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Thomas M. Campbell Award

Beginning with Volumes 6/7, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the Thomas M. Campbell Award for the best paper published in the Annual Proceedings (now Annals) of that year.

Thomas M. (Tom) Campbell was the driving force behind the creation of the Florida Conference of Historians, at that time called The Florida College Teachers of History, over 40 years ago. It was his personality and hard work that kept the conference moving forward. Simply put, in those early years he was the conference.

Tom was a professor of U.S. Diplomatic history at Florida State University. The Thomas M. Campbell Award is in his name so that we may recognize and remember his efforts on behalf of the Florida Conference of Historians

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Blaine T. Browne Award

Beginning with volume 22, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the Blaine T. Browne Award, given to the best paper written by a graduate student who presents at the annual meeting and publishes in the Annals.

Dr. Browne earned a doctorate in American history at the University of Oklahoma in 1985. He subsequently taught at several universities and colleges before joining the faculty at Broward College in 1988. An active participant in the Florida Conference of Historians since 1994, Dr. Browne has presented at annual meetings and published in the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, the predecessor of the *Annals*. Now retired from Broward College, in 2014 Dr. Browne generously provided the seed money for this award.

Recipients

- 2021: J. D. Reiner, Florida Atlantic University
- 2020: Douglas Benner, University of South Florida
- 2019: Colin Cook, University of Central Florida
- 2018: Colin Cook, University of Central Florida
- 2017: Brad Massey, Polk State College and University of Florida
- 2016: Khali I. Navarro, University of Central Florida
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J. Calvitt Clarke III Award

Beginning with volume 20, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the J. Calvitt Clarke III Award for the best undergraduate research paper published in the Annals.

In 2012, Dr. Clarke, Professor Emeritus at Jacksonville University and a strong supporter of undergraduate research, graciously provided the seed funding for this important award. He is a frequent contributor and the founding editor of the predecessor to the *Annals*, the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*.

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- 2021: Kendall Allen, Texas State University
- 2020: Mariana Kellis, University of Central Florida
- 2019: Jeffrey Coltman-Cormier, Florida Atlantic University
- 2018: John Lancaster, University of Central Florida
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- 2016: Nicole Kana Hummel, New College of Florida
- 2015: Tyler Campbell, University of Central Florida
- 2014: Michael Rodriguez, Florida Gulf Coast University
- 2013: Amy Denise Jackson, Wesleyan College

A Note from the Editor

The present volume (28) includes articles presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of the Florida Conference of Historians, hosted by Florida Gateway College, Lake City, February 28-29, 2020. Congratulations to this year's recipient of the J. Calvitt Clarke III Award for the best undergraduate paper presented at the Annual Meeting and published in the *Annals*: Kendall Allen, "For Their Greatest Good": Education as a Diplomatic Tool in Negotiations with Native Peoples." (appearing in an online supplement to this volume).

Contributions from professional scholars, graduate students, and independent scholars in the present volume include the recipient of the Thomas M. Campbell Award for the best professional level paper presented at the Annual Meeting and published in the *Annals*: David Morton, "That the 'Traditions of the South' and 'Pure Americanism' Shall be Perpetuated": The Influence of the Ku Klux Klan and Prohibition Party on Florida's Silent Motion Picture Industry." Also featured is "The Interpretation and Historicity of the Healing of the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter" by J. D. Reiner, the recipient of the Blaine T. Browne Award for the best paper presented by a graduate student at the Annual Meeting and published in the *Annals* (congratulations to both award winners). The remaining contributions, as always, cover a wide variety of historical topics and geographical regions, including three articles with a Florida focus, covering civil rights issues and Florida's silent motion picture industry; civil rights student movements at the University of Florida; and Florida's military bases and wartime industries during the Second World War. Other topics are as varied as historical connections between China and Pennsylvania, New Testament history, wartime sabotage in Canada (WWII), and teaching social movements in Chilean history.

Michael S. Cole
30 January 2022

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New Faces but Old Ideas: A History of the Black Campus Movement at the University of Florida, 1969-1975

David Vaina
Union Institute & University

Introduction

This article provides a succinct overview of the Black campus movement at the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, a movement whose beginning and endpoints I have identified as 1969 and 1975. The UF movement was far from exceptional as it was one of nearly 200 movements that occurred on university and college campuses throughout the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including several across Florida (e.g., Florida State University, Florida Technological University, Santa Fe College). My main argument is that during the period that's been bracketed for this study, while acknowledging some very militant and even revolutionary rhetoric and cultural aesthetics, the Black campus movement at UF can be seen as a thematic continuation of a long civil rights movement that began at least fifteen years prior in Florida and throughout the South.

Jim Crow in Gainesville

From 1945 to 1958, there were eighty-five African American applicants to UF at both the undergraduate and graduate school levels; not one was admitted.¹ A familiar name to Florida history scholars is Virgil Hawkins, who first applied to UF's law school in 1949 but would not relinquish his battle in the state courts to overturn his rejection from UF until 1958 and only when the state agreed to desegregate its public universities. Another prominent figure from Florida's civil rights era was Stephen O'Connell, who was president of UF during the events of the Black campus movement but before that had served on the Florida Supreme Court in the 1950s where he co-authored a 1957 court opinion backing UF's rejection of Hawkins. George Starke Jr. officially became UF's first Black student when he was admitted to the law school in the fall of 1958. In 1962, a cohort of seven were UF's first Black undergraduates.

Meanwhile, a May 1971 position paper from the Black Student Union described labor conditions for Black employees at UF in the mid-1960s: "Black staff workers were designated for only the most menial jobs, those too demeaning for even the most uneducated, inept, unqualified Whites. Black employees, for instance,

Paper presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of the Florida Conference of Historians, originally entitled "Radical Ideas & New Faces: A History of the Black Campus Movement at the University of Florida, 1968-1975."

¹ Betty J. Stewart-Dowdell and Kevin McCarthy, *African Americans at the University of Florida* (Gainesville: B.J. Stewart-Dowdell, 2003), 42.

were not allowed to ride in the cab of university pick-up trucks.”² One of the key objectives of the leaders of Black campus movement at UF and on other campuses across the country was to undermine the so-called town-gown relations that generally divided the university community from the locality in which the school was based. As will be discussed below, efforts to establish a student-worker alliance at UF were in the Black students’ repertoire in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Racial progress at UF was barely discernible by the late 1960s. UF had just one Black faculty member in 1969, a visiting law professor named Spencer Boyer and a Harvard man who abandoned his appointment after racist threats. Before leaving, Boyd told the UF student newspaper, “I picked up the phone and the voice said, ‘Hello, is Dr. King there?’” Then [the caller] shouted a profanity and said, “how would you like a white southern boy to put a .30-06 bullet in your head just like we got Dr. King?”³ In 1969, Black students at UF accounted for a mere one percent of the total student enrollment at a time when U.S. Census data indicated that Black Floridians accounted for fifteen percent of the state’s population.⁴ Illustrating this extreme racial isolation at UF was one Black student’s perspective in 1968: “how can you feel part of an ocean of whiteness?” In 1970, a U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) report found that in 1969, only nine Blacks were among 922 new academic employees hired that year at UF, and no Blacks were promoted or were authorized to make a personnel decision; Blacks and other people of color were referred to in “traditional and inhuman terms,” said the report.⁵ Yet UF’s enrollment figures were fairly typical. In 1969, universities in the South had an average Black enrollment of 1.76 percent; in the East, the figure was 1.84 percent, in the Midwest, it was 2.98 percent, and in the West, the figure was 1.34 percent.⁶ But the numbers on Black enrollment at UF were somewhat misleading and clearly inflated as they included Black students from other countries that were added to amplify the overall Black student enrollment data. As Black activists at UF pointed out time and time again, the Black student enrollment data was regularly manipulated by the University administration for both political and public relations purposes.

The Establishment of BSU

The Black Student Union (BSU), which replaced the Afro-American Student Association (AASA), was organized in 1969, although UF did not formally charter

² University of Florida Black Student Union, Statement of Position I, 5 May 1971, Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida.

³ Paul Kaplan, “Negro Prof Leaves UF After Threatening Call,” *Alligator* (Gainesville, Fla.), 8 Apr. 1968.

⁴ Jilliane Henry, “African American Studies program celebrates 50 years, and looks to its future,” *University of Florida News*, 4 Feb. 2019, <https://news.ufl.edu/articles/2019/02/african-american-studies-program-celebrates-50-years-and-looks-to-its-future.html>; U.S. Census Bureau, “General Population Characteristics Florida (1970),” https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1970a_fl1-02.pdf.

⁵ Bob Wise, “UF Desegregation ‘Not Fast Enough,’” *Alligator*, 1 May 1970.

⁶ Martha Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 17.

it until late 1970. BSU operated as the fulcrum of power within UF's Black campus movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. BSU's rhetoric was strident right out of the gate, as evidenced in the preamble to its new constitution: "we, the black students of the UF, have come from all over this state and country burning with anger and despair, not only with the miserable plight of black students ... but also with the plight of our people." Added one of BSU's founders: "we are more political and militant than the AASA was . . . and more 'revolutionary.'"⁷ But it is at this early moment in BSU's organizational history that we also observe a disconnect between its rhetoric and its political objectives, an uncoupling that embodies a recurring theme throughout the 1969-1975 period. Immediately following the aforementioned revolutionary rhetoric was this less revolutionary summation of the new BSU agenda: "what we want is an end to racist employment practices, more black students, professors and administrators, an end to the racist hiring practices of the university, psychological testing and screening for administrators."⁸ BSU's modest demands could be boiled down to inclusion, equality, equity, and full access to the rights that U.S. citizenship holds: "what we are stressing is fundamental to the existence of this republic. If we owe the federal government taxes and the human ultimate — our lives for its existence, then it owes us the full privileges of American citizenship and the indefatigable execution of all its laws."⁹

Meeting weekly for several years after its 1969 founding, BSU was a well-organized group on campus and far from a fringe, separatist voice that resists categorization as a monolithic articulation of Black Power.¹⁰ It was also extraordinarily productive for its modest size; one member recounted in an oral history that the core of BSU was just between eight and ten people.¹¹ While BSU was governed by a tiny cadre of students, its analysis appeared, in most aspects, to be generally reflective of the issues that were top of mind to most other Black students at UF. In March 1971, a campus-wide poll conducted by two political science students at UF found that ninety percent of all Black students thought UF's administration was largely unresponsive to Black students' needs. However, the overall Black student population was considerably less enthusiastic in its support towards BSU's specific tactics.¹²

As noted above, the Black campus movement, both at UF and nationwide, sought to extend its reach to the non-academic Black communities that surrounded the campuses. Thus, we saw BSU collaborate with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and its efforts to

⁷ John Sugg, "New Black Student Union Replaces AASA," *Alligator*, 9 Oct. 1969.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Michell Dasher, "We Demand Full Privileges of Citizenship," *Alligator*, 5 Nov. 1969.

¹⁰ For a discussion on the Black student movement and its multi-dimensional engagement with both the civil rights movement and Black Power, see Biondi, 4.

¹¹ "History and the people who make it: David Horne," *Gainesville Iguana* (Gainesville, Fla.), 1 Apr. 2019.

¹² Randy Bellows, "UF Officials' Attitudes Prejudicial Says Poll," *Alligator*, 12 Mar. 1971.

organize mostly-Black cafeteria workers at UF who sought to form a union and secure pensions.¹³ BSU coordinated rallies in the spring of 1971 on behalf of an uprising at nearby Raiford State Prison. It also launched a bi-weekly newspaper around that same time that reported on issues of importance to both Black UF students and Black residents in Gainesville. BSU collaborated with the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter as well as neighboring students from Santa Fe College and Gainesville High School to organize a local “Black Week.” Inspired by the Black Arts Movement (it hosted the radical poet and activist Amira Baraka as a campus speaker), BSU brought politically-conscious theatre to the Gainesville community and also conducted tours for local high school students of the university’s Institute of Black Culture that would open in February 1972. This commitment to the broader Gainesville community and social justice was still evident in the late 1970s when the BSU operated as a referral service for local sickle cell anemia patients and their families (as did local Black Panther chapters throughout the country) and even after UF’s Senate slashed its budget by thirty-four percent in 1972.¹⁴ BSU was also a key figure in both the university and Gainesville communities’ active anti-war movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, one that reached its peak in the aftermath of the Kent State shootings.¹⁵

BSU’s politically-moderate practices were equally illustrated in its commitment to consistently working within the institutional structure of the university when it submitted its formal demands to the UF Student Senate in the spring of 1970: expand the role of the director of Minority Affairs and increase that position’s salary; hire a Black administrator in Academic Affairs to recruit more Black faculty; develop a Black Studies Program leading to a degree and one that would be taught by Black scholars; address the aforementioned HEW report findings; end University recognition of fraternities and sororities at UF with racist policies; and recruit and hire more Black athletes and coaches.¹⁶ In June 1970, BSU’s president was installed into Florida Blue Key, the state’s oldest and most prestigious honorary society, telling the student newspaper that he was inspired by BSU’s solidarity with White liberal allies on campus.¹⁷ While the new Institute of Black Culture (IBC), which BSU campaigned for in the early 1970s, featured a large portrait of Angela Davis on its walls and BSU selected Betty Shabazz (the widow of Malcolm X) as its keynote speaker for its opening ceremony, IBC’s founding vision was hardly a stridently-separatist one: “the purpose of the center is not to segregate the black students from the rest of the student body, but instead it is intended to serve as a means of communications between the different nationalities on campus . . . an

¹³ Sue Custode, “Workers’ Union Visualized,” *Alligator*, 3 Mar. 1970.

