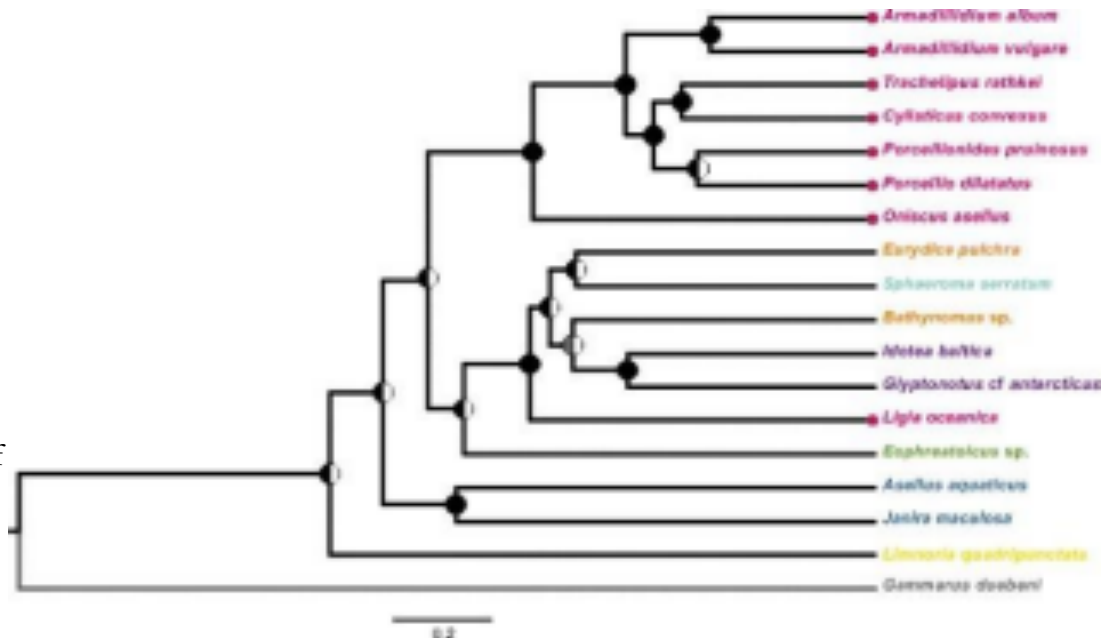
up state (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017). This reveals that this Upper Oligocene terrestrial isopod specimens possess the ability to conglobate, or form itself into a ball. The advantages of this behavior and its evolution will be discussed in a later section. Additional terrestrial isopod fossils that have been found are detailed in the table below, alas morphological and contextual interpretations of each will not serve my argument and thus further discussion of them will be omitted (Hyzny & Dávid, 2017).

Species	Age	Country	Setting	Reference
<i>Armadillidium vulgare</i>	Pleistocene	France	clastics	Dalens and Bouthier (1985)
<i>Eoarmadillidium granulatum</i>	Pleistocene	France	clastics	Dollfus (1904)
gen. et sp. indet.	early Miocene	Mexico	amber	Serrano et al. (2007)
<i>Armadillidium pulchellum</i>	late Oligocene	Germany	amber	Spahr (1993)
<i>Armadillidium</i> sp.	late Oligocene	Hungary	clastics	herein
gen. et sp. indet.	Eocene	Northern Europe	amber	Weitschat and Wichard (2010)
Disputed by Schmidt (2008)				
<i>Armadillidium molassicum</i>	middle Miocene	Germany	clastics	Heer (1865)
<i>Armadillidium payangadensis</i>	?Miocene	India	amber	Srivastava et al. (2006)

For many years, the monophyly of the suborder Oniscidea had been supported by morphological data and

corresponding  
phylogenetic trees  
constructed based on  
morphology of taxa.

However, more recent  
publications investigating  
the evolution of terrestrial  
isopods based on  
molecular data have failed  
to produce evidence to  
support the monophyly of  
this suborder (Lins et al.,  
2017). Bayesian analysis  
and estimates based on  
amino acids and



nucleotide sites support the polyphyly of Oniscidea, indicating that different lineages of oniscids may have evolved independently as shown in the phylogeny produced below (Lins et al., 2017). Although there has been discourse over the phylogenetics of terrestrial isopods (largely due to gaps in the fossil record), one fact reigns true regardless.

As stated by Lins and colleagues, “Species found in supralittoral environments are considered to represent transitional forms because of their intermediate adaptations to water restrictions” (Lins et al, 2017). Members of the genus *Ligia* are a phenomenal example of this due to their combination of primitive and derived traits, characterizing them as a transitional form.

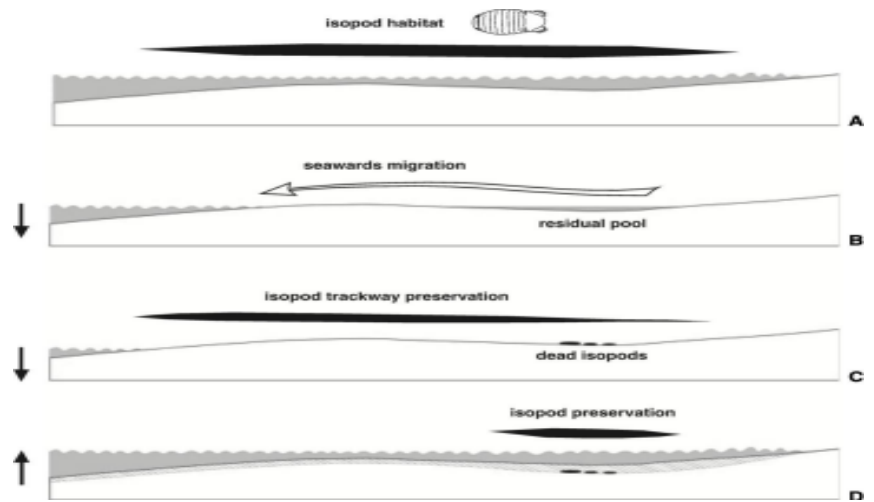
## Terrestrial Isopod Trackways

The Upper Jurassic Crayssac Lagerstätte has been the site of a variety of fossil discoveries that provide insight into the biotic life that has ventured on the mudflats of southwest France. However, very limited attention is directed at the fossilized record of invertebrates present at the lagerstätte, which may contribute significant evidence of the terrestrialization process of ancient arthropods (Gaillard et al., 2004).

At the site of this French lagerstätte, well-preserved trackways were uncovered that are evidenced to be from early arthropods on the coastal mudflats around intertidal zones. Although it is difficult to concretely attribute the trackways to a definitive species or genus under the phylum Arthropoda, analogical comparisons to modern locomotive tracks of isopods can create a fuller picture. According to Gaillard and other researchers studying the Crayssac Lagerstätte, the observed trackways resemble those of members of the extant genus of woodlice *Oniscus* (Gaillard et al., 2004). These comparisons help to not only to classify the fossilized footprints of extant isopod ancestors, but also help to track the evolutionary steps of oniscids taken to suit terrestrial life from the sea.

Additionally, these trackways provide a glimpse into the life history of ancient isopods and

the degree of terrestrialization. Analysis of the trackways coupled with understanding of the ecology of the area's coastal mudflats allowed researchers to reconstruct migratory patterns of these ancient arthropods. The orientation of the isopod trackways perpendicular to the shore suggests migratory movement in accordance with tidal rhythms (Gaillard et al., 2004). This significant finding reveals that the isopods that traversed these intertidal zones were likely to have determined their niche based on the limiting factor of tidal fluctuations. The trackways provide evidence that these isopods would travel in a perpendicular fashion away from an incoming tide, seeking refuge on elevated land from the flooded supratidal habitat. Although this ancient behavior affirms that ancient isopods, at least as far back as the Tithonian, had become terrestrialized to such a degree that they actively avoided flooded environments to preserve themselves, the observed trackways from the Crayssac suggest that full terrestrialization had not yet been achieved. The perpendicular pattern of locomotion following the rhythms of the tides are evidenced to extend in both directions from the shore. Thus, ancient isopods exhibited extraordinary migratory behaviors following outgoing tides, likely to prevent desiccation and begin the hunt for food in a moist environment suited to their survival (Gaillard et al., 2004). This phenomenon is demonstrated in the diagram above, courtesy of Gaillard and colleagues, depicting the fundamental niche of isopods and how their habitat is limited by tidal rhythms.



These ancient trackways described at the Crayssac Lagerstätte support the argument that there exists a potential for the evolution of a further degree of terrestrialization in *A. vulgare* and other Oniscidean isopods. As evidenced by the simulated patterns of isopod locomotion in rhythm with the tides, isopods that colonized the supratidal levels of France's coastal mudflats during the Tithonian still possessed a significant reliance on water and humidity to promote survival. However, as will be discussed in succeeding sections, a higher degree of terrestrialization has been achieved through the evolution of a variety of biological and behavioral adaptations to terrestrial life. Thus, it can be argued that further evolutionary work could theoretically be done to advance Oniscidean lineages to further colonize less humid environments.

### Respiratory Evolution of Oniscidea

Terrestrial isopods possess a multitude of biological features that help trace their origin to their aquatic ancestors. *A. vulgare* and other oniscids possess gill-like structures on their abdomens, referred to as pleopods. These pleopods are primitive characteristics of woodlice indicative of their marine origin. This fact, coupled with the fact that an isopod's pleopods must be kept moist to

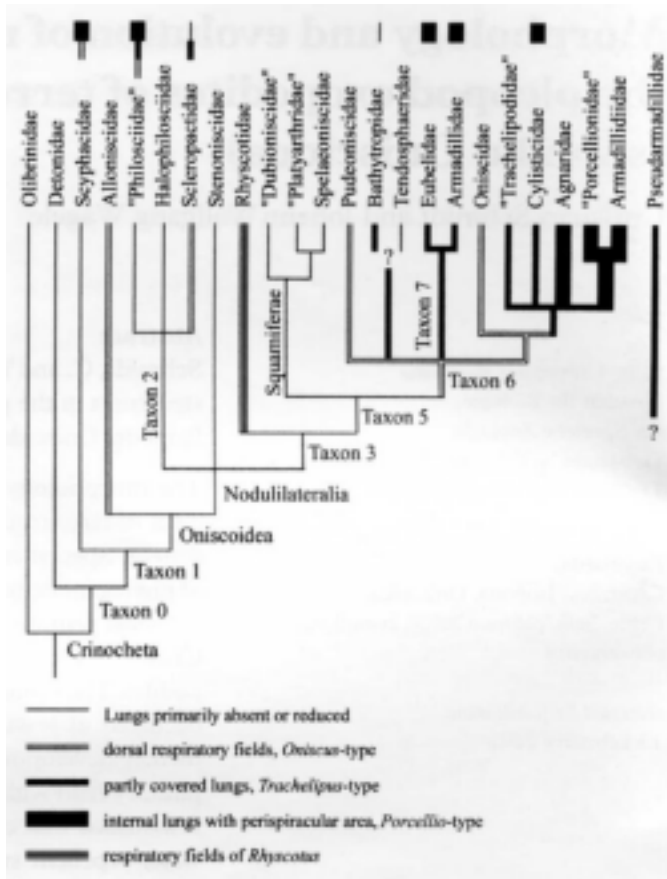
maintain their function, reveals that members of Oniscidea are limited by the very factor they evolved away from: water (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). Smigel and Gibbs wrote, “Evaporation from the pleopods is one of the most important physiological factors affecting the survival and distribution of isopods” (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). The process of respiration that

occurs on the pleopods of oniscids is almost entirely controlled by the structure of these respiratory organs and their functionality in environments with varying water concentrations.

Although primitive characteristics, especially these gill-like organs, have been preserved in extant terrestrial isopods, many genera of Isopoda have biologically evolved to better suit the needs of terrestrial life. The genus *Ligia* is considered the least terrestrially adapted form of the suborder Oniscidea (Broly et al. (2013b). This is evidenced by the continued use and reliance on simple pleopods to conduct respiration, structures that morphologically resemble that of many extinct and extant marine isopods (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). Additionally, it is not uncommon for members of the genus *Ligia* to be considered amphibious or even transitional forms of oniscids as their fundamental niche is limited to littoral zones, humid caves, and other habitats of extremely high moisture level (Schmidt & Wägele,

2001). Due to the rather primitive nature of *Ligia*, lungs are mostly or wholly absent in Ligiidae and other lesser terrestrial Oniscidean families.

To dive further into the evolution of respiratory structures in terrestrial isopods, it is important to consider the phylogeny of terrestrial isopods. To the right is an image depicting a phylogenetic tree of the Crinocheta section of woodlice that has been constructed based on morphology and shared traits. The ancestral state of the respiratory system of woodlice is not adequately represented within the phylogeny below, but its primary primitive characteristic is described as a gas exchange located on the ventral cuticle of pleopod exopodites (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). This ancestral trait is present within the oniscid families of Ligiidae, Synocheta, and some Chroniceta (as seen in many of the far left taxa represented in the phylogenetic tree). The positioning of the respiratory surface on the ventral cuticle made these taxa vulnerable to desiccation, especially in more arid or temperate climates. However, desiccation did not pose such a serious danger to these more “primitive” species, such as the “amphibious” *Ligia* (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). Nevertheless, this respiratory structure was not sufficient to facilitate widespread colonization of terrestrial environments.



As a result, evolution favored a shift of the respiratory surface in oniscids to the dorsal cuticle. This evolution toward a different extreme was driven by environmental stresses caused by water loss and the inability to cope with them. Thus, evolution favored more efficient respiratory organs with a decreased reliance on moisture. As evolutionary time progressed, the dorsal respiratory fields began to increase in surface area and became very shallowly wrinkled to aid in gas exchange. This “*Oniscus*-type lung” is characteristic of many transitional oniscid species that were on their way to terrestrialization (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). Next, the “*Trachelipus*-type lung” is evidenced to have evolved directly from the “*Oniscus*-type lung,” which involved an increase in wrinkling and the rise of the “caudal wall,” aiding in the formation of air tubules and the prevention of desiccation (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). As can be inferred, the increase in complexity of terrestrial isopod pleopodal lungs allowed more habitats to be colonized in less humid conditions. There is very minimal literature detailing the development of these pleopod structures and “pseudotrachea” of the more successful terrestrial isopod lineages within an individual. However, research on the pleopodal lung development of *Porcellio scaber*, a very terrestrialized oniscid, has helped to shed light on the mechanisms of adaptation within terrestrial isopod species (Inui et al., 2022). According to morphological analysis and interspecific comparisons, *Porcellio scaber* possesses respiratory organs of both primitive and derived nature (Becker, 1936). Additionally, this research may be applicable to other species of Oniscidea with similar lung structures, including *Armadillidium vulgare*, specifically in regard to the location and structure of spiracles (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). Since the evolution of lung structures in terrestrial isopods is very evident in the changes in morphology of taxa, these respiratory systems are highly invaluable in the classification of species according to a terrestrialization continuum. As cited by Smigel and Gibbs, some of the more terrestrially adapted species, especially those of the genus *Armadillidium*, have evolved into having invaginated lungs.

This adaptation makes *A. vulgare* capable of taking in 94% of the natural levels of oxygen essential to sustain life in non-humid air (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). Yet the evolution of increasingly complex respiratory structures in oniscids may suggest that the pleopodal exopodites of the “mostly” terrestrial *Armadillidium* woodlice may have room for further evolution allowing individuals to survive in an environment completely void of water. This could allow the continuum of terrestrialization in woodlice to evolve alongside enhanced respiratory structures to better support life on land.

Some cases of Oniscideans surviving in more arid environments have been described, as in the case of *Hemilepistus*, a genus that can survive even in desert habitats. However, the survival of these isopods in the described harsh conditions is reliant on complex social behavior mechanisms (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). Further evolution of an “atrium” discovered in *Hemilepistus* is reflective of unique adaptations to the respiratory systems of select oniscids to survive in exceptionally dry conditions. Although this species has evolved to be better fit to survive in the desert, its morphological evolution was coupled with significant behavioral adaptations. This raises the question about whether *Armadillidium* would ever be able to or need to evolve further complex respiratory structures and behaviors to sustain drier conditions, especially in the case of significant environmental change.

Lastly, to round out the discussion of the evolution of pleopodal lung structures of terrestrial isopods, it is important to consider the evolutionary trade-offs of this adaptation. In a study conducted comparing the respiratory structures of *Porcellio scaber* (previously mentioned to be significantly comparable to *A. vulgare*) and *Oniscus asellus* (a lesser terrestrial isopod), researchers discovered that the evolution of a waterproofed cuticle results in an evolutionary trade-off (Antol et al., 2021). As summarized in the results of this study, more terrestrialized isopods (*P. scaber*) have a higher desiccation resistance due to their enhanced cuticular structure, but they suffer from an increased risk of hypoxia, especially in low oxygen conditions (Antol et al., 2021). Essentially, this study examines how a biological adaptation in terrestrial isopods may result in both a benefit and a disadvantage to survival. However, alongside these biological adaptations, *A. vulgare* and other oniscids have simultaneously evolved a variety of behavioral traits to once again increase their ability to tolerate dry conditions.

### **Aggregation to Prevent Desiccation**

One of the most defining aspects of isopod behavior and ecology is their tendency toward aggregation. As discussed in previous sections, even modern isopods require a degree of moisture or humidity to sustain life as indicated by their habitat preferences and biological evolution. The formation of aggregates provides a multitude of advantages for isopods primarily to aid in moisture retention.

Aggregation in woodlice is principally derived to be a mechanism to prevent desiccation. Although members of the suborder Oniscidea are considered “fully” terrestrial, their life history is still restricted by the limiting factor of water. The majority of a pillbug’s life is spent aggregated in shelters with favorable humid conditions, especially during the daytime (Broly et al., 2013a). The clustering of multiple pillbugs in a condensed area reduces the surface area of each individual exposed to the air. Since water is lost through passive evaporation through the isopod membrane, aggregation aids in the prevention of water loss, and thus reduces the risk of desiccation and death (Broly et al., 2013a). As a result, it is the most likely scenario that aggregation evolved as a behavioral mechanism to enhance the fitness of *A. vulgare* and other species of oniscidean isopods. Pierre Broly and colleagues emphasize that, “[.] woodlice—the only suborder of Crustacea almost entirely composed of strictly terrestrial species—are a model taxon for studying the evolution of sociality through the transition from water to land” (Broly et al., 2013a). The evolution of aggregation in Oniscidea provides valuable insight into how organisms change their behaviors in order to better suit their current environment. Additionally, the evolution of this behavior is indicative of the origins of woodlice from their marine ancestors. In a separate paper, Broly and colleagues described how aggregation emerged from a social origin in response to environmental pressure involving variations in temperature, predation rates, and water concentrations (Broly et al., 2012). Aside from water retention through reduction of surface area, aggregation may provide a number of additional advantages within terrestrial isopod populations.

A variety of alternative explanations for the evolution of aggregative behaviors of isopods have been thoroughly considered. These advantages include proximity to potential mates, decreased risk of predation, ability to locate and share resources, and more (Broly et al.,

2013a). Since aggregation results in a generally heterogeneous distribution within a population of oniscids, it is easy to infer how aggregates may generally increase an individual's reproductive potential while simultaneously decreasing its risk of predation.

Aggregation is a widespread shared behavior across a multitude of species of terrestrial isopods as pillbugs have colonized vast expanses of the Earth's surface. Thus, the behavior is likely to be ancient in nature and a possible explanation as to why these organisms have become so successful in their colonization of terrestrial environments compared to their marine ancestors and cousins. However, the very nature of aggregation suggests that these magnificent organisms rely heavily on adapted behaviors to compensate for their inability to maximize their survival potential on their own.

### **Conglobation to Prevent Desiccation**

Aside from the collective efforts to prevent desiccation, evolution has also favored mechanisms to maximize water retention within individual pillbugs. As briefly mentioned in previous sections, the lifespan of a terrestrial isopod is largely spent aggregated in humid shelters. *A. vulgare* and other species control their exposure to air with low levels of water by engaging in foraging and other energy-spending activities during the most humid hours of the day (Broly et al., 2012). On top of the regulation of daily behaviors, some woodlice have also evolved the remarkable ability to conglobate.

*Armadillidium vulgare* is one of the few species of terrestrial isopods that have mastered the art of conglobation. In fact, *Armadillidiidae* are the only family of terrestrial isopods that possess this remarkable ability to conglobate (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). In an experiment to document the effects of conglobation on water-loss rates in *A. vulgare*, researchers Smigel and Gibbs found that the specimens studied retained water more effectively when rolled into a ball, largely due to the covering of the pleopodal lungs (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). Additionally, this ball-like formation that pillbugs are capable of significantly reduces the exposed surface area as the ventral cuticular surface is directed toward the center of the sphere (Smigel & Gibbs, 2008). The decrease in the surface area to volume ratio that occurs when *A. vulgare* enters its conglobated form causes a subsequent decrease in the amount of passive evaporation taking place on the respiratory surface of its exopodites (Schmidt & Wägele, 2001). The results of this study reveal that the behavior of conglobation, much like aggregation, had evolved in response to stressors in the environment involving dry conditions in the air and terrain. Once again, the evolution of oniscids was driven by water.

### **The Future of Terrestrial Isopods**

As mentioned throughout the previous sections, desiccation is a significant threat to the survival of *A. vulgare* and other terrestrial isopod individuals, stemming from their need for water to sustain life. It is not absurd to consider that although woodlice are considered fully terrestrial, there may be evolutionary motions that would allow them to be better suited to life on land such that

their life histories are not limited by the very factor they evolved away from: water. I propose that terrestrial isopods, especially *Armadillidium vulgare*, have the potential to evolve more derived respiratory structures instead of their current gills used in the exchange of gases. This argument is supported by the understanding of the distribution of terrestrial isopods over geographic space and time, their biological adaptations regarding respiration to support life on land, and the evolution of social behaviors to overcome their limiting factor.

Although the genus *Armadillidium* is the most derived form of oniscid and considered to be the most terrestrial of the genera of the suborder Oniscidea, there still lies a possibility for these magnificent creatures to evolve further adaptations. Since oniscid species have such a wide distribution across geographic space and occupy distinct niches, intraspecific selection drives the divergent evolution of life history mechanisms (Kight, 2008). Thus, large-scale environmental changes have the potential to significantly alter the life history of pillbugs, furthering the need for more enhanced respiratory structures to withstand increasingly arid conditions.

## References

- Antol, A., Berg, M. P., Verberk, W. C. (2021). Effects of body size and lung type on desiccation resistance, hypoxia tolerance and thermal preference in two terrestrial isopods species, *Journal of Insect Physiology*, Volume 132, 2021, 104247, ISSN 0022-1910, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jinsphys.2021.104247>.
- Becker, F. D. (1936). Some Observations on Respiration in the Terrestrial Isopod, *Porcellio scaber* Latreille. *Transactions of the American Microscopical Society*, 55(4), 442–445. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3222526>
- Broly, P., Deneubourg, J., Devigne, C. (2013a). Benefits of aggregation in woodlice: A factor in the terrestrialization process?. *Insectes Sociaux*. 10.1007/s00040-013-0313-7.
- Broly, P., Deville, P., Maillet, S. (2013b). The origin of terrestrial isopods (Crustacea: Isopoda: Oniscidea). *Evolutionary Ecology*. 27. 461-476. 10.1007/s10682-012-9625-8.
- Broly, P., Maillet, S., Ross, A. (2016). Terrestrial isopods: progress in their fossil record.
- Broly, P., Mullier, R., Deneubourg, J., Devigne, C. (2012). Aggregation in woodlice: social interaction and density effects. *Zookeys*, 10.3897/zookeys.176.2258
- Broly, P., Mullier, R., Devigne, C., Deneubourg, J. (2016). Evidence of self-organization in a gregarious land-dwelling crustacean (Isopoda: Oniscidea). *Anim Cogn* 19, 181–192. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10071-015-0925-6>.
- Gaillard, C., Hantzpergue, P., Vannier, J., Marg  rard, A., Mazin, J. (2004). Isopod trackways from the Crayssac Lagerst  tte, upper Jurassic, France. *Paleontology*, 2004, 48 (5), pp.947-962. 10.1111/j.1475-4983.2005.00502.x . hal-00666942.

- Hyzny, M. & Dávid, A. (2017). A remarkably well-preserved terrestrial isopod (Peracarida: Isopoda: Armadillidiidae) from the upper Oligocene of Hungary, with remarks on the oniscidean taphonomy. *Paleontologia Electronica*. 20. 1 - 11. 10.26879/615.
- Inui, N., Kimbara, R., Yamaguchi, H., Miura, T. (2022). Pleopodal lung development in a terrestrial isopod, *Porcellio scaber* (Oniscidea), *Arthropod Structure & Development*, Volume 71, 2022, 101210, ISSN 1467-8039, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asd.2022.101210>.
- Kight, Scott. (2009). Reproductive ecology of terrestrial isopods (Crustacea: Oniscidea). *Terrestrial Arthropod Reviews*. 1. 95-110. 10.1163/187498308X414724.
- Lins, L. S. F., Ho, S. Y. W., Lo, N. (2017). An evolutionary timescale for terrestrial isopods and a lack of molecular support for the monophyly of Oniscidea (Crustacea: Isopoda). *Org Divers Evol* 17, 813–820. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13127-017-0346-2>
- Schmidt, C. & Wägele, J. W. (2001). Morphology and evolution of respiratory structures in the pleopod exopodites of terrestrial Isopoda (Crustacea, Isopoda, Oniscidea).
- Smigel, J. T., & Gibbs, A. G. (2008). Conglobation in the Pill Bug, *Armadillidium vulgare*, as a Water Conservation Mechanism. *Journal of Insect Science*. 10.1673/031.008.4401.
- Vittori, M., & Dominko, M. (2022). A bibliometric analysis of research on terrestrial isopods. *ZooKeys*, 1101, 13–34. <https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.1101.81016>

**FROM DRACULA TO CULLEN: THE AVERAGE  
VAMPIRE**  
Callum Hardy

## **Introduction**

Vampires are a broad and notorious genre, whether they are thought of as ancient crypt-dwelling goths (Stoker, 1897) or edgy teen heartthrobs (Meyer, 2008). Every piece of media has some unique way of portraying them, while still staying similar enough to the classic vampire to ensure they come across as such. But what is the average vampire? Depending on a person's first perception of vampires, this could be anything. Someone could grow up thinking *Nosferatu* (1929) is the classic vampire archetype, while somebody else might see it as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997).

The purpose of this study is to document and formalize the traits that make a vampire. Within different media, the characteristics are molded and interpreted to fit the content, sometimes even changing entirely. It is easy to say the "classic vampire" is simply the first vampire, but has pop culture changed so much that this is no longer the case? This purpose aims to answer the research question "what are the traits that actually make up the 'classic vampire' and how does that differ across history in English speaking western media?"

## **Limitations**

Due to the time and reach constraints of this research, the vampire genre had to be narrowed down to 9 influential pieces of media. The pieces of media were narrowed down by researching what is commonly regarded as the most influential vampire media, through wikis (a website that allows collaborative editing of its content and structure by its users) and papers. 9 were chosen because they could be easily represented in 3 groups of 3, as well as being an odd number to erase any possibility of a tie. It is also a big enough number to give a credible sample size, while not being unattainable. Additionally, a majority of video media was chosen, both due to the time periods represented and the time constraints. All pieces of media with a credible video adaptation were consumed through the video format, except Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, which was deemed too important to the genre to leave out.

## **Definitions**

To understand certain concepts and themes throughout this essay, there are some definitions which are necessary to know. Firstly, these terms are necessary to understand the research methods and results. When the term vampire is used, it refers to an undead monster referred to explicitly as a vampire; excluding any alternative vampires such as energy vampires who are stated to operate under different rules. A trait is a characteristic that defines a vampire. Other beings are any mythical being that is not human or another subset of vampire, most commonly werewolves and witches.

There are also a few traits that need to be defined to fully understand. The first is immortal, which refers to not dying of old age or human disease, but still being able to be killed by other means. The second is gothic literature which has a few key characteristics. The first is the setting, which is usually somewhere large, empty, and somber, and is also often religious. These places include but are not limited to castles, cathedrals/churches, graveyards, and abandoned buildings. The characters also have specific traits, and are often supernatural, fascinated with death, isolated, and psychologically distressed. Finally, the themes found throughout are often melancholy, Victorian, romantic, frightening, and tragic. It is also often a metaphor for outward issues and conflict.

The final definitions are necessary to understand the literature review. Fandom is short for “fan kingdom” and is a community of people who all interact with and enjoy the same media. Counterculture was a movement started in the 60’s that radically opposed the social norm and rejected the social values of the time. Alternative in a cultural context refers to a group of people that exists outside the mainstream culture and social norms and often falls under another subculture.

### **Assumptions**

\*For shows where traits are shown once in the pilot and never again, the traits will not be counted, as shows are often slightly different in the pilot due to them being filmed in advance to see if the shows will be continued.

Examples include the character designs in *What We Do in the Shadows*, and the actress for Willow Rosenberg in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, starting out as Riff Reagan, then changing to Alyson Hannigan in the rest of the series.

\*If traits are shown then they do apply, and in any other case including neutrality, they do not. This circumvents the issue of the gray area, where if a trait is not explicitly shown, it could be positive, by not allowing for that gray area to exist and cutting out anything that is not shown.

### **Literature Review**

Before vampires were a staple of the gothic genre, they were a part of folklore, being passed around all of Europe since presumably before it was even officially documented. The earliest documentation of vampire folklore currently known is from the territories of Kievan Rus’, found in the Polish-Lithuanian Union, all the way back in the year 1000 AD. (Bohn, 2019) Unfortunately, due to its age, not much is known about it, besides its coining of the original concept of a vampire.

Over the next 400 years, the rise of the more common interpretation of vampires in folklore can begin to be seen. In 1453, the Ottomans decided their best course of action to preserve their authority over the Orthodox population in recently conquered Constantinople was to scare them with the concept of a “vrykolakas” (Bohn, 2019). These pre-pop-culture vampires were a little different than what’s seen now, though, and were defined as “the non decomposed corpse of an excommunicated person” who is said to “had found exile in its own skin”.

Moving further into the future, to the year 1732, the folklore gets even closer to the way vampires are represented now, seen in the Latin West on the frontier of the Habsburg Empire, where the figure of the Southern Slavic vampire was becoming known (*Isgar, 2024*) as a result of the threat of a plague. Again, this interpretation of the vampire was seen as imperishable, and subsequently a threat because of it.

As vampires became notable in European folklore, so did the fear of the undead. But where fear goes, fascination follows. Thus, vampires stayed relevant, continuing to evolve from stories told amongst small communities, into documented fiction. The first (of many) iconic pieces of vampire-related media is most commonly attributed to John William Polidori's "*The Vampyre*." The origins of this book can be clearly tied to Eastern European and Slavic folklore which, as said earlier, was incredibly influential in the creation of the genre in fiction. "The incorporation of these legends adds authenticity to the narrative," (*Nowik Niton, 2024*) and in turn connects it to its history.

After the publication of "*The Vampyre*", the genre began to expand, leading to the cultural phenomena like Bram Stoker's "*Dracula*" and Sheridan Le Fanu's "*Carmilla*" at the forefront. The classic vampire began to hold influence from the Catholic church, who began to push its own social agenda onto vampires, using their monster nature and pre established fear to demonize social groups they were against. They became a sort of figurehead for sexual deviants, representing things like incest and bestiality, but also homosexuality and premarital sex (*Hardy, 2023*). The combination of fear-mongering from the old days, mixed with the erotic messaging of the newer days, transformed the figure of the vampire into a scary, sexy, and seductive creature.

That sexiness did anything but fade away, and as time went on, so did their scope in pop culture. Movies like "*Interview with the Vampire*" and "*Blade*" really exemplified the way vampires had begun to be interpreted, keeping up that seductiveness while slowly dropping the scary. It seemed the quiet messaging from the catholic church had begun unknowingly encouraging what it once fought against, as counterculture began to rise in popularity.

It did not stop at counterculture though, and over time vampires became associated with a lot of alternative groups, from the 80's goths to the 2000's emos. What started as a genre shared amongst small communities had slowly gone back to being just that, but online (*Blom, 2019*). People formed fandoms, and bonded over their shared interest, all while further skewing the original intentions of what vampires were meant to be.

By modern times, the meaning of what it meant to be a vampire had effectively shifted in meaning and perception and are now often redeemed in media as opposed to villainized. People have begun to have sympathy for these fictional creatures, which thus humanized them. "Francis Ford Coppola's portrayal of Stoker's *Dracula* in the 1992 film was also instrumental in the more sympathetic reception of the vampire by creating a romance between Count Dracula and Mina" (*Fenicchia, 2012*). By making these creatures into misunderstood humans, it evoked the opposite

meaning originally intended, taking them from sexual deviants to morally gray heartthrobs.

## **Purpose**

Since the creation of vampiric mythology and media, there has been analysis of it. People have always sought to find meaning in things, and vampires were no different. As seen throughout the literature review, that meaning is ever changing, and documented only by dedicated researchers. However, those researchers have failed to truly define a vampire.

There are assumptions about what a vampire consists of, but no studies have ever sought to narrow down a universal definition. Most people focus on a niche, whether it be by time or media. Very few have researched everything, and none of them have sufficiently answered the question of “the average vampire.”

Beyond this, there is also a more widespread meaning. Media reflects life, and it is by studying media that we further understand life. This essentially means that humanity reflects themselves on the media they create, and by understanding what the media is actually saying you learn what the people of the time were thinking. Whether it be personal to the author, or a commentary of the social climate of the time, there is always something to be found throughout media.

Throughout this paper, the predictions will be stated to present what the knowledge of the literature review suggests. From there, the methods will be presented, and the results will be documented afterwards. There will then be a discussion section, which will take the information from the literature review and look at it in terms of the results. The paper will then conclude by presenting the implications of research.

## **Predictions**

As the research begins, it can be predicted that the average vampire will not vary too much. However, the traits that are dependent on the time they were written will likely vary. The traits relying on past ideals, such as sensitivity to Christ and gothicism, and through factors like old religion and culture, will likely decrease. Inversely, the traits that depend on more modern ideals and interpretations, like freedom and sexuality, will likely increase.

## **Methods**

9 pieces of media across vampire pop culture history were chosen and then separated into 3 eras: era 1 (1872-1929), era 2 (1976-1998), and era 3 (2008-2019). Each era has 3 items. era 1 includes *Carmilla* (Book, 1872), *Dracula* (Book, 1897) and *Nosferatu* (Film, 1929). era 2 includes *Interview with The Vampire* (Film, 1976), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (TV, 1997), and *Blade* (Film, 1998). era 3 includes *Twilight* (Film, 2008), *The Vampire Diaries* (TV, 2009) and *What We Do in The Shadows* (TV, 2019).

These time periods were selected to narrow down the process of tracking changes over history. By separating into 3 groups, the changes are clearer, and easier to record. The first era consists of the original vampire media, going from 1872-1929. The second group is the revival of the vampire genre leading to the now “retro movies” during the age of popularized colored film, going from 1976-1998. The final group is the post-2000 continuation that becomes the “modern media” up until about the present, going from 2008-2019.

The traits observed will consist of 3 categories: physical, behavioral, and perception. Physical traits such as pale/desaturated, presence of fangs, gothic aesthetic, lack of reflection, bat form, cold to the touch, nocturnal/no sun, and sleep in a coffin. Behavioral traits such as a thirst for blood, an aversion to human food, heightened senses/abilities, created by a bite, must be invited in, immortal, sexuality, killed by stake, sensitivity to Christ, and sensitivity to garlic. Perception (by others) is split into two categories: perception by humans and perception by other creatures (if applicable), and is measured 1-5 (least to most). Those categories are feared, believed not to exist, amicable relations, and hated.

The traits will be measured in the first two categories (excluding gothic aesthetic and sexuality) by a true or false scale. If a trait is seen, it’s true, if not, it is false. The excluded traits and the perception traits will be measured on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not or barely visible, and 5 being the most visible.

The methods chosen have been decided as the best way to go about answering this research question, due to its search for specific knowledge and addressing of all possible holes in research. By finding the average of each trait, it allows specific insight as to the frequency of each trait, and how popular they really are. Despite the qualitative facade of the question, the best way to document the answer is actually quantitative. It makes it possible to do an in-depth analysis of how things have evolved, and how they make sense overall, while avoiding any bias possible in a qualitative study.

## Results

After conducting the research, the results were calculated. There is an average score for each category overall, as well as for each era individually.

Table 1 shows that the final physical trait results led to both true and false traits. The true traits are Pale/Desaturated (67%), Fangs (100%), Gothic (3.6/5), Cold to the Touch (56%), Nocturnal/No Sunlight (89%), and Sleep in a Coffin (56%), while the false traits are Lack of Reflection (44%), Animal Form (44%).

Throughout all 3 eras, only 2 traits stayed the same: Pale/Desaturated (67%), and Fangs (100%). 2 traits increased throughout the eras: Cold to the Touch (33% to 67%), and

Nocturnal/No Sunlight (67% to 100%). 3 traits decreased throughout the eras: Goth (5, 2.6), Animal Form (67% to 33%), and Sleep in a Coffin (67% to 33%). Only one trait had no clear path throughout the era: Lack of Reflection (33% to 67% to 33%).

Table 1: Physical traits of vampires as noted in a variety of media from 1872 to 2019

Name	Year	Media	Type	P	F	G	R	A	C	N	S
Carmilla	1872	Book	F	T	5	F	T	F	F	F	F
Dracula	1897	Book	T	T	5	T	T	T	T	T	T
Nosferatu	1929	Film	T	T	5	F	F	F	T	T	T

#### Average Per Trait (era 1)

Interview With The Vampire	1976	Film	T	T	4	T	F	T	T	T	T
Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1997	TV Show	T	T	2	T	T	T	T	T	F
Blade	1998	Film	F	T	2	F	F	F	T	T	T

#### Average Per Trait (era 2)

Twilight - 2008	2008	Film	T	T	2	F	F	T	T	F
The Vampir e Diaries	2009	TV Show	F	T	2	F	F	F	T	F
What We Do In The Shado ws	2019	TV Show	T	T	4	T	T	T	T	T

Average Per Trait (era 3) 67% 100% 2.6/5 33% 33% 67% 100% 33% Average Per Trait 67%  
100% 3.6/5 44% 44% 56% 89% 56%

Categories: P- Pale/Desaturated, F- Fangs, G- Gothic Aesthetic, R- Lack of Reflections, A  
Animal Form, C- Cold to the Touch, N- Nocturnal/No Sunlight, S- Sleep in a Coffin

The final mental trait results led to both true and false traits as well, as seen in Table 2. The true traits are Thirst for Blood (100%), Aversion to Human Food (89%), Heightened Senses (100%), Created by Bite (56%), Immortal (100%), Sexuality (3.6/5), and Killed by Stake (78%). The false traits are Must be Invited In (44%), Sensitivity to Christ (44%), and Sensitivity to Garlic (44%)

Within the eras, two traits stayed the same: Thirst for Blood (100%), Heightened Senses (100%), and Immortal (100%). Only one trait increased throughout the eras, which was Must be Invited In (33% to 67%). 3 traits decreased throughout the eras: Aversion to Human Food (100% to 67%), Killed by Stake (100% to 67%), Sensitivity to Christ (67% to 33%). The remaining 3 traits varied and had no clear path, those being Created by Bite (33% to 100% to 67%), Sexuality (2.3 to 4.3 to 4), Sensitivity to garlic (33% to 67% to 33%).

Table 2: Behavioral traits of vampires as noted in a variety of media from 1872 to 2019.

Name Year Type Bo F S Bi ii I Se K C G

Carmilla	1872	Book	T	T	T	F	F	T	4	T	F	F
Dracula	1897	Book	T	T	T	T	T	T	2	T	T	T
Nosferatu	1929	Film	T	T	T	F	F	T	1	T	T	F
<b>Average Per Trait (era 1)</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2.3/5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Interview With The Vampire	1976	Film	T	T	T	T	T	T	5	F	F	F
Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1997	TV Show	T	T	T	T	F	T	3	T	T	T
Blade	1998	Film	T	T	T	T	F	T	5	T	F	T
<b>Average Per Trait (era 2)</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4.3/5</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>67%</b>
Twilight	2008	Film	T	T	T	T	F	T	3	F	F	F
The Vampire Diaries	2009	TV Show	T	F	T	F	T	T	4	T	F	F

What We Do In The Shadows	2019	TV Show	T	T	T	T	T	T	5	T	T	T
<b>Average Per Trait (era 3)</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Average Per Trait</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.6/5</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>

Categories: Bl- Thirst for Blood, F- Aversion to Human Food, S- Heightened Senses/Abilities, Bi- Created by Bite, ii- Must be Invited In, I- Immortal, Se- Sexuality, K- Killed by Stake, C- Sensitivity to Christ, G- Sensitivity to Garlic

Similar to the last two categories, the final “perception by humans” trait results led to both true and false traits, as seen in Table 3. The true traits are Feared (4.4/5), Believed to Not Exist (4.1/5) and Hated (4.6/5), while the false traits are Worshipped (1.1/9), and Amicable Relations (1.5/9).

These era specific averages led to the information that 2 traits increased: Believed to Not Exist (3/5 to 4.3/5 to 5/5), Worshipped (1/5 to 1.3/5). 2 traits also decreased: Feared (5/5 to 3.3/5), Hated (5/5, 4/5). One trait had no clear path: Amicable Relations (1.3/5 to 1/5 to 2.3/5).

Table 3: Perception by humans of vampires as noted in a variety of media from 1872 to 2019

Name	Year	Media type	Feared	Not believed	Hated	Worshipped	Amicable
Carmilla	1872	Book	5	5	1	1	5
Dracula	1897	Book	5	2	1	2	5
Nosferatu	1929	Film	5	2	1	1	5
<b>AveragePer Trait (era 1)</b>			<b>5/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1.3/5</b>	<b>5/5</b>

Interview With The Vampire	1976	Film	5	4	1	1	5
Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1997	TV Show	5	4	1	1	5
Blade	1998	Film	5	5	1	1	5
<b>AveragePer Trait (era 2)</b>			<b>5/5</b>	<b>4.3/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>5/5</b>
Twilight	2008	Film	3	5	2	1	4
The Vampire Diaries	2009	TV Show	3	5	1	4	4
What We Do In The Shadows	2019	TV Show	4	5	1	2	4
<b>AveragePer Trait (era 3)</b>			<b>3.3/5</b>	<b>5/5</b>	<b>1.3/5</b>	<b>2.3/5</b>	<b>4/5</b>
<b>AveragePer Trait</b>			<b>4.4/5</b>	<b>4.1/5</b>	<b>1.1/5</b>	<b>1.5/5</b>	<b>4.6/5</b>

The final “perception by other beings” trait results led to both true and false traits, seen in Table 4. The true traits are Feared (4.4/5), Believed to Not Exist (4.1/5) and Hated (4.6/5), and the false traits are Worshipped (1.1/9), and Amicable Relations (1.5/9).

Due to the skewed results because of the lack of media with other beings, this data will be presented era by era.

In era 1, there were no other beings to perceive the vampires, therefore no data exists. In era 2, the only media with other beings is Buffy the Vampire Slayer. The only true trait is Hated (5/5).

Every other trait is false, including Feared (2/5), Believed to Not Exist (1/5), Worshipped(1/5), and Amicable Relations (1/5). In era 3, all 3 media included other beings. The true traits are Hated (4.3/5). The false traits are Feared (2.3/5), Believed to Not Exist (1/5), Worshipped (1/5), Amicable Relations (1.6/5).

Every trait increased except for Hated, which went up from era 1 to era 2, and then down from era 2 to era 3. The presence of other beings in general also increased, from 0 in era 1, 1 in era 2, and 3 in era 3.

Table 4: Perception by other beings of vampires as noted in a variety of media from 1872 to 2019

Name	Year	Media type	Feared	Not believed	Hated	Worshipped	Amicable
Carmilla	1872	Book	-	-	-	-	-
Dracula	1897	Book	-	-	-	-	-
Nosferatu	1929	Film	-	-	-	-	-
<b>AveragePer Trait (era 1)</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Interview With The Vampire	1976	Film	-	-	-	-	-
Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1997	TV Show	2	1	1	1	5
Blade	1998	Film	-	-	-	-	-
<b>AveragePer Trait (era 2)</b>			<b>2/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>5/5</b>
Twilight	2008	Film	2	1	1	1	5

The Vampire Diaries	2009	TV Show	3	1	1	2	4
What We Do In The Shadows	2019	TV Show	2	1	1	2	4
AveragePer Trait (era 3)			2.3/5	1/5	1/5	1.6/5	4.3/5
AveragePer Trait			2.25/5	1/5	1/5	1.2/5	4.5/5

### Interesting Findings

Beyond just the findings that answer the question, there were a few results that were equally as interesting.

The first is a technicality that arose from how many pieces of media actually have other creatures. As seen above, only 4 pieces of media actually contain other creatures to report on, while the rest have none. This means only 4/9, or 44%, of vampire media has other creatures, which, according to the guidelines in the research, makes it a false trait, and not present in the average vampire.

There were also a few traits that were surprisingly seen/not seen. Unexpectedly, a weakness to fire ended up being incredibly common despite it not even being included in the spreadsheet. It was so common in fact, that if those statistics had been in the chart, it likely would have been positive. On the other hand, animal form being as negative as it was very surprising, because of the common association with bats. It was very rarely seen that vampires would be associated with bats, which begs the question of where the association even came from. Even more surprisingly, one vampire had a completely different animal form. Carmilla was actually a black cat rather than a bat, which never seemed to catch on in later media.

Of course, there could not be an interesting results section without mentioning the rather unconventional things people added to their vampires. The most notorious throughout pop culture is, of course, the sparkling twilight vampires, with their skin glittering in the sun rather than melting. That was not the only odd reaction to sun though, in Blade the vampires simply put on motorcycle helmets to avoid burning in the sun.

## Discussion

Why did things change the way they did? There are a lot of ways this question could be answered; however, the overarching theme is simply time. That isn't nearly specific enough though, and frankly does not explain anything, so it is important to delve into what changed over time.

The first and probably most important shift was the major culture shift that occurred, going from the traditional values of the 19th century into the ever-modernizing culture of the 20th century and ending up in the present-day contemporary 21st century. This led to a lot of changes, especially seen in comparing era 1 to era 3. During era 1, the culture was very traditional, with Catholicism being the majority of what anyone thought. Because of this, the media is covered in Catholic values, from most obviously a sensitivity to Christ from the creatures created to represent the unholy, but also to the demonization of their sexuality, and their heavy air of tail-end gothicism. Era 2 is a transitional period where things begin to change towards more modern views, and you see things begin to even out, leading to a mix of the traditional traits from era 1 to the modern things from era 3. Era 3 is where things flip towards modern values where culture was less traditional, and begin to emphasize individuality, and traits changed to reflect it, like sexuality increasing, and fear of vampires decreasing. From there, smaller reasons begin to arise.

There was also a shift in media types. In the 1800's there was of course nothing but books, so that is all media was. However, as time passed, the media evolved and suddenly movies and TV were easier to create than ever. While the difference may not seem to be relevant, it led to a lack of internal monologue present in books which the readers had once known and made it so a lot of storytelling had to be cut out to account for the time limit in film. Because of this, the traits that required internal story change, like created by bite starting low and increasing to account for a lack of further backstory being able to be shared, and mental traits declining in general as there was less ability to clarify small mental quirks.

The location of vampire media also changed, starting out in Europe and transitioning into the United States. In Europe, the culture was a lot more traditional, and followed the conventions previously stated in the literature review. However, as things moved to the US, European influence began to dwindle. Christ stopped being such an important figure, and things like horror were emphasized instead, decreasing sensitivity to Christ and increasing a belief of nonexistence.

As time went on, the media creators went from individuals to huge companies. Because of this, the traits began to branch out beyond the norm from era 1, with each company wanting their own trademarked "thing". This is why it went from a seemingly very congruent idea of what a vampire was, to things like sparkling skin and motorcycle helmets.

Similarly to the creators changing, the audience changed, going from local to global. This meant that what was once a local genre became worldwide, and just as traits were affected by creators and what they wanted to portray, traits were affected by audiences and what they wanted to see. It is a lot

easier to stand out to a local crowd by staying consistent with local lore, but with global audiences, variation is necessary. Audiences began to prefer shiny new spins on the genre which had been around so long, leading to a consistent decrease in physical and mental traits overall as they began to be removed and replaced with another variation.

### **Conclusion**

As a reminder, the question this research sought to answer was “What are the traits that make up the “average vampire”, and how does that differ across history in English speaking western media?”. To explain how it was answered, the question will be split into 2 parts.

Firstly, identifying which traits make up the average vampire; and then identifying how and why they differ across history.

The first portion of the question is answered in the results, where the question simply asks to identify the traits. This was done through the averaging of each trait, where it was decided whether a trait was “true” (>50% and present in the average vampire), or “false” (<50% and not present in the average vampire). Those traits were as follows. Physically, a vampire is pale/desaturated, has fangs, is gothic, feels cold to the touch, is nocturnal/cannot be in the sun, and sleeps in a coffin. Mentally, vampires thirst for blood, have an aversion to human food, are created by a bite, have heightened senses, are functionally immortal, have a high sexuality, and can be killed by stake. In context to both humans and other beings, vampires are feared, hated, and believed to not exist.

The second portion of the question is answered in the discussion, where it becomes about the “why” rather than just viewing the figure on a surface level. This portion asks how each trait differs across history. Traits changed across the 3 eras in 4 different ways; they either increased, decreased, stayed the same, or had no clear path. The traits that increased over time are Cold to the Touch, Nocturnal/No Sun, Must Be Invited In, Believed to Not Exist (by humans), Worshipped (by humans), Feared (by other beings), Believed to Not Exist (by other beings), Worshipped (by other beings), Amicable relations (by other beings). The traits that decreased are Gothic,

Animal Form, Sleep in a Coffin, Aversion to Human Food, Killed by Stake, Sensitivity to Christ, Feared (by humans), and Hated (by humans). The traits that stayed the same are Pale/Desaturated, Fangs, Thirst for Blood, and Heightened Senses. Finally, the traits with no clear path are Lack of Reflection, Created by Bite, Sexuality, Sensitivity to Garlic, Amicable Relations (by humans), and Hated (by other beings). The changes were so varied due to, as previously stated, a natural change over time. More specifically though, it came down to a change in culture, media type, location, author, and audience.

Finally, the implications of the research are addressed. The most obvious implication is that, by providing an average vampire both overall and within different eras, it gives average ground for anybody researching vampires to stand on. Rather than fussing over whether or not a trait is present, it allows the researcher to simply use the average and focus on the research.

Less obviously, this study provides an example of media reflecting life. The influence of the cultural climate at the time greatly impacts the figure throughout different eras, from the remains of the original gothic movement to the gothic revival of the 80's. By showing this reflection on a small scale, it can be inferred to apply on a larger scale. Just about every period of time vampires had their own media, whether it be art on the

walls of a cave, or an animated Disney movie. This study is very open ended and primed for continuation. The easiest way to proceed is to add more media to research. If looking at media within the defined time , extending the eras is not an issue. However, if going outside the time period, the era's should be split by 50 years at a time (ex: 1850-1900, 1900-1950, 1950-2000, 2000-present). If going even further in depth, those 50 year periods may be split in half again, into 25 year periods.

Going beyond the research, it is possible to go both narrower and wider in scope. Going narrower, it is possible to look further into the specific media and traits, observing things like why they exist, what they represent, and general analysis of their content. Going wider, it is possible to study the vampire genre in its entirety, and rather than focusing on the beings themselves, analyzing the genre and the media.

## References

- A. Asbjørn Jøn. (2025). From Nosferatu to Von Carstein: Shifts in the Portrayal of Vampires. *Australian Folklore*, 16. <https://journals.kvasirpublishing.com/af/article/view/158>
- Blom, M. (2013). Television vampire fandom and religion. *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, 25. <https://doi.org/10.30674/scripta.67430>
- Bohn, T. M. (2019). *The Vampire : Origins of a European Myth* (F. Ipgrave, Trans.). Berghahn.
- Grebey, J. (2022, September 30). From sparkles to sick abs: What are the best and weirdest vampire “rules” in pop culture? SYFY Official Site. <https://www.syfy.com/syfy-wire/vampire-weaknesses-powers-rules-reginald-twilight-count-morbius-adventure-time>
- Hardy, C. (2024). Media perception through hidden propaganda [Student Paper].
- J Gordon Melton, & Hornick, A. (2015). *The vampire in folklore, history, literature, film and television : A comprehensive bibliography*. Mcfarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
- Nowik Niton, A. (2024). *The Influence of Eastern European Folklore on Vampire Portrayals in John William Polidori’s The Vampyre and Bram Stoker’s Dracula* [BA Thesis].
- Fenicchia, L. M. (2012). *The Modern Vampire as Romantic Hero: Acceptance, Love and Self-Control*.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Hillary Neumann

The Florida civil rights movement- like the national movement- followed a series of trends regarding education, specifically public education. Public education played many roles in the Florida civil rights movement, roles which have been discussed throughout the relatively new historiography surrounding the Florida movement. Epistemic violence against Black Americans was frequently used as a tactic to prevent Blacks from knowing their rights and successfully voting. Black activists such as Harry T. Moore and Mary McLeod Bethune utilized education as a form of resistance, educating Black children on their rights and history. School integration became a hotly contested topic, and many whites resisted desegregation in public schools long after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. Public schools became sites of physical violence rather than safe havens of knowledge in the 1970s with the implementation of busing and the push towards true integration rather than token desegregation. While authors within the historiography of public education in the Florida civil rights movement address these different roles, they tend to agree that public education was fundamentally important to the movement no matter which role it was playing. Scholars disagree, however, on the role education played in the movement and exactly how education was important to the movement. This historiography will examine how scholars of the Florida civil rights movement have centered education with respect to the time in which they were writing, the place they were writing about, and the goals of their text.