¹⁴ Lynne Jackson, “Student Senate cuts BSU Budget,” *Alligator*, 9 Mar. 1972.

¹⁵ Bob Wise, “6,000 Join Candlelight Procession,” *Alligator*, 11 May 1970.

¹⁶ “Minimum Demands’ Issued By BSU,” *Alligator*, 14 May 1970.

¹⁷ Ron Sachus, “Kirk Keynotes ‘Key’ Banquet,” *Alligator*, 4 June, 1970.

environment of the free exchange of ideas.”¹⁸ Thus, the tenor of both BSU and IBC was one characterized as overwhelmingly institutional and cooperative.

A More Complicated Black Thursday

This article did not exclusively focus on the events surrounding “Black Thursday,” the very short BSU occupation of President O’Connell’s office in April 1971 that resulted in the arrest of sixty-six Black students, UF’s foreign Black students recommending their embassies not send nationals to study at UF because of the racism there, and a series of boisterous campus-wide protests supporting BSU and opposing O’Connell. First, Black Thursday has been commemorated at several UF-sanctioned events. Meanwhile, an alumnus who participated in the events has published an account of them.¹⁹ There’s also a *New York Times* news report on the events.²⁰ Second, one may argue that so much public and intense attention on this one action, however dramatic, obscures the years of organizing that occurred before this moment and as well as the work BSU continued to do in its aftermath. Indeed, Black Thursday was hardly a spontaneous moment. There were six demands presented during the occupation: increased Black student enrollment and more funding of remedial support for incoming first-year Black students who may need or desire additional tutoring; the establishment of a Department of Minority Affairs managed by its own vice president; hiring a Black administrator in Academic Affairs; hiring of a Black assistant manager with personnel responsibilities; recruiting and hiring more Black faculty; and improved labor conditions for UF’s Black employees. These demands were nearly identical to demands made eighteen months prior, as BSU pointed out.²¹

Over the years, a near-mythical quality has surrounded Black Thursday and the events are generally considered an outlier from the other campaigns of the civil rights era at UF and in Gainesville because they involved an occupation and mass arrests. But there appeared to be no violence committed by the Black students, as most of the vandalism that occurred was created by White students. And while historical accounts usually highlight that 122 Black students withdrew in protest after the events because O’Connell refused to grant full amnesty (he rather downgraded their punishment to probation), ninety-two of these students ultimately returned to campus in the fall.²²

What’s generally omitted from Black Thursday accounts is the complicated role and legacy of President Stephen O’Connell, whose name now adorns UF’s basketball arena in the heart of campus. According to Roy Mitchell, who was serving as UF’s Coordinator of Minority Affairs/Disadvantaged Students during

¹⁸ Kathy Roberts, “GSU To Open Student Center,” *Alligator*, 15 Oct. 1970.

¹⁹ Stanley Laham, *The Taking of Tigert Hall* (Baltimore: Publish America, 2006).

²⁰ James T. Wooten, “Florida U. Head Disavows Racism,” *New York Times*, 18 Apr. 1971.

²¹ Statement of Position I, 2.

²² “Black enrollment increases by 207,” *Alligator*, 28 Oct. 1971.

the Black Thursday events and essentially acted as the sole liaison between UF's administration and all Black students (he had no full-time staff and just two part-time student employees), O'Connell met with him just twice in those eighteen months to discuss the Black students' demands.²³ O'Connell, who had refused to give up his membership in the all-White Gainesville Country Club, was largely an imperial figure during this time as he accepted no responsibility for his actions or inactions. In a public statement on the day of the occupation, O'Connell blamed BSU: "all of us at the University, and I personally, deeply regret that the students and others involved have shown their lack of good judgment, restraint, and concern for their own welfare and that of the University by precipitating this confrontation at this time."²⁴

O'Connell's public statements alternated between infantilizing Black students or aping Cold War rhetoric that he was certain would appeal to the average voter and the Florida Board of Regents. For instance, O'Connell dismissed BSU's demands and actions as a case of spring fever: "it's the silly season."²⁵ Ever the defender of American freedom, O'Connell justified the student arrests because UF faced internal threats and that radical Black students were mere "pawns" of a broader conspiracy.²⁶ Both the public and the news media overwhelmingly sided with O'Connell. The *Gainesville Sun* attributed Black Thursday to "hysterical mobism," a "handful of anarchists," a "limber-legged pack of irresponsible kooks," and "emotional children."²⁷ UF issued a press release that spring to demonstrate that the silent majority had O'Connell's back: "to date the Office of the President has received a total of 1,238 letters and telegrams from faculty, students, staff, legislators, friends and the general public, all but 33 of them in support of the President."²⁸ Four years later in 1975, and after O'Connell had retired and the Black Thursday generation had graduated, some current Black students at UF were still angered by the announcement that the student center would be named after him. In 2018, a petition to rename the O'Connell Center at UF was circulated on campus: "sign our petition so we can put an end to the glorification and immortalization of this racist and hate-filled man, and stop upholding our University's history of racism and discrimination," the petition read.²⁹

²³ Roy I. Mitchell, Statement to Citizens of the State of Florida (The Tax Payers), 27 May 1971, Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, 3.

²⁴ Stephen O'Connell, Statement by President Stephen O'Connell, 15 Apr. 1971, Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, 3.

²⁵ Melvin L. Sharpe, 'Black Thursday': A Black Demonstration at the University of Florida, n.d., Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, 39.

²⁶ Stephen O'Connell, Statement by President Stephen O'Connell, 19 Apr. 1971, Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, 6.

²⁷ "Abandon All Reason," *Gainesville Sun*, 19 Apr. 1971.

²⁸ Jim Beckham, "Statement of J. A. B.," 29 Apr. 1971, Special & Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, 1.

²⁹ "UF Students say O'Connell Center shouldn't be named after 'racist' ex-president," *Tampa Bay Times*, 8 Feb. 2018.

One More Moment in a Long Struggle

For well over a decade now, a handful of historians, most prominently Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, have advocated for a “long civil rights movement,” and the concept remains relevant to scholars contextualizing local civil rights histories across the South.³⁰ In the traditional “short” civil rights movement framework, historians have divided up post-World War II Black activism into separate phases that are distinguishable for their singular themes. Thus, from 1955 to 1965 there was what’s known as the civil rights movement’s “classical” phase when the unifying thread was Black integration into previously racialized spaces, especially public schools. After 1965, and ending in the early 1970s, there was the shift to Black Power when the overarching concerns included, but were certainly not limited to, armed self-defense, Black nationalism, and economic redistribution. But advocates of a long civil rights movement collapse any differentiating phases within the historical period. Even in the classical phase, such advocates contend the linkages between economic equality and civil rights were visible well before the 1966 establishment of the Black Panther Party in Oakland. When considering the relatively moderate goals and tactics of the Black campus movement at UF, one can link the movement to the activism that was initiated in the mid-1950s across the South in localities such as Gainesville. Although the pace of Gainesville’s activism in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was considerably slower than it was in some other southern localities, it too showed signs of a formal social movement with the local NAACP chapter receiving its national charter in October 1954 and the emergence of an NAACP Youth Council embracing direct action in the late 1950s.³¹

Another important point among those supporting a long civil rights framework is a refutation of declension, or the belief that the type of broad-based Black activism initiated in the mid-1950s was swallowed up by Black Power. Many national civil rights leaders recognized how much more work there was to do after the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act were passed. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said in August 1967, “the deep rumbling of discontent in our cities is indicative of the fact that the planet of freedom has grown only a bud and not yet a flower.” By the late 1960s, he added, many Blacks were still living “in the basement of the Great Society” and continued to be denied access to “the total life

³⁰ See Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1233-1263.

³¹ At this time, there is no comprehensive account of post-World War II Black activism in Gainesville. For an account of the struggle as it pertained to education and equality, see Michael T. Gengler, *We Can Do It: A Community Takes on the Challenge of School Desegregation* (New York: Rosetta Books, 2018). Other notable local histories within Florida include David R. Colburn, *Race, Change & Community Crisis: St. Augustine, Florida, 1877-1990* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991); Glenda Alice Rabby, *The Pain and the Promise: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Tallahassee, Florida* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2006); and J. Michael Butler, *Beyond Integration: The Black Freedom Struggle in Escambia County, Florida, 1960-1980* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

of the community.”³² How Blacks sought to experience and collectively organize for that “total life” can be told through the events that occurred in the late 1960s and well into the 1970s.

Of course, this is not to say there were not moments of militancy during the Black campus movement at UF or that the aesthetics were not occasionally radical in their expressions. BSU, according to one of its members, was modeled to mimic the organizational structure of the Black Panther Party and thus the titles of the officers in BSU included “Minister” as the Panthers had used.³³ Another episodic expression of militancy was evidenced when three Black students were arrested in January 1970 for allegedly forcing White students, at gunpoint, to clean up a mess several White students had made in their dorm as part of a BSU strategic effort to draw attention to Black custodians’ low wages and humiliating treatment.³⁴

But again, the overall historical narrative, particularly BSU’s actions and statements, do not generally correspond with these periodic manifestations of radicalism. It was largely a historical extension of community organizing with thematic objectives supported by a number of White progressive organizations on campus as well as one receiving broad support within the student government and student body (both White and Black), and can be located at the high point of mass political mobilization per Rex D. Hopper’s typology of social movements.³⁵ Furthermore, declension would not occur until after the most active years of BSU of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Black campus movement was also a peaceful movement, and one in alignment with the overwhelming non-violence that was perhaps the larger movement’s most celebrated quality. One just has to compare and contrast the work of BSU on campus to what happened off campus and in the streets during a momentary burst of radicalism that Gainesville was witness to in the winter and spring of 1968. The *New York Times* characterized Gainesville in early 1968 as home to a “miniature black power movement.”³⁶ By mid-February, nearly 20 bombs had gone off in the city.³⁷ As local media reports noted, Gainesville, in the immediate aftermath of Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination in April, had become an “armed camp” in the Black neighborhood of northwest Gainesville where barricades were erected by Black youth and it was described as a “country under military rule.”³⁸ The local newspaper reported that during a four-hour “uprising,” car windows were smashed, an estimated fifteen to twenty gunmen shot at police, rocks and bottles

³² Martin Luther King, Jr., “Where do we go from here?,” in *The Radical King*, ed. Cornel West (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 163-164, 168, 176.

³³ Joseph McCloud, interviewed by Andre Everett, 3 Sept. 2010, transcript, African American History Project, Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at the University of Florida.

³⁴ Raul Ramirez, “3 Students Jailed In Dorm Incident,” *Alligator*, 23 Jan. 1970.

³⁵ Rex D. Hopper, “The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movements,” *Social Forces* 28, no. 3 (1950): 270-279.

³⁶ Anthony Ripley, “Black Power Unit Stirrs Florida City,” *New York Times*, 21 Apr. 1968.

³⁷ Raul Ramirez, “Accused Firebomber Still Missing,” *Alligator*, 25 Mar. 1968.

³⁸ Harvey Alper, “Troops Patrolled City Again Monday Night,” *Alligator*, 9 Apr. 1968.

were thrown, and a grocery market was firebombed; the city also regulated all sales of “liquor, beer, gasoline, flammable liquids, firearms and ammunition.”³⁹ Ultimately, 366 National Guardsmen and other law enforcement personnel were called up.⁴⁰ No such violence occurred on campus and while some Black students from UF were present during these events and even assumed leadership roles, it does not appear they engaged in any violent protest.⁴¹

If we may then consider collectively the years 1955 to 1975 and the hundreds of local civil rights movements that occurred across the South, we can see them not as a period of distinct phases abruptly transitioning into the next one, such as the civil rights movement morphing into Black Power, but an evolving, widening struggle consisting of various, and sometimes simultaneous campaigns for a modern, interracial democracy. Indeed, the notion that in 1965 there was an abrupt declension from the civil rights movement to Black Power appears to be a reductive conceptualization when we closely examine the events on the ground in local communities. Extending well into the 1970s, the era of a long civil rights movement reacted to and evolved from the emergence of Black Power, but that latter phase was overwhelmingly a temporary and relatively brief rupture in the era as Black activists largely ignored it or in some cases, worked within it. As noted above, BSU, when it was established in the late 1960s, declared: “what we are stressing is fundamental to the existence of this republic. If we owe the federal government taxes and the human ultimate — our lives for its existence, then it owes us the full privileges of American citizenship and the indefatigable execution of all its laws.”⁴²

Or, what if we wish to characterize the campus movement at UF solely as an expression of Black Power? As J. Todd Moye has written, the term Black Power can mean many things and is an “amorphous ideology.”⁴³ Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, meanwhile, contend there was an “artificial distinction between civil rights and Black Power.”⁴⁴ The late Manning Marable argued that the ten point platform of the Black Panthers was one of radical reform and that the Panthers were well within the American tradition when they cited Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence in their own program: “governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, [but] whenever any form of government becomes destructive . . . it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem

³⁹ “11 P.M. Curfew Put In Effect Here,” *Gainesville Sun*, 8 Apr., 1968.

⁴⁰ Harvey Alper, “Guards, Riot Squad Placed on Alert Here,” *Gainesville Sun*, 7 Apr. 1968.

⁴¹ Harold Kennedy, “Ghetto Tense After Marches,” *Alligator*, 8 Apr. 1968.

⁴² Dasher, “We Demand Full Privileges of Citizenship”

⁴³ Todd J. Moye, *Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Movements in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 206.

⁴⁴ Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, eds., *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 5.

most likely to affect their safety and happiness.”⁴⁵ Peniel E. Joseph adds that the “elements of civil rights activism and Black Power militancy co-existed in complex, combative, and novel ways.”⁴⁶ At UF and in Gainesville, where we observed regular political collaboration between BSU and the local NAACP chapter, the Black Power expression was almost completely stripped of any ideological purity.