School integration is the most prominent theme in the overall historiography surrounding the Florida civil rights movement. Most scholars acknowledge that education was able to play multiple roles, but the prevailing argument is that the most important role was as a battleground for integration after the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision. Historian Joseph A. Tomberlin writes in his article “Florida Whites and the Brown decision of 1954” that white opposition to *Brown* was the primary effect of the decision, providing the example of whites in St. Augustine who believed the *Brown* decision “would throw together black and white youth who would have to adjust to each other and solve problems which had already proved insoluble.” (24) Tomberlin, writing just eighteen years after the *Brown* decision went into effect, relies on the methodology of examining Florida newspapers and editorials' response to *Brown*. Since the decision was so recent at the time Tomberlin was writing, he is one of the first scholars to enter the conversation surrounding education in the Florida civil rights movement. He argues that “editors of the more influential daily newspapers refrained from arousing opposition to the *Brown* ruling.” (29) Tomberlin's argument demonstrates an early push towards the myth of Florida exceptionalism, which has largely been disproven by more modern scholars such as Paul Ortiz. Proponents of the idea of Florida exceptionalism believe that the Florida civil rights movement followed different trends than the rest of the South. Tomberlin at first appears to agree in his examination of Floridian newspapers' response to *Brown*, arguing that “initially the reaction of Florida whites to the Brown case was less extreme than in many other Southern states” (35) because of how newspaper editors did not encourage massive resistance to

*Brown*. This connects to the idea of Florida exceptionalism by aligning with the belief that the civil rights movement in Florida was relatively nonviolent compared to other Southern states.

Tomberlin may not have been a total proponent of Florida exceptionalism, however, as he concedes that “early responses [to *Brown*] were deceptive, that they were only surface manifestations, and that beneath the surface there existed a huge reservoir of potential resistance to desegregation.” (35) This view is the most popular in the recent historiography surrounding the topic, as historian J. Michael Butler, writing nearly fifty years later in his book *Beyond Integration*, describes the Pupil Assignment Law (PAL) as “Florida’s most transparent attempt to circumvent the *Brown* ruling.” (28), which he argues “demonstrated that Florida whites ‘did not reject the spirit of massive resistance’” (29) In his book *Emancipation Betrayed*, author Paul Ortiz, writing about a decade before Butler, agrees with the anti-Florida exceptionalism belief surrounding the Florida civil rights movement, stating that Florida had “a Jim Crow system as brutal as anywhere in the Cotton South.” (12) While Ortiz’s primary focus in *Emancipation Betrayed* is not education, the sentiment that Florida had a similar Jim Crow system implies white Floridians in support of the Jim Crow system would react similarly to whites in other Southern states when segregation was threatened, a sentiment which is supported by Butler’s argument. Florida exceptionalism regarding white resistance and reactions to *Brown*, therefore, is considered an outdated and largely disproven argument within the historiography of education in the Florida civil rights movement.

The *Brown* decision’s place within the timeline of Black education is not agreed upon by all scholars of the Florida civil rights movement. Several sources look at education and resistance decades before *Brown*. Public education has always represented resistance, not just white resistance to integration but also Black resistance to Jim Crow. Black resistance is chronologically the first way education manifested in the Florida civil rights movement, but not the first way historians approached education as resistance. Tomberlin, as one of the earliest authors on education in the Florida civil rights movement, approached education through the lens of white resistance. Ortiz, however, provides an account of education through the lens of Black resistance to Jim Crow in the late part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nearly seventy years before *Brown*. Ortiz writes that Black Floridians desired “a strong, state-supported educational system that would help produce an autonomous citizenry,” (21) while “Conservative Democrats saw black education as a dangerous proposition.” (22) As Ortiz’s book was written in 2005, roughly forty years after Tomberlin’s article, it is clear that historiography has changed regarding when exactly education becomes a key aspect of the Florida civil rights movement. Ortiz builds on Tomberlin’s idea of resistance in education being found through white resistance, but he enters the conversation with the relatively novel idea that resistance in education can be viewed from the perspective of Black Americans using education as a form of resistance to Jim Crow and race-based oppression.

The idea of Black Americans using education as resistance had been viewed in isolated incidents before Ortiz, with a strong focus on Mary McLeod Bethune’s educational philosophy and approach to educating Black girls. In her article “Ringling Up a School: Mary McLeod Bethune’s Impact on Daytona,” historian Audrey Thomas McCluskey quotes Bethune as saying, the children “of black workers and their families... ‘need a real school,’” (201) and that in the school facilities provided to Black children Bethune “‘found dense ignorance and meager educational facilities and

racial prejudice of the most violent type.” (202) The shift toward a focus on epistemic violence toward Black communities in Florida began with a focus on Bethune, albeit with limited scholarship. With this focus on Bethune, the “rudimentary and haphazard” (McCluskey 203) conditions of Black children in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were illuminated. These conditions, as both McCluskey and Ortiz argue, were a result of Jim Crow era policies that had the goal of keeping Blacks in subservient positions and low-paying jobs. McCluskey once again quotes Bethune: “To keep [Blacks] inferior... they must be denied justice and the right to make a decent living,” (209) which is echoed by Ortiz when he writes that unions in early 1900s Pensacola “called for the expulsion of black workers from skilled trades.” (163) The argument that Jim Crow policies in education kept Blacks from achieving equality is common to the historiography starting in the 1990s when McCluskey was writing. This idea is not found in the Tomberlin article, which focuses primarily on the ramifications of the *Brown* decision rather than why the decision was necessary. Tomberlin likely does not touch on the background of the decision because during the time he was writing, the narrative of the civil rights movement had not been extended beyond the classic time frame that starts with the 1954 *Brown* decision. The historiographical movement towards the idea of the long civil rights movement regarding education begins directly around the time of Ortiz, but authors such as McCluskey writing on Bethune’s impact before 1954 indirectly began to expand the timeline as early as the 1990s.

The belief that Bethune represented an isolated incident of Black resistance through education in the Florida civil rights movement is common to scholars of Bethune. McCluskey argues that Bethune’s success could be in part attributed to “Daytona’s image for racial tolerance,” (216) an image which, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was not yet as applicable to the rest of the state. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Ocoee riot and Rosewood massacre both occurred in Central Florida. As areas that did not rely primarily on tourism, the illusion of moderation was not necessary for rural Florida. Tourist areas such as Miami and Daytona, however, needed to provide an image of racial tolerance to continue to thrive with tourist income. While there is an emerging historiography that contests the timeline of Florida’s illusion of moderation, the scholarship on Bethune still presents the fact that her school in rural Palatka was unsuccessful, but achieved success in the tourist economy of Daytona with the help of “donations from Andrew Carnegie and other affluent whites who vacationed or resided in Daytona.” (McCluskey 212) The early historiography surrounding education as Black resistance believes, then, that racial moderation was essential to the success of Bethune’s school and therefore helped contribute to one of the earliest examples of Black resistance-based education.

Later scholars of Bethune disagree with the belief that racial moderation was essential for Black education’s success. Historian Elaine M. Smith, writing a few years after McCluskey, in her article “Mary McLeod Bethune’s ‘Last Will and Testament’: A Legacy for Race Vindication,” argues that Bethune’s approach to education was less about maintaining racial harmony through passive resistance and more focused on, as the title implies, racial vindication. Smith writes that Bethune’s “interracial mandate” and “conviction of black empowerment derives dialectically from enhancement within and without the race.” (106) This argument demonstrates a shift in the historiography to the belief that Bethune’s education, although still considered an isolated incident, was directly intended to be used as resistance to Jim Crow rather than unintentionally combatting

the circumstances of Black youth. This belief represents a shift towards including Black resistance-based education in the conversation around education as resistance in the Florida civil rights movement. Smith argues against McCluskey's belief that Bethune's education represented passive resistance, instead stating that for Bethune "ideology is best seen through action" (106) and therefore represents active resistance. This is a change in the historiography of education within the Florida movement, beginning with Smith's article in the 1990s, which would carry over through the next twenty years into studies about Black education before *Brown*.

The most comprehensive biography of the life of Harry T. Moore is historical journalist Ben Green's book *Before His Time*, written in 2017. Green focuses on Moore as playing the single role of an educator-activist rather than playing these roles separately, arguing that Moore was an activist starting in his days as a teacher by challenging the limits of the status quo teaching "what wasn't in the textbooks: black history, politics, and current events." (40) As a teacher, Moore started out as a less inflammatory figure like Bethune, but Green believes that Moore was never engaged in passive resistance while scholars like McCluskey have argued that Bethune's usage of education was passive. This is likely because, while Bethune is still a figure without much scholarship, Moore lacks a comprehensive biography outside of *Before His Time*. As Green wrote the book in 2017, it appears he was a proponent of the new historiographical ideology that Black education was inherently a form of active resistance and chose to argue this belief throughout the text. Moore's approach to political activism within and outside of the NAACP was informed by his role as an educator. Green argues that "Moore was not the kind of black man whom Florida politicians were used to dealing with" because his letters showed "no trace of deference or humility...as if Moore knew his rights under the law and fully expected them to be protected." (75) This kind of presentation is because Moore was well-educated on his rights, an education which he actively provided to his Black students. This served as a form of resistance because knowing one's rights would then lead to Black students becoming voters who were aware of the ways in which these rights were being violated and an overthrow of the white establishment. The Brevard County school superintendent demonstrated this threat by refusing to offer Moore a teaching contract for the next year, which Green describes as a "firing...[that] was not altogether unexpected—that threat had been hanging over [Moore's] head throughout his political career." (77) Educating Black students on their rights, then, became a form of active resistance with active consequences for teachers who chose to do so.

Green expands upon the beliefs of both Ortiz and historians of Mary McLeod Bethune in *Before His Time* by utilizing a specific incident to demonstrate a larger trend in education within the Florida civil rights movement. He builds on Smith's idea that education for Black Americans, specifically education on their rights and history, was a form of active resistance to the South's Jim Crow system, which Ortiz had proven existed in Florida by debunking Florida exceptionalism regarding education. Green also follows the emerging historiographical trend of expanding the timeline of the civil rights movement to be before the *Brown* decision, as Moore was active in the 1940s and was killed three years before *Brown*. The historiography around education as a form of Black resistance has frequently expanded the movement's timeline because of how influential Black resistance-based education is to the foundation of the movement. Ortiz's writing demonstrates that the civil rights movement in Florida began not long after Reconstruction when Black Americans

desired education to learn professional skills rather than continue to work doing unskilled physical labor as they had when they were enslaved. The common belief in contemporary historiography is that Black education during the Florida civil rights movement was inherently a form of resistance. Where scholars focused on resistance-based education disagree is whether this resistance was active or passive. Contemporary scholars such as Ortiz and Green tend to believe that this resistance was active as it was intentionally designed to combat the Jim Crow system and policies that kept Blacks essentially enslaved even after emancipation, as the title of Ortiz's book implies.

Black education as resistance is an emerging theme in the historiography of education in the Florida civil rights movement. The theme that previously dominated historiography is white resistance to and after the *Brown* decision, a theme which continues to be important to the historiography and written about by scholars of education in the Florida movement. Tomberlin's article establishes that Florida was not an exception to Southern white resistance to *Brown*, a belief which is expanded upon by several other scholars. In his article "Brotherhood of Defiance: The State-Local Relationship in the Desegregation of Lee County Public Schools, 1954-1969," historian Irvin D.S. Winsboro writes that "the business-friendly, image-minded Sunshine State prolonged segregation of its schools just as long, if not longer, than most of its more 'radical' neighbors.'" (71) This demonstrates continuity with Tomberlin's belief that Florida had an illusion of moderation but was still pro-segregation and therefore anti-*Brown*. The way Winsboro argues this belief is much more direct than the way Tomberlin does. This could likely be attributed to the fact that Winsboro was writing in 2009 while Tomberlin was writing in 1972, while resistance to *Brown* in Florida was still actively occurring. The historiography of Florida's response to *Brown* has since become more direct in stating that white Floridians actively resisted *Brown* because enough time has passed. Tomberlin had to be careful, especially when using newspapers as evidence, that he did not encourage further agitation within the state. Winsboro has the advantage of time to allow him to directly critique Florida's illusion of moderation. He argues that the massive resistance in Florida was occurring at the political level, but it was still occurring. Conceding that Florida had a more moderation response to *Brown*, as Tomberlin does, has been largely disproven in the historiography and is no longer a commonly accepted interpretation.

Winsboro also outlines the stonewalling tactics used politically by whites to actively resist integration directly after *Brown*, which enables him to build upon Tomberlin's claim that there was the potential for resistance to desegregation by providing examples of how desegregation was resisted. Winsboro writes that school authorities began resisting desegregation "by implying that blacks themselves were not interested in desegregating local schools." (72) This argument was invoked frequently throughout the Florida movement and is something that white resistance to education historiography has proven to be untrue. Winsboro presents an argument that other scholars tend to agree with: that "the school board intended to use state law and Down South presumptions to deflect *Brown*...it is of little surprise that whites in Lee County [and the rest of the state] moved so quickly to institute a stonewalling strategy." (72) As other scholars such as Ortiz had previously disproven the Florida exceptionalism theory and demonstrated that Florida did not behave much differently from other Southern states, Winsboro's argument was in line with much of the scholarship in the historiography of education in the Florida civil rights movement.

Another key factor in Winsboro's argument is his focus on the role of Florida politicians. He introduces the figure of Governor LeRoy Collins, who Winsboro quotes as saying "segregation in our public schools is a part of Florida's custom and law" and that he would "use all the lawful power of the Governor's office to preserve this custom and law." (73) By invoking the words of the Florida governor who took over the year after *Brown* went into effect, Winsboro builds on Tomberlin's argument by illustrating that white massive resistance to desegregation occurred at the statewide political level. What Winsboro essentially demonstrates is that when the governor says he will use all his power to preserve segregation, it is self-evident that there is enough white resistance to desegregation for the governor to get involved in protecting segregation. Winsboro writes that the governor's stonewalling "stratagem proved all too effective, [as] at the outset of the 1956-1957 school year, not one local district in Florida had moved to end its dual system of public education." (75) Winsboro's article introduces the stonewalling strategy that was in keeping with Florida's illusion of moderation but still represented white massive resistance as occurred in the rest of the South. He addresses the white massive resistance in the years immediately following *Brown*—with the advantage of time that Tomberlin did not have—and opens the door for scholars to build on the idea of massive resistance that occurred after *Brown* at the state political level. Historians writing after Winsboro chronologically within the movement tend to build on his ideas of white massive resistance occurring at the political level, even as time went on and the movement progressed.

Historian J. Michael Butler, who has previously been mentioned as agreeing with Ortiz regarding the anti-Florida exceptionalism sentiment, writes in his book *Beyond Integration* that the Escambia County school board was ordered "to integrate its first two grades in the fall of 1964" by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, but this decision "did not order immediate and total integration" (32) and operated under a "vague time frame." (33) It is important to note that the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals encompassed solely Southern states including not only Florida but also Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi—states which had all taken a similar stance on desegregation. While the Fifth Circuit Court did rule Escambia County's desegregation unconstitutional, Butler makes note of an important nuance when illustrating that the court's order lacked immediacy or specific direction. This nuance is important because it shows that the Fifth Circuit Court was still acting as a government agency that had some of the South's best interests in mind, even when enforcing desegregation. The role of the Fifth Circuit Court as an agency that was loosely supportive of Southern policies, even if unconstitutional or in violation of *Brown*, is largely unexplored by other scholars of education in the Florida civil rights movement. Butler adds an interesting viewpoint of a branch of the federal courts to the conversation in the historiography by introducing this concept. The historiography tends to believe that involvement of the federal government was the key factor in ensuring desegregation while state and local governments were the key factors in preserving segregation, so Butler's viewpoint makes sense as circuit courts lie somewhere in between federal and state government.

Butler also contributes to the historiography of education in the Florida civil rights movement by focusing on Confederate imagery and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) as violent forms of active white resistance to school integration in the decades following *Brown*. He examines a crisis at Escambia High School (EHS) that involved the changing of their mascot, which was originally the

Rebels. After Black students made complaints that they did not like the mascot, displaying of Confederate flags, and playing of “Dixie” because these Confederate symbols “[had] become and [were] symbols of racism in general,” (100) racially motivated fighting broke out at a school that had desegregated relatively peacefully. The fighting culminated in a riot after the mascot had been officially changed to the Raiders, when white students staged a protest by raising a Confederate flag on the flagpole which they were ordered to take down and resisted. Deputies did little “to curtail the violence and harassment black students endured after the brick and bottle throwing began.” (198) In response to the riot, the KKK “made a number of bombing, burning, and death threats against numerous public officials” and “[t]he number of crosses burned on county school grounds proved so numerous” (206) that the county school system’s fire coverage was canceled. Active white supremacist violence on a school campus demonstrates an addition to the historiography that massive resistance to desegregation evolved from political stonewalling to physical violence by local whites who were not involved in politics. This evolution came as the movement progressed chronologically, as the incident Butler focuses on occurred in 1976, about twenty years after *Brown* went into effect. In looking at later decades, Butler expands the timeline of the Florida civil rights movement in the opposite direction that Ortiz and scholars of Bethune do—he brings the civil rights movement into the 1970s and beyond, as the title of his text implies. A theme in the historiography, then, is that white resistance immediately after *Brown* was different than white resistance in the next few decades of the long civil rights movement. Butler characterizes this more recent white resistance as overtly violent and racist, while the early white resistance Winsboro and Tomberlin discuss was hidden by Florida’s illusion of moderation, causing it to be less physically violent and not openly based in racial discrimination.

Historian Benjamin Houston’s beliefs align with Butler’s in that later white resistance was more openly racist and violent than early white resistance to *Brown*. In his article “Voice of the Exploited Majority: Claude Kirk and the 1970 Manatee County Forced Busing Incident,” Houston argues that Florida Governor Claude Kirk’s political style “blended old and new, borrowing tactics of the past while speaking to a fresh constituency and its voters.” (259) This argument demonstrates how Houston builds on the ideas of both Butler and Winsboro by providing an example of an instance where a state politician utilized state power to resist desegregation at the political level—the tactics of the past—while also inciting violence to protect segregation, a new trend which Butler would later trace more thoroughly in his book. The new voter constituency Houston describes “often provoked and often responded to political posturing,” (260) which is reflected in the provocative and populist tactics used by Governor Kirk. Some of these tactics include “his celebrated patenting of ‘the politics of confrontation,’” (261) refusal to identify openly with segregation but still using political power to protect it, and “self-assertive acts” based on “blurred regionalism” (263) in which Kirk presented himself as pro-community preservation to further his anti-integrationist beliefs and policies. These tactics contributed to Kirk’s skewed presentation of moderation—he was not openly pro-segregation or openly racist, but he was confrontational and willing to defend the South’s way of life.

Houston’s writing contributes to the historiography by illustrating that there was a transition period between the types of white resistance to school desegregation Winsboro and Butler write

about. Presenting the character of Claude Kirk as moderate in some respects while confrontational in others is a good way to bridge the gap between the illusion of moderation that dominated the first decade after *Brown* and the often-violent confrontations that were common in the second decade after *Brown*. Scholars within this historiography do not typically address what happened more than a decade after *Brown* as the long civil rights movement typically expands backward in time. Within the historiography of education as resistance in the Florida civil rights movement, expanding backward in time means including Black resistance-based education before *Brown* with figures such as Mary McLeod Bethune and Harry T. Moore. Houston and Butler expand the historiography forward in time, addressing the change in presentation through figures such as Claude Kirk and Richard Nixon. These contributions in both directions are important because they show how education has always and will continue to symbolize resistance for both Blacks and whites in the context of civil rights.

Examination of the historiography surrounding the roles of education in the Florida civil rights movement reveals that there are two distinct roles most scholars tend to believe education played. Most scholarship, especially older scholarship, focuses on the *Brown v. Board of Education* case and white resistance to *Brown*. The historiography of white resistance to *Brown* varies in how closely to *Brown* chronologically each scholar chooses to examine. Some scholars look at white resistance within a decade of *Brown* and their arguments then focus on Florida's illusion of moderation and resistance to desegregation through legal action at the state level. Other scholars expand the timeline of the civil rights movement and look at white resistance over a decade after *Brown*. These scholars tend to believe that the illusion of moderation had shifted due to changes in political trends, and massive resistance in the form of violence became more common in Florida. Both groups of scholars are correct and do not necessarily disagree with each other because they are aware that they are examining the same topic during different periods. Where disagreement tends to happen is among scholars of Black resistance-based education. Most of these scholars look at a similar period, although this period has a rather wide timespan. Ortiz, for example, begins his investigation of Black resistance-based education right after Reconstruction, while Green looks at Black resistance-based education in the decade before *Brown*. The primary disagreement these scholars have, then, is whether Black education was a form of active or passive resistance. The older historiography approaches Black education as a form of passive resistance, while more recent historians tend to believe Black education in the expanded civil rights timeline was a form of active resistance.

The disagreement within the overall historiography is which of education's roles was most important. Those who argue for white resistance believe that it was most important because it demonstrates the ramifications of the *Brown v. Board* decision, expanding the civil rights movement timeline beyond *Brown* and opening the conversation about the differences between desegregation and true integration. These scholars also believe that the negative impact of white resistance on Black students and their ability to get a good education could be argued to have been a step backward in the civil rights movement, especially when compared to the way that Black education had previously been used as resistance. Those who argue that education as Black resistance is the most important role that public education played in the Florida civil rights movement do so because they believe it was the catalyst for the voting rights movement that caused the greater push for civil rights. This argument is slightly more compelling because it opens the definition of Black

resistance—whether active or passive—to include resistance at the epistemic level, greatly expanding the timeline of the civil rights movement. Expanding the definition of resistance and length of time Blacks have been resisting Jim Crow is compelling because it gives Blacks more agency through something typically taken for granted—free, decent public education provided by the federal government. Despite the disagreement over which role was more important, scholars of education within the Florida civil rights movement tend to agree that education was fundamental to the movement's progression and outcomes by being representative of resistance by both Blacks and whites.

The historiography of education in the Florida civil rights movement has evolved, but some things have remained consistent over time. Even with disagreements over which role of education was most important, both groups have acknowledged that white resistance to *Brown* did occur and had a huge impact on the movement. Even the Tomberlin article, written less than twenty years after *Brown* and carefully worded due to active resistance occurring at the time he was writing, concedes that there was resistance to *Brown* even though it was cloaked in the illusion of moderation. The historiography has also always tended to acknowledge that the Jim Crow system had a negative impact on the type of education Black children could receive. Where historiography has shifted, however, surrounds the idea of how education was utilized. The argument that education for Black children was an intentional form of resistance is relatively new within the historiographical chronology. This argument is compelling even with its newness, and further examination of this argument is likely to reveal that there were more instances of Black agency than the common narrative tends to attribute in the context of the civil rights movement.

While the historiography of this topic has widely expanded in both chronology and subject matter since research began, there are still gaps in the research that should be further investigated to have an argument that is representative of all the nuances in education. Besides Mary McLeod Bethune, the role of women is severely underrepresented when surveying education during the Florida civil rights movement. Historians should ask questions regarding the comparison of female-only education like Bethune's original school and coed public education. Black boys tended to be the ones involved in racially motivated school fighting, but what role did Black girls play? What about Black girls who famously integrated schools? Bethune was not an isolated incident—Black women and girls were passionate about education and played a largely misrepresented role in the movement. Black women were frequently teachers, and the role of teachers beyond Bethune and Harry T. Moore is another area where more research could be done. Were other Black teachers educating children on their rights and history? How did white teachers treat these topics and their Black students after desegregation? These questions and topics would create a more comprehensive and representative historiography of public education for all.

## Works Cited

- Butler, J. Michael. *Beyond Integration: The Black Freedom Struggle in Escambia County, Florida, 1960-1980*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016.
- Green, Ben. *Before His Time*. Cocoa, FL: Florida Historical Society Press, 2017.
- Houston, Benjamin. "Voice of the Exploited Majority: Claude Kirk and the 1970 Manatee County Forced Busing Incident." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 83, no. 3 (Winter 2005): 258-286.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/29720193>.
- Ortiz, Paul. *Emancipation Betrayed*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.
- Smith, Elaine M. "Mary McLeod Bethune's 'Last Will and Testament': A Legacy for Race Vindication." *The Journal of Negro History* 81, no. 1 (1996): 105-22.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2717611>.
- Thomas McCluskey, Audrey. "Ringling Up a School: Mary McLeod Bethune's Impact on Daytona." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (October 1994): 200-217.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/30148760>.
- Tomberlin, Joseph A. "Florida Whites and the Brown Decision of 1954." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (July 1972): 22-36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30150269>.
- Winsboro, Irvin D.S. "Brotherhood of Defiance: The State-Local Relationship in the Desegregation of Lee County Public Schools, 1954-1969." Essay. In *Old South, New South, or Down South?*, edited by Irvin D.S. Winsboro, 68-86. Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2009.

## THE DIALECT OF PROPAGANDA: HOW POWER IS PERPETUATED FROM MASS MEDIA TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Gabriel James

The existence of propaganda and how it may be perpetuated has been studied for over a century since the ability for institutions to mass-produce newspapers, broadcasts, and commercials. Propaganda by nature is discourse of an ambiguous source, producing opinion that the public is expected to consume without second thought. Walter Lippmann makes a poignant statement in his book *Public Opinion*, “It is often very illuminating, therefore, to ask yourself how you got the facts on which you base your opinion.”<sup>1</sup> Critical analysis and prudent perceptions of social/political concepts would be assumed most useful in making precarious, impactful decisions (i.e. voting), yet elites and their compeers utilizing propaganda “realized that it must use as many of the basic emotions as possible,”<sup>2</sup> lulling the American populace into a state of mass consensus. Implications in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century may have been minimized by this, but 21<sup>st</sup> century mainstream and alternative media changed this dynamic in an arguably more catastrophic way, fostering great division between sub-groups influenced by their own particular brand of echo chamber.

Through comparative analysis of Edward Bernays’ articulation of early 20<sup>th</sup> century mass media propaganda and its 21<sup>st</sup> century successor, social/alternative media, I will argue that propaganda has become more dialectic, where the original goal remains ultimately the same, to maneuver public opinion in favor of “invisible governors,” as Bernays refers to essentially as elites. These are, as Bernays explains, a small group of highly intelligent, powerful, and wealthy individuals who understand the mechanics of society and guide the masses from behind the scenes.<sup>3</sup> However, the elite consolidation of power now often lies in the chaos of division, where polarization averts public criticism away from elite power structures and redirects said attention to cultural matters between Americans. While the ultimate use of propaganda has provided similar results between centuries, the platform by which media is employed has resulted in unprecedented division rather than hive minded unity pursued by propagandists like Bernays.

### Mass Media Manipulation

Propaganda has been a common practice witnessed subtly throughout the evolution of culture, most notably American culture, configuring a citizenry that has been told indirectly what their culture should be and what truth really is. “The manufacturing of consent” is Walter

---

<sup>1</sup> Lippmann, Walter. *Public Opinion*: 1922. Suzeteo Enterprises, 2018, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Bernays, Edward L., and Mark Crispin Miller. *Propaganda*. Ig Pub, 2005, 116.

<sup>3</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 20.

Lippmann's well-known phrase noted by Bernays as a "necessity throughout the public sphere,"<sup>4</sup> essential for nudging the public into compliance, even if they are unaware of what they are complying with. As Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century know well, division and decentralized thought can commonly result in chaos - whether this is chaos between ideology, economics, cultural issues, etc. The emergence of far-left and far-right subgroups within the Democrat and Republican parties, alongside the rise of Trumpism and Democratic Socialism are illustrative of this – a foundational fracturing of public opinion. This is such a vital concept to early 20<sup>th</sup> century propagandists like Bernays, as they were aware of the havoc that would ensue without widely agreed upon consent. When constructing something to be publicly consumed, whether this is ideology, a politician, or a product, Bernays asserts that regardless of your wealth, service, or fairness, "if you haven't behind you a sympathetic public opinion, you are bound to fail."<sup>5</sup> This implies a necessity for the propagandist, or to put it bluntly, a salesman for a sales pitch.<sup>6</sup>

Whether this is a pitch for the American "Hearty breakfast,"<sup>7</sup> or a distraction story to divert the individual mind from economic inequality to pointless rhetoric derived from endless political maunder,<sup>8</sup> the salesman is needed to establish an agreement. But the salesman itself is ambiguous, especially when considering discourse among 21<sup>st</sup> century media platforms. But even in Bernays' early 20th-century scope, the identity of the salesman, or who he answers to, is somewhat anonymous. Do propagandists work for the politicians? – Certainly not. As a matter of fact, Bernays says himself that the conspirators of propaganda are anonymous even to him, for "we are governed, ... largely by men we've never heard of ... dominated by the relatively small number of persons."<sup>9</sup> We see this potentially manifesting in the existence of corporatocracy – a state by which its institutions and systematic actions are controlled by corporations and elites. To Bernays, politicians and their campaigns are quite obsolete in terms of actual power over the systematic process, calling them "sideshowes,"<sup>10</sup> or in essence, a distraction. 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars tend to joke at the notion of a "wizard in a tower" controlling the world below, although Bernays makes a stunning contradiction, that it is actually "well known" that consequential decisions or a presidential candidate's "name may be decided upon by half a dozen men sitting around a table in a hotel room."<sup>11</sup> If this is supposedly common knowledge, it is intriguing to ponder why this is so shocking to hear today. Undoubtedly, this is not a revelation that the half a dozen men in the hotel room want the mass public to brew on; thus, it should be no surprise to assume massive amounts of capital are

---

<sup>4</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 93.

<sup>6</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 24.

<sup>8</sup> Ulfkotte, Udo K., et al. *Presstitutes Embedded in the Pay of the CIA*, 2020, 80.

<sup>9</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 37.

<sup>10</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 111.

<sup>11</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 60.

being spent to organize the ‘sideshow’ that subverts that revelation. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s rise of social media and its subsidiary, alternative media, have found a place among the populace mind, it is arguable that this manipulation has become more troubling to manage for those like Bernays and his conspirators, although this chaos might have opened a door for manipulation by new means: polarization.

Mainstream media itself has undergone its own evolution, featuring an amusement-first depiction of news and ideology, amounting to broadcasts inducing thought-consumerism. Many say that the news isn’t news, it’s entertainment. While Bernays is writing in a pre-television America, his assertion that objects, pictures, and sounds “can be utilized in one way or another” to influence public opinion<sup>12</sup> is directly applicable to MSNBC and FOX News broadcasts today. With regards to Bernays’ media as well as today’s, those with the purchasing power and the ambition to pull the strings behind the media may make a concerted effort to do so. German Investigative Journalist, Udo Ulfkotte, wrote in his book *Presstitutes*, an exposé of the German/Western mainstream media, revealing that “the US Department of Defense alone has spent billions of dollars on targeted propaganda over the years to influence media coverage around the world,” as well as the C.I.A.<sup>13</sup> This has always been a public concern to some extent, but amidst the social media and technological revolution, we witness deliberate favors made by politicians acting to further the capability of wealthy corporations, elites, and institutions in influencing mainstream media. Literacy scholar, Nolan Higdon, discusses in his book, *United States of Distraction*, that the media was dropped into the hands of a select few corporations following Bill Clinton’s 1996 Telecommunications Act, allowing all media outlets to be bought and owned by what is now approximately five or six companies.<sup>14</sup> These facts may seem profound, yet some might argue that an “appearance of corruption” between multi-media outlets and ultra-high net worth elites is not visible. However, journalists like Ulfkotte revealed that there certainly was an appearance of corruption, considering an example he posits where he and his colleagues indulged in expensive ‘journalistic’ trips to Oman to report on the state of the nation, which was funded by the Sultan dictator of Oman at the time – a dynamic that oddly did not call for any investigation into conflict of interest.<sup>15</sup> What has remained a persistent goal of the media throughout time is to create consensus, either among party affiliations or an overall populace – often justified as necessary for peace. While propaganda as a concept has not changed, the platform by which it is perpetuated has derailed Bernays’ original concept of the term, as now propaganda capitalizes on calamity rather than consensus.

---

<sup>12</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 118.

<sup>13</sup> Ulfkotte, *Presstitutes*, 17-18.

<sup>14</sup> Higdon, Nolan, and Mickey Huff. *United States of Distraction: Media Manipulation in Post-Truth America (and What We Can Do about It)*. City Lights Books, 2019, 63.

<sup>15</sup> Ulfkotte, *Presstitutes*, 42.

## A New Era of Media

If you find it disturbing or obscene that a deep corporate state-of-affairs may have been able to embed ideas and inject cult ideologies for a populace to become complacent, then it will either be relieving or deeply distressing to realize that the average American now has the capabilities of doing the same. Social media, now that it has become almost a mainstream source of its own, has allowed for the everyday Instagramer or YouTuber to influence a group of people on the other side of the country or world. What is particularly unique about social media is how it has fragmented the political and social environment throughout the world with the emergence of unseen, uncensored, and potentially radical expressions on the internet. What it has notably given rise to is the radical left and right, creating echo-chambers using algorithms and click-bait to reel in unsuspecting moderates and undecided voters. The Right has taken more to alternative media platforms like Rumble, YouTube, and X to produce content that may be considered too explicit to air on television. Tucker Carlson and his departure from FOX News is a great example of this, as Carlson now owns his own podcast and travels the world as an alternative media journalist – making money from views, sponsors, and merchandise. The reason social media has become so effective in spreading radical ideologies is described excellently by Bernays himself, nearly 100 years earlier, that “less influential architects will as a matter of course imitate what is done by men whom they consider masters of their profession.”<sup>16</sup> As Tucker Carlson, Ben Shapiro, or the late Charlie Kirk (architects of a type of right-wing radicalism) express their views, young, impressionable viewers will find it in their nature to imitate. Much of the time this may be a result of similar ideologies between the viewer and the creator, although radical opinions are often bolstered among social media creating dwindling moderate discourse and exasperated radical discourse. As noted by Noelle-Neuman, the “Spiral of Silence” is when “mass media depicts minority opinions as majority opinions and then people refrain from speaking their mind,” thus we are left with only radical minority opinions.<sup>17</sup> It goes without saying that these opinions, in order to flourish, must appeal to the viewer on some level. As social media becomes a dominant media source for most people, candidates and thought leaders will predictably find more viewership on alternative media platforms, a reality conveyed by Donald Trump and Kamala Harris interviews that amounted millions of views on platforms like YouTube. The unfortunate goal of the presidential candidates, whether on an interview or the debate stage, is the persistent reference of emotional topics rather than articulating policy. Topics like unbased claims of immigrants stealing and eating pets, or Kamala Harris’ repetition of talking points about being middle-class has no intention other than to sway the public emotionally, as “their interest in the issues of the campaign must be secured by coordinating it with their personal interests.”<sup>18</sup> From a critic’s perspective, this behavior is ingenuine and distasteful; however it is unsurprisingly

---

<sup>16</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 78.

<sup>17</sup> Ulfkotte, *Presstitutes*, 72.

<sup>18</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 117.

successful and has been studied by moral psychologists as intuitionist models are often used to understand political morals and decision-making. Psychologist Jonathan Haidt insists in his work, *The Righteous Mind*, that moral arguments stem from a place of emotional intuition, often lacking reason and logic; to quote David Hume, “reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions.”<sup>19</sup>

What is refreshing about social media propaganda is that it is at least “alternative.” There is a greater abundance of ideas, with endless ideological poisons to pick from. It is the job of an educated populace to be wary of all voices and to distinguish the absurd from the rational. Social media has allowed for unique voices to make it on the airways, as well as granting the ability for those with similar ideas and interests to organize political events for better or worse, as we could look at the Arab Spring, BLM, MeToo, or the Jan 6<sup>th</sup> Riot. Social media is in general a more “free speech” option for those tired of the mainstream, resulting in a fragmentation of majority and minority opinions. But this has actually become much worse than slight partisan or mainstream divide. There has been a complete and utter devolution of the social consensus Bernays illustrates in his work. We are now struggling with not just partisan divide, but divide within the parties, and divide within subgroups of the parties. There are more political groups now than ever before, between the liberals and conservatives, leftists and the far-right, the classical liberal or Burkean conservative, the Democrat and Republican, and yet they all mean different things to some extent; labels have lost all meaning. Some liberals support Israel while some of the Left despise it, and some Republicans love Trump while Never-Trumper neoconservatives try to impeach him. Even America-First Jewish conservative, Dave Smith, called for Donald Trump’s impeachment following Trump’s great 11 Day War in the Middle East, exhibiting unprecedented discontent and divide, even just within the MAGA movement.<sup>20</sup> The Left doesn’t have it any easier. Democratic socialist, Zohran Mamdani, who won the New York Mayoral race, was not endorsed by many establishment Democrats,<sup>21</sup> while Bernie Sanders and other congresspeople who caucus with Democrats have condemned many of their own liberal constituents.<sup>22</sup>

Divided support, especially among the public, can in some ways be attributed to how social media has created its own political sects. Bernays, in a different era, again is able to explain this

---

<sup>19</sup> Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided By Politics and Religion*, Vintage Books, New York, 2012, pp. 58, 216.

<sup>20</sup> Hamedeh, Yasmeen. “Comedian Backtracks on Supporting Trump and Calls for His Impeachment Instead”, *The Daily Beast*, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/comedian-dave-smith-apologizes-for-supporting-donald-trump-a-bad-calculation/>

<sup>21</sup> Wendler, Jacob. “Schumer meets with Mamdani — but still no endorsement”, *POLITICO*, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025. <https://www.politico.com/live-updates/2025/09/09/congress/chuck-schumer-zohran-mamdani-endorsement-00553082>

<sup>22</sup> Stracqualursi, Veronica. “Bernie Sanders thinks Democrats have turned on their base. Now it’s time to fight back”, *CNN Politics*, Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/10/politics/bernie-sanders-interview-redistricting-democrats>

phenomenon: “man is by nature gregarious he feels himself to be member of a herd, even when alone in his room with the curtains drawn. His mind retains the patterns which have been stamped on it by the group influences.”<sup>23</sup> Now that social media has filtered each susceptible American into a group of their own, based on their particular values, ambitions, and sympathies, it becomes even easier to radicalize them. From a political campaign’s standpoint, after discovering which groups to target, which are most susceptible to influence, they can utilize tools of the media (mainstream or alternative) to bend the will of the people in their favor.<sup>24</sup> Of course, this will require paying off reporters or funneling several million dollars’ worth of promotions into a YouTuber’s bank account, but it will ultimately bode well in the favor of those who want to be elected, or those who want to get someone elected. This dynamic has remained unchanged.

### Same Old American Media

It is reasonable to suggest that social media has fundamentally changed Bernays’ definition of propaganda, as it is no longer a practice in pursuit of consensus, rather it is in pursuit of unrepairable division. In fact, the well-paid propagandists have been replaced by everyday Americans, who unknowingly pedal an elite pursuit for chaos. But oddly enough, many of Bernays’ concepts are persistent, even throughout this chaos. Partisan division for example is not solely a 21<sup>st</sup> century issue. “Group leaders” have always existed, “dramatizing personalities,” creating connections with lower-level group leaders, ultimately to consolidate control over massive populations;<sup>25</sup> Donald Trump and his absurd rhetoric is an exemplary character for this notion, teaming up with social media star Charlie Kirk and his national youth group TurningPointUSA. Trump is well known for being a flippant public figure, which has been a successful strategy particularly in 2016, as Trump had around 300% more news coverage than Hillary Clinton during their run for President.<sup>26</sup>

Yet Bernays’ most significant persisting presumption is that there is something pulling the strings behind all the madness occurring. Be this the corporatocracy, the World Economic Forum, or the Bilderberg Group, following the money leads any investigation into political policy motivations back to a small group of wealthy individuals. Nolan Higdon argues that a uni-party has been conceived, “the pro-corporate party... funded to uphold corporate interests above all others.”

---

<sup>23</sup> Bernays, Propaganda, 73.

<sup>24</sup> Bernays, Propaganda, 118.

<sup>25</sup> Bernays, Propaganda, 119.

<sup>26</sup> Higdon, United States of Distraction, 21.

Bernays said it from the start, it's an "invisible government"<sup>27</sup> that truly rules our world, rather than the politicians he refers to as 'sideshows.'

Ultimately, Bernays' propaganda has not changed at its core, in fact it is almost identical to what he would have remembered. The only tangible difference is synchronization, as he argues "whatever is done must be synchronized accurately with all other forms of appeal to the public."<sup>28</sup> This has been directly disrupted by a new age of tumultuous media that has obfuscated the road to public control – however the control of the public is still ongoing, even while alternative media pundits claim to be the virtuous substitute to elite media consolidation. Now, pundits indirectly perpetuate control through ideological radicalization – however this isn't necessarily a bad thing, as we can hope the market of ideas, with time, will continue to filter out the bad and produce mostly good. Yet somehow Bernays predicted this as well, as his closing statement asserts, "propaganda will never die out. Intelligent men must realize that propaganda is the modern instrument by which they can fight for productive ends."<sup>29</sup>

#### References

- Bernays, Edward L., and Mark Crispin Miller. *Propaganda*. New York: Ig Publishing, 2005.
- Haidt, Jonathan. *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. New York: Vintage Books, 2012.
- Hamedeh, Yasmeen. "Comedian Backtracks on Supporting Trump and Calls for His Impeachment Instead." *The Daily Beast*, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
- Higdon, Nolan, and Mickey Huff. *United States of Distraction: Media Manipulation in Post-Truth America (and What We Can Do about It)*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2019.
- Lippmann, Walter. *Public Opinion*. 1922. Reprint, Eugene, OR: Suzeteo Enterprises, 2018.
- Stracqualursi, Veronica. "Bernie Sanders Thinks Democrats Have Turned on Their Base. Now It's Time to Fight Back." *CNN Politics*, August 10, 2025.
- Ulfkotte, Udo K., et al. *Presstitutes: Embedded in the Pay of the CIA*. Sheridan, WY: Progressive Press, 2020.

---

<sup>27</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 38.

<sup>28</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 118.

<sup>29</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 168.

Wendler, Jacob. "Schumer Meets with Mamdani — but Still No Endorsement." *POLITICO*,  
September 9, 2025.

## BEYOND THE BINARY: DRAG AS A TOOL FOR NONBINARY IDENTITY FORMATION

Jena Bouchard

### Beyond the Binary: Drag as a Tool for Nonbinary Identity Formation

Drag has long been central to discussions of gender identity, sexuality, and performance. It has been celebrated as a form of self-expression and as an art in which the idea of gender is challenged, and how we think about what gender means. Drag often stages gender as both parody and protest of conventionally masculine or feminine ideals (Brennan & Gudelunas, 2017). Indeed, Judith Butler (1990) famously asked, “Is drag the imitation of gender, or does it dramatize the signifying gestures through which gender itself is established?” (p. xxviii). Butler’s question centers drag as more than just entertainment; it is an art that reimagines, challenges, and experiments with social expectations of gender. Although drag frequently destabilizes the binary, it unfolds in a world that is deeply invested in categorization. This raises the pressing question: What does it mean to exist beyond the binary? For nonbinary individuals—those not conforming to strictly male or female—identity formation is an ongoing, complex process that is shaped by cultural, social, and performative contexts (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Examining drag through the lens of nonbinary individuals reveals how gender is performed and reimagined. How does drag contribute to the identity formation of nonbinary individuals?

Drag serves as a site where gender identity is reimagined through performance, yet it is also limited by social expectations. Nonbinary performers, in particular, challenge the boundaries in drag that historically have been organized around binary gender norms. To explore the role of drag in nonbinary individuals’ identity formation, we will apply queer theory—especially Butler’s (1990) concept of gender as performative—as a guiding framework to analyze historical representations of drag (e.g., *Paris is Burning*; Livingston, 1990) mainstream media portrayals (e.g., *RuPaul’s Drag Race* [RPDR]; Brennan & Gudelunas, 2017), and current scholarship centering nonbinary identities, experiences, and voices. Through this analysis, drag performance emerges as a transformative tool where nonbinary individuals can articulate, experiment with, and express their identities. In conversation with Butler’s concept of gender performativity and West and Zimmerman’s (1987) notion of “doing gender,” drag can be analyzed as a practice of self-construction as well as resistance against traditional gender norms.

### Theoretical Framework: Queer Theory and Performativity

To analyze how drag functions in nonbinary identity formation, this section applies Butler’s (1990) theory of gender performativity and West and Zimmerman’s (1987) concept of “doing gender.” Queer theory itself emerged in the early 1990s as a deliberate disruption (Halperin, 2003). As Halperin notes, Teresa de Laurentis coined the term “queer theory” partly as a provocation, challenging heteronormative assumptions embedded in academia and parodying the authority of the academic “theory.” In the same way that drag parodies and subverts gender norms, queer theory subverts categories and binaries that have structured other formal academic study.

In one of the foundational works of queer theory, Butler (1990) argued that gender is not a stable essence but rather a performance or “repetition of acts” that is solidified over time through behaviors, clothing, gestures, and bodily practices. What we understand as “male” or “female” identities are not innate; rather, they are the effects of performances that are constantly being repeated and reinforced until they appear natural. Drag exposes this performativity by exaggerating gender norms and exposing their socially constructed nature. For nonbinary individuals, drag is a deconstruction of binary altogether and offers a space to perform gender outside of its normative constraints. Drag becomes a strategy for breaking the gender norms and opening possibilities outside of the female and male binaries.

West and Zimmerman (1987) complement this view by framing gender as something individuals do rather than what they are—a continuous process that is adhered through social expectations such as work, family, and public life. Individuals are rewarded when their gender performances align with social norms and are punished when they diverge. This framework resonates with depictions in *Paris is Burning* (Livingston, 1990): During drag balls, contestants would compete in categories like “executive realness.” Drag balls are, fundamentally, competitions to see how convincingly folks could perform roles tied to gender, as well as class and race. These performances reflect social pressures that are described by West and Zimmerman, and highlight how gender roles are socially “policed” while also being strategically reimaged.

For nonbinary performers, drag is a conscious enactment of gender performativity, enabling them to test boundaries of masculinity, femininity, and everything in between. Unlike binary performers who will parody or affirm a gender, nonbinary performers use drag to experiment with different identities or reject any categorization altogether.

### **Drag, Media, and Representation**

Building upon queer theory and performativity, it is important to situate drag in its historical and sociocultural contexts. Drag has been integrated into our societies for centuries, but has not always been specifically acknowledged as drag. In the modern era, drag is associated with LGBTQ+ communities, particularly gay men. In this context, drag became more than just a performance; it became a way to survive, resist, and build community. *Paris is Burning* (Livingston, 1990) documents how drag balls offered queer and trans people of color a (metaphorical *and* literal) stage where they could embody another version of themselves, as well as form familial bonds in “houses.” The historical and sociocultural contexts provide a frame for understanding drag as a social resource for resilience, belonging, and identity.

At the same time, drag has also been criticized for reinforcing the gender stereotypes it aims to deconstruct. When a performer exaggerates femininity through makeup, wigs, and glamorous gowns, they risk reaffirming essentialist ideas of womanhood. Similarly, performers who perform masculine roles rely on a “cliché” or stereotype of men. This reveals a key feature in drag: that it operates within gender norms. Rupp, Taylor, and Shapiro’s (2010) comparative study of drag queens and kings demonstrates this paradox clearly. Specifically, emphasizing sexuality, glamour, and beauty when drag queens perform, they critique the expectations placed on women, yet these same performances also reinforce the ideals of what femininity should look like. While drag kings and

queens challenge gender norms, they also reinforce traditional roles by relying on exaggerated gender performances. This is relevant when considering nonbinary performers who exist outside the binary. The contradiction of drag as subversive while also being conservative is relevant in the conversations of nonbinary performers. Where drag kings and queens often base their performances on binary categories, nonbinary performers destabilize this by refusing to fit in a box of masculine or feminine. Their performances highlight how drag challenges gender norms, but also how it opens doors for identities that do not fit within the binary.

Later scholarship highlights this instability as both constraint *and* possibility. Greaf (2016) argued that drag creates a fluid space where gender is both affirmed *and* destabilized. Ethnographic data from drag queens demonstrates that performance allows individuals to redefine and reflect on their own gender identities. It allows these individuals to embody different gender expressions while also bringing to light the instability of these categories. For nonbinary individuals, drag can provide an outlet where expressing identities that exist outside male and female categories is a process of self-reflection and identity formation (Greaf, 2016). Egner and Maloney (2016) extend this argument by explaining drag as a site of “gender bending.” Their interviews with drag performers reveal that drag can allow for the embodiment of multiple genders or even gender rejection. For example, both Greaf (2016) and Egner and Maloney (2016) recount drag performances in which the performers change gender presentation—for example, by removing their wig—during the show. For nonbinary performers, the flexibility of drag may be liberating and essential to living an authentic life in a world that demands conformity. They conclude that drag performance can function as a revolutionary practice that can destabilize the rigid boundaries of gender and sexuality (Egner & Maloney, 2016).

Rogers (2018) extends these insights by focusing on trans and nonbinary performers in the Southeastern United States. Their research revealed that drag allows nonbinary individuals to express their identities publicly and gives them the ability to foster internal affirmation through community participation and performance. Their findings revealed that drag is a resource for development of identity, particularly for nonbinary individuals (Rogers, 2018). As performer Roscoe McCoy stated, drag “provided an avenue for me to find a safe space and comfort in my own gender expression and identity” (Rogers, 2018, p. 899). Many of the participants described their drag personas as being more authentic than their “normal” everyday identities. Drag offers them a way to explore these internal identities while outwardly presenting them and fostering a sense of belonging in the community. Rogers (2018) focuses on drag as more than a cultural practice, but a developmental tool for nonbinary individuals to evolve their identities. This resonates with theories of gender identity as a performance. By treating drag as a resource rather than a mask or costume, it challenges assumptions of drag being only about performance for an audience. Drag becomes a personal act of self-development, especially for those who do not fit in the binary.

Contemporary media representations of drag further complicate the picture. While *The Queen* and *Paris is Burning* both highlight tension over “realness” and identity, RPDR has brought drag into the global mainstream (Chan, 2024). RPDR has shaped cultural understanding of performativity and accountability on a global stage, but its format raises questions about which performers are privileged and which identities remain marginalized (Chan, 2024). From its first episode and for 12 seasons, RuPaul declared, “Gentlemen, start your engines, and may the best woman win!” Essential

in the show's catchphrase were normative ideals about masculinity and femininity. Instead of destabilizing gender norms, RPDR inadvertently reinforced them for over a decade. As drag continues moving from underground spaces to mainstream platforms (and embracing the label of "drag" in the process), the inclusion of nonbinary performers offers a new lens for considering the possibilities and limitations of representation.

### **Nonbinary Performers in the Mainstream**

The emergence of nonbinary performers in drag complicates these ideas. Historically, drag has been men performing as women or women performing as men. Nonbinary performers challenge this structure because they cannot be categorized as a man or a woman. Nonbinary performers blur the lines and force us to reconsider how gender operates in drag culture. In addressing the question of how nonbinary performers expand the meaning of drag, we can use the theoretical frameworks of performativity and "doing gender" to gain a better understanding.

Egner and Maloney (2016) explored the revolution of drag and how it can open opportunities and possibilities for gender fluidity. The interviews they conducted suggested that drag is not only about entertainment, but it is also a vehicle for embodying and exploring gender expressions. This notion is a key for nonbinary individuals who reject traditional gender categories. Their idea of drag as "gender-bending" clearly shows Butler's theory in action. By highlighting how drag disrupts gender stability we see performers being able to play with gender categories. Butler's theory states the play is subversive and destabilizes the illusion of gender categories as natural or essential.

While this is all true, drag does have its contradictions. Rupp et al. (2010) noted in their findings that drag sometimes relies on exaggerated gender tropes that reinforce the binary. This is shown in mainstream representation like RPDR, where contestants are encouraged to perform "realness" in hyper masculine or feminine ways. Chan (2024) points out that the inclusion of nonbinary performers in mainstream media, like Gottmik has challenged these norms and pushed the boundaries of what drag "looks like" and who it is for.