The post-World War II Black freedom struggle in Gainesville and at UF was a long one, beginning in the 1950s and tapering off in the mid-1970s. Overall, the tenor of the activism during the 1955 to 1975 era remained well within the broad framework of American liberalism and racial integration as Blacks in Gainesville and across the South sought to first establish equality of opportunity and then achieve equality in outcome as affirmative action emerged as a critical issue in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. Black students at UF joined the struggle in the late 1960s, sustaining a legacy that had commenced with older Gainesville residents and high school students a decade before. The sit-ins of the early 1960s in Gainesville were led by local high school students through their involvement in the NAACP Youth Council and were not spearheaded by college students such as the ones in Greensboro and elsewhere simply because UF did not have any Black students until a few years later. Hopefully, this argument offers a very modest contribution to a growing body of scholarship that undermines, both ideologically and chronologically, the dominant civil rights era narrative of 1954 to 1965. By identifying this period of activism as one consisting of a series of campaigns, such as UF’s Black campus movement, that had linkages with each other, sometimes overlapped with each other, or were different responses to each other, we can replace the tendency to create sharp divisions during the 1954 to 1975 timeframe. Even while recognizing phases of thematic diversity, this approach enables us to more fully capture a relatively unified era of Black activism speaking the same vocabulary of social justice in its broadest sense.

⁴⁵ Manning Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-1990* (Oxford: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 109.

⁴⁶ Peniel E. Joseph, “The Black Power Movement: A State of the Field,” *Journal of American History* 96, no. 3 (2009): 760.

Global and Local Connections in an Autobiography: The German Translation of Yan Phou Lee's (Li En Fu) *When I Was a Boy in China*

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In 1889, Yan Phou Lee's autobiography *When I Was a Boy in China* was published as *Aus meinen Knabenjahren in China*, not in Berlin or Leipzig, but in Allentown, Pennsylvania.¹ Allentown was both a burgeoning industrial center neighboring the Bethlehem steel works, and a thriving city influenced by the culture and religion of its primarily German settlers. Yan Phou Lee's autobiography recounts the story of his upbringing in China and elaborates on how he managed to become a college student in the United States. Lee's autobiography and its German translation are evidence how important historical insights can be gained from investigating networks of transnational productions of knowledge.

Lee's book would not have been possible without his participation in the Chinese Educational Mission. Lee had been chosen by the CEM as one of 120 students to eventually study in the United States and live with an American family.² He was admitted to Yale University and earned a bachelor's degree in Literature. Lee integrated into American society, one of his sons was a World War One pilot, but then experienced divorce, remarriage, and professional uncertainty. In the process of his autobiography, Lee introduces readers to various facets of Chinese culture during the late Empire, prior to China's revolution. Lee's publication was mentioned and reviewed in various U.S. newspapers at the time. The publication of his memoirs in German only two years later speaks to the thriving German-language publishing industry in the United States, as well as the increasingly global production of knowledge during the late 19th century. Interestingly, Lee's autobiography was not published in Germany, nor was the German translation widely distributed in the United States. I was able to locate what might be the only existing copy. According to the Allentown translation, Lee's translator was Albert Petri, a professor and founder of a *Gymnasium* in Germany. A pressing

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¹ Yan Zhou Lee, *Aus meinen Knabenjahren in China* (Allentown: Trexler & Hartzell. 1889).

² On the Chinese Educational Mission, see: Liel Leibovitz and Matthew Miller, *Fortunate Sons: The 120 Chinese Boys Who Came to America, Went to School, and Revolutionized an Ancient Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), and Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Stepping Forth into the World: The Chinese Educational Mission to the United States, 1872-81* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011); and earlier: Thomas E. La Fargue, *China's First Hundred* (Pullman: State College of Washington, 1942). Leibovitz and Miller refer to Yan Phou Lee as Li En Fu, reflecting an updated phonetic spelling and the Chinese custom of placing the family name first. Rhoads uses both versions. La Fargue used the name Lee Yen-fu in reference to Yan Phou Lee. In this paper, I have attempted to follow the Chinese tradition of placing the family first, especially in the sections based on Leibovitz and Miller's book, with the exception of Yan Phou Lee, whose name I use as printed in his autobiography.

question, then, is how Petri in Germany obtained Lee's text, deciding to translate it for the American market. Here the connections may be denominational. Allentown mustered a strong showing of Lutheran and Reformed congregations, and Petri hailed from Schmölln, a mostly Lutheran-Evangelical town in Thuringia. In addition, Allentown and Lehigh County featured a variety of printers and publishers during the late 1800s.

Yan Phou Lee was a Christian with increasing dedication, which has earned him posthumous criticism from those scholars seeking to explore the "authentic" Chinese immigrant experience in the West. According to such critics, Lee would have been too westernized to truly convey the Asian immigrant experience.³ Subsequent scholarship, however, values all evidence and literature, noting that immigrant experiences are diverse.⁴ Lee himself would go on to make a bold stance against the Chinese Exclusion Acts, and prejudices facing immigrants from China.⁵ Although the impact of the German translation of Lee's autobiography is currently unknown, it nevertheless demonstrates the important connections of the global, national and local transfer of knowledge in the late nineteenth-century world.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, China found itself in a difficult situation. An ecological crisis, brought on by soil erosion and the destruction of natural watersheds, increased the intensity and recurrence of floods. Opium imports resulted in a shortage of silver currency.⁶ As a result of the Second Opium War (1858-1860), China had been forced to legalize opium imports as payment for tea exports, and a total of sixteen port cities were opened to trade, losing their jurisdictional sovereignty in the process. The Taiping and Nian rebellions resulted in widespread destruction and challenged the calcified Qing dynasty. The rebellions also negatively impacted food production, as "fertile fields stood uncultivated."⁷ As a consequence of the First Opium War, foreigners enjoyed the right to proselytize in China's treaty ports.⁸ Western missionary schools offered English classes and education. In 1850, one of the missionaries, the Reverend Samuel Brown, brought a Chinese student called Yung Wing back to Connecticut.⁹ This move would plant the seed for the Chinese Educational Mission.

³ See for example: Amy Ling, "Yan Phou Lee on the Asian American Frontier," in *Re/Collecting Early Asian America: Essays in Cultural History*, ed. Josephine Lee, Imogene L. Lim and Yuko Matsukawa (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 273-287.

⁴ See for example: Floyd Cheung, "Early Chinese American Autobiography: Reconsidering the Works of Yan Phou Lee and Yung Wing," in *Recovered Legacies: Authority and Identity in Early Asian American Literature*, ed. Keith Lawrence and Floyd Cheung (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 24-40.

⁵ Yan Phou Lee, "The Chinese Must Stay," *North American Review* 148, no. 389 (Apr. 1889): 476-483.

⁶ Klaus Mühlhahn, "China und der westliche Imperialismus", in *Kolonialkrieg in China*, ed. Mechthild Letutner and Klaus Mühlhahn (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2007), 15-16.

⁷ Liel Leibovitz and Matthew Miller, *Fortunate Sons: The 120 Chinese Boys Who Came to America, Went to School, and Revolutionized an Ancient Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), 67.

⁸ Thoralf Klein, "Aktion und Reaktion? Mission und chinesische Gesellschaft", in *Kolonialkrieg in China*, 33. The Second Opium War resulted in foreigners being able to travel and proselytize in all of China. See: Mühlhahn, "China und der westliche Imperialismus", in *Kolonialkrieg in China*, 20.

⁹ Leibovitz and Miller, *Fortunate Sons*, 20.

Yan Phou Lee's journey to the United States and his subsequent education at Yale University would not have been possible without the initiative of Yung Wing. Yung was the first person from China to study at Yale, and according to Leibovitz and Miller, made a name for himself among the students in 1850 as the winning scorer during the annual freshmen against sophomores football game.¹⁰ These were the days when American football had no rules, and simply featured riotous crowds attempting to place a ball across the opposing sides' goal line. Yung spent eight years abroad, and later wrote a widely available autobiography, titled *My Life in China and America*.¹¹ Upon his initial return to China, Yung sought employment. His first visit was to American missionaries, the kind who had facilitated his studies in the United States.¹² Equipped with a bachelor's degree but without having taken the highly selective Chinese civil service examination, Yung's options were limited. A position at the Imperial Customs Translating Department in Shanghai ended when Yung refused involvement in the customary bribery schemes.¹³ Eventually, after a further display of his physical prowess, one that involved punching a disrespectful but socially superior Westerner, Yung became a tea trader for a British-run firm. In this role, Yung traveled between the Heavenly Kingdom of the Taiping rebels, and the Shanghai province of the Qing dynasty.¹⁴ An old friend, now a high-ranking official in the Heavenly Kingdom, had equipped Wing with a silk passport for safe passage.¹⁵ During the nascent self-strengthening movement against the exploitation of China by Western colonial powers, in 1863, Yung was summoned by Zeng Guofan, the governor-general of Hunan province. Zeng had complained that "many Qing officials did little but devote themselves to the Confucian classics."¹⁶ Zeng tasked Yung with setting up a machine shop to produce armaments, and Yung returned to the United States to procure the necessary machinery. Soon, an engineering school followed.¹⁷ In response to a request by the Jiangsu Province governor Ding Richang, Yung submitted a number of proposals for China's further self-strengthening.

One of Yung's proposals in support of China's self-strengthening movement was a suggestion to send 120 Chinese students abroad for fifteen years to study at preeminent American colleges.¹⁸ This idea by Yung was the genesis of the Chinese Educational Mission. According to the Burlington Treaty of 1868, "Chinese subjects shall enjoy all the privileges of the public educational institutions

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15-19.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹² *Ibid.*, 31.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 61-64.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 73. Zeng passed away just prior to the Chinese Educational Mission setting sail (89).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 76-77 and 84. During this second stay in the United States, coinciding with the American Civil War, Yung felt obligated as an American citizen to offer his services to the Union army, but was advised by a friend, the son of a Union general, to carry out his mission for China instead (*ibid.*, 78-79).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

under the control of the government of the United States.”¹⁹ Recruitment for the educational mission proved to be challenging. Without national newspapers or other “popular means to disseminate official decisions,”²⁰ Yung had to rely on local representatives. Apparently, cultural opposition to sending away sons, mistrust of Westerners who had arrived to colonize, as well as horrific myths about American violence, all eventually resulted in over 70 percent of student recruits stemming from the more cosmopolitan Canton province.²¹ After completing a specifically established preparatory school, the first group of boys arrived in San Francisco in 1872.²² Riding on the recently opened Transcontinental Railroad, the students’ ultimate destination was Hartford.²³ The co-director of the group, Chen Lan Pin, had been “an official with the Imperial Board of Punishments,”²⁴ ensuring that in Connecticut, the boys did not stray from their cultural values, such as wearing their Chinese robes and displaying their braided ponytails. Eventually, Chen permitted the students to wear suits, although he prohibited them from cutting off their queue.²⁵ Local officials in Hartford viewed the quick assimilation of the Chinese students “as an affirmation of the potent American spirit over the . . . ineffectual traditions of China.”²⁶ By 1875, Yung Wing was married to Mary L. Kellogg, an acquaintance of Yung’s friend, Reverend Joseph Twichell, who had also been instrumental in Mark Twain meeting Olivia Langdon Clemens.²⁷ In 1876, the students toured the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, visited Machinery Hall there, and shook the hand of President Ulysses S. Grant.²⁸ These events are examples of the semi-celebrity status of the CEM students, during their time at Hartford Public High School.

Despite the overwhelming success of the mission, by 1876 the educational mission was in trouble. Li Hongzhang, the imperial official responsible for the CEH, had received critical reports from Yung’s traditionalist co-director.²⁹ When Yung’s co-director Chen was promoted to a position as China’s chief envoy in Washington, D.C., Chen appointed the inept traditionalist Woo Tze Teng in his place.³⁰ Chinese authorities made further efforts to restrict the students’ efforts at assimilation. The news from Washington was equally dismal: students from China would not be allowed to attend U.S. military academies.³¹ By 1880, the Burlington Treaty had been revised “to ‘regulate, limit or suspend’ Chinese immigration.”³² In

¹⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 87.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

²² *Ibid.*, 89 and 96.

²³ *Ibid.*, 96, 109 and 114.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 115 and 132.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 129 and 140.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 87 and 144.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 141-142.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 156.

³² *Ibid.*, 157.

1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act became law.³³ Ultimately, however, the early end to the CEM was decided by the Emperor.³⁴ Even a personal appeal by President Ulysses S. Grant to Li Hongzhang, following an introduction made between Grant and Reverend Twichell by Mark Twain, could not change the mind of the higher ups at the imperial court.³⁵ Curiously, the drifting apart of the United States and China seems to have been reciprocal. One must wonder whether the Chinese authorities were actually appalled at the assimilation of their U.S.-based students, or the imperial court was simply cutting its losses because the students would not be allowed to study American military craft. In addition, the Chinese Exclusion Act must have made China's leaders question the assertion that American culture and education were worth emulating.