*RuPaul's Drag Race* (RPDR), as discussed by Chan (2024), brings up the conversation of how gender is shown in the mainstream media. Early seasons of the show had primarily cisgender male queens as contestants, however recent seasons have included nonbinary performers who discuss their identity openly. Gottmik's participation earned them the title of the show's first transmasculine contestant. Their participation opened up new conversations about masculinity, femininity, and nonbinary visibility. These representations are so important in providing validation and visibility to nonbinary individuals exploring their own identity. The inclusion of nonbinary performers on RPDR demonstrates the interaction between practice and theory. Butler's theory on performativity is clear when a performer like Gottmik uses drag to perform femininity while also affirming a masculine identity off-stage. This undermines the assumption of gender performance aligning with a fixed identity.

Lastly, Chan (2024) presents *RuPaul's Drag Race* as a cultural phenomenon that has shifted public opinion and conversations about gender. Although RPDR often centers around cisgender gay men as contestants, it has also provided visibility to nonbinary contestants. RPDR has been a great influence in broadening the understanding of gender diversity. For example, Gottmik was the first

transmasculine contestant on the show and used drag to perform hyper-femininity while simultaneously living as masculine. This clearly shows Butler's theory of gender as a performance but also challenges the assumptions of how drag forms binary identities (Chan, 2024). These conversations reflect the constant changing and evolving attitudes toward gender and how it impacts how nonbinary individuals engage with drag as a part of their identity journeys. Together, these sources reveal a consensus about drag as a powerful tool for gender exploration. Even so, gaps remain in experiences for nonbinary performers. Further research should seek to address this gap, and the effect it has on nonbinary performers. Addressing that gap by analyzing how drag enables nonbinary individuals to affirm, perform, and evolve their gender identities is a very important step.

For nonbinary drag performers, 'doing gender' is more complicated. Since these individuals do not identify as strictly male or female, their performances cannot be evaluated against the binary expectations. They instead play with masculinity, femininity, and androgyny, which entirely rejects the categories that we see in *Paris is Burning*. Rogers (2018) provides support for this claim. Their participants described drag as a way for them to live authentically, not just to perform. For example, some participants said that their drag personas are closer to their real selves than their everyday presentations. This suggests that drag reflects and shapes nonbinary identities, as well as drag not being a parody of gender but as a way to "do" gender on one's own terms, aligning with West and Zimmerman's theory.

### **Overarching Themes and Future Directions**

*The Queen* (1968) shows similar gender complexity. This documentary follows the 1967 Miss All-America Camp Beauty Pageant and its participants. It captures the early tensions in drag culture around authenticity, gender, and beauty. Nonbinary discussions in the film, such as those expressing unhappiness with rigid beauty standards, suggest that even in the early days of drag, performers were challenging the idea that gender conforms to binary categories. One of the most famous moments from the film happens when Crystal LaBeija, a black drag queen, passionately critiques the competition on racial bias. This is a powerful moment that highlights how even in a space where individuality is welcomed and celebrated, there are still broader systems, such as race or class, that are at play. The pageant rules also imposed strict standards of what femininity should look like, leaving little to no room for ambiguity and other forms of expression. As Greaf (2016) highlights, drag creates a space where gender can be affirmed and destabilized. *The Queen* shows that even in rigid structures, performers pushed back against the limitations that were imposed, paving the way for a more fluid interpretation of drag in later decades.

Drag offers nonbinary individuals a space where they can resist the structures West and Zimmerman describe. Outside drag, they might feel pressured to conform to a binary expectation in their families, workplaces, or other social contexts. However, in drag they can perform gender fluidity without the "penalties" they might experience in society. Enger and Maloney (2016) had similar findings, in which they discussed the boundaries of gender in drag. They describe it as a "gender-bending" practice, which is relevant for nonbinary performers who often experience conflict with traditional gender categories. Drag allows them to live in a space where gender can be deeply personal and playful and offers a means of "doing gender" while simultaneously undoing it.

Drag is more than just entertainment, it is a performance in a dynamic space where nonbinary individuals are able to affirm, explore, and reshape their identities. Theories of gender performativity and the social construction of gender offer an insight into the platform drag offers in resisting binary norms and reimagining gender. As shown in research and media, drag enables nonbinary performers to enact gender on their own terms, while challenging the idea of what gender it is and what it can be. In understanding drag's role in nonbinary identity formation, we can gain deeper insight into the ever-evolving landscape of gender and the potential performance has to not just reflect identity but also create it.

## References

- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Chan, A. S. W. (2024). RuPaul's Drag Race: A cultural phenomenon that challenges gender norms and sparks conversations across borders. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 71(8), 1863–1866. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2023.2216336>
- Graef, C. (2016). Drag queens and gender identity. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 25(6), 655–665. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2015.1087308>
- Livingston, J. (1990). *Paris Is Burning*. Off White Productions Inc.
- Rogers, B. A. (2018). Drag as a resource: Trans\* and Nonbinary individuals in the Southeastern United States. *Gender & Society*, 32(6), 889–910. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243218794865>
- Simon, F. (1968). *The Queen*. Grove Press.
- Egner, J., & Maloney, P. (2016). “It has no color, it has no gender, it’s gender bending”: Gender and sexuality fluidity and subversiveness in drag performance. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 63(7), 875–903. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2015.1116345>
- Rupp, L. J., Taylor, V., & Shapiro, E. (2010). Drag queens and drag kings: The difference gender makes. *Sexualities*, 13(3), 275–294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460709352725>
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society* 1(2), 125-151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243287001002002>

## QUESTIONABLE LOYALTY: THE FRACTURED BROTHERHOOD OF AMIS AND AMILOUN

Becca Frank

In the medieval romance *Amis and Amiloun*, two unrelated boys, who look identical, become great friends as they grow up, swearing an oath of loyalty to each other as brothers when they reach young adulthood. Despite the text's general perspective of being a representation of the ideal friendship, Amis and Amiloun's interactions are wrought with secrecy, forgetfulness, and unawareness. Once they part ways, Amis and Amiloun do not see each other for many years, which seems out of place given their closeness. Amiloun, suffering from leprosy after their parting, is not recognized by Amis when the two reunite, and Amis has never thought to check upon his friend after acquiring a wealth of his own. Though scholars uphold Amis and Amiloun's friendship as a beacon of the purest sort, the actions the two men commit—and don't commit—against one another indicate a growing divide between them, which they only reconcile for nostalgia's sake.

While Amis and Amiloun are born on the same day and look exactly the same, there is nothing in their upbringing that indicates a divine connection, unlike other countries' versions of the story; the two boys happened to be raised in the same area and thus became friends by circumstance. The narrator explains, "When they were sevyn yere olde, / Grete joy every man of hem tolde / To beholde that frely foode" (*Amis and Amiloun* 55-57). Though the boys seem to be inseparable, onlookers can only recognize their "fairness" and "mild manners" instead of an unbreakable bond. The text continues, "And al they seide without lesse / Fairer children than they wesse / Ne sey they never yere" (82-84). The story repeatedly emphasizes the boys' fairness—that is, how "pleasing" they are to look at—rather than their compatibility personality-wise. In only focusing on the boys' appearances, the text subtly implies a superficial nature to their friendship, one which is furthered through the fact that neither seems to have anything to say about the other; they simply remain together. The onlookers notably omit interactions that are normally seen in friendships between young children; they don't watch the boys play, smile, or laugh together; instead, Amis and Amiloun are simply idle, standing in place where others can see them. Such a factor in their early friendship indicates an underlying performative aspect that is noticed by Dr. Elliot Kendall.

Kendall, in examining how Amis and Amiloun's friendship in the Middle English version of the story progresses, finds an undeniable naïve quality: "The pair's sameness is purely physical and their sworn brotherhood is born of a youthfulness that can be read as immaturity" (Kendall 603). Although there is a strong connection between Amis and Amiloun at the beginning of the story, Kendall explains that such a connection is based purely on coincidence; the boys are linked by their appearances—a surface-level characteristic that does not yield a much stronger connection in the future. In Kendall's study of the origins of Amis and Amiloun's friendship, he calls attention to the teachings of the Roman philosopher Cicero on "ideal friendship." Kendall clarifies Cicero's perspective, saying that he "argues that it is generally unwise to commit to deep friendships 'until

we've reached an age when our character and way of living are established and confirmed" (606). Cicero's opinions directly critique Amis and Amiloun's vow of brotherhood, which occurs when they are both children, as the text describes. The following oath takes place between the two boys, who pledge loyalty to one another:

On a day the childer, war and wight,  
 Trewethes togider thai gun plight,  
 While thai might live and stond  
 That bothe bi day and bi night,  
 In wele and wo, in wrong and right,  
 That thai schuld frely fond  
 To hold togider at everi nede,  
 In word, in werk, in wille, in dede,  
 Where that thai were in lond,  
 Fro that day forward never mo  
 Failen other for wele no wo:

Therto thai held up her hond. (*Amis and Amiloun* 145-150)

The text begins the oath by noting that both boys are still children; the next stanza indicates that they are at least under fifteen (163). Although it is frequently mentioned how much the children love each other (139-144), that love is perceived through a pure, innocent lens that extends to the oath, which Cicero's comments make clear. Amis and Amiloun swear to "stick together in well and woe" in line 152, though such a promise is quite clearly broken in the latter half of the story, when Amiloun is afflicted with leprosy and his supposed "blood brother" does not even recognize him, having been apart for many years. The above passage emphasizes the brothers' naïveté through more grandiose concepts such as dire promises (146) and morality (149). In particular, "Trewethes togider thai gun plight" has two substantial interpretations, neither of which children are generally expected to comprehend. The verb "treuth-plighen", evident in this phrase, can be defined as a "bargain with death" or as a "betrothal" ("Treuth-Plighen"). Both death and betrothal are somewhat "lofty" concepts that are understood more clearly with the wisdom of age, though inclusion of such language in the text implies that Amis and Amiloun are disobeying Cicero's instructions; that is, they are rushing into a sworn brotherhood they are not ready for because they do not fully understand the world yet. Kendall describes the oath as thus: "The oath commits the brothers to imitating twinned-self friendship but is erected on foundations of sand when it comes to any existing psychological synergy" (Kendall 606). Instead of being linked on a psychological level, Kendall suggests, the brothers are instead linked "as though fused into one individual," thus leading to a lack of "distinction between parties' interests or contributions to their relationship" (606). The oath is especially vague in its provisions, only including mirrored promises such as "to hold togider at everi nede" (*Amis and Amiloun* 151), thus eliminating any distinguishing characteristics between the two boys. For instance, an extroverted Amiloun could promise to stand up for a shier, quieter Amis, which would create a

noticeable difference between them by giving them unique (i.e., individual) traits. However, the text refuses to do this, instead continuing to define Amis and Amiloun as if they are one person. Such sameness limits their ability to create an oath that accommodates separate needs.

The oath between the brothers is often considered the basis of their friendship throughout the text, a friendship which is held together by children's conditions. Despite this fact, Amis and Amiloun hold steadfast to the oath for the most part; however, such loyalty is interrupted when, after Amiloun battles the steward in Amis's place, Amis is married to Belisaunt, the daughter of a duke. Amiloun, who also marries, returns home to face his wife's anger at this deception. Once marriage enters the story, the two brothers begin living separate lives; Amis gains influence in his town once he receives the duke's inheritance, while Amiloun is driven from his home once he becomes a leper. The parting is subtly explained through the text's shift in focus: "So within tho yeres to / A wel fair grace fel hem tho, / As God almighty wold" (1525-8). After Amiloun fights and wins against the steward and the brothers return to their rightful places, Amis's perspective is the sole focus of the text in this section, "hem" referring to Amis and his bride, Belisaunt. Though the first 1500 lines of the text focused on the brothers' upbringing as one, the marriage of the two men to wives with more distinct personalities produces distinct husbands, thus breaking apart the "mirrored" bond the brothers shared from childhood. The "yeres to" of this section is also worthy of note, as years—not days, weeks, or months—have passed without Amis and Amiloun interacting. The same brothers who promised to "hold togider at everi nede" have refused to even check upon one another; marriage—that is, pledging loyalty to someone else—does not need to affect the basic tenets of friendship to involve communication. However, the text seems to suggest that, by marrying two different women, the brothers' oath is broken as each initiates a separate vow to his wife. Therefore, they become different individuals through their unions with these women, severing the sameness that has persisted thus far.

Amiloun's transformation, the curse of leprosy, is brought on when Amiloun is separated from his brother: "For al that were his best frende, / And nameliche al his riche kende, / Bicom his most fon" (1552-4). Amiloun, shunned by his friends and family for his disease, experiences a loneliness that sworn brotherhood should have prevented. Gina Marie Hurley, in her article about isolation in the text, makes notable claims about the societal perception of loneliness. She says, "Literary sources from the fourteenth century often present solitude as an unhealthy or undesirable condition" (Hurley 72). She further explains that "When solitude does not indicate a sort of sickness, it is often presented as a misfortune" (72). Amiloun's conditions, although they include a physical illness, also represent a psychologically unhealthy situation; being apart from his brother he swore an oath to (due to life changes), and being pushed away by the wife he also swore a vow to (through marriage), leaves Amiloun completely without a loyal partner. In such a situation, Amiloun's solitude is not chosen nor blissful; instead, it is a painful reminder of all he has lost. While Amiloun continues living as a leper with the assistance of his young nephew Amoraunt, the two are "togider alon" (*Amis and Amiloun* 1744), a phrase which Hurley calls attention to in her article. Though solitude might be preferable for some in the present day, the medieval romance refuses to view it as anything but undesirable; Hurley

notes this fact in her examination, stating that “the Middle English poet describes the exiled pair as ‘togider alon’. This sorry description might as well apply to Amis and Amiloun, whose friendship renders them similarly alone” (Hurley 74). Although the brothers have become separate people with their own individual lives, nowhere in their oath does such distance—physically and socially—create a need to disregard their brotherhood, though this happens as the years pass on without either contacting the other.

When Amiloun and Amoraunt arrive at Amis’s town, where Amis has become duke, the lack of recognition between the two brothers is on full display. Amis, upon hearing that a leper and his nephew have arrived at the castle gate, goes to examine them, saying aloud, “Mine hende brother, Sir Amiloun, / Is slain, withouten lesing” (2059-61). Though the text provides a reason that the brothers have not interacted for many years, with Amis believing his brother dead, such a reason seems superficial given how inseparable the two men were as children. Instead of refusing to believe his brother has died, perhaps even searching for his body, Amis simply accepts Amiloun’s fate without checking if it is really true. Moreover, Amiloun himself never returns to visit Amis, despite the two being united so deeply; the text implies that they must live separate lives so as not to disrupt the “switch” that occurred for the steward’s battle. Nevertheless, such devoted friends who have supposedly sworn to “hold togider at everi nede” break their oath, if it has not been broken by marriage already. Kendall highlights the brothers’ distance in this section, stating, “Amis himself has changed almost beyond recognition” (Kendall 609). He goes further, “The cups have ceased to represent the brothers truly” (609). Although the cups—a symbol of the oath from Amis and Amiloun’s childhood—are brought forth to reunite the brothers, such items do not, Kendall suggests, characterize them in their present state, as both Amis and Amiloun have drastically separated from one another in both appearance and character, with Amis becoming a duke and Amiloun becoming a leper.

As Amiloun is taken in by Amis and Belisaunt to recover from his leprosy, the story introduces a grave sin that Amis must commit to heal Amiloun: the murder of Amis’s young children. Amis, at this juncture, ponders his decision briefly before going through with it. Amis thinks, “For to slen his childer so ying, / It were a dedli sinne; / And than thought he, bi heven king, / His brother out of sorwe bring” (2246-9). This passage emphasizes the brothers’ rekindled bond, though it also demonstrates how much Amis has changed, as he quickly strays from the thoughts of the moral repercussions of his actions to how it will help Amiloun. While such a devotion may be representative of an “ideal friendship” on the surface, Amis’s willingness to commit filicide indicates his distance from another type of devotion, as Hurley notes in her article. When the other members of the castle go to church for the night, Amis is left alone to think over his actions, and Hurley explains that “The relentless repetition of these lines [2276-7, 81] reflects how complete Amis’s isolation from communal devotion has become” (Hurley 79). Though Amis is physically with his sworn brother Amiloun at this point in the story, the two are distanced by Amis’s dismissal of basic morality. Amis does not know before he commits the violent act that his children will be revived from death; nevertheless, he fully

intends to—and does—go through with it to help alleviate his brother's leprosy. Kendall calls attention to Amis's motivation for killing his children; he says, "It is neither oath nor cups but the 'grimly wound' and the history it represents that determine the event" (Kendall 613). While the oath, built on "unconditional cooperation" (612), may direct some of Amis's thinking, Kendall rejects the perspective that such a pledge guides Amis's murderous plot; instead, he argues, this "unconditional cooperation" that the oath represents—how Amis and Amiloun would always be there for one another, no matter the circumstances—was replaced with "reciprocity" when the two are reunited in adulthood, leading separate lives (612). Because unconditional cooperation no longer represents their relationship, Kendall contends, Amis must find a way to repay Amiloun for taking his place in the deadly battle against the steward many years before. This shift in their brotherhood—from one of absolute loyalty to more of a give-and-take—demonstrates that Amis and Amiloun's friendship is not wholly sound by the end of the text.

Though general scholarship on *Amis and Amiloun* upholds the story as a model of loyalty in friendship, many parts of the text subvert this conclusion. Amis and Amiloun's friendship begins as a shallow coincidence (i.e., not connected on a psychological level, but a physical level) with their identical appearance and conception, and their oath to brotherhood is made in haste by inexperienced children. In adulthood, Amis and Amiloun separate and do not even attempt to verify that the other is alive and well; once reunited, they only recognize each other through cups, an object, rather than the face of the other, emphasizing how much both men have changed. This change culminates in Amis's intention to murder his own children to cure Amiloun of his leprosy. By expressing his loyalty through a morally appalling act, Amis is distanced from the basis of his brotherhood, which was sworn with the other's "everi nede" in mind. Amis and Amiloun's friendship, though intact and growing stronger by the end of the story, has many notable flaws in its progression, which must be acknowledged to fully appreciate the story's underlying critique of sworn brotherhood.

## Works Cited

- Amis and Amiloun, Robert of Cisyle, and Sir Amadace*, edited by Edward E. Foster, Middle English Text Series.
- Hurley, Gina Marie. "Togider Alon?: Isolation and Community in Narratives of Amis and Amiloun." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 119, no. 1, 2020, pp. 67–88. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.5406/jenglgermphil.119.1.0067>. Accessed 7 May 2025.
- Kendall, Elliot. "Friendship and Its Logics in *Amis and Amiloun*." *ELH*, vol. 91 no. 3, 2024, p. 599-628. Project MUSE, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/elh.2024.a936607>.
- "Treuth-Plighten." *Middle English Compendium*, University of Michigan, 2025, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED47024/>. Accessed 6 May 2025.

# SHAKESPEARE AND MARLOWE: FRIENDS OR FOES?

## Samantha Hohnhau

### 1. Shakespeare and Marlowe: The Founders of the English language?

Nowadays, many people question why Shakespeare is still part of the school curriculum. The answer to this question is simple: Shakespeare continues to live on in our daily use of language, our culture, and society. Thus, it is no miracle that his influence left a lasting impression on education as well. Modern English was coined by him because more than 2000 words and idioms were used first in his works, for example, the verb “dishearten”<sup>1</sup> or the metaphor “heart of gold”<sup>2</sup>. He invented new grammatical structures, which were, along with the correct spelling, standardized. That was possible because his plays were known throughout the country.<sup>3</sup> But before the rise of William Shakespeare, a dramatist by the name of Christopher Marlowe dominated London’s theatre scene. Marlowe influenced Shakespeare, which becomes visible in several of Shakespeare’s plays, for instance, in *The Merchant of Venice*. Thanks to Marlowe, Shakespeare rose to be one of the most important poets in the world.<sup>4</sup> He influenced other authors like Dickens, Goethe, Tschaikowski, Verdi, and Brahms. Agatha Christie’s work *The Mousetrap* serves as a perfect example because it was inspired by Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Today, the ability to educate is also part of Shakespeare’s legacy. The works of the *Royal Shakespeare Company*, the *Shakespeare’s Globe*, and communal projects such as the *Shakespeare School Festival* show that, by studying and performing Shakespeare’s plays, the ability to read, self-confidence, and the general level of education have improved for those involved.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, playwrights like Shakespeare and Marlowe indeed contributed largely to the English language today. How did they achieve such a feat? Did their upbringing play an important role? Did the playwrights influence each other, and if so, what kind of relationship did they share? Were Shakespeare and Marlowe friends who bonded over trying to find their way in the chaotic and bustling city of London? Or were they foes who saw each other as rivals in London’s theatre scene? This thesis tries to find an answer to these questions.

### 2. The Life of William Shakespeare

#### 2.1 Family and Childhood

William Shakespeare was one of five children of John and Mary Shakespeare. His youngest brother Edmund followed William to London, where he probably joined his

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.welt.de/print/die\\_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html](https://www.welt.de/print/die_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html) (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.lernhelfer.de/schuelerlexikon/englisch-abitur/artikel/christopher-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.welt.de/print/die\\_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html](https://www.welt.de/print/die_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html) (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

brother's company as an apprentice. Their sister Joan and the two brothers, Gilbert and Richard, led normal lives by staying close to their birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon.<sup>6</sup>



William Shakespeare<sup>7</sup>

After leaving his hometown, William Shakespeare lived in London during the years from 1590 to 1613. Besides acting and writing for his company, *The Lord Chamberlain's Men*, he also managed the company. As a shareholder, he partly owned the entertainment company, and in 1599, he became one of the owners of the Globe Theatre, which he turned into a profitable enterprise.<sup>8</sup> Shakespeare was able to save his money without losing it. He managed to stay out of legal disputes and invested in properties around London. Eventually, he bought *New Place*, one of the most beautiful houses in Stratford-upon-Avon.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 Education

In his youth, Shakespeare attended grammar school. He went there without having to pay any charges because his father, a glover, had made it to chief alderman and bailiff, a renowned position in their village's society that lifted their social status. During his first year, Shakespeare was mostly taught how to read Latin and correctly pronounce it. In his second term, he learned grammar, including the eight parts of speech and the "concordances

<sup>6</sup> Bate, Jonathan (ed.), Rasmussen, Eric (ed.). *Complete Works. William Shakespeare*, London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007, p. 19

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/reflexionen/geschichten/2059006-William-Shakespeare-im-Homeoffice.html> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/william-shakespeare/#:~:text=From%20about%201590%20to%201613,or%20cowrite%2C%20about%2040%20plays> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>9</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 242

of grammar and Latin speech to know the agreement of parts amongst themselves”<sup>10</sup>. Additionally, he learned how to work with texts like “the precepts of Cato with such other little books wherein is contained not only the eloquence of the tongue but also good plain lessons of honesty and godliness”<sup>11</sup>. The third grade at grammar school involved more demanding texts like Aesop’s fables, the poetry of Virgil, Cicero’s letters, and the comedies of Terence. In his last year, Shakespeare learned to translate Latin to English and the other way around. The same form included advanced texts, Latin versification, and composing epistles.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.3 Literature and Defining Experiences

Shakespeare often referred to the local details of his hometown in the descriptions of his plays. His talents ranged from good vocabulary to fair judgement, the way he processed information and added it to his knowledge was remarkable. His imagination had no limits, which makes the morality and sense of tradition displayed in his works fascinating.<sup>13</sup> Shakespeare might have believed that actors were “the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time”<sup>14</sup>, meaning that actors and their plays gave the public the opportunity to get a short look into the nation’s history.<sup>15</sup> During his time in London, Shakespeare learned how royals and courtiers behaved and spoke. That was the basis of the authentic performances in his plays.<sup>16</sup> Shakespeare saw human interactions and relationships as an embodiment of “permanent truths and historical contingencies”<sup>17</sup>. As a result, his plays consisted of classical characters, core plots, conflicts, and the dramatization of opposing beliefs. For instance, the contrast between the living and the dead, the old and the young, an individual and the society, men and women, or insiders and outsiders.<sup>18</sup> The conflicts presented in his plays were often structural or historical conflicts at that time. Structural conflicts involved the differences between the religious and the secular, birth and education, dictatorship or monarchy, and democracy or honour and erotic desire. Historical conflicts often dealt with the rivalry between Catholicism and Protestantism, birth of national identity, immigration and England’s rise as a world power. Shakespeare also developed a liking for duality. He maintained a delicate balance between an illusion of reality and the theatrical process. That is the reason why Shakespeare included meta-dramas in his plays. His liking for the duality of having a drama within a drama is obvious. So is his double vision, for instance, the contrasts

---

<sup>10</sup> Bate, Jonathan (ed.), Rasmussen, Eric (ed.). *Complete Works. William Shakespeare*, London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007, p. 19

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 19

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. pp. 19-20

<sup>13</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 241

<sup>14</sup> Bate, Jonathan (ed.), Rasmussen, Eric (ed.). *Complete Works. William Shakespeare*, London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> Bate, Jonathan (ed.), Rasmussen, Eric (ed.). *Complete Works. William Shakespeare*, London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007, p. 8

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 8

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p. 10

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 10

between court and country, city and forest, or educated and simple life.<sup>19</sup> In his plays, the people's character changed through action and dialogue because the drama was meant to discover one's true self. That becomes possible because of his double plots and the contradiction of word and action.<sup>20</sup>

Shakespeare soon realized that it was not only important to hone his writing skills through education but also to keep in close contact with the common people, since they were the majority watching his plays. Shakespeare's first works were likely re-workings of pieces that already existed. For instance, the principal source for Shakespeare's creation, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, could have been the pastoral, *Felix and Philismena*.<sup>21</sup>

Shakespeare's decision to write plays and not only act in them happened under Christopher Marlowe's influence. There are traces of Marlowe's most successful play, *Tamburlaine*, in Shakespeare's trilogy, *Henry VI*, although his definite motivation to write the trilogy is unknown. It could have stemmed from his theatre company, *The Queen's Men*, anxieties about Marlowe's success or the request to finish the project. Either way, it led to the creation of a historical epos.<sup>22</sup>

In 1587, when Shakespeare grew accustomed to London, people came to watch Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* performed by the rival company of Shakespeare's, *The Admiral's Men*.<sup>23</sup>

It is likely that Shakespeare watched both parts of *Tamburlaine*. The display of *Tamburlaine*'s power was a crucial experience for Shakespeare, and the challenge grew when Shakespeare found out that Marlowe's life was similar to his own.