Although the Chinese Educational Mission was recalled to China in 1881, one of its former students, Yan Phou Lee, returned to the United States on his own in 1884.³⁶ Presumably based on his fluency in English, Lee was allowed back into the United States, despite the Chinese Exclusion laws. While residing with the family of Mrs. Sarah Vaille, Lee attended various schools in Connecticut, and entered Yale College in 1880. Concluding his formal American education, Lee received a degree with honors from Yale in 1887 and published *When I Was a Boy In China*. According to his own account, Yan Phou Lee was born in 1861. This is just about the only specific biographical information that Lee provides in his book. However, Lee's late grandson, Professor Richard Vaille Lee, M.D., a former chief of medicine at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Buffalo, New York, compiled much of what is known about Yan Phou Lee.³⁷ Lee was born in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, and arrived in Connecticut in 1873, after passing his entrance examination for the Chinese Educational Mission the previous year.³⁸ Initially, Lee had been ill-prepared to leave China and study in the English-speaking world. Regarding education, Lee pointed out that "schools in China are usually kept by private gentlemen."³⁹ The author noted that as a rule, only one scholar taught at these schools, and that any other system would have been impractical, because "the schoolmaster in China must be absolute."⁴⁰ Except for holidays and vacations, school continued for seven days a week. Lee bemoaned the fact that after having to

³³ *Ibid.*, 157.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 163.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 161-163.

³⁶ Yan Phou Lee, quoted in: "Introduction", in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee: When I Was a Boy In China* (Xlibris 2003), 18.

³⁷ Cf.: William C. Roberts, MD, "Richard Vaille Lee, MD: A Conversation With the Editor," *Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings* 13, no. 3 (July 2000): 267-275.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1317055/pdf/bumc0013-0267.pdf>

³⁸ "A Capsule of the Life of Li Yan Phou", in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 25. For further biographical information, see: Amy Ling, "Yan Phou Lee on the Asian American Frontier," in *Re/Collecting Early Asian America: Essays in Cultural History*, ed. Josephine Lee, Imogene L. Lim and Yuko Matsukawa (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 273-287.

³⁹ Yan Phou Lee, *When I Was a Boy in China* (Boston: D. Lothrop Company, 1887), 50. Lee went on to state that "the government provides for advanced scholars only".

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

memorize the Chinese written characters, without initially knowing their meaning, he had to commit volumes of Confucian books to memory.⁴¹ Neither grammar nor mathematics were taught.⁴² Thus was Lee's preparation when one of his cousins arrived at home with the news of Yung Wing's plan to send Chinese students to America. Few parents were eager to send their children abroad, under the tutelage of foreigners, for years on end. Lee's cousin, however, convinced Lee's mother of the "golden prospects of the successful candidate."⁴³ Consequently, Lee's widowed mother left the decision up to him, and he "said yes without hesitation."⁴⁴ As Lee pointed out, he was "more or less adventurous in disposition," exclaiming that "a chance to see the world was just what I wanted."⁴⁵ Lee deeply bowed four times to his mother, and was on his way to Shanghai, via Hong Kong, where he promptly wandered off on his own, only to be whipped by his cousin upon his return.⁴⁶ In Shanghai, Lee met an uncle who worked as a *compradôr* for an American tea house and supervised "a corps of accountants."⁴⁷ Lee marveled at the constricting clothing of Western dress, wondering how one could walk or run in it.⁴⁸ Lee was witnessing transculturation, "the confrontational dynamic of the process and the creativity of the consequent production."⁴⁹ Chinese and Western professionals were in the process of creating a hybrid culture out of cooperation and culture conflict.

In the book, Yan Phou Lee made an effort to provide his readers with a survey of Chinese cultural traits and aspects of village life in China, decades before China's revolution and the later Japanese invasion. Lee proceeded in chronological order, beginning with the idiosyncrasies of infancy and childhood, as well as observations on parenting and authority. Because Lee first left China at twelve years old, already having lost his father three years prior, his detailed account only encompasses this period. He explains that his given name, Yan Phou, means "Wealth by Imperial Favor," forming his full name as Lee Yan Phou. Fortunes are told for newborns, and charm necklaces are worn to ward off evil spirits.⁵⁰ Thick quilted and padded layers of cotton clothes are worn, but no shoes until infants are able to walk.⁵¹ Thus wrapped up, he watched his mother spin flax.⁵² When Lee's uncle died, he adopted him and made him his heir. This change brought the responsibility of burning a daily remembrance incense and annual offering.⁵³ For Lee, childhood

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 53-57.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 92-95, here 95.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 96-98.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 99. A *compradôr* was "an agent of the Western colonizers" (see: Leibovitz and Miller, *Fortunate Sons*, 64).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴⁹ Cf. Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 17.

⁵⁰ Lee, *When I Was a Boy in China* (1887), 10.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

meant “obedience and respect, rather than affection.”⁵⁴ According to the author, this was the norm. In the household, men and women lived in separate wings, and “women are subject to their fathers and husbands.”⁵⁵ Lee also adamantly pointed out, however, that the infanticide of girls was not a common practice, a belief that he appears to have later encountered in America.⁵⁶ He stressed that “the horrible practice of female infanticide was in our part of the empire only heard of in stories, and not without a shudder.”⁵⁷ Lee’s statement demonstrates his awareness of these issues.

Lee’s “higher middle class condition of life” included extended family, such as a set of grandparents and an uncle’s family, whereas his grandfather embodied domestic authority.⁵⁸ Several servants catered to the household, but Lee’s grandmother also assigned chores to her daughters.⁵⁹ For nourishment, fish, rice, turnips and potatoes were staples.⁶⁰ Festive meals featured pork roast.⁶¹ Whether the ceremony was comparable or literal is not clear, but for Lee’s christening, as he writes, “pigs’ feet and ginger pickled together” were served.⁶² Further afield, “kite-flying is a national recreation.”⁶³ A type of hacky sack using a shuttlecock was another popular amusement.⁶⁴ Lee notes that thirty or forty families, all related to each other, resided on his street.⁶⁵ Thus, his social interactions focused on his extended family and distant relations.

In an active period of writing, Lee followed up on his book with two articles, “Why I Am Not a Heathen,” and “The Chinese Must Stay,” both published in the *North American Review*.⁶⁶ Around this time, Lee applied for American citizenship, although it was not granted.⁶⁷ Following his graduation, Lee married Elizabeth Maude Jerome, a relative of Winston Churchill’s mother.⁶⁸ The union produced two children, Jennie and Gilbert, but the marriage ended in divorce in 1890. Gilbert Jerome also graduated from Yale and died in 1918, flying for the French Escadrille during World War One. Daughter Jennie went on to become a librarian at the New Haven Public Library.⁶⁹ In 1897, Lee operated a concession in Nashville, at the

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 18, 23.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 20, 24.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁶⁶ “A Capsule of the Life of Li Yan Phou”, in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 26.

⁶⁷ “Introduction,” in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 20. An 1896 newspaper report claimed that Lee was about to travel to China as a U.S. citizen. See: “Exclusion Act Don’t [sic.] Affect Him”, in: *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, 9 Oct. 1896, 1.

⁶⁸ “Introduction,” in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 16.

⁶⁹ “Introduction”, in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 16-17. On Gilbert N. Jerome, see for example: *New England Aviators 1914-1918: Their Portraits and Their Records*, introduction by A. Lawrence Lowell, vol. 1 (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co./Riverside Press Cambridge, 1919).

Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition.⁷⁰ Prior to the exhibition, Lee had once again travelled to China, indicating that he may have obtained items for his exhibit while there. In Nashville he met and married his second wife, Sophie Florence Bolles. This marriage also resulted in two children.⁷¹ In 1899, Lee obtained a concession for a “Chinese exhibit” at an exposition in Philadelphia.⁷² Presumably this occurred on the occasion of the Philadelphia National Export Exposition.⁷³ Lee does not seem to have been able to expand on this venture, however, and from 1904 to 1917 he was the proprietor of a live poultry market in the Chatham Square section of Manhattan’s Chinatown.⁷⁴ Subsequently, he returned to writing.

From 1918 to 1927, Lee worked as editor of *American Banker Magazine*, leaving for Hong Kong that year to edit an English language newspaper. Lee last communicated with Yale University in 1938 and is not believed to have survived the Japanese invasion of Canton.⁷⁵ Lee had replied to inquiries by the Yale Alumni Office that he had worked for the *Canton Gazette* from 1931 to 1937, but was now suffering from Japanese aerial bombardments. At seventy-seven years of age in 1938, he asked his son Clarence to send money from the United States, but the son’s reply to Lee was returned from China, “marked ‘Address unknown’.”⁷⁶ Lee was never heard from again.

What we have is his book. A number of possible reasons exist why the German translation of Lee’s book was published in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Allentown was the center of a lively German-language publishing scene. In the late nineteenth century the population of Allentown was primarily Lutheran, especially its civic and business leaders. Although geographically in the Mid-Atlantic region, its economic and transportation ties to New York City have always placed Allentown in the periphery of the Northeast. After its beginnings as a country town, Allentown became a city in 1867, with a population that still numbered less than 15,000.⁷⁷ For the time being, the changeover from iron to steel negatively affected Allentown industries, and local iron ore mines neared exhaustion.⁷⁸ Allentown’s largest bank, the First National Bank of Allentown, failed.⁷⁹ Finally, in 1881, the Adelaide Silk Mill opened, ushering in a new age of industrial success. Within five years, the

⁷⁰ Yan Phou Lee, quoted in: “Introduction,” in Richard V. Lee, ed., *Yan Phou Lee*, 19. On world’s fairs, c.f. Robert Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), and Bruce Harvey, *World’s Fairs in a Southern Accent: Atlanta, Nashville, and Charleston, 1895-1902* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014).

⁷¹ “Introduction,” in: Richard V. Lee, ed. *Yan Phou Lee*, 19.

⁷² Yan Phou Lee, quoted in *ibid.*, 19.

⁷³ Cf. <https://www.phillyseaport.org/rise-fall-philadelphia-commercial-museum>. A co-sponsor of the National Export Exposition, the Commercial Museum occupied the Philadelphia Convention Hall and Civic Center complex and housed a vast permanent collection of world’s fairs exhibits.

⁷⁴ Yan Phou Lee, quoted in “Introduction,” in Richard V. Lee, ed., *Yan Phou Lee*, 19.

⁷⁵ “A Capsule of the Life of Li Yan Phou,” in *ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁶ Ling, “Yan Phou Lee on the Asian American Frontier,” in *Re/Collecting Early Asian America*, 279.

⁷⁷ Karyl Lee Kibler Hall and Peter Dobkin Hall, “A History of Allentown: 1874-1900,” 289-339, in Mahlon H. Hellerich, ed., *Allentown 1762-1987: A 225-Year History* (Allentown: Lehigh County Historical Society, 1987), 289.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 292.

Allentown Spinning Mill, the Pioneer Mill, and the Iowa Barb Wire Company (later part of the American Steel and Wire Company) followed.⁸⁰ By 1882, the local cigar industry was producing over 17 million cigars annually.⁸¹ In 1883, the Allentown Electric Light Company, soon to be the Allentown Electric Light and Power Company, was incorporated.⁸² Furniture workers were the first to organize “under the banner of the Knights of Labor.”⁸³ The Pennsylvania German population was now joined by new immigrants, including “Italians, Frenchmen, Syrians, Slavs, and Russian and Eastern European Jews.”⁸⁴ In 1883, for example, the first Jewish house of worship opened.⁸⁵ Despite its growing cultural diversity, Allentown was still strongly influenced by the roots of its majority Pennsylvania German population. According to Kibler Hall and Dobkin Hall, “the Pennsylvania Germans were, in fact, an amalgam of Protestants who had come from France, Switzerland, and various German principalities.”⁸⁶ This initial melting pot of German-speaking Protestants continued to support various German-language publications, the first of which had appeared in the early 1800s.

Allentown acquired its German-language presses in 1812, relatively late compared to Reading, Lancaster, and York, for example. Only then did Allentown become a county seat with the formation of Lehigh County out of parts of Northampton County. From the 1830s to the 1850s, the so-called Pennsylvania Dutch presses saw their highest demand. Printing, however, continued into the early 20th century. The biographies of the publishers of Lee’s German-language edition reflect their local engagement in a growing town. According to Alfred Shoemaker, “the Allentown press . . . was predominantly Lutheran.”⁸⁷

The German translation of Lee’s book was published by Trexler and Hartzell. William J. Hartzell was born in Lower Macungie, Lehigh County, in 1848. He attended Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and became a ticket agent for the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. In 1877, he purchased part of the Allentown German-language newspapers *Friedens-Bote* and *Welt Bote* (Messenger of Peace and World Dispatch). The newspaper office doubled as a bookstore and a wallpaper store. Undoubtedly, this placed the business on a more solid footing. In 1893, he co-founded the *Allentown Leader*. An active member of the community, Hartzell served as councilman, school director, and water commissioner. In addition, he was active in Democratic county politics, served as a

⁸⁰ L. C. Gobron, *Souvenir of Allentown* (Allentown, 1919), cited in Karyl Lee Kibler Hall and Peter Dobkin Hall, “A History of Allentown: 1874-1900,” 289-339, in: Mahlon H. Hellerich, ed., *Allentown 1762-1987: A 225-Year History* (Allentown: Lehigh County Historical Society, 1987), 299.

⁸¹ Kibler Hall and Dobkin Hall, “A History of Allentown: 1874-1900,” 300.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 301.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 306.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 289.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 306-307.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 319.

⁸⁷ Alfred L. Shoemaker, *A Check List of Imprints of the German Press of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania 1807-1900 with Biographies of the Printers*, vol. 16, *Proceedings of the Lehigh County Historical Society* (Allentown: H. Ray Haas & Co., 1947), 14.

director of the Lehigh Valley Traction Company, co-founded the Lehigh Telephone Company, as well as the Lehigh Valley Trust Company. He died in Allentown in 1923.⁸⁸ Benjamin F. Trexler was born in Long Swamp township, Berks County, in 1827. He began an apprenticeship at the *Friedens-Bote* around 1840 and went on to publish *Der Lecha Patriot* (the Lehigh Patriot). Both newspapers are available in the Library of Congress. In 1854, he founded the *Welt-Bote*. From 1858 to 1867 he worked for the *Republikaner* (Republican). By 1868, he was in a position to publish a daily German-language newspaper in Allentown, called the *Stadt- und Land-Bote* (the Town and Country Dispatch). In 1893, Trexler sold his newspaper interests and traveled extensively. He became a trustee of Muhlenberg College, and wrote a history of Lehigh County. He died in Allentown in 1922.⁸⁹ Both of these short biographies reflect deep connections to Allentown's entrepreneurial class and predominant religious community at the time.