In his trilogy, Shakespeare strived to create a whole new world with legendary characters. Contrary to Marlowe's piece, which takes place in the Orient and where everything is concentrated in the single character *Tamburlaine*, Shakespeare's *Henry VI* is placed in England's own past and Shakespeare has several *Tamburlaine*-oriented figures. In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, unscrupulous ambition leads to the creation of a tremendous world order that disintegrates because, according to Marlowe, everything is impermanent, whereas Shakespearean ambition leads to utter chaos and an ungovernable and murderous divide. The result is the loss of power and control. At this point in life, Shakespeare was not able to counter Marlowe's unstoppable style of writing, but his surprising success with *Henry VI* earned him respect as a playwright and poet. Without the influence of Marlowe, Shakespeare's plays would be inherently different, and it is inarguable that with the creation of *Henry VI*, Christopher Marlowe had been challenged by William Shakespeare.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 10

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 12

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pp. 14-18

<sup>22</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. pp. 221-239

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. pp. 221-239

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. pp. 221-239

### 3. The Life of Christopher Marlowe

#### 3.1 Family and Childhood

Christopher Marlowe was the child of John Marlowe and Katherine Arthur. His father owned a shop as a shoemaker, and his particular skill set was respected by his fellow shoemakers. According to author W. Urry, John Marlowe had trustworthy friends, but his reckless and unpredictable attitude sometimes turned him into a harsh tradesman. Consequently, he had financial difficulties towards the end of his life. Christopher Marlowe's mother, Katherine, was likely the daughter of a yeoman of Dover.<sup>25</sup> However, his mother's family "does not seem to have ranked very high in the Town [Dover]"<sup>26</sup>. That would be a possible explanation as to why many of Marlowe's heroes, like Tamburlaine, Barabas, or Faustus, come from the "base stock"<sup>27</sup>. Christopher Marlowe was born in Canterbury. The city was of great religious importance to England because Canterbury Cathedral represented the seat of the national church. As a consequence of the many visiting pilgrims or the flood of people and goods from the port at Dover, Marlowe had a cosmopolitan and well-informed childhood. He developed a sense for the political power and influence of Canterbury Cathedral in his early years.<sup>28</sup> Marlowe's later life can be seen as related to his birthplace. Canterbury was a tense city filled with corruption, beauty, and international trade. It was also a city full of myths and legends mingled with the truth that formed Marlowe from the beginning. At a young age, Christopher Marlowe was already very observant. He had a special interest in the night sky, the stars, comets, the Milky Way, and the Northern Lights. Therefore, it is no surprise that his lifelong fascination with cosmology and astronomy is evident in his poetry. Canterbury was like a theatre itself: always developing, flourishing, full of chances and spectacles.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 35

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* p. 35

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 19

<sup>29</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. pp. 9-30

Christopher Marlowe<sup>30</sup>

### 3.2 Education

Christopher Marlowe received several scholarships for his education.<sup>31</sup> At Petty School, he learned to read, add sums, and cost accounts. At age 14, Marlowe had gathered a vast knowledge of grammar. He was elected a scholar at the King's School around Christmas 1578, where his curriculum was filled with lessons in Latin and Greek. The school focused on the classics, it is no surprise that Marlowe was fascinated by them. He found in them a stunning beauty and the writings of ancient Rome charmed him. After receiving a scholarship for Cambridge at the age of 17, he came to Corpus Christi College in December 1580. He stayed there for six and a half years, the only exceptions were his weeks of absence.<sup>32</sup> It is likely that Marlowe found the material for his plays during his time at university.<sup>33</sup> During his vacations from university, he was often missing from campus, for instance, in 1585 when he was at Canterbury to visit his family. Many other students were absent at that time as well, so it is feasible that an event like an epidemic disrupted the years of studying, but it is not known for sure. Because of Marlowe's long time off Campus, it is speculated that he served the government as a spy, but in comparison to the other students' records, Marlowe's absences were not uncommon.<sup>34</sup> As a scholar, Marlowe belonged to the elite and participated in the best programmes Corpus Christi had to offer.<sup>35</sup> His timetable was quite busy:

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/oct/28/brush-up-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>31</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 20

<sup>32</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. pp. 31-71

<sup>33</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 222

<sup>34</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. pp. 12-16

<sup>35</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. p. 119

*The exercises of Learning in Corpus Christi College in Cambridge every daye in the weke from the beginning of the terme untill the ending thereof. On Mondaye after morning prayers, be read in the hall at vi of the clock, these three Lectures 1. Aristotle's Naturall Philosophy. 2. Aristotell's Organon 3. [John] Seaton's [Dialectica] which continewe for the space of one whole houre. At xii of the clock to be read two Greeke lectures, one of construction, as Homere or Demosthenes, or Hesiod, or Isocrates, etc. The other of the grammer. At iii of the clock to be read a rhetorick lecture, of some part of Tully [Cicero], for the space of an houre. At iiij of the clock beginneth the schollers sophisme, which continueth untill 5 [...]*

*On Frydaye after morning prayer A common place, as upon Wednesdaye. At vi. xii. & iii of the clock, the same lectures to be read as before. At iiij of the clock the Deane keepeth corrections; At 5 of the clock doth beginn the fellowes probleme in Divinitye which continueth ii hours.<sup>36</sup>*

According to the quotation, Marlowe's Monday at university started at six o'clock after the morning prayers with lectures about works of Aristotle like "Naturall Philosophy"<sup>37</sup> or "Organon"<sup>38</sup>. At midday, there were lessons in Greek about grammar and construction. After a rhetoric lecture at four o'clock, the scholars had a debate until five o'clock. The other days of the week were almost the same with only slight differences, for example, the two-hour-lecture on divinity at five o'clock on Friday.<sup>39</sup> The schooling helped to sharpen his skills and intellect.<sup>40</sup> Marlowe gained new views on power and poetry and made "liberating discoveries about his society; and advances in his creative life"<sup>41</sup>. Cambridge's lectures also contributed to his speculative thinking and clarified his mind through nine terms. It is feasible that Marlowe was interested in theology because *Tamburlaine* includes various thoughts about divinity and human will.<sup>42</sup> Originally, Marlowe wanted to work for the church. Instead, he went to London and turned out to be a successful playwright.<sup>43</sup> In London, he became part of a group called the *University Wits*. They were playwrights with whom Shakespeare could realise his own debut as an author, although he did not join their group.<sup>44</sup> Besides Christopher Marlowe, the playwrights Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Lodge, George Peele, and Thomas Kyd were part of the *University Wits*.<sup>45</sup> They were often described as "spirited, reckless, drunken, promiscuous, wild"<sup>46</sup>. Nashe himself spoke of them that way: "Wee scoffe and are iocund, when the sword is ready to goe through us; on our wine-benches we bid a

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p. 88-89

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. p. 88

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p. 88

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. pp. 88-89

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. p. 31

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 31

<sup>42</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. p. 110

<sup>43</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 21

<sup>44</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 239

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/University-Wits> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>46</sup> Ackroyd, Peter. *Shakespeare – The Biography*, London: Vintage, 2006. p. 135

Fico for tenne thousand plagues”<sup>47</sup>, meaning that at least Nashe was aware of their superficial and careless behaviour.<sup>48</sup>

### 3.3 Political Involvements

Although his aforementioned absences from university can be explained by disruptive events or simple visits to his family, the more exciting theory is Marlowe’s secret employment as a spy or double agent.<sup>49</sup> In the mid-1580s, when Marlowe was studying at university, the Queen’s Council began recruiting secret agents at Cambridge. One of the recruited students was Christopher Marlowe. At first, Marlowe thought well of secrecy, travels, and risks. Furthermore, he wanted an alternative to entering the church after his studies. A direct consequence of his secret work were his more complex attitudes: he viewed the state’s power differently, rivalries ensued, his interest in politics, loyalties, duplicity, secrecy, and personality grew.<sup>50</sup> There was one incident where those important connections might have saved him. Marlowe was once arrested for counterfeiting in Vlissingen on the Island of Walcheren. A total of three individuals – Evan Flud, Gifford Gilbert, and “Marly” – were taken for fake coining. Said “Marly” or Marlowe claimed to be an acquaintance of the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Strange. In the end, Marlowe was never tried for this incident, and it is likely that his connection to the higher-ups saved him from punishment.<sup>51</sup> One and a quarter year after that coining-episode, Marlowe was arrested for his “monstrous opinions”<sup>52</sup>. He often fell back on verbal violence, and his statements were considered blasphemous.<sup>53</sup> Nowadays, that depicts Christopher Marlowe as a rather rebellious playwright. On May 12, 1593, Marlowe’s former roommate Thomas Kyd was apprehended after the “atheistical tract *The Fall of the Late Arian*”<sup>54</sup> by John Procter had been found in his room. Kyd was tortured and claimed the papers to be Marlowe’s. The government sent a fellow spy, Richard Baines, to investigate. His discoveries were delivered one day before Marlowe’s death in the form of a document titled: “A note containing the opinion of on[e] Christopher Marly Concerning his Damnable Judgement of Religion, and scorn of gods word”<sup>55</sup>. Together with Kyd’s scolding letters, Marlowe’s remarks draw a picture of him as a “rash, impetuous, hot-tempered attention seeker”<sup>56</sup>. It is generally assumed that Marlowe spied at the Jesuit Seminary in Reims. This institute in particular had a reputation for training English Catholic priests and was considered a centre of “subversion”<sup>57</sup>. The Council’s memo about Marlowe in 1587 suggests that Marlowe’s work was complex and important

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. pp. 135-136

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. pp. 135-136

<sup>49</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 221

<sup>50</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. pp. 120-122

<sup>51</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 28

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 29

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p. 29

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 29

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 29

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 33

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. p. 20

but also that he did it well: “he had behaved him selfe orderlie and discretie [...] in matters touching the benefitt of his Countrie”<sup>58</sup>. Marlowe served as a courier. His path led him through the Paris embassy where he delivered and picked up letters.<sup>59</sup> On May 30, 1593, Marlowe travelled to Deptford to meet up with three men, Ingram Frizer, Nicholas Skeres, and Robert Poley. A following argument led to Marlowe’s death. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was discovered that the inn, as well as all four men, maintained connections to the Queen’s espionage system, so Marlowe’s death could have been for political reasons.<sup>60</sup>

In the end, there are two undeniable facts: Marlowe was summoned by the Privy Council and he was killed ten days later. As a result, there is often seen an evil connection between both events, but it is also probable that they were not connected at all.<sup>61</sup>

### 3.4 Literature and Defining Experiences

Christopher Marlowe wrote at least five plays. His first and at the same time most successful drama was *Tamburlaine*, released in 1587.<sup>62</sup>

Marlowe was highly emotional and, as a consequence of his temper and alleged homosexuality, often found himself in difficulties. In addition, he was very tense because several individuals, for instance, John Greenwood, who was an acquaintance from college, or Henry Barrow, had recently been executed. Those happenings could have triggered Marlowe’s irrationality. The consequential violent aspects of his life influenced his art and his biography.<sup>63</sup> There were at least four occasions when Marlowe had become violent. The first incident resulted in arrest and imprisonment in September 1589, with a fellow poet, Thomas Watson, for the murder of William Bradley. They pleaded for killing in self-defence. While Watson was remanded in custody at Newgate Prison, Marlowe was released on bail in early November thanks to his former benefactor at King’s School and other justices. Watson remained imprisoned until February. Three years later, in September 1592, in Canterbury, Marlowe had an argument with a man named William Corkine. Marlowe had attacked Corkine with a stick and a dagger, so Corkine filed a lawsuit. Marlowe countered with a lawsuit and claimed that Corkine launched the first attack. Before the trial started, both agreed to drop the issue. The third was only a minor incident. After Marlowe was brought to court, he was supposed to appear again in Finsbury Court, but he was not able to show up due to the William-Corkine incident. On the fourth occasion, the events can be traced back at least in part to his volatile behaviour. It was on that occasion that Marlowe died. He had rested on a bed in a rented room at Mrs. Bull’s inn after dinner with the aforementioned acquaintances, Robert Poley, Nicholas Skeres, and Ingram Frizer. A dispute led to Marlowe losing his temper and lashing out

---

<sup>58</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. p. 147

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p. 147

<sup>60</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. pp. 315-316

<sup>61</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. pp. 13-20

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/oct/28/brush-up-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>63</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 22

at Frizer. Frizer grabbed Marlowe's wrist and thrust a knife two inches deep into Marlowe's head. The blade entered above his eye and below the eyebrow. It is speculated that the knife pierced the blood vessel, which "drains into the jugular vein and hence into the heart"<sup>64</sup>. The air would have entered the blood vessel, and the result would have been death because of embolism. In conclusion, it is left to say that Marlowe was involved in many violent incidents. However, his involvement is not proof enough to picture him as an aggressor. Despite the problems with his mentality, paired with the brutality brought into his life, they form an important part in his plays.<sup>65</sup>

## 4. The Relationship Between Marlowe and Shakespeare

### 4.1 Common Ground

Despite their differences, there are some things that Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare have in common. Marlowe and Shakespeare shared a similar upbringing. They were both born in the year 1564 in a smaller town. Shakespeare's father worked as a glover, and Marlowe's father was a shoemaker, so the families led a simple life.<sup>66</sup> Shakespeare and Marlowe were equals in artistry. Both poets worked hard in their own way for the achievements they made.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, they used blank verse in a similar way.<sup>68</sup>

### 4.2 Differences

Contrary to Shakespeare, who deliberately referred to his father's work as a glover, Marlowe distanced himself from his father's employment as a shoemaker.<sup>69</sup> Unlike Marlowe, Shakespeare did not study at a renowned university like Oxford or Cambridge. Hence, Shakespeare was not part of the *University Wits*. He did not participate in the self-promotion they did for each other, and he had no further contact with that particular group of playwrights.<sup>70</sup> The fundamental difference between Marlowe and Shakespeare lies in the way they became famous. Shakespeare thrived as a writer within the ranks of his company. He viewed them as companions. Marlowe, on the other hand, came to the theatre from the outside after his studies at Cambridge. Thus, the basic difference between them is that Marlowe was hired by a company and Shakespeare was part of one. In retrospect, actors like Kempe or Burbage praised Shakespeare: "our fellow Shakespeare ... it's a shrewd fellow indeed ... puts them all down"<sup>71</sup>. But they also criticised the *University Wits*

---

<sup>64</sup> Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe, University Wits*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011. p. 25

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 22-26

<sup>66</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 221

<sup>67</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. p. 193

<sup>68</sup> <https://janetpanic.com/what-was-christopher-marlowe-relationship-with-shakespeare/> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>69</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. p. 32

<sup>70</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. pp. 240-242

<sup>71</sup> Ackroyd, Peter. *Shakespeare – The Biography*, London: Vintage, 2006. p. 140

because their plays “smell too much of that writer Ovid”<sup>72</sup>. In other words, the actors appreciated that Shakespeare viewed them as his companions.<sup>73</sup>

### 4.3 Evolvement of their Relationship

Marlowe and Shakespeare saw each other quite often, and their relationship evolved between 1590 and 1593. The dynamic of their relationship was the foundation of the rise of the English theatre.<sup>74</sup> Their first meeting was likely after the successful release of *Henry VI* in an inn in Shoreditch, Southwark, or on the Bankside in the presence of the rest of the *University Wits*.<sup>75</sup> As a consequence of Shakespeare’s success, Marlowe imitated him by writing a play centred around English history.<sup>76</sup> Shakespeare admired Marlowe visibly in his plays, for instance, in his general choice of topic.<sup>77</sup> Around five years after Marlowe’s death, Shakespeare honoured Marlowe by quoting one of his most important lines in *As You Like It*.<sup>78</sup> Nowadays, the truth about the nature of their relationship is almost impossible to verify. The world is divided whether they were friends or foes. Some say that

*We can now be confident that they didn’t just influence each other, but they worked with each other. Rivals sometimes collaborate.*<sup>79</sup>

Others say that it is far-fetched for them to collaborate. Those experts question why Marlowe, the “poster boy of theatre writing,”<sup>80</sup> would work with Shakespeare, a “non-entity of an actor”<sup>81</sup>. Whatever the nature of their relationship was, it is clear that they worked in the same social environment. Both were well-known in London’s theatres, especially in the years from 1590-93. Both had their plays performed at *The Rose*.<sup>82</sup> The use of blank verse in their pieces was creative, although it is presumed that Shakespeare copied some of Marlowe’s ideas. Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* shines through in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. The same way Shakespeare’s *Richard II* was influenced by *Edward II*.<sup>83</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, A. C. Swinburne claimed Marlowe to be “the father of English tragedy and the creator of English blank verse”<sup>84</sup> and “the first English poet whose powers can be called

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. p. 140

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p. 140

<sup>74</sup> Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005. pp. 187-193

<sup>75</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. pp. 229-230

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. p. 240

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/oct/28/brush-up-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>78</sup> Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004. p. 317

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-37750558> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<sup>82</sup> Sawyer, Robert, “Shakespeare and Marlowe: Re-Writing the Relationship”, *Critical Survey*, 2009, p. 42

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. p. 42

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. p. 43

sublime”<sup>85</sup>. Swinburne admires and highly praises Marlowe’s writing skills.<sup>86</sup> According to Swinburne, his verses were the foundation for the rise of Shakespeare. Marlowe showed Shakespeare the “right way of work”<sup>87</sup>, meaning the use of blank verse and putting distance between rhyme.<sup>88</sup> That makes Marlowe, in Swinburne’s opinion, “the greatest discoverer, the most daring and inspired pioneer, in all our poetic literature”<sup>89</sup> because thanks to Marlowe’s creation, Shakespeare was able to become one of the greatest and most well-known poets in the world. In the times of the Cold War and Globalization, the playwright’s relationship is pictured completely differently.<sup>90</sup> Irving Ribner portrays their connection as two poles pulling and pushing each other, much like the Cold War rhetoric in the newspapers. After the Second World War, the “only nations in a position to assume leadership were the United States and the Soviet-Union,”<sup>91</sup> which led to a global divide with the Soviet-Union and the United States as the two poles. The rhetoric’s focus lies on those poles as the “supreme rivals”<sup>92</sup>, comparable to Marlowe and Shakespeare as the “supreme artistic rivals”<sup>93</sup> of the Elizabethan era. According to Ribner, both writers were polar opposites with different views on the world.<sup>94</sup> At the beginning, Marlowe’s view on the world shows extraordinary optimism in *Tamburlaine* that spirals down into negation, visible in his later works such as *The Massacre at Paris*. Shakespeare, on the other hand, moves from a failure of kingship in the *Henry VI* trilogy to the captivating and extraordinary story of *Richard III*.<sup>95</sup> Another example of their different sights on the world is their opinion of love. Marlowe views love as a weakness that keeps the main character for a short time from his “heroic destiny”<sup>96</sup>. For Shakespeare, love is “an all-embracing commitment”<sup>97</sup> that contributes to becoming more mature and wiser.<sup>98</sup> The discoveries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century about the Shakespeare-Marlowe relationship differ greatly from the earlier rhetoric. According to Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare was climbing the social ladder rapidly. Shakespeare is pictured as greedy, egotistical, and even syphilitic at the time of his death. Marlowe remains in the background as a figure not able to be Shakespeare’s rival. Instead, Shakespeare is said to possess the negative traits formerly associated with Marlowe.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. p. 43

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. p. 43

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. p. 44

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p. 44

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. p. 44

<sup>90</sup> Sawyer, Robert, “Shakespeare and Marlowe: Re-Writing the Relationship”, *Critical Survey*, 2009, p. 44

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. p. 45

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. p. 45

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. p. 45

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. p. 45

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p. 46

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. p. 46

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. pp. 45-46

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. pp. 45-46

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. p. 54

## 5. Shakespeare and Marlowe: Friends and Foes

To sum it up, the upbringing, education, and their later life in society played an important role. Thanks to the poor circumstances in which Marlowe and Shakespeare grew up, they were able to face all kinds of challenges in their later life, even if those challenges came in the form of each other. However, it was mainly Marlowe who influenced Shakespeare. He impacted his style of writing, his general choice of what to write about, and he represented a worthy challenge for Shakespeare's genius. It is still quite fascinating that Shakespeare rose to become the better and more known poet compared to Marlowe. Because Marlowe studied and had a broad education, it would have been easier to understand if Marlowe had risen as the world's best-known poet and dramatist. But in that case, the contrary happened. Instead of Marlowe, Shakespeare became the most famous playwright despite the fact that his education consisted only of Petty School and Grammar School. But through the influence that Marlowe exercised on Shakespeare, he managed to live on in Shakespeare. Sadly, because of Christopher Marlowe's early death in 1593, Shakespeare's influence could not have had an enormous impact on Marlowe. Today, it is nigh impossible to draw clear conclusions about the supposed rivalry or friendship between William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe because of the almost complete lack of evidence. If the need to concretely name their relationship ever arose, it probably would be considered as an acquaintanceship. They were professionals who admired each other. But they were also foes who pushed each other to his limit. Over the past centuries, critics have come to the most diverse assumptions about their relationship because they are subjugated to the beliefs and influence of their own time. It is consequently a correct statement that

*Therefore, in re-writing the Marlowe-Shakespeare relationship, critics from Swinburne to Duncan-Jones often offer us a portrayal reflected in the mirror of their own image and era.<sup>100</sup>*

## 6. Sources

### Primary literature:

Bate, Jonathan (ed.), Rasmussen, Eric (ed.). *Complete Works. William Shakespeare*, London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007.

### Secondary literature:

Ackroyd, Peter. *Shakespeare – The Biography*, London: Vintage, 2006.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in der Welt. Wie Shakespeare zu Shakespeare wurde*, Berlin: Berlin GmbH, 2004.

Honan, Park. *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005.

Logan, Robert A. *Christopher Marlowe. University Wits.*, USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011.

Sawyer, Robert, "Shakespeare and Marlowe: Re-Writing the Relationship", *Critical Survey*, 2009.

### Internet sources:

---

<sup>100</sup> Sawyer, Robert, "Shakespeare and Marlowe: Re-Writing the Relationship", *Critical Survey*, 2009, p. 54

<https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-37750558> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/University-Wits> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<https://janetpanic.com/what-was-christopher-marlowe-relationship-with-shakespeare/> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<https://www.lernhelfer.de/schuelerlexikon/englisch-abitur/artikel/christopher-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/william-shakespeare/#:~:text=From%20about%201590%20to%201613,or%20cowrite%2C%20about%2040%20plays> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/oct/28/brush-up-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

[https://www.welt.de/print/die\\_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html](https://www.welt.de/print/die_welt/debatte/article150713586/Shakespeare-lebt.html) (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

**Picture credit:**

Illustration 2:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/oct/28/brush-up-marlowe> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

Illustration 1:

<https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/reflexionen/geschichten/2059006-William-Shakespeare-im-Homeoffice.html> (Last seen: 21.10.2022)

## BEHIND THE HALL: INTERNAL DEBATES WITHIN THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION FOLLOWING THE MARIAN ANDERSON INCIDENT

Rachel Lynne Wall

As Marian Anderson's voice rang out from the Lincoln Memorial, the lyrics "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, to thee *we* sing" echoed before an integrated crowd. Her rendition of "America" not only captured a spirit of hopeful unity but also underscored the racial tensions of Easter Sunday in 1939.<sup>1</sup> The narrative of Anderson and her iconic performance is a familiar triumph, as she became a symbol of possibility and racial progress after the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) refused to allow her to perform at their venue and headquarters, Constitution Hall, because of its segregation policy. Attended by seventy-five thousand people and broadcast to a national radio audience, the performance remains a pivotal moment in the fight for racial equality. The support of influential figures, including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, sparked public furor because of a legacy of racism associated with the DAR.

The DAR's refusal to allow Anderson to perform and her later Lincoln Memorial concert have been widely studied for their impact on the Civil Rights Movement by historians including Simon Wendt, Peggy Anderson, and Margaret Gibbs, who explore the relationship between race, gender, and national memory.<sup>2</sup> Surprisingly, in analyzing the national reaction to the DAR's exclusion of Anderson, scholars have often neglected questions about its impact on the organization's internal operations and racial policies. This paper argues that, while the 1939 Marian Anderson controversy exposed the Daughters of the American Revolution's exclusionary practices, the organization's internal policies and leadership attitudes toward race remained largely unchanged until the 1980s, despite decades of public scrutiny. The DAR has long been a leading and highly visible organization in the preservation and promotion of American Revolutionary memory through national outreach, commemorative events, publications, and historic preservation efforts. The public narrative of the DAR was shaped for decades by its exclusionary national policies, as the organization repeatedly resisted change and continued discriminatory practices well beyond the 1939 Marian Anderson incident. The following pages trace the DAR's response to the Anderson controversy, the persistence of its racial policies through the mid-twentieth century, and the gradual legal and public pressures that ultimately forced the organization to change.

### Historical Context and Scholarship

Founded in 1890, the Daughters of the American Revolution is a patriotic lineage organization whose mission is to "perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who

---

<sup>1</sup> Scott A. Sandage, "A Marble House Divided: The Lincoln Memorial, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Memory, 1939–1963," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (June 1993): 135–167.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory in the Twentieth Century* (University Press of Florida, 2020); Margaret Gibbs, *The DAR* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969); Peggy Anderson, *The Daughters: An Unconventional Look at America's Fan Club – the DAR* (St. Martin's Press, 1974).

achieved American Independence.”<sup>3</sup> With almost two hundred thousand active members and three thousand chapters across the United States, this organization is far from a typical local ladies social club. The DAR limits membership to lineal descendants of individuals recognized by the organization as Patriots, either through military service during the Revolutionary War or through civil or patriotic contributions to the cause of American independence. As a result, the DAR has primarily consisted of affluent and socially connected white, Protestant women.<sup>4</sup> National governance within the DAR is authoritarian, with a President General and Board of Management that consists of eleven elected officers and fifty state regents.<sup>5</sup> Located in Washington, D.C., near the White House and National Mall, the DAR National Headquarters consists of three interconnected buildings that occupy an entire city block. Ownership and maintenance of the property belongs to the Daughters, making it one of the largest properties in the world wholly established, owned, and operated by women. The complex includes the Administration Building, Memorial Continental Hall, which houses the DAR Library, Museum, and Archives, and Constitution Hall. Constitution Hall was built in 1929 to accommodate members attending the DAR’s annual Continental Congress and is the largest concert hall in Washington, D.C. Since its opening, the DAR made it available for public rental. It continues to serve as a prominent cultural venue in the city.<sup>6</sup>

### **Institutional Justifications: The DAR Board and Segregation Policy**

In 1939, due to its size and significance, Sol Hurok, manager of American contralto singer Marian Anderson, made efforts to secure the venue for a concert series featuring his internationally acclaimed artist. The DAR initially denied Anderson’s request, claiming the venue was booked on the day of inquiry, Easter Sunday.<sup>7</sup> When later asked about an alternate date, the organization refused to sign a rental agreement on the grounds of an existing “white artist only” clause present in their rental contracts.<sup>8</sup> A committee formed by the NAACP pushed for the integration of the venue and several influential civic leaders, including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, spoke out in support of Anderson’s cause. Roosevelt’s resignation from the DAR further fueled public backlash and ultimately resulted in Anderson’s Easter Sunday performance at the Lincoln Memorial.<sup>9</sup>

While we know much about the impact of Anderson’s performance on the cause for racial equality, an internal perspective into the motivations and attitudes of the DAR’s national leadership has seldom been examined. This study seeks to expand on the existing scholarship by analyzing the

---

<sup>3</sup> Pamela Rouse Wright, Ginnie Sebastian Storage, et al., *DAR Handbook and National Bylaws* (Daughters of the American Revolution, 2024), 8.