Lee's book was translated into German by Albert Petri. Starting in 1902, Petri would be the founding director of a secondary school in Schmölln, Thuringia, since 1871 part of the German Empire.⁹⁰ Petri was most likely a philologist by training and maintained an index of recent works on English philology, published in several updated editions, as well as writing about Lutheran missionary work.⁹¹ Therefore, Petri would have been in a position to translate a book from English into German, and find a presumably receptive audience. The relative obscurity of the German translation of Lee's book could be attributed to a number of reasons: perhaps the purging of German-language literature, once the United States went to war against Germany in 1917, played a role.⁹² Another possible reason might have been a general unpopularity with German-speaking audiences of the subject matter of the story of Lee's childhood in China. Thirdly, Trexler and Hartzell were local newspaper publishers without a distribution network far beyond the city of Allentown. Any number of these reasons may have contributed to the existence of only one copy, or few above that, of Petri's translation.

More recently, the late Amy Ling, Professor of English and Director of Asian American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, was one of the first scholars to rediscover and reevaluate Yan Phou Lee's role as a writer and a citizen of the world. According to Ling, Lee was "the first person of Asian ancestry to

⁸⁸ Ibid., 213.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 224.

⁹⁰ Cf. Albert Petri, *Geschichte der Staatlichen Realschule zu Schmölln, Thür. 1902-1927* (H. Böckel, 1927).

⁹¹ Cf.: Albert Petri, *Die Ausbildung der evangelischen Heidenboten in Deutschland mit besonderer rücksichtigung des Berliner Missions-Seminars und einem Anhang über evangelische Missions-Anstalten ausserhalb Deutschlands* (Berliner Missionshaus, 1873); and Albert Petri, *Das Ephoralamt. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Bedeutung desselben in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der preußischen Landeskirche* (Bertelsmann, 1908); and Albert Petri, *Übersicht über die im Jahre 1894 [etc.] auf dem Gebiete der englischen Philologie erschienenen Bücher, Schriften und Aufsätze, zusammengestellt von A. Petrie*. Further editions 1898-1909 and 1913.

⁹² See for example: <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2017/09/banned-book-week-news-coverage-of-textbook-burnings-during-world-war-i/>

write and publish a book in English in the United States.”⁹³ Ling was critical of fellow scholar Elaine Kim’s categorization of Lee’s book as belonging to a group of uncritical “ambassadors of goodwill,” that included Ilhan New’s autobiography, *When I Was a Boy in Korea*.⁹⁴ Admittedly, Lee and New’s books were published in a series titled “Children of Other Lands Books.”⁹⁵ Nevertheless Ling argues, the contents of these books were most likely prescribed by the editor, and Lee’s includes “glimmers of humor, irony, and understatement,” in addition to being the prelude to his North American Review articles, “Why I Am Not a Heathen” and “The Chinese Must Stay.”⁹⁶ In “Why I Am Not a Heathen,” Lee proclaimed that,

the California legislature that passed various measures against the Chinese was not Christian, the Sandlotters were not Christians, nor were the foreign miners. They might call themselves Christians, but I don’t call a man a genius simply because he claims to be one. Let him do something worthy first. You shall know a man by his works.⁹⁷

This quotation is just a brief example of Lee’s polemic and rhetorical abilities that he effectively applied in his articles, with references to Aristotelian logic and Presbyterian beliefs. Therefore, even though Lee’s autobiography presumably was limited in its scope, Lee the author was not. Professor Floy Cheung, however, argues that Lee’s dismantling of stereotypes about China and its people goes further than the overtly political writings. According to Cheung, it was precisely *When I was a Boy in China* where, “thus does Lee use his unique socioeconomic and racialized position to contest what he perceived to be inauthentic and unflattering ethnographies of the Chinese, which were often used by politicians and the press to advocate Chinese exclusion.”⁹⁸ Therefore, one may say that Lee, as the first Chinese American book author, does more than play tourist guide. He actively worked to counter prejudices and contest Chinese exclusion. Lee’s status, as somebody who was culturally Chinese American, but lacked the formal conclusion of his citizenship application process, poignantly reverberates to the present.

In conclusion, Yan Phou Lee’s life story, as far as it can be reconstructed, offers insights into the life of one of China’s first exchange students in the United States. Lee was not the only student of the Chinese Educational Mission about whom we have biographical information. He was perhaps the only one, however, whose recollections were translated into German. These connections have allowed me to

⁹³ Ling, “Yan Phou Lee on the Asian American Frontier,” in *Re/Collecting Early Asian America*, 273.

⁹⁴ Ibid. Cf. Rocio G. Davis, *Begin Here: Reading Asian North American Autobiographies of Childhood* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007), 34-37.

⁹⁵ Davis, *Begin Here*, 36.

⁹⁶ Ling, “Yan Phou Lee on the Asian American Frontier,” in *Re/Collecting Early Asian America*, 282-283, with quotation on page 282.

⁹⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, 283. Italics in the original. “The Sandlotters” refers to “San Francisco, where harassment of Chinese was most virulent, and where Dennis Kearney, and Irish [sic.] labor leader, held anti-Chinese rallies in sandlots”. *Ibid.*, 284.

⁹⁸ Cheung, “Early Chinese American Autobiography: Reconsidering the Works of Yan Phou Lee and Yung Wing,” in *Recovered Legacies*, 26.

highlight examples of how global and local producers of knowledge interacted, as well as Allentown, Pennsylvania's participation in this process. The rediscovery of the forgotten translation of Lee's book also suggests the continued importance of historical preservation and inquiry, and the knowledge that can be gained from such endeavors. Some of what has been discarded by libraries as outdated or unimportant may end up being our library of Alexandria. We would do well in preserving more of it.

Monster and Mascot: The Alligator and Florida's Coming of Age

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In 1895, the Florida Times Union published an exposé on a man known as “Alligator Joe” Frazee. Frazee was a renowned alligator hunter who guided groups of tourists to capture the creatures for sport, raised baby alligators for export to the north, and claimed to have amicable relationships with some of the saurians.¹ He was apparently able to summon a “10-footer” with a whistle, and the animal proceeded to climb out of the water and lay its head on Frazee’s lap. The Times Union author who documented the scene likened the reptile to “a pet dog.”² However, despite Frazee’s alleged close relationship with the alligators, he clearly viewed them as monsters to be exploited. In July of 1897, when a group of men near Biscayne Bay captured a crocodile and issued a challenge that someone provide an alligator to fight their animal, Alligator Joe answered by providing one of his “pets” for the fight. In a gruesome display of frontier barbarism, Joe and his opponents placed their respective beasts together in close quarters and provoked a battle to the death. Though the alligator won by crushing the crocodile’s lower jaw, before the contest was over the crocodile managed to bite “the ‘gator amidships and [tear] out several yards of entrail.”³

Frazee’s ultimate decision to provide one of his pet alligators for an animal fight was illustrative of a period when Floridians regarded alligators as dangerous monsters to be killed for commodities, safety, and as a feat of frontier masculinity. Alternatively, the mythmaking behind his personage, which included somewhat familial ties with the dangerous reptiles, suggested other potential relationships between people and alligators. This study is a cultural environmental history that addresses an important question for historians of Floridians’ relationships to their natural environment: how did Floridians’ perceptions of alligators shift over the turn of the century, and how does this reflect the state’s development? As their state grew and developed between 1894 and 1912, Floridians’ views of the alligator shifted away from a confrontational hostility grounded in frontier masculinity, and toward a more reconciliatory form of domination that claimed the tamed species as a facet of Florida’s cultural identity. By asserting that an observable cultural shift with respect to alligators occurred between 1894 and 1912, this essay is meant to challenge prior late assessments of shifting culture toward the Florida reptile.

Instead of emphasizing the timing of protective legislation, as some previous authors have, this study relies most heavily on popular representations of alligators

¹ The term “saurian” was prominently used in the late 1800s and early 1900s to describe alligators. Merriam-Webster defines it as “any of a suborder (Sauria) of reptiles including the lizards and in older classifications the crocodiles and various extinct forms (such as the dinosaurs and ichthyosaurs) that resemble lizards.”

² “Joe Frazee Farms ‘Gators,” *Florida Times Union*, 22 Sept. 1895, 5.

³ “Crocodile Pitted Against a ‘Gator,” *Florida Times Union*, 18 July 1897, 5.

and human-alligator encounters contained in the *Florida Times Union*. As the largest statewide newspaper during the period, its stories involving alligators simultaneously reveal Floridian perspectives on the animals as well as how the publication's contributors thought the creature should be described. Through these hitherto untapped portrayals, one can begin to understand the cultural relationship between the Florida public and the alligator.

Although many scholars of Floridian environmental history have weighed in on the relationship between growth, development, industry, and environmental degradation, the popular status of the Florida alligator during the turn of the century remains largely unaddressed.⁴ Fortunately, some recent works have tacitly indicated the potential for this kind of study by refocusing attention upon human perspectives on the animals they share space with. For example, in his essay "Alligators and Plume Birds: The Despoliation of Florida's Living Aesthetic," Jack Davis devoted his writing entirely to two prominent animal groups in Florida history. He documented the destruction of alligator and plume bird populations in Florida and argued that the exploitation of these species simultaneously stripped the state of the very things that attracted people in the first place.⁵ While the appeal of plume birds as images of beauty and quality targets for sport resulted in their mass destruction by plumage and sport hunting, the allure of alligators as an exotic and dangerous creature contributed both to the impulse to kill the animals as an act of masculinity, and to the commodification of various body parts for tourists and export.

The killings occurred on such a massive scale that, according to Davis, by the early 1900s "a growing number of people recognized that vanishing wildlife was changing Florida's living aesthetic."⁶ By implicating alligators as part of the growing realization of vanishing wildlife, this claim invited the analysis conducted in this study in order to better grasp how such a realization was taking shape during the turn of the century. Davis's contention is especially notable when considered alongside Mark Barrow Jr.'s subsequent essay, "The Alligator's Allure: Changing Perceptions of a Charismatic Carnivore."⁷ Barrow brought new layers of understanding to the study of the alligator in Florida's cultural

⁴ Notable examples include Mark Derr, *Some Kind of Paradise: A Chronicle of Man and the Land in Florida* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1989) and James Miller, *An Environmental History of Northeast Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998). Derr's work was primarily a declensionist narrative, and he emphasized environmental exploitation and destruction driven by the pursuit of short-term profits. He specifically tied the expansion of Florida's railroads, as a driving force for tourism and accelerated economic growth, to greater wildlife and forest destruction. Miller made similar connections in the latter portion of his text, relating growing rail infrastructure to increases in land development and the Florida naval stores industry, which in turn begot more environmental degradation.

⁵ Jack Davis, "Alligators and Plume Birds: The Despoliation of Florida's Living Aesthetic," in *Paradise Lost? The Environmental History of Florida*, ed. Jack Davis and Raymond Arsenault (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 238.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 251.

⁷ Mark Barrow, "The Alligator's Allure: Changing Perceptions of a Charismatic Carnivore," in *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History*, ed. Dorothee Brantz (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

environmental history by examining the beast as a predator, a symbol of Florida's landscape, a commodity, and as an endangered species. As a dangerous predator and a commodity, Floridians deemed the alligator a target for hunting without countervailing reasons to show any restraint.⁸ Alternatively, as a symbol of their state's unique landscape, Floridians regarded the reptiles as a tourist attraction. The creatures featured prominently in curio shops and drew visitors to alligator farms and zoos across the state.⁹ Barrow concluded his work by describing the alligator's image as an endangered species, and eventually a nuisance animal, and how concerns over the reptile's decline in the mid-twentieth century begot these perceptions.

By dealing solely with Floridian perceptions of alligators, Barrow's study provided a closer cultural analysis than any preceding work. Although the author identified the middle of the century as the crucial period of shift in attitudes toward alligators, his organization of differing perceptions also established a loose chronological evolution which suggested a long-term shift. Where Floridians once viewed alligators in a primarily antagonistic light and therefore justified the gratuitous killing of the saurians, they eventually valued alligators to an extent that they deemed the animals worthy of large-scale legal protection.

The cultural shift that Jack Davis hinted at, and which Mark Barrow Jr. expanded upon, received more direct attention from Laura Ogden in her book, *Swamp Life*.¹⁰ In her effort to de-marginalize the stories of people who lived in and around the Everglades, Ogden dedicated an entire chapter to the alligator and its conservation. After a brief explanation of the commodity market for alligator products, she elaborated on the importance of alligator hunting to those who lived in the Everglades and continued by addressing state efforts to restrict hunting. She noted state laws passed as early as 1939 and contended that such actions were a response to "alligator-conservation concerns."¹¹

The timing of these morphing attitudes toward alligators suggests that the cultural shift pertaining to the reptiles began in Florida considerably earlier than scholars have claimed. To better understand that change, this study combines methodologies from the works of Leslie Poole and Ted Ownby. Early in her book *Saving Florida*, Poole identified the turn of the century as an era of cultural change in Florida heavily influenced by the period's progressive politics and trends toward conservation, and she did so by foregrounding women's political and social activities across the state.¹² By the same token, this essay focuses on how newspapers depicted the relationship between men and alligators in an effort

⁸ *Ibid.*, 129-132.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹⁰ Laura Ogden, *Swamplife: People, Gators, and Mangroves Entangled in the Everglades* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹² Leslie Poole, *Saving Florida: Women's Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015).

to demonstrate a cultural shift during the period in question. However, whereas Poole examined women's activism, this analysis applies Ted Ownby's formulation of hunting as an expression of masculinity in Southern male culture to reinterpret the significance of representations of alligators in the state's popular media.¹³

Between 1894 and 1912, Floridian perspectives on alligators seen in the *Florida Times Union*, and some other smaller publications, shifted from viewing the reptiles as coveted trophy animals to beloved cultural symbols. This tangible change in attitude took place without the direct advocacy or support of any interest group, which suggests the decline of violent frontier masculinity parallel to the state's burgeoning development in this period. As the state developed beyond frontier wilderness and toward a more secure expansion of modernization, the value in the masculine domination of alligators through killing lost importance. Instead, Florida's reptile became a tame tourist attraction and symbol of Floridian identity; still dangerous, but under control.