<sup>4</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Gibbs, *The DAR* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Peggy Anderson, *The Daughters: An Unconventional Look at America’s Fan Club - The DAR* (St. Martin’s Press, 1974), 3.

<sup>7</sup> “National Symphony Orchestra Contract for April 9, 1939,” unpublished manuscript, box 2 folder 4, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>8</sup> Fred Hand, “Facts Concerning the Management of Constitution Hall” unpublished manuscript, box number 67 folder 1, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>9</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 156.

tenacity of the DAR's members, specifically its governing body, the National Board of Management, in maintaining racial discrimination following the Marian Anderson controversy.

Following its founding, the Daughters of the American Revolution composed and archived significant information about their organization at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. Most of the early written works about the organization appeared in self-published volumes, newspapers, and periodicals. As a result, the earliest histories of the group emphasized the organization's efforts in historical preservation and the structure of the organization.<sup>10</sup> As primary sources on the early days of the organization are mainly of an institutional character, the earliest histories of the DAR also concentrated on organizational structure and preservation rather than the organization's social or political impact. For example, in 1969, author Margaret Gibbs published a monograph entitled *The DAR*. While her work still centered on the organization's structure, Gibbs extended earlier institutional studies by recognizing the DAR's broader social and political influence through the 1960s.<sup>11</sup> In a similar fashion, journalist Peggy Anderson explored DAR membership and structure at both the national and local levels. Her monograph, *The Daughters: An Unconventional Look at America's Fan Club - The DAR*, offered a critical account of the organization's political activities and public opinion following its most tumultuous years of the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>12</sup> Most recently, in 2020, scholar Simon Wendt published a cultural historical analysis, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriot Memory in the Twentieth Century*. Wendt examined how the DAR influenced public memory and perpetuated white supremacy as well as conservative gender roles. His work presents DAR members as direct contributors to narrow, exclusive nationalistic standards for American patriotism and devotes multiple chapters to the DAR's involvement with the Anderson incident and racial discrimination. The existing state of the research on the DAR is thus extensive, though its primary focus has remained on the DAR's exclusionary practices and how these aligned with broader national themes of racial and gender boundaries. Through the examination of individual leaders, this article builds on Wendt's study by focusing specifically on the internal reaction of the DAR Board of Management to the Anderson controversy and the degree to which public backlash influenced organizational policies.

The infamous "white artist only" clause became the official basis for denying permission for Anderson's performance and served as the DAR's national policy regarding the performance of African American artists in Constitution Hall. A result of social pressure following a 1931 concert by an African American artist, and in accordance with Washington D.C.'s racial protocol for "theaters, auditoriums, hotels and public schools," the clause was adopted following a 1932 Board of Management meeting.<sup>13</sup> Fred Hand, the venue's manager from its opening in 1929 through the 1970s, oversaw the enforcement of these regulations while executing all contracts related to the

---

<sup>10</sup> Daughters of the American Revolution, *Daughters of the American Revolution: Its Early History* (Daughters of the American Revolution, 1915.)

<sup>11</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 225.

<sup>12</sup> Anderson, *The Daughters*, 15.

<sup>13</sup> "Rulings of the Board regarding Constitution Hall policy, 1932-1951," unpublished manuscript, box 130 folder 7, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

venue.<sup>14</sup> In a February 19, 1939 circular letter, Maryland member and President General Sarah Corbin Robert reported and defended the National Board of Management's decision to uphold the "white artist only clause." She maintained that the DAR acted in accordance with segregationist policies in Washington D.C. rather than out of racial prejudice.<sup>15</sup>

### **Public Image and Internal Resistance in the 1940s–1950s**

On February 29, 1939, following the publication of Robert's circular, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt publicly resigned as member of the DAR. Unlike previous First Ladies who were actively involved in the organization as lifetime members and regularly hosted White House receptions, Roosevelt accepted membership only as a courtesy, "upon request."<sup>16</sup> As a result, Roosevelt's resignation was first sent as a letter to Robert while she was traveling on a national tour. In it the First Lady wrote, "I am in complete disagreement with the attitude taken in refusing Constitution Hall to a great artist. You have set an example which seems to me unfortunate, and I feel obliged to send you my resignation. You had an opportunity to lead in an enlightened way and it seems to me that your organization failed/"<sup>17</sup> Roosevelt's words conveyed both moral disappointment and public condemnation, framing the DAR's decision as a failure of leadership rather than a procedural matter. Her resignation was later published in newspapers nationwide, prompting widespread backlash from both the public and some within the DAR membership.<sup>18</sup> The condemnation forced Robert to address the First Lady personally and to speak nationally to DAR members at the following annual meeting.<sup>19</sup>

The 48th Continental Congress convened in April 1939, eight days after the Easter Sunday performance, marking the forty-ninth anniversary of the organization. In her report to Congress, Robert refrained from mentioning any names, including Anderson's, and referred to the matter simply as an "incident," a term that remains closely associated with the refusal by DAR members to this day.<sup>20</sup> Robert reinforced the position of her February 16th circular, defending the National Board of Management's decision to uphold its existing racial policy. She contended that the society upheld the clause following a forty-nine to one vote, based on the segregated practices that existed in Washington, D.C., both in 1932 and 1939. She concluded her report by stating that, "when the community at large has worked out its problem," the Daughters would "adapt its policies to practices and customs in accordance with the highest standards of the community."<sup>21</sup> This language

---

<sup>14</sup> Hand, "Facts Concerning Management," 2.

<sup>15</sup> Sarah Corbin Robert, "Circular Letter No.6 February 13, 1939," unpublished manuscript, box 129 folder 1, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>16</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 162.

<sup>17</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, *Resignation Letter President General Roberts*, February 26, 1939, President General Sarah Corbin Robert Papers, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C. box 131 folder 7.

<sup>18</sup> V.D. Johnston, *The Washington Times-Herald*, "Barred by Race," January 13, 1939.

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Corbin Robert, *Reply Letter to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt*, Date, President General Sarah Corbin Robert Papers, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C. box 131 folder 7.

<sup>20</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 165.

<sup>21</sup> Sarah Corbin Robert, "Excerpt from the Report of the President General Mrs. Henry M. Robert, Jr., 48th Continental Congress April 1939," unpublished manuscript, box 130 folder 1, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

indicated that the policy change would only occur when forced by legally enforced integration in Washington D.C.

President General Robert's closest friend and Committee Bylaws Chair, Anne Musgrave, later attributed Robert's actions to fear of the DAR "being sued by neighboring businesses" for not upholding segregation.<sup>22</sup> Musgrave, who spent a significant amount of time at national headquarters with Robert, recalled that while some members opposed the decision, many "had become very indignant" but that, once the Board of Management voted, the DAR was "obliged to stand by it."<sup>23</sup> Maintaining "peace and harmony" within the DAR was considered paramount and was perceived to be guaranteed only through strict adherence to parliamentary procedure.<sup>24</sup> Robert's steadfast adherence to the previously adopted clause is unsurprising given her connection to parliamentary tradition as the daughter-in-law of Henry Robert, author of *Robert's Rules of Order* and founder of the DAR's procedural framework.<sup>25</sup> Despite public scrutiny, Robert ensured that she followed procedure to protect the organization from further tension.

Defusing tension was not unusual among DAR members, as the organization included nearly two hundred thousand woman across forty-eight states. The 1932 vote revealed that friction over racial policy within DAR membership existed long before the 1939 Anderson controversy and continued to trouble the DAR in following years. Unlike other societies founded in the 1890s, the DAR was focused on uniting its members around remembrance of the nation's struggle for independence. Their discussions were confined to the events between 1775 and 1783. The DAR promoted a message of national unity to bring Revolutionary War descendants together.<sup>26</sup> Contrary to the DAR mission, several Daughters, particularly in southern states, sought membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), a women's lineage group dedicated to the romanticized remembrance of Confederate soldiers and the Lost Cause.<sup>27</sup> As a means to retain southern membership and appease race related differences, the DAR practiced benign indifference and rarely mentioned African Americans prior to the most "unpleasant and confusing discussion" by the National Board of Management in 1932.<sup>28</sup>

### **Gradual Concessions and Persistent Exclusion**

The Marian Anderson controversy thrust the DAR into the public spotlight and prompted calls to amend its racially discriminatory practices. Despite public outcry, the DAR insisted that "Washington was a Southern city, a segregated city," and upheld its existing policy during the administration of New York tennis champion, President General Helena R. Hellwig Pouch.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Anne Musgrave, "Correspondence of President General Fleck to Mrs. Musgrave - Recollection of a 60 Year Member," unpublished manuscript, box 198, fol. 12, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, *The Daughters*, 121.

<sup>24</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 166.

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, *The Daughters*, 128.

<sup>26</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 128.

<sup>27</sup> Karen Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (University Press of Florida, 2003), 34.

<sup>28</sup> "Rulings of the Board," 3.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, *The Daughters*, 138.

Between 1941 and 1944, the Daughters concentrated on World War II relief programs while also managing public backlash over the Anderson controversy. In an effort to gain public favor and strengthen ties with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, then chair of the China Relief Fund, the Daughters organized a benefit concert featuring Marian Anderson at Constitution Hall in 1943.<sup>30</sup>

Marian Anderson's performance at Constitution Hall was not a concession to policy change by the DAR. Despite her request that the organization abandon its "white artists only" and "Jim Crow" seating policies in connection for all future events, the practices remained in place after her performance.<sup>31</sup> The Board of Management accepted Miss Anderson's request for integrated seating during her performance, since it was also a condition for First Lady Roosevelt's attendance. On January 7, 1943, Marian Anderson performed to a sold-out, integrated audience, which included the First Lady. However, the concession was explicitly framed as temporary and did not alter the DAR's enforcement of the "white artists only" clause in its future rental contracts or its adherence to Washington, D.C.'s segregation policies.<sup>32</sup>

While the denial of Marian Anderson's request to perform remains a vivid public memory, scholars have often overlooked other subsequent refusals during the later half of the 1940s. One such incident occurred in 1945 when African American classical pianist and jazz singer, Hazel Scott, requested a contract for a performance at Constitution Hall. Having recalled the backlash from previous years, venue manager Fred Hand apologized for the inconvenience of the clause and attempted to assist Scott in finding a "suitable" venue for her performance.<sup>33</sup> Outraged, Scott's management rejected Hand's offer and directed her husband, Representative Adam Clayton Powell Jr., to write to President Harry Truman, insisting that immediate action be taken against the DAR for discrimination. The letter and President Truman's response were featured in a *New York Times* editorial. Powell also sent a letter to Mrs. Truman asking her not to appear at a previously scheduled tea hosted by the DAR. While the First Lady "deplored" the regulation of Hazel Scott's ability to perform at Constitution Hall, she declined Powell's suggestion to boycott the tea.<sup>34</sup> The First Lady's continued membership in DAR and appearance at the scheduled DAR function in October 1945 made clear that she would not follow in Roosevelt's example of breaking with the organization.

Instead, the public civil leader who advocated for Hazel Scott's ability to perform at Constitution Hall was Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce, a Connecticut DAR member and wife of the publisher of *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune*, and *Sports Illustrated*, Henry Luce. Luce was well known for opposing discriminatory southern tax polls and supporting anti-lynching legislation.<sup>35</sup> She repudiated the DAR's establishment of the 1932 "white artist only" clause and went as far as to transfer from her home chapter in Putnam Hill following a vote to support the executive ruling at national convention. Following another refusal by Hand, acting for the DAR, to allow an African American jazz band to perform, Luce appeared on a national radio broadcast on February 21, 1945, urging

---

<sup>30</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 166.

<sup>31</sup> Raymond Arsenault, *The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, The Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America* (Bloomsbury Press, 2009), 179.

<sup>32</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 166.

<sup>33</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 167.

<sup>34</sup> "Truman Condemns Negro Ban," *The New York Times*, October 13, 1945.

<sup>35</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 168.

Daughters to unite in opposition to the racist clause. In her appeal, she directly blamed incumbent President General May Erwin Talmadge for maintaining the organization's "white artists only" clause.<sup>36</sup>

Talmadge, a native of Georgia, was affectionately known by the DAR as the "Georgia Peach" and was the organization's first Southerner to be elected to the role of President General. She first served as Georgia's State Regent and gained popularity among southern members as an active participant in multiple lineage societies, including the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Distantly related to the Atlanta Talmadges, she refused to acknowledge Luce's on-air remarks. During the national broadcast, Luce addressed her pointedly, stating "in your deep concern for white faces you are paradoxically giving our DAR a couple of black eyes."<sup>37</sup> Luce's wit and sharp remark inspired nine DAR members to join her newly formed Committee Against Racial Discrimination in Constitution Hall. The committee urged Daughters who opposed the clause not to resign from the organization but instead attend the next Continental Congress with the hope of executing a vote to end the clause. Luce's only chance at success, however, depended on securing the support of delegates representing chapters nationwide.<sup>38</sup>

President General Talmadge maintained her confidence in the "white artists only" clause while on her tour of chapters nationwide. In October 1945, she issued a circular letter to all three thousand chapters instructing members to refrain from commenting on the clause. On the opening day of the fifty-fifth Continental Congress, Talmadge announced the formation of a "special committee" devoted to examining the organization's 1932 clause. This decision effectively bypassed a delegate vote on the policy. Seeking sympathy from the delegation, she read Luce's broadcast speech and accused her committee for "stirring up racial discord" amongst the membership.<sup>39</sup> No vote was taken on the issue of the 1932 clause and both Congresswoman Luce and Frances Bolton, a "multimillionaire," resigned from the DAR.<sup>40</sup>

Midwesterners Estella O'Byrne and Marguerite Courtright Patton served as President Generals in the two administrations that followed Talmadge's term, which ended in 1950.<sup>41</sup> The decade of the 1950s focused on post-World War II efforts and Junior Members recruitment.<sup>42</sup> Despite efforts by both President Generals to improve public opinion and increase membership, Constitution Hall manager Fred Hand continued to deny African American artists under the 1932 clause and former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt continued to speak out against the DAR's racially discriminatory practices.<sup>43</sup> In 1952, an exception was made for African American soprano, Dorothy Maynor, to perform in a program at Constitution Hall with the National Symphony Orchestra. This

---

<sup>36</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 171.

<sup>37</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 173.

<sup>38</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 172.

<sup>39</sup> May Erwin Talmadge, *President General's Circular Letter No. 16-A*, "Pertaining to the Management of Constitution Hall, and the Statement of the Executive Committee and the National Board of Management Made on October 11, 1945," *DAR Magazine*, January 1946, 6–7.

<sup>40</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 176.

<sup>41</sup> "DAR Presidents General," *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, accessed March 9, 2025, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/dar-presidents-general>.

<sup>42</sup> Pamela Wright, *DAR Handbook*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 173.

was the first commercial appearance of an African American artist at the venue since adoption of the 1932 clause. However, a change in DAR national policy regarding segregated seating and removal of the “white artists only” clause did not occur until the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on *Brown v. The Board of Education*.<sup>44</sup>

### **From Marian Anderson to Lena Ferguson: The Long Arc of Change**

The DAR continued to face public criticism for its past racial policies into the 1960s and 1970s. In response, the organization began to promote an image of gradual changes toward greater inclusion. The DAR hosted Marian Anderson at Constitution Hall for her “Farewell Tour” in 1964 but maintained the narrative of the “incident” as an unavoidable result of Washington D.C.’s segregated policies.<sup>45</sup> President General Eleanor Washington Sullivan Spicer of Florida, who served from 1971-1974, went so far as to blame the press for its “license with the truth” in reporting the 1939 Marian Anderson controversy.<sup>46</sup> Despite the DAR welcoming its first “Colored Daughter,” Karen Batchelor of Royal Oak, Michigan, in 1977, the organization continued to defend its exclusionary practices well into the 1980s.<sup>47</sup>

Lena Ferguson, an African American woman who had been denied membership by several Washington D.C. chapters in the 1980s due to her race, was finally admitted into the DAR as an at-large member in 1983.<sup>48</sup> Ferguson’s story attracted significant public backlash as she gained national media attention for the DAR’s racial exclusion. Refusing to yield in the face of discrimination and the organization’s refusal to acknowledge African American patriots, Ferguson forced a bylaws revision through a public campaign for equality. The *Washington Post* published the story of Ferguson’s denial, and within one day of publication, David A. Clarke, Chairman of the District of Columbia’s City Council, threatened to revoke the DAR’s property tax exemption. If it had been executed, the organization would have faced an additional \$900,000 in taxes and, if Ferguson pursued legal action, might have been found in violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.<sup>49</sup>

Lena Ferguson later told the *Wall Street Journal* that she “could have sued the organization and tried to destroy it,” but instead wanted the DAR to “change and make up for its past.”<sup>50</sup> Following the publication, President General Sarah King assisted Ferguson in finding a local chapter and vowed to bolster minority membership. In an agreement between the DAR and Ferguson’s legal representation, the organization issued a written apology, and amended bylaws to prohibit discrimination in local chapters, distributed pamphlets encouraging minority membership, and

---

<sup>44</sup> Gibbs, *The DAR*, 135.

<sup>45</sup> “Anderson’s Performances at DAR Constitution Hall,” *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, accessed April 2, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/national-society/marian-anderson/andersons-performances-dar-constitution-hall>.

<sup>46</sup> Anderson, *The Daughters*, 109.

<sup>47</sup> Donnie Radcliffe, *Washington Post*, “The DAR’s Changing Image: Not Radically, But Members Are Younger and Now Include a Black,” April 20, 1978.

<sup>48</sup> Remembering Lena Santos Ferguson (blog), Daughters of the American Revolution Margaret Whetten Chapter, accessed April 1, 2025. <https://www.margaretwhetten.org/remembering-lena-santos-ferguson.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 195.

<sup>50</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 197.

conducted research to supporting a pending federal bill to honor African American soldiers for their service during the American Revolution. In 1985, the DAR joined Lena Ferguson in organizing a march from Constitution Hall to the National Mall advocating a memorial honoring African American Patriots.<sup>51</sup>

### Reassessing the DAR's Legacy

Despite the national progress made by the DAR to change its exclusionary practices, the public still voiced concern. Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce remained critical of the organization following Ferguson's admittance and public sentiment still perceived the DAR's legacy as one of exclusion. Although the organization attempted to acknowledge its past discrimination, Luce's concerns were echoed decades later when President General Betty Jane "Wayne" Garrison Blair publicly claimed that "race had nothing to do with the decision," regarding the Marian Anderson controversy.<sup>52</sup>

Fifty years after the 1939 denial, the DAR still hesitated to acknowledge its adherence to racially discriminatory national policies. Sentiments from national leadership changed twenty years later, during the administration of President General Linda Gist Calvin. In a 2009 press release recognizing the seventieth anniversary of Marian Anderson's performance, the DAR formally admitted its prejudice stating, "The DAR deeply regrets that Marian Anderson was not given the opportunity to perform her 1939 Easter concert in Constitution Hall because of her race." The DAR further recognized Anderson's Lincoln Memorial performance as a "pivotal event in the struggle for racial equality."<sup>53</sup> Today, the DAR maintains a public stance of remorse and hosts a variety of archival material related to the event on its national website.<sup>54</sup> Despite its long history of racial prejudice, the Anderson and Ferguson cases remain the only publicly recognized acknowledgements of the organization's discrimination.

Scholarly attention has largely focused on the national outcry over Anderson's denial, leaving key questions unanswered, as few studies have examined the individual members who comprised the DAR's Board of Management throughout its history. These women played a direct role in shaping the internal operations and national racial policies of the organization, and their contributions and their demographic backgrounds should be considered in future studies. Many leaders of this period also held simultaneous memberships in groups such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, suggesting that Southern perspectives strongly influenced DAR policies. Studying leadership demographics alongside chapter records could shed light on the motivations that sustained discriminatory practices and reveal the degree to which Southern interests shaped the nation's largest and most influential lineage organization.

---

<sup>51</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 197.

<sup>52</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 203.

<sup>53</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, 208.

<sup>54</sup>"Lena Santos Ferguson," *The Daughters of the American Revolution*, accessed April 5, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/national-society/lena-santos-ferguson>.

Many DAR members continue to frame the organization's exclusionary actions as an attempt to "uphold the law" rather than as deliberate discrimination.<sup>55</sup> This perception reflects how national sentiment and the justifications of earlier administrations remain embedded in the organization's memory. Oral histories and chapter archives may provide further insight into how these explanations persist and how members reconcile them with the DAR's legacy of exclusion. Studying the experiences of both national and state leadership, as well as general membership, can help scholars understand the degree to which exclusion remains tied to the organization's mandate.

It is uncertain how the DAR will continue to confront its racially prejudiced past with both its members and the public. However, the organization's history of denial and tenacious exclusion demonstrates that the DAR did not immediately change its national policies following the 1939 Marian Anderson controversy. Despite widespread public criticism, the organization maintained a discretionary "white artists only" clause in its Constitution Hall rental contracts until 1954, when Washington D.C. officially desegregated its public spaces and schools. The continued enforcement of racially exclusionary policies into the 1980s shows that the DAR resisted change until facing legal pressure in 1984, when it was compelled to acknowledge and include African Americans in its national policies. For the DAR to continue as both the nation's largest women's organization and a leading steward of Revolutionary memory, it must more fully acknowledge its history of racial exclusion as a necessary step toward building inclusive and accurate commemorative practices.

Understanding this history also invites broader reflection on what the DAR's story reveals about women's civic organizations and their influence on American memory. The DAR's long record of internal debate also raises broader questions about how women's organizations shaped national memory and navigated race within American patriotic culture. Examining these patterns helps illuminate the ties between gender, nationalism, and belonging, and reminds us why it remains essential to understand how exclusion shaped the institutions that preserve the nation's past.

---

<sup>55</sup> Henrietta Brown, interview by Rachel Lynne Wall, April 25, 2025, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. This interpretation reflects an oral history interview with a current Florida member, who has been a Daughter for sixty-nine years. I am continuing to conduct interviews to investigate how such perceptions persist, as part of an ongoing research project to follow.

## Bibliography

## Archival Sources

Hand, Fred. *Facts Concerning the Management of Constitution Hall*. Unpublished manuscript. Box 67, fol. 1. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

Musgrave, Anne. "Correspondence of President General Fleck to Mrs. Musgrave - Recollection of a 60 Year Member." Unpublished manuscript, box 198, fol. 12, DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

*National Symphony Orchestra Contract for April 9, 1939*. Unpublished manuscript. box 2, fol. 4. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

Robert, Sarah Corbin. *Circular Letter No. 6, February 13, 1939*. Unpublished manuscript. Box 129, folder 1. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

Robert, Sarah Corbin. *Excerpt from the Report of the President General Mrs. Henry M. Robert, Jr., 48th Continental Congress, April 1939*. Unpublished manuscript. Box 130, folder 1. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

Robert, Sarah Corbin. *Reply Letter to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, March 3, 1939*. President General Sarah Corbin Robert Papers. Box 131, folder 7. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

Roosevelt, Eleanor. *Resignation Letter to President General Roberts, February 26, 1939*. President General Sarah Corbin Robert Papers. Box 131, folder 7. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

*Rulings of the Board Regarding Constitution Hall Policy, 1932–1951*. Unpublished manuscript. Box 130, folder 7. DAR Archives, Washington, D.C.

## Interviews

Brown, Henrietta. Interview by Rachel Lynne Wall. April 25, 2025. Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

## Published Primary Sources

Johnston, V.D. "Barred by Race." *The Washington Times-Herald*, January 13, 1939.

Radcliffe, Donnie. "The DAR's Changing Image: Not Radically, But Members Are Younger and

Now Include a Black.” *Washington Post*, April 20, 1978.

Talmadge, May Erwin. *President General's Circular Letter No. 16-A*. “Pertaining to the Management of Constitution Hall, and the Statement of the Executive Committee and the National Board of Management Made on October 11, 1945.” *DAR Magazine*, January 1946, 6–7.

“Trumans Condemn Negro Ban.” *The New York Times*, October 13, 1945.

Wright, Pamela Rouse, Ginnie Sebastian Storage, et al. *DAR Handbook and National Bylaws*. Daughters of the American Revolution, 2023.

## Secondary Sources

Arsenault, Raymond. *The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, The Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America*. Bloomsbury Press, 2009.

Anderson, Peggy. *The Daughters: An Unconventional Look at America's Fan Club - the DAR*. St. Martin's Press, 1974.

“Anderson’s Performances at DAR Constitution Hall.” *The Daughters of the American Revolution*. Accessed April 2, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/national-society/marian-anderson/andersons-performances-dar-constitution-hall>.

Cox, Karen. *Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. University Press of Florida, 2003.

“DAR Presidents General.” *The Daughters of the American Revolution*. Accessed March 9, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/national-society/dar-presidents-general>.

*Daughters of the American Revolution: Its Early History*. Daughters of the American Revolution, 1915.

Gibbs, Margaret. *The DAR*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

“Lena Santos Ferguson.” *The Daughters of the American Revolution*. Accessed April 5, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/national-society/lena-santos-ferguson>.

“Marian Anderson and the DAR.” *The Daughters of the American Revolution*. Accessed March 13, 2025. <https://www.dar.org/discover/about-dar/marian-anderson>.

*Remembering Lena Santos Ferguson* (blog). *Daughters of the American Revolution Margaret Whetten Chapter*. Accessed April 1, 2025. <https://www.margaretwbetten.org/remembering-lena-santos-ferguson.html>.

Sandage, Scott A. "A Marble House Divided: The Lincoln Memorial, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Memory, 1939–1963." *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (June 1993): 135–167.

Wendt, Simon. *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory in the Twentieth Century*. University Press of Florida, 2020.