At the turn of the century, access to Florida skyrocketed with the extension of railroad infrastructure throughout the state. During the early- and mid-1890s Henry Flagler rapidly expanded his rail lines south along the east coast, reaching New Smyrna in 1892, Rockledge in 1893, West Palm Beach in 1894, and Miami in 1896.¹⁴ Flagler's railway reached its furthest extent in 1912, when an unprecedented feat of engineering linked mainland Florida to Key West.¹⁵ These railroads brought opportunities for tourists, development, and industrial interests in a state where travel was hitherto mostly limited to lines of steamboat service. The quickening pace of new visitors and residents had numerous implications for Floridians, including worries over the state's sustainability, especially regarding game animal availability. In February of 1895, a *Florida Times Union* article reported on the excessive shooting of doves, quail, and deer, all valuable game animals of the state, and laid responsibility for the recklessness upon visitors. The author described Florida as a "hunting paradise," but raised the specter of losing this status if actions were not taken to protect game animals.¹⁶ The incident was timely because it was published exactly one week after an editorial which called for similar protective action. The editorial warned that a recent frost had already weakened game populations, and also invoked Florida's unique game environment to justify preservation.¹⁷ These early articles foreground the importance that Floridians, and

¹³ Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 12, 21; Ownby argued that killing animals served as an outlet of violent masculinity for men who were restricted at home and in society by religious values that elevated "harmony, self-control, and moderation." As a "respectable opportunity for excitement and self-indulgence," killing animals functioned in many ways as a status symbol, with especially dangerous or remarkable circumstances holding greater clout. This point clarifies why so many desired to kill a large and powerful predator like the alligator.

¹⁴ Derr, *Some Kind of Paradise*, 25-26.

¹⁵ Ogden, *Swamplife*, 36; Miller, *Northeast Florida*, 179; the "unprecedented feat of engineering" mentioned here was Flagler's construction of an overseas railway bridge that connected the Florida peninsula to Key West via the Key Islands.

¹⁶ "Birds and Deer Butchered," *Florida Times Union*, 28 Feb. 1895, 3.

¹⁷ "Protect the Game," *Florida Times Union*, 21 Feb. 1895, 4.

the editorial staff of *Florida Times Union*, credited to game animals. Yet in these and later calls for game animal protections, the alligator was conspicuously absent.

This was because Floridians viewed the alligator less as a game animal, and more as a fierce and powerful beast that could threaten humans. Much of Florida's population held this view throughout the nineteenth century, and it is best understood through the most oft-repeated stories featuring alligators. The origins of the alligator's mighty image date back to the beginnings of colonialism, but William Bartram's "medieval representations of dragons" sensationalized and standardized the reptile's monstrous reputation.¹⁸ The alligator's alleged monstrosity thus made it a frequent target of steamboat passengers who shot the animals in massive numbers from their vessels' decks. Although the alligator was not the only victim of these steamboat shooting galleries, it was the victim most continuously subjected to indiscriminate slaughter outside of hunting situations, even after steamboat owners banned shooting from their decks in the mid-1880s.¹⁹

Popular media, chiefly newspapers, played an undeniable role in promoting hostility toward these misunderstood creatures. From 1894 to 1903, the cultural predisposition toward alligators as dangerous monsters which were to be killed at every opportunity persisted, buttressed by frequent news of such killings. Individuals told stories and provided descriptions which continued Bartram's tradition of mythmaking, reaffirming the alligator's image as powerful and threatening while supporting the cultural pressures that made killing or capturing one of the beasts a masculine feat of strength. In one case in February of 1896, the *Times Union* reported on a man named J. B. Lovering, who recounted how alligators attacked his horses when he was out filling barrels with water. In his telling, upon firing his rifle at them, the alligators "made a rush for the wagon and overturned it."²⁰ After he fell into the water, Lovering stated one of the saurians struck him with its tail, allegedly flinging him twenty feet away onto dry land.²¹ The aggressive and coordinated swarming Lovering attributed to his attackers aggrandized their ferocity, and even though alligators are indeed strong animals, the ability to launch a man twenty feet through the air was a remarkable exaggeration.

Embellishments of their size accompanied the overselling of the reptile's strength and behavior. J. C. Spottswood made one of the most outlandish of these descriptions. In August of 1895, he told a *Times Union* writer that, while alligator hunting in southern Florida, he killed a saurian that weighed 387 pounds and measured twenty-seven feet long.²² Such imagery certainly conveys a sense of monstrosity, but the length alone is patently absurd, not to mention the beast's proportions. For comparison, as of 2013 the largest verified alligator in Florida

¹⁸ Davis, "Alligators and Plume Birds," 239.

¹⁹ Barrow, "The Alligator's Allure," 133-134.

²⁰ "Attacked by Alligators," *Florida Times Union*, 12 Feb. 1896, 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² "Spottswood's Truthful Story," *Florida Times Union*, 12 Aug. 1895, 3.

measured 14 feet 3.5 inches and weighed approximately 654 pounds.²³ As comical as these hyperbolic caricatures may be today, they accrued a real sense of excitement and pride to violent encounters with Florida's native monsters. The *Times Union* described Lovering's encounter as a "thrilling experience," and deployed more outsized verbiage to describe other stories.²⁴

For example, in March of 1895, two young women went fishing with a guide in Bartow. After finding a "monster gator," the guide shot it once in the back, and the women "had the pleasure of putting a few balls into [its] head."²⁵ The sub-heading "The Combat of Two Young Ladies With a Saurian" led the description of this one-sided event, and the article concluded by congratulating the women for capturing "this old hero of many battles."²⁶ All at once, this author conveyed the alligator's fierce reputation and the concomitant daring nature of anyone who challenged the beast. The situation was a rare experience, "thrilling" and "exciting."²⁷ This kind of narrative fueled the desire to conquer alligators through killing and capture and helped reinforce these actions as rewarding deeds of frontier adventurism. It likewise highlighted the role of masculine frontier men bringing joy to women by guiding them in the slaying of such a creature.

The following year, in another such "exciting experience," three men took their female companions on an alligator hunt in Punta Gorda with the aim of bringing one of the animals back alive. The hunt went well, and they succeeded in digging an alligator out of its cave and binding it for transport. The *Times Union* described their prey as an "immense beast" whose eyes "scintillated with fury" and whose swinging tail was "vicious," leaving no doubt about the grave danger the alligator posed.²⁸ However, the trip nearly went awry when, in the men's absence, the reptile freed itself from the rope around its jaws and, to the horror of the women, made an attempt to attack the horses hitched to their wagon. Similarly, in July of 1895, W. A. Gilbert almost lost his life after he presumed an alligator dead after he shot it nine times. Upon attempting to collect "so fine a trophy" as the creature's corpse, the alligator revealed that it was still quite alive, and chased its assailant out of the water.²⁹ Such stories demonstrated not only how dangerous the reptiles could be, but also just how powerful the draw was to be known for besting a saurian. A masculine effort to exhibit strength, daring, and courage could conflict with the traditionally masculine priority of guaranteeing women's safety. Wrangling a wild alligator was such a tantalizing prospect to the three men at Punta Gorda that they put their female partners in extreme danger.

²³ Arnold M. Brunell, J. Patrick Delaney, Richard G. Spratt, Dwayne A. Carbonneau, and Jason E. Waller, "Record Total Lengths of the American Alligator in Florida," *Southeastern Naturalist* 12, no. 4 (2013): N9-N14, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44657462>.

²⁴ "Attacked by Alligators."

²⁵ "They Fought an Alligator," *Florida Times Union*, 25 Mar. 1895, 2.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ "Gator Hunt at Punta Gorda," *Florida Times Union*, 7 Mar. 1896, 7.

²⁹ "His Hair Stood on End," *Florida Times Union*, 30 July 1895, 5.

Thus, the very same reputation and attributes which made the alligator a prime target for glory-seekers also designated it as a constant threat to humans. Perceived as resilient predators capable of vicious and sudden aggression, the reptile's presence near humans was inherently offensive. Floridians could then rationalize the killing of otherwise unoffending alligators as a defensive action, part of men's masculine obligation to safeguard their communities. As a result, men and boys took time to go out of their way to kill saurians that they found in their immediate area. In one instance in June of 1895, a Sheriff Tillis and two other men encountered a "monster 'gator" while crossing Paine's Prairie near Gainesville.³⁰ The animal's size earned it a description as "one of the largest alligators ever seen in this county."³¹ The men surrounded the saurian on horseback and reportedly shot it twenty times before it was believed dead, at which point the sheriff slit the animal's jugular to be sure. Likewise during the preceding month in Clermont, two boys came upon "a large 'gator" on their way to church.³² Since they lacked anything with which to kill the alligator, one went home to retrieve an axe, which they then used to fashion clubs. The boys assaulted the eleven-foot-long creature with their makeshift clubs, putting out one of the reptile's eyes before delivering the coup de grace with their axe.³³

The three men passing on horseback through Paine's Prairie could have easily avoided the alligator they spotted, yet they halted their journey to kill the animal. There were not many clues as to the reasoning behind this behavior, except that the *Times Union* emphasized the alligator's size and resistance to gunfire. Such a powerful creature's existence in an area through which humans might pass meant that people were living under a grave threat. Therefore, in light of the potential danger to the community, Sheriff Tillis and his compatriots had to kill the reptile. In the latter scenario, the *Times Union* clarified that the alligator was found laying out and sunning itself. The account described no aggression by the alligator but was sure to include the creature's formidable size. This, and the fact that two boys on their way to church delayed their progress to stop and kill the beast, suggests a similar pattern of logic to Sheriff Tillis. By existing on a path frequented by people, the alligators violated the modicum of separation required to maintain bloodless coexistence, and their lives were forfeit. For this very reason, in 1902 an alligator was used as target practice by numerous citizens at the Jacksonville wharves before it was killed with a bullet through its eye.³⁴

Clearly, a bloodless coexistence between alligators and Floridians was never the case. Besides killing the reptiles for glory or to remove the perceived threat they represented, Florida's residents and tourists hunted alligators to a considerable

³⁰ "A Monster 'Gator," *Florida Times Union*, 26 June 1895, 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² "A Large 'Gator," *Florida Times Union*, 20 May 1895, 3.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ "Shot an Alligator," *Florida Times Union and Citizen*, 1 Aug. 1902, 5.

extent for commodities such as teeth and skins. The scale of this type of hunting could reach massive proportions. In August of 1897, the *Times Union* reported that S. H. Bush, of Bonifay, killed 226 alligators for their skins on a five-week hunting expedition.³⁵ The following May, the *Times Union and Citizen* reported that a hunting party in the southern reaches of the St. Johns River brought in 229 skins in one week.³⁶ In Mr. Bush's case, his kills translated to over six alligators killed per day; in the case of the southern hunting party made up of an unspecified number of people, the rate was almost thirty-three per day. Numbers like these give greater validity to estimates that suggested the quantity of alligator hides harvested from Florida between 1880 and 1894 numbered approximately 2.5 million.³⁷

While the preceding numbers indicate that some of Florida's residents and visitors hunted the reptile on a colossal scale for economic purposes, by virtue of the saurian's capacity to threaten humans, Floridians relegated them to a nebulous status. The animals were monsters and threats to be hunted and killed, but they were not to be considered proper game animals. This meant that despite the material value of their teeth and hides, and their economic value as targets for tourists, alligators would not be lumped into the cultural concern for overexploitation that was preoccupied with the overhunting of deer and quail. In fact, in an 1896 editorial, a *Times Union* writer criticized the excessive hunting kills of a visiting group of "sportsmen," and went so far as to lambaste them for the shooting of "sixteen useless and inoffensive alligators."³⁸ The author took the surprising step of associating alligators with quail and deer by branding the whole episode as unreasonable, but continued by clarifying that "as far as alligators are concerned, the saurian cannot rightfully be considered game."³⁹ The only conceivable reason why the creatures were excluded from categorization as game animals is due to the alligators' fierce image as a predator, which mandated their destruction and capture at every opportunity.

Until 1903, the alligator was widely perceived and represented as a dangerous beast to be hunted and killed for glory, protection, and in some cases, income. Masculine impulses led residents of Florida, and visitors to the state, to seize any opportunity to best the wild animals. Meanwhile, there were no significant countervailing reasons to show restraint, and simply let an unthreatening alligator live. This overall cultural predisposition showed signs of faltering after 1903, as tales of slaying monstrous and powerful alligators gave way to familial descriptions of tamed pets and tourist attractions.

From 1903-1912, alligators featured in the news at a level of frequency consistent with the previous century's close. This frequency was characterized by a

³⁵ "A 'Gator Hunter Lays Claim to Killing 220 Saurians in Five Weeks," *Florida Times Union*, 5 Aug. 1897, 7.

³⁶ "Banyan," *Florida Times Union and Citizen*, 25 May, 1898, 3.

³⁷ Davis, "Alligators and Plume Birds," 242.

³⁸ "Useless Game Slaughter," *Florida Times Union*, 15 Dec. 1896, 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

tangible change in tone and subject, with more articles detailing the capture of the animals for display in places like the Florida Ostrich Farm or J. Oskey's curio store on Jacksonville's Bay Street. Writers also noticeably played down the reptile's established monstrosity and instead attributed more positive traits to the predator. However, this did not seem to be part of any conscious effort to change the public's view of alligators. Rather, *Times Union* articles from this period most likely reflected contemporary societal changes. The majority of reporting on alligators from this time period originated in Jacksonville and its immediate vicinity, symbolizing a rapid shift in focus from the rural community to the urban. Considered together, these elements present a clear change in perceptions and representations of alligators and implicate a more urban and development-focused perspective as a driver for this transition. Experiencing rapid development, economic change, and sizeable increases in tourism, Florida's image evolved beyond that of a wild and dangerous frontier. For Floridians, whether they were writers or entrepreneurs, rehabilitating the alligator's image went hand-in-hand with their state's growth.

After 1903 this rehabilitation took the form of emphasizing the alligator's role not as a dangerous predator and a threat, but rather as a tourist attraction and a natural wonder. For instance, in March of 1903, the Florida Ostrich Farm near Jacksonville proudly advertised in the *Times Union* its acquisition of all of the Palatka Alligator Farm's saurians.⁴⁰ The ad touted the Ostrich Farm's collection as "the largest in the state" and promised guests daily features that would show how alligators could be "tamed."⁴¹ Furthermore, the *Times Union*'s write-up on the reptiles' northward transfer described the animals as "happy as alligators could be" when they were "allowed to disport themselves with thirty members of their tribe that were already domiciled at the farm."⁴² After this description, another segment detailed how a transportation mishap almost led to one of the alligators freeing itself entirely from its restraints, and thereby caused something of a panic.⁴³ The animal retained its fearsome reputation with the public, yet its representation as a captive was far more positive, acknowledging the beast's value while taking the unprecedented step to anthropomorphize it with emotions like happiness.

Deeper within Jacksonville, the long-time terminus for any travel proceeding deeper into Florida, the citizens had an intimate and well-established relationship with alligators.⁴⁴ So intimate was this relationship that the city even maintained

⁴⁰ "Alligators!" *Florida Times Union*, 11 Mar. 1903, 8.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² "Ostrich Farm Gets Nine Alligators," *Florida Times Union*, 11 Mar. 1903, 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Julian Ralph, *Dixie; or, Southern Scenes and Sketches* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1896), 172, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t6348xf2r&view=1up&seq=7>. The author of this travel diary described the prominence of the alligator on Jacksonville's Bay Street thus: "The main street is fit to be called Alligator Avenue, because of the myriad ways in which that animal is offered as a sacrifice to the curiosity and thoughtlessness of the crowds. I did not happen to see any alligators served on toast there, but I saw them stuffed and skinned, turned into bags, or kept in tanks and boxes and cages; their babies made into ornaments or on sale as toys; their claws used as purses, their teeth as jewelry, their eggs as curios. Figures of them were carved on canes, moulded on souvenir spoons, painted on china, and sold in the forms of photographs, water-color studies, breastpins, and carvings."

one in a pond outside the municipal waterworks facility. In March of 1903, Big Joe, “a pet of the city for the last fifteen years,” took his leave of the waterworks. The *Times Union* reported his recapture by describing how he “fought like a demon” and made multiple “vicious lunges” with “strength and vigor.” Similarly to the Ostrich Farm alligators, Big Joe’s ferocity was counterbalanced by asserting how “delighted” the recaptured reptile was upon being returned to his quarters at the waterworks: Big Joe “is as happy as a school boy with his shoes off for the first time during summer.” In addition to the efforts made to recapture the resident saurian, further descriptions convey the positive sentiment Jacksonville’s public held for Big Joe. The article noted the happiness his return would bring to “thousands of children” in the city, as well as to “regular winter visitors who have gone to see him times innumerable.”⁴⁵ Clearly tied to Jacksonville’s tourist industry, the public considered Big Joe a part of the city’s identity and, without forgetting his fierce reputation, treated him as a domesticated pet. When he died the next year, the *Times Union* lamented the passing of “the children’s pet and the visitor’s curiosity,” and even advocated the procurement of a new alligator to replace Big Joe.⁴⁶

While Big Joe was a mascot of sorts to Jacksonville, he was not the only alligator held in the city. At the curio shop of J. Osky on Bay Street, the reptiles starred in commodities and as living showpieces. One five-foot saurian even escaped from the store, provoking a warning by the *Times Union* to be on the lookout for an alligator at large in the city. The fugitive reptile had a habit of showing up in the back doors of local shops, but even in reporting this danger to the public, the article’s author chose to deem the animal “Mr. Gator.”⁴⁷ The implied familiarity of Mr. Gator marks a significant departure from prior descriptions of alligators in close proximity to humans. Alligators were apparently so common in Jacksonville that, instead of emphasizing the peril of a roaming monstrosity, this particular author was granting the escaped reptile a neighborly nickname. This may have been a result of Osky’s persistent business endeavors.

In March of 1904 Osky had acquired a different alligator when a local man, Davis, after three years of trying, finally succeeded in capturing a “monster gator” that lived in a shallow pond. The alligator’s size was a matter of considerable public interest, and the *Times Union* said it was “the largest alligator ever known to have been captured in the state of Florida.” After purchasing the fourteen-foot reptile from Davis, Osky invited the public to his establishment to see it up close, and the reporting author teased that “Big Joe at the waterworks plant is a large ‘gator, but he looks like a baby beside this one.”⁴⁸ In March of 1906, Osky purchased another twelve-foot alligator from a local fisherman who caught it in the upper St.

⁴⁵ “Big Joe at Home After Struggle,” *Florida Times Union*, 22 May 1903, 5.

⁴⁶ “Big Joe is Dead,” *Florida Times Union*, 21 Aug. 1904, 5.

⁴⁷ “Watch for this ‘Gator,’” *Florida Times Union*, 8 Aug. 1904, 2.

⁴⁸ “A Monster Alligator,” *Florida Times Union*, 16 Mar. 1904, 5.

Johns River.⁴⁹ Whereas Floridians, and indeed the *Times Union*, once cited the size of the reptiles to reinforce images of dangerous beasts and elevate the successes of those who hunted them, during this time the size became a matter of public wonder. Larger alligators were considered a sight to behold by the layperson, and an opportunity to bring in more business by the shrewd entrepreneur.

Florida's rapidly burgeoning economy, development, and tourist traffic reinforced a cultural shift in how the public viewed alligators. By 1908, tourist traffic to Florida increased significantly every year, instigating the construction of new hotels and the expansion of tourist seasons.⁵⁰ As Florida's tourist industry grew and modernized, so too did Jacksonville's. Jacksonville developed to serve growing middle- and upper-class clienteles, and Florida's self-image shifted away from the exotic, and toward the modern. This transition manifested itself most apparently at the Ostrich Farm, which, by 1910, leaned away from featuring alligators as one of its main attractions. Instead, the prominently advertised events included the spectacles of modernizing showbusiness: comedians, contortionists, balloon ascensions with parachute drops, monologists, concerts, "Darling's dog and monkey show," and other acts that merited lauding as "the most sensational exhibition seen in Jacksonville in many years."⁵¹

Its fall from sensationalist acclaim as a dangerous prehistoric monster of immense power did not mean that it lost its place in Florida's culture. On the contrary, it was a sign that the alligator's position in Floridian identity was solidified more than ever. No longer a frightening novelty that needed to be conquered, Florida's reptiles had survived the violence of frontier excesses to take their place as a permanent component of the state's image. The cultural value of saurians as an attraction under the control of Floridians grew and the ancient reptiles became a symbol not only of Florida's natural landscape, but of the society that was replacing that natural landscape. In a 1907 article which told of an alligator's sighting and subsequent killing in downtown Jacksonville, the *Times Union* remarked "the few early tourists now in Jacksonville seized upon it as a choice bit of news and as proof that they were really in Florida."⁵² The article's author was implying that, as opposed to other states with alligator populations like Georgia or Louisiana, an alligator in town was an especially Floridian occurrence. In 1908, Florida staked its unique claim to the alligator's identity when the animal's likeness was first used to represent the University of Florida, and cemented that claim in 1911 when the school's varsity football team first took on the name "Alligators."⁵³

⁴⁹ "Twelve Foot Alligator" *Florida Times Union*, 29 Mar. 1906, 2.

⁵⁰ "Winter Season is Opening Up Early," *Florida Times Union*, 28 Sept. 1908, 5; "Tourist Season is Opening Early," *Florida Times Union*, 17 Oct. 1908, 9.

⁵¹ "Entertained Big Crowd of Season," *Florida Times Union*, 7 Mar. 1910, 5; "Many Attractions Have Been Engaged for Ostrich Farm," *Florida Times Union*, 9 Nov. 1910, 5.

⁵² "Alligator Shot in Hogans Creek," *Florida Times Union*, 26 Oct. 1907, 7.

⁵³ "Florida Gators Mascot History," https://floridagators.com/sports/2015/12/10/spirit_mascots_history.aspx; "The 1911 Florida Alligators," <https://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/archome/1911.htm>; The exact process by which the alligator was adopted officially as the University of Florida's mascot is unclear. According to the university's

The aforementioned changes in tone and reporting illustrate a clear shift in Floridian perception and representation of saurians from 1894-1912. Yet this shift was not absolute, nor was it complete. Before 1903, there were voices, albeit very few and far between, that endeavored to draw attention to the alligator's overexploitation and senseless killing. In April of 1897, the *Times Union* relayed a study conducted by the United States Fisheries Commission which concluded that the Florida alligator was at risk of extinction "owing to excessive hunting and wanton killing."⁵⁴ By listing excessive hunting and miscellaneous killing without economic cause, the study implicated the alligator's exploitation as a frontier resource and the masculine impulse to dominate nature as the main drivers behind the reptile's reduced population.

After 1903, alligator killings continued to occur across the state, sometimes still accompanied by absurd mythmaking stories. The most nonsensical of these was a statement made by a Mr. Duffy in Jacksonville, who claimed in 1905 that an alligator he shot at in town "rose on his back legs and tail and fought like a man for several minutes."⁵⁵ Perhaps most surprising in this situation was that the alligator did not bring its own firearm; but such a story could only be meant to convey a sense of danger from the offending saurian and therefore inflate the honor gained in defeating it.

The alligator's mighty reputation thus did it a continuous disservice. Due to its awesome strength, it was inconceivable that the reptile could possibly need protection. Therefore, the alligator had no concerted advocates at any point between 1894 and 1912. Florida's deer benefitted from the outrage of the state's covetous resident hunters. Quail, too, benefitted from the hunters' possessive attitudes, while the state's plume birds gained the protection of the women-led Florida Audubon Society. City animals like dogs and horses fell under the protective auspices of local chapters of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.⁵⁶ The *Times Union* frequently reported on these groups' agendas and meetings, and in some cases devoted editorials to their causes. For its part, the alligator was all but absent from consideration, save for the occasional and isolated report expressing concern that humans were over-hunting the reptiles.

The lack of a concerted interest group behind the alligator reinforces the contention that this shift was culture in motion. Rather than being the result of suddenly accessible public outrage, or coming on the heels of government intervention,

explanation, the alligator was first tied to their institution when Phillips Miller attempted to purchase university merchandise to sell in his store in Gainesville. Upon realizing the university had no official emblem, Miller and his son proposed the alligator because it was native to Florida and no other school had claimed it. Few other details are available, except that the University of Florida's 1911 football team was the first to be officially known as the Alligators.

⁵⁴ "Florida Alligators," *Florida Times Union*, 4 Apr. 1897, 5.

⁵⁵ "Alligators Prowl Through Riverside," *Florida Times Union*, 31 July 1905, 5.

⁵⁶ "Movement to Protect Game in Off Season," *Florida Times Union*, 30 July 1909, 7; "The Audubon Society," *Florida Times Union*, 16 Mar. 1904, 2; "Humane Society's Annual Meeting," *Florida Times Union and Citizen*, 2 May 1900, 6.

the *Times Union's* reporting on alligators changed in an entirely organic manner. The *Times Union's* writers and editors functioned as manifestations of a culture in transition, focusing more on urban sensibilities which eschewed the wanton slaying of alligators and instead emphasized them as potentially profitable touchstones of Florida's modernizing identity. The rural did not cease to exist, and hunters in Florida's remaining frontier regions most certainly continued to hunt alligators for commodities and to enforce their dominion over nature. Regardless, these stories fell out of favor with Florida's modernizing urban culture. As the state's economy and development boomed, especially in its longer-settled more northerly regions, the alligator became less of an obstacle to Florida's culture. Instead, the reptile became a participant, albeit unwillingly, in Florida's new identity.

The transition from portraying alligators as savage, wild, and dangerous monsters, to leveraging them as tourist attractions and a facet of Florida's identity, is best understood as part of a broader transition in Florida's culture. Up until the early twentieth century, a frontier culture persisted which lionized the subjugation of nature. To this end, men needed to assert their dominance over what they perceived as Florida's most powerful and enduring threat to their community: the alligator. Through mass slaughter and commodification, humans bent the local monsters to their economic and social will and, over time, broke the frontier image of a ferocious and dangerous beast that threatened the lives of unsuspecting Floridians and tourists. With enough time, the ease of killing alligators decreased the existential threat the reptiles posed, and the honor to be gained through their defeat, thereby allowing Floridians to attribute to their ancient vassals a more reconciliatory character. Having established their unchallenged dominance over Florida's fiercest creature, after 1903 Floridians began the lengthy process of assimilating alligators as a feature of their society, and as symbols of their own identity.