## **FORGOTTEN FEARS: A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF BLACK COMMUNITY MASSACRES IN FLORIDA**

Sarahannah Snyder

A little over one hundred years ago, violence spread through two black communities in Florida, causing generational fear and a purposeful avoidance of the topic by both survivors and perpetrators. Only in the last twenty years have historical studies of the two incidents garnered more attention. The Ocoee Massacre of 1920 and the Rosewood Massacre of 1923 do not display just the White violence that was purposely inflicted to maintain the pre-existing social order, but the ways that the story and history were detailed in the following decades offer a timeline of its interest and the reparations that the focus allows. The progression of the historical memory of the massacres of Black communities that occurred within Florida is a direct mirror to the direction of civil rights; the ways the history was preserved, ignored, and brought to justice is a perpetuated issue that historiographies aim to repair. By examining the historiographies of the Rosewood Massacre in Alachua County and the Ocoee Massacre in Orange County, the ever-growing necessity for continued dialogue and historical study becomes evident. Both communities were permanently changed, and history, in recent years, has allowed the knowledge of the pain and continued struggle for Black communities a rightful place in the long freedom struggle.

The resistance of Black individuals did not begin with the start of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 60s; it began over a century ago, and the stories of Ocoee and Rosewood are perfect examples of the continuing fight. The cases of Rosewood and Ocoee disabuse the theory of Florida Exceptionalism by extending the timeline of purposeful Black resistance to White suppression and exposing the deliberate violence inflicted on Black men and women. Florida Exceptionalism had largely limited the study of Black massacres due to a public state-wide belief that the violence that happened in Florida did not compare to the rest of the South. Due to this, the history of incidents such as Rosewood and Ocoee was pushed to the side. Many contemporary White Floridians labeled the incidents as brought on by Black instigators and outside agitators. The continued emphasis on the false narrative of Florida Exceptionalism, the history was vastly ignored, despite the events of these massacres directly breaking apart the theory. Florida did not stand apart from the rest of the South; if anything, the violence that occurred would become the standard for what would be seen as acceptable throughout the South as a whole.

The resurgence of the history of the two massacres has aided in destroying the credibility of Florida Exceptionalism, while simultaneously bringing greater focus to the importance of these regional histories. Foundational books such as *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* by Paul Ortiz and

*The Rosewood Massacre: An Archeology and History of Intersectional Violence* by Edward González-Tennant have brought the scholarship into the Twenty-First century. However, those who lived through the attacks, especially Rosewood survivors, were hesitant to share their accounts, even after scholars had become interested. The decades of fear from the attacks and near-constant encouragement for historical silence by surrounding White communities dissuaded many from sharing their accounts.<sup>1</sup> This has led to the scholarship often having to fill in holes and bolster relationships with the surviving communities themselves to preserve and document history.

As these massacres continue to be studied, scholars have been able to form a powerful argument about the of the long Black Freedom Struggle and the physical ways that Black men and women resisted the violence inflicted upon their communities. Often divided into two sections, the Black Freedom Struggle is broken into the era of slavery through Jim Crow and from the start of the Civil Rights Movement to an insufficient conclusion with the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The long Black Freedom Struggle emphasizes the ways that the fight for equality occurred long before the start of the Civil Rights Movement. At first glance at the events of Rosewood and Ocoee, it would appear through the evidence provided by contemporary Newspaper articles that Black individuals were complicit in the erasure of their communities. That is far from the truth, and with further studies, the specific and direct ways that Black men and women fought against the system surrounding them break apart the narrative put out by the initial newspaper reports.

The first sources of information about Rosewood and Ocoee created specific images that distorted the events that occurred to readers nationally. Newspaper articles wrote about the massacres often from a one-sided narrative that did not provide the context that led to the massacres. It is with recent studies and the documentation of oral histories that the full image of these Florida massacres becomes fully known. On November 2, 1920, the Ocoee Massacre occurred, but the violence which occurred that day was not the result of impromptu White mobs with no reasons behind their actions. Based on works such as Ortiz's book states that eighty to ninety people were estimated to be killed and were targeted because of the festering fear of the power that Black individuals might have if they had access to the voting polls. The 1920 election in Florida allowed Black Americans to demonstrate their political power through the existing legislative system. With aid from the national organizations like the NAACP, thousands were registered to vote with the hope of peacefully entering the Florida polls on November 2nd. However, like much of the state, Black voters were turned away in droves. Using fear tactics like holding large bodies of by regional

---

<sup>1</sup> Moore, Gary. 1982. Review of *Rosewood Massacre*. *St. Petersburg Times*, July 25, 1982.

Ku Klux Klan members at polls and stonewalling practices, White Floridians prevented the vast majority of Black Floridians from voting.<sup>2</sup>

In cities throughout Florida, individuals still headed towards the voting polls even with the fear of White violence looming. Many voting lines were segregated, and with the Black line moving at incredibly slow rates, encouraging many to leave. Ortiz described how other community members would encourage those waiting in the lines, stating that “In Daytona, this task was led by the indomitable Mary McLeod Bethune, who ‘walked up and down the uneasy, fearful line, instilling confidence-and the line held.’”<sup>3</sup> In Ocoee, White city managers specifically rigged ways to limit voting turnout. They sent the local notary, R.C. Biegelow, out of the city to excuse their inability to create legal space for Black individuals to vote. To be able to enter the polls, individuals had to prove to the notary public that they had successfully registered to vote. This tactic was one where White Floridians used the legal system to maintain the social structure they desired to maintain. It is daunting to change a system that works directly against specific individuals, and the community of Ocoee realized this. Still, some persisted and were determined to cast their vote in the election.

White community members claimed that one such man, Mose Norman, brought a shotgun to the polls. Chased away from the polls, it became rumored that Norman took shelter in the house of July Perry. Perry, who was known by everyone in Ocoee, was a threat to the White power structure due to his elevated social standing within the Black community. A landowner, he provided Black laborers with positions on a Black owned farm, whereas in other cities This limited Black men and women to only have the option to work for White landowners. The excuse for the voting limitations enforced by White Floridians was the same excuse why the community disliked Perry. White Ocoee members wanted to purposefully limit the social mobility of Black Americans to maintain the social order left over from an Antebellum South. Following the violent removal of Norman from the voting poll, men began to form a mob, determined to remind their Black neighbors of the hierarchy they wanted to maintain. This caused all other Black individuals who were still at the polls to return home with growing fears of what the White mob would do. It was not an uncommon practice that White Floridians would use violence as a tool to instill fear within Black communities.

Both Norman and Perry exemplified much of what White Floridians came to resent about growing Black communities. The prospering nature of these communities and the landowning status of men such as Norman and Perry challenged the struggling rural South. The KKK grew in notoriety through rural communities by playing on heightened emotions, stress, and confusion about Black people. They believed that these communities should not prosper, especially in ways that the

---

<sup>2</sup> Ortiz, Paul. *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920*. Germany: University of California Press, 2005. page 260

<sup>3</sup>Ortiz. *Emancipation Betrayed* page 268

White community members found it difficult to mimic. These beliefs culminated in their anger about Black voting turnout. It was easy to shift the anger from voting suppression to an individual, and in the case of Ocoee in 1920, all of the growing resentment and anger from White community members became focused on July Perry. As local and national newspapers would later describe, they labeled both men as hostiles and instigators of local issues. The *NY Times* wrote three days after the event that Perry, “was said to have precipitated the riot.”<sup>3</sup> Using a false narrative of the characters of the men, the mob felt justified in following after Norman. Claire Strom and Carlee Hoffmann wrote in their article *A Perfect Storm: The Ocoee Riot of 1920*, that, “The mob resolved to find Norman and inform him such behavior at the polls would not be tolerated.”<sup>5</sup> After Hearing rumors that Norman was hiding at Perry’s home, the mob grew to around one hundred men and walked towards the Perry residence.

The act of registering to vote and physically showing up at the polls was the first step of Black resistance to the social system in Florida, but that was not where Black resistance ended in Ocoee. It was there that Perry, knowing the likelihood of surviving the mob encounter, fired into the mob in self-defense. The age of non-violent protests was decades away, and the demonstration that Perry made by the defense of his family and personal property is proof of the ways that Black individuals did not remain complacent to the violence inflicted upon their communities by White men. Following the initial rounds of fire, the mob called in for reinforcements, and men from the surrounding Orange County came. Ortiz wrote, “Fifty carloads of white men from Orlando raced to the scene.”<sup>4</sup> The speed at which reinforcements were rallied is indicative of the likelihood of established plans for retaliation following election day. The much larger mob surrounded the northern Ocoee black community. Through the night, the White mob indiscriminately torched Black homes, businesses, and churches.

During the razing of the Black community, it has been widely estimated that thirty to eighty Black individuals were killed in the destruction. “The Rev. R.B. Brooks, presiding AME elder in St. Augustine, stated, “The total number [of dead] will probably never be known because the bones of the murdered Negroes who were burned to death were taken away as souvenirs by members of the mob.”<sup>5</sup> The lengths of violence inflicted upon the community of Ocoee were not a demonstration of voter suppression. It was a deliberate demonstration that violence would be the ultimate authority in rural Florida. It became undeniable proof that White Ocoee members were above the laws of the state, and they knew they would find no consequences for their actions. The definitive example of

---

<sup>3</sup> “NEGROES FLEE RIOT REGION. Ocoee, FL., Lacks Labor, Following Election Lynchings.” 2025. [Nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com). 2025.

<sup>5</sup>Hoffmann, Carlee, Carlee Hoffman, and Claire Strom. “A Perfect Storm: The Ocoee Riot of 1920.” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (2014): 25–43. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43487653>. page 26

<sup>4</sup> Ortiz. *Emancipation Betrayed* page 272

<sup>5</sup> Ortiz. *Emancipation Betrayed* page 273

the White mobs' authority outside legal parameters and was emphasized in how the town acted towards July Perry. During the night, Perry was eventually captured under heavy fire and was taken to Orange County Jail. He was then removed from jail the next morning by a mob and brutally beaten before he was hanged. His body was shot repeatedly after he was pronounced dead. Perry was not convicted, tried, or found guilty of any crime. As with so many Black men throughout Florida, the only cause for the violence was their very existence, which was a challenge to White authority. July Perry was lynched not because he attempted to vote but because he was a threat to the White power structure.

Both Florida and national media outlets reported the initial coverage of the massacre was incredibly one sided, with many of the initial reports blaming the Black community as the instigators for the riot. The St. Petersburg *Times* wrote a few months later that, "Relatives of the slain negroes are believed to be armed and are expected to cause trouble if overtaken by whites."<sup>6</sup> These newspaper articles continued to depict the community members of Ocoee as the violent perpetrators and the White mob as the defenders of their town and social order. Many Black citizens from Ocoee fled in droves on November 2nd, fearing for the lives of themselves and their families, and the once-prospering community, which had numbered at twenty percent of the community, almost became eradicated overnight. Many fled to Jacksonville and other nearby Black towns, escaping under the cover of darkness. The city of Ocoee, still to this day, has not seen the return of Black population numbers as it was before the massacre.

In the following years, even police reports did not try to find the estimates of Black victims from that night. The remaining local community members often denied affiliation, claiming that many of the assailants were those who had travelled across town lines. "The Ocoee Riot was a shameful and controversial event that the community elided for many years in an attempt to erase it from communal memory and move forward."<sup>7</sup> The pushed belief of Florida Exceptionalism holds no ground when the story of Ocoee is displayed. Its history was ignored and diminished to maintain the false narrative that Florida was not as violent as the rest of the South. In the immediate aftermath, many survivors of the attack did not share their stories with new neighbors or even descendants. There was still a fear of retribution by White Floridians even decades later.

The first example of the documentation with Black context was when Zora Neale Hurston wrote about the incident in her 1939 work, *The Ocoee Riot*. While she had finished the piece only twenty years after the massacre occurred, it would be another forty years before the work was publicized. *Essence Magazine*, an African American-created magazine which focused on the voices of

---

<sup>6</sup> St. Petersburg Times. 1923. Review of Blacks Kill Two Whites in Race Riot, January 6, 1923.

<sup>7</sup> Hoffmann, and Strom. "A Perfect Storm" page 27

Black women, ran Hurston's story in 1989.<sup>8</sup> Over the next couple of decades, the story of Ocoee would remain out of direct historical spotlight until the turn of the century. With the encouragement of the Ocoee Massacre's surviving descendants, the oral histories began to be preserved. Published in 2005, Paul Ortiz laid out a large part of the initial groundwork for the historical scholarship of the Ocoee Massacre. Academic journal articles and public news pieces have followed, drawing from the cornerstone text; that is, *Emancipation Betrayed*. Similar to the following Rosewood Massacre, the information from the actual Ocoee survivors took decades to record due to the sensitive nature and traumatic memories that were provoked when retelling.<sup>11</sup> The recent historical trend to completely disprove Florida Exceptionalism has pointed to a greater focus on the significant moments of violence throughout the state. This focus will help move the scholarship forward and bring greater attention to the horrors of the Ocoee Massacre.

The 1923 Rosewood Massacre is similar to Ocoee in many ways, especially with the lack of contemporary Black narratives from survivors. Descendants of Oren Monroe, who was born in backwoods North Florida and survived the massacre, recalled the ways that their patriarch evaded the topic. Ninth daughter of Monroe, Marie Monroe-Ames, recalled when asked about the lack of oral history from the previous generation, saying "These people were actually chased by ghosts all their lives, and we didn't understand that."<sup>9</sup> The traumatic nature of such violence inflicted on communities like Rosewood and Ocoee largely silenced the initial preservation of history. For their community's history, preservation and detailing were a privilege; one that was heavily challenged due to the very nature of their lived experiences. The work that has been done in the last few decades has been completed through fragmented oral histories, contemporary newspapers from primarily white authors, and continued local perceptions of the events.

One of the strengths of the recent continuation in the study of these historical studies is the work of public historian Edward González-Tennant, *The Rosewood Massacre*, from 2018. He expanded the work of David Colburn's article *Rosewood and America in the Early Twentieth Century* from 1997, by following the tradition of White Floridian violence. Between these two central studies, the proper historical documentation of Rosewood begins to take shape. In conjunction with regional memorial groups such as The Real Rosewood Foundation and Remembering Rosewood, they were some of the first to push for the documentation of the history and reparations for the survivors' descendants starting in the 1980s. Between the activism from local groups and the solidified historical study of the massacre, it becomes clear how the initial silence of yet another Florida massacre was purposefully done to continue the narrative of Florida Exceptionalism.

---

<sup>8</sup> Hurston, Zora Neale. 1989. Review of *The Ocoee Riot*. *Essence Magazine*, February 1989. <sup>11</sup> The Ocoee Massacre: A Documentary Film | WFTV

<sup>9</sup> Samuels, Robert, ed. 2020. Review of *After Reparations*. The Washington Post. April 3, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/rosewood-reparations/>.

Both Rosewood and Sumner, Florida, are near the Gulf Coast, lived in peace, and together, had a total of six hundred and thirty-eight citizens, three hundred and forty-four being Black and two hundred and ninety-four White. There had not been significant racial violence leading to the 1923 massacre. In areas such as Gainesville and larger cities, the presence of the KKK was felt more heavily. While the town of Rosewood had not yet experienced the violence that had been seen through much of the state, they knew that it was possible and could happen soon. In 1920, Florida led the nation in lynching cases with a total of eleven individuals murdered.<sup>10</sup> Information about other attacks was spread throughout the state. Rosewood citizens knew that White communities would use violence as a tool to suppress any behavior they deemed negative in the Black community.

When, in January 1923, an alarm was rung about an attack on a White woman, Fannie Taylor, the tenuous balance of race relations in Rosewood and Sumner was challenged. Taylor, a married woman, claimed that in the early morning, a Black man broke into her home and physically assaulted her. She gave no identifiers for the man other than his race, and with her single unclear accusation, she caused the destruction of an entire town. Sarah Carrier, Rosewood local and laundress for the Taylor family disputed these claims. She stated that she had seen a man leave the Taylor residence, but that individual had been White, not Black. Carrier's story was not accepted by the public, and Sumner residents came to believe that the man responsible for the attack was an escaped prisoner, Jesse Hunter. A white mob was quickly formed, and several hundred men were deputized by Levy County Sheriff Robert Elias. One of the greatest fears of the White community was retribution by Black men; especially the assault and rape of White women. Any case that came close to implicating a Black man in the sexual assault of White women created intense emotional reactions from White communities. The community of Sumner believed, without specific evidence, that Jesse Hunter was responsible for the crime and that any Black man found in connection with him was equally guilty.

The mob that had formed was filled with members from outside of Sumner, including nearby Gainesville, a city that had just recently seen a large KKK rally where a cross was burned and the fears of Black aggression were often discussed. The first casualty of the projected fears and hatred of the White mob was blacksmith Sam Carter. He was tortured, and a false confession was gathered stating that Carter had helped Hunter flee the county. When he could not corroborate the story, his body was riddled with bullets before he was hanged. His body was left in the trees as a reminder to Rosewood and as an encouragement not to harbor Hunter. As the next few days passed, the White mob started to lack direction for where to look for Taylor's supposed perpetrator. They returned to Rosewood on January 4th, intent on questioning Sylvester Carrier. Carrier, son of Sarah

---

<sup>10</sup> Jones, Maxine D. n.d. Review of *The Rosewood Massacre and the Women Who Survived It*. *The Florida Historical Quarterly* Vol. 76 (No. 2): pp. 193-208. Accessed May 7, 2025.

Carrier, was known to disrupt the cultural standards in the city. He had pushed for voting efforts in the 1920 election and was known to not withstand racist advances from White people. Similar to July Perry, Carrier became the embodiment of the mob's growing frustration and anger towards Black men who strayed away from the social standards of their day. The often-used trope that specific Black men were disrespectful, troublemakers, or agitators was used repeatedly throughout the South to label men who actively resisted the power structure they found themselves surrounded by. In just four days, the mob had targeted three Black men who had no proven ties to Fannie Taylor, and the mob's reasons were all foundational in these repeated tropes.

Carrier had encouraged many of his family members earlier in the week to gather at Sarah Carrier's house. They sought refuge as much of the community continued to fear that the mob would branch out further, and the violence would spread with each day that passed without a clear person to blame for the attack on Taylor. The mob was intent on finding some proof for aid in Hunter's hiding, or at least enough justification to respond with violence against Carrier. They approached the referred individuals, and it was then that the tension which had been building, not just for days but for decades, was released. It is not definitive on who fired the first shot, but the initial gunfire spurred a standoff between Carrier and the mob for hours. During the action, Sarah Carrier was shot in the head and killed, and Sylvester was eventually also killed in the shootout. When the mob had retreated late in the night, the other survivors escaped through the back and found safety in the swamp.<sup>11</sup>

Maxine D. Jones, in *The Rosewood Massacre and the Women Who Survived It*, gave detailed accounts from oral histories that provide the reactions during the aftermath by Rosewood citizens. Following the shootout at the Carrier home, White Floridians regrouped. "And on the seventh day, Sunday, January 7, instead of resting, whites finished what they had started."<sup>12</sup> As the news of the standoff at the Carriers spread, more men travelled from across the state to follow, in what they thought was a noble fight against the challenges of Black men. The men who joined the growing mob were not all there to bring justice to Fannie Taylor.

No, the men who journeyed across Florida did so because they saw the resistance of a singular Black man as a considerable threat to the social order they had tried to maintain since the days of slavery. Sylvester's armed resistance was a clear demonstration that not all Black individuals believed in the eventual activism of non-violent protest. Sylvester chose immediate action in an attempt to save the lives of his family members. The unfortunate repercussions of Sylvester's

---

<sup>11</sup> Gonzalez-Tennant, Edward. 2018. *The Rosewood Massacre: An Archaeology and History of Intersectional Violence*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida

<sup>12</sup> Jones, Maxine D. n.d. Review of *The Rosewood Massacre and the Women Who Survived It*. *The Florida Historical Quarterly* Vol. 76 (No. 2): pp. 193-208. Accessed May 7, 2025. pg 5

resistance were that White Central Floridians believed the whole town liable to similar actions and decided the whole community needed to be removed.

The mob spread through Rosewood and began to burn the whole town to the ground. Any Rosewood citizen who appeared came under target, and many were hit in crossfire during the week-long attack on the town. Families began to flee in the darkness to the woods and swamps, often in nothing more than their pajamas. Soon, the town of Rosewood was destroyed, and every Black man, woman, and child left the town fearing for their safety. The mob destroyed not only homes but also churches and businesses. The lifestyle that many Black citizens had built for themselves in Rosewood, with two-story homes, in-home pianos or organs, and wrap-around porches, was a physical symbol of the ways that Black individuals had created their own society without reliance on the White. The segregated South was what White Southerners and Floridians wanted as long as the separated Black communities were still able to be controlled by the White majority. Separate and individual was not something that Floridians saw as acceptable for Black men and women. The Rosewood Massacre became the justification for the complete erasure of the thriving Black community, all based upon a thin testimony that an unidentified Black man assaulted a White woman.<sup>13</sup>

In her article about the Rosewood Massacre, Jones emphasizes the importance the perspectives of the women holds and how they were the ones to initially preserve the history of these tragic events. Tracing the historical accounts by individual women, she followed the history of Rosewood into the modern realm with court hearings about official state-sanctioned reparations in the 1980s and 1990s. It was not until decades later that even the women, who were eventually bold enough to share their stories, felt comfortable doing so. When the community dispersed, many tried to forget the traumatic week, and some even went under new names in fear of continued retribution from White Floridians. Black survivors held onto their stories, fearing what would happen if the story were repeated. White locals created a silence around the incident to limit national focus. Between the two groups, the history of Rosewood would largely go unstudied until 1982, when Gary Moore would rediscover the story and encourage survivors to document their experiences. Written for a publication in the St. Petersburg *Times*, his article *Rosewood Massacre*, brought new encouragement to examine the topic.<sup>14</sup> As he is not a historian, he focused on the story in a journalistic manner, but the spotlight that he created made room for true historians such as David Colburn and others to include the topic of Rosewood in the overarching story of Floridian Racial Violence.

---

<sup>13</sup> Gonzalez-Tennant. *The Rosewood Massacre* pg 150

<sup>14</sup> Moore. *Rosewood Massacre*

An official study was concluded in 1993 by historians at Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and the University of Florida, that while the estimates of people killed numbered upwards of 100, the report conclusively placed the death toll at eight.<sup>15</sup> Six Black residents were killed, and two White men were killed in the altercation at the Carrier house. With the continued historical work on the Rosewood Massacre, reparations have been made possible for a few of the Rosewood survivors. In 1994, Florida officially recognized compensation, and a total of nine survivors were compensated \$150,000. The Florida Department of Education set up the Rosewood Family Scholarship Fund in the same year to support the academic pursuits of the descendants of Rosewood. A 2020 News article by the *Washington Post* followed the academic journey of Morgan Carter, the great-granddaughter of survivor Oren Monroe. The article demonstrates that through the continued focus on the history of Rosewood, reparations were made possible, and the history of Rosewood was no longer solely focused on attaining justice. The history can expand to fit within larger narratives of Florida Exceptionalism and Southern racial violence. It can demonstrate patterns of Black resistance and the ways thriving communities became a threat. For Carter, the continued emphasis on studying history created new opportunities for her and her family. “The Rosewood story no longer ends with a scared boy running through the woods; it continues with graduation robes and diplomas, potentially the family’s first doctorate.”<sup>16</sup>

The stories of Rosewood and Ocoee mirror one another in a myriad of ways. Prospering Black communities were specifically targeted due to individuals nearby White community members viewed as social threats. Due to the significant trauma inflicted on survivors, the stories were largely diminished until recent years, with a continued emphasis on the avoidance of any guilt by the descendants of the perpetrators. The continued focus on the histories of Rosewood and Ocoee allows the scholarship to expand into fields that can deepen an understanding of the myth of Florida Exceptionalism, Black Resistance, and the longevity of the Black Freedom Struggle. The work of scholars such as David Colburn and Edward González-Tennant frames the history in ways that give credibility to the long-avoided stories. Through the strength of survivors, the oral testimonies retained in the 1980s and 90s reopened the historical work and brought about healing for both communities through verbal processing and legal reparations. The scholarship of the topic has not been exhausted, and through further focus, healing for the communities of Ocoee and Rosewood finds greater footing. White communities used mob violence to sow fear and to maintain slavery-era social power throughout these towns. Through the recognition of this history, the people harmed and the communities that were displaced, the strength of the individual and communal resilience is highlighted, and the fear that threatened them diminishes with time.

---

<sup>15</sup> Rosewood Incident of 1923. 1994. <https://library.law.fsu.edu/Digital-Collections/FLSumGenLeg/FISumGenLeg1994.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Samuels. *After Reparations*

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

Hurston, Zora Neale. 1989. Review of *The Ocoee Riot*. *Essence Magazine*, February 1989.

Moore, Gary. 1982. Review of *Rosewood Massacre*. *St. Petersburg Times*, July 25, 1982.

“NEGROES FLEE RIOT REGION. Ocoee, FL., Lacks Labor, Following Election Lynchings.” 2025.

[Nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com). 2025.

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1920/11/05/102985880.html?pageNumber=15>.

*Rosewood Incident of 1923*. 1994. <https://library.law.fsu.edu/Digital-Collections/FLSumGenLeg/FlSumGenLeg1994.pdf>.

St. Petersburg Times. 1923. Review of Blacks Kill Two Whites in Race Riot, January 6, 1923.

### Secondary Sources

Brackett, Ron. 2018. “From the Archives: The Original Story of the Rosewood Massacre.” Tampa Bay Times. June 6, 2018.

<https://www.tampabay.com/data/2018/06/06/from-the-archives-the-original-story-of-the-rosewood-massacre/>.

Colburn, David R. 1997. Review of *Rosewood and America in the Early Twentieth Century*. *Florida Historical Society* Vol. 76 (No. 2): pp. 175-192.

file:///home/chronos/u-

765422f77c9bf4d59efebdc7d049ab07c281f645/MyFiles/Downloads/Colburn%20%20Rosewood%20(3).pdf.

Gonzalez-Tennant, Edward. 2018. *The Rosewood Massacre: An Archaeology and History of Intersectional Violence*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Hoffmann, Carlee, Carlee Hoffman, and Claire Strom. “A Perfect Storm: The Ocoee Riot of 1920.” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (2014): 25–43. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43487653>.

Jones, Maxine D. n.d. Review of *The Rosewood Massacre and the Women Who Survived It*. *The Florida Historical Quarterly* Vol. 76 (No. 2): pp. 193-208. Accessed May 7, 2025.

file:///home/chronos/u-

765422f77c9bf4d59efebdc7d049ab07c281f645/MyFiles/Downloads/Jones%20-%20Rosewood%20Women%20(2).pdf.

Ortiz, Paul. *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920*. Germany: University of California Press, 2005.

Samuels, Robert, ed. 2020. Review of *After Reparations*. *The Washington Post*. April 3, 2020.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/rosewood-reparations/>.

Singleton, John, dir. 1997. *Rosewood* Film. Warner Bros. Pictures.