“That the ‘Traditions of the South’ and ‘Pure Americanism’ Shall be Perpetuated”: The Influence of the Ku Klux Klan and Prohibition Party on Florida’s Silent Motion Picture Industry

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In his seminal work on African American cinema, *Slow Fade to Black*, Thomas Cripps outlines the narrative that, “until the release of *The Birth of a Nation*, the races never confronted each other on equal terms, the rulers versus the aggrieved.”¹ While this dialectic of oppression and resistance between “the rulers” and “the aggrieved” has since yielded a countless number of fascinating and important discussions on the film’s role in “transposing the national myth of the South into terms congruent with the mythology of White American nationalism,”² and how “the mass protest movement against *The Birth of a Nation* continued to develop in dialogue with modern black life with the emergence of the race film industry.”³ Southern genre films effectively established the grounds for a cultural conversation in early American film that would notoriously meet its apex with the distribution of *The Birth of a Nation*. What is absent both from Cripps’s initial observation and subsequent works on the pervading influence of Lost Cause redemption narratives, is an explanation on the influence place has on the genre’s inception. In particular, an understanding how the motion picture *inspired* and was *influenced by* the social transformation of the City of Jacksonville in the early decades of the twentieth century offers an important addition to the study on the ascendancy of segregation in the American South.

Between 1908 and 1914, Jacksonville, Florida was home to the first Civil War-themed films to be told from an exclusively southern perspective. Although production studios such as the Edison-affiliated Kalem, Lubin, and independents such as Selig and the Vim Comedy Company were based in the North, the films produced during their winter-time expeditions to North Florida were without doubt influenced by the culture and community they operated within. In order to comprehend the origins of the narratives and counternarratives that would come to dominate cultural discussions in the aftermath of Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation*, it is important to comprehend the community that served as the *locus originis* of filmic narratives regarding Civil War memories. To draw from Henry Lefebvre, “history

¹ Thomas Cripps, *Slow Fade to Black: The Negro in American Film 1900-1942* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 43.

² Daniel Bernardi, “Introduction,” in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 20.

³ Cara Caddoo, *Envisioning Freedom: Cinema and the Building of Modern Black Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 170.

is experienced as nostalgia,” and it is unconscious memory “that denotes both a subject and subject’s denial.”⁴

This essay will examine how “The Southern” as a film genre, along with reductionist representations of race first came into being through Kalem Studios’ Florida Series, produced in Jacksonville between 1910 and 1914. The looming presence of the city’s motion picture industry shaped both the community and national discussion on race and memory during cinema’s silent era. Exploring these interactions, as well as the broader political and cultural developments within the American motion picture industry during cinema’s transition from serial short reel subjects to the feature film can help shed light on the emergence of a dangerous genre conveyed through the emerging Hollywood monolith, as well as the impact that the advent of Jim Crow had on the social dimensions of North Florida in the first decades of the twentieth century.

In 1900, Jacksonville was a city with an African American majority population, a small but aspirational African American middle class, but with the majority of wealth and power concentrated in a small white aristocracy. According to Jacksonville historian James Crooks, “black Jacksonville, despite varying degrees of segregation, discrimination, and exclusion from voting, education, entertainment, and work opportunities, pursued a varied civic life reflecting the community’s vitality.”⁵ The following year in 1901, the same year James Weldon Johnson left Jacksonville, the city was consumed by a devastating fire that would drastically change its dimensions and demographics. Within ten years the city’s population had nearly doubled, yet its racial dynamics had profoundly shifted.⁶ Taking advantage of an increased influx of whites from nearby Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina and applying many of the same segregationist practices imposed elsewhere in the Deep South, the City of Jacksonville embarked on a campaign of disenfranchisement. By 1905, the Jacksonville City Council passed a municipal segregation ordinance that did not include any exception to the law for servants and nurses. In 1907, the last two remaining African American councilmembers were gerrymandered, effectively barring the city’s African American population from any form of participation in public office at the city level.⁷

Segregation and white supremacy were effectively at the core of the economic resurrection at the city and state level in the decades following Reconstruction. As Henry Woodfin Grady, one of the key theorists to outline the New South movement

⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 51.

⁵ James Crooks, “Changing Face of Jacksonville, 1900-1910,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (Apr., 1984), 440-441. Jacksonville’s population in 1900 was 28,429, making it Florida’s largest city. By comparison with neighboring southeastern cities however, it ranked behind Savannah, Charleston, Augusta, Atlanta, Birmingham, and Mobile. Jacksonville’s 16,236 African American residents comprised 57 percent of the population.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 441. By 1911 the net white population experienced an increase of 16,171 (plus 120 percent) exceeded the net black increase of 13,057 (plus 80 percent), resulting in an almost numerical balance in the city of 29,293 blacks and 28,329 whites.

⁷ Cassanello, 102-103.

attested, “the supremacy of the white race of the South must be maintained forever, and the domination of the negro race resisted at all points and at all hazards – because the white race is the superior race.”⁸ The dimensions of Jacksonville’s political and demographic transformation during the decade of 1900 was by no means an outlier in terms of the emergence of segregation in the American South. Film historian Evelyn Ehrlich has argued that the impetus to this change has relied on the changing dimensions of audiences during this period. According to Ehrlich, in the nickelodeon era early film audiences, “which comprised primarily of immigrants likely had difficulty relating to the Civil War genre type pre-1908. It is only after the middle class began to adopt cinema that it took off.”⁹ In *The Celluloid South*, Edward Campbell Jr. counters Ehrlich’s argument by claiming the Southern genre’s “appeal was primarily to the lower classes who were compelled by illiteracy, foreign native tongue, or the sheer drudgery of their everyday lives to shun the printed word and indulge in ‘nickel madness’ at the many arcades in large urban areas.”¹⁰

This intersection between the arrival of northern entertainers, displaced Deep South white planters, and aspirational New South businessmen created a terse dynamic relayed through films made *in* and *about* the South in the early twentieth century. Ehrlich and Campbell’s competing observations on the class constitution of audiences rests solely on whether it was the lower or middle class (presumably white) movie audiences who gravitated to the Lost Cause mythos on film. Absent from both accounts are where minority audiences fit within this dynamic. What remains unacknowledged is how these accounts provide a mirror into the disturbing developments that ultimately led to “the nadir of race relations in America.”¹¹ Florida film historian Richard Alan Nelson adds to the discussion with the compelling argument that the perversion of Civil War-era memory through the proliferation of antebellum archetypes first began in Florida during the 1900s and 1910s. These early serials helped to establish an archetype that for decades afterward “romanticized the South and misrepresented race relations by falsely picturing a world of sentimentality and salaciousness unrepresentative of Dixie as a whole.”¹²

What makes the Kalem Company significant in this discussion is that it was the first studio to establish winter headquarters in Florida, as well as the authors of the first Civil War stories on film. Kalem was formed in early 1907 by Edison Manufacturing Company distributor George Kleine, along with producers Samuel

⁸ Henry Woodfin Grady, *The New South and Other Addresses* (New York: Charles Merrill and Co., 1904), 53.

⁹ Evelyn Ehrlich, “The Civil War in Early Film: Origin and Development of a Genre,” in *The South and Film*, ed. Warren French (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1981), 73-4.

¹⁰ Edward D. C. Campbell Jr., *The Celluloid South: Hollywood and the Southern Myth* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 11.

¹¹ Rayford Whittingham Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro, From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Da Capo Press, Reprint Edition 1997), xxi.

¹² Richard Alan Nelson, *Lights! Camera! Florida! Ninety Years of Moviemaking and Television Production in the Sunshine State* (Tampa: Florida Endowment for the Humanities, 1991), 21.

Long and Frank Marion. The company's name being an amalgam of the names of its three founders.¹³ From its onset, the company sought to distinguish itself from other emerging production companies by filming "outdoor scenes that were actually filmed outdoors rather than in front of crudely painted scenery."¹⁴ Kalem's desire to incorporate natural landscapes into their films as well as a shift toward creating historical "actuality" films became a major draw for actors and directors interested in extending the storytelling possibilities the new medium could provide. A major cost cutting measure applied by the Kalem company was that it relied on location shooting, which served to accommodate growing audience demand "that movies aspire to reality."¹⁵

In the summer of 1907, Kalem shot several historically based films on location in upstate New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. According to "Kalem Girl" Gene Gauntier, the studio's most popular films during this time were Western and Southern stories. In these places "taverns doubled for western saloons, for Civil War recruiting stations, and dozens of other sets."¹⁶ The indoor scenes for the Civil War-set *The Days of '61* (1907) was filmed on location in Connecticut, while the battle scenes were shot on the grounds of St. John's Military Academy in Manlius, New York. As Gauntier recalled, "with this environment, plus costumes and props, we turned out pictures which were things of beauty even in those crude days."¹⁷ The financial success and nation-wide popularity that came from *Days of '61* inspired Kalem's General Manager Frank Marion to develop more Civil War-themed films. Marion for that matter, "suggested it would be a novel thing to make pictures from the Confederate side."¹⁸ Kalem's absorption into the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC) in December of 1908 was followed a week later by their first expedition to Florida. The additional financial and legal security provided by Kalem's membership in the Edison Trust helped the company pursue on-location filming for a proposed series of Civil War films as a part of their "Sunny South Release."¹⁹

What is perhaps the most compelling aspect of Kalem's early Sunny South Releases is understanding how the studio's perspective on Civil War stories adjusted because of its winter in Jacksonville. When Kalem's Civil War films were initially produced in New York and Connecticut, the films primarily had Union characters as the protagonists. So, if the production of pro-Confederate film narratives were not a direct capitulation to Southern film audiences, the question is what compelled Gauntier, Olcott and their Kalem counterparts to take on a pro-

¹³ Robert, S. Birchard, "Kalem Company: Manufacturers of Moving Picture Films," *American Cinematographer* 65 (1984), 34. Kleine (Ka), Long (le), Marion, (m).

¹⁴ Paul Spehr, "City of Intrigue and Mystery," in *Fort Lee: The Film Town*, ed. Richard Koszarski (Rome: John Libbey Publishing, 2004), 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹⁶ Gauntier, 184.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁸ Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 142.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

Confederate perspective in their films? Unlike D. W. Griffith who grew up in the border state of Kentucky and whose father was a Colonel in the Confederate Army, the varied background of Kalem's producers likely had little influence on their sympathies toward the Union or Confederacy. Instead, it is likely that the North Florida community also had its own direct input on the type of films that were to be shot on location.

This transition can be traced back to Kalem's first season in Jacksonville during the winter of 1908-1909. Two of Kalem's earliest box-office successes from their initial excursion to Jacksonville were *A Florida Feud: Or, Love in the Everglades* and *The Cracker's Bride* (1909) which were marketed to northern audiences as "a very faithful portrayal of conditions which exist in certain portions of Florida today."²⁰ However it was Kalem's emphasis on telling location-based stories which made the reception of the films in Jacksonville less than favorable. *A Florida Feud* "presented a rather unfavorable picturization of poor whites residing outside of Jacksonville," and *The Cracker's Bride* was considered by a local reviewer as, "misshapen, shuddering, disgusting, and revolting, as well as totally unfit for showing."²¹ This community-wide backlash, which made Sidney Olcott for a time "very unpopular with the civic authorities,"²² was a likely factor toward Kalem's decision to avoid ruffling the feathers of Jacksonville's civic organizers. As Thomas Cripps explains, "Jacksonville whites threatened to throttle a Kalem production unless the studio ceased making such movies as *Florida Crackers* [sic. *The Crackers Bride*]."²³

Kalem's initial mission toward producing "authentic" location-based stories showcases the complicated race and class dynamics in North Florida during this period. A film that best encapsulates Kalem's shifting ideology from that same winter season is the studio's adaptation of Irish playwright Dion Boucicault's antebellum anti-slavery melodrama *The Octoroon* (1859). Although the original play concerned the residents of a pre-Civil War Louisiana plantation, Sidney Olcott's adaptation, *The Octoroon: A Story of the Turpentine Forest* (1909), relocated the story to the Florida Pines. In a synopsis published in *Motion Picture World*, Olcott expressed "we are going to try to teach you something about our great country the while we are entertaining you with our dramatic story."²⁴ While Boucicault's *The Octoroon* was an explicit commentary on the moral evils of slavery, Olcott's 1909 adaptation sidesteps the mention of slavery and instead focuses on the interracial relationship between "a beautiful young octoroon named Zoe and her lover, who is the owner of the turpentine still." Meanwhile the story's antagonist changes from that of a despotic Louisiana slave owner desirous of purchasing Zoe for his own

²⁰ "Kalem's Florida Series," *Motion Picture World* (hereafter MPW), 2 Jan. 1909, 16-17; Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 139.

²¹ Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 141.

²² Anthony Slide, *Early American Cinema* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 53.

²³ Cripps, 25.

²⁴ "The Octoroon," MPW, 23 Jan. 1909, 102.

devices, to in the film version, the owner of the turpentine still described as “a man of Spanish descent, a cruel vindictive brute of little principle.”²⁵ By changing the ethnicity and placing greater emphasis on showing “the principle features of the turpentine industry,” Olcott and the Kalem players intentionally side-stepped attracting another community-wide backlash.

Perhaps as a capitulation to its urban audiences, Kalem producers made an unexpected choice to present the interracial relationship central to the film’s premise in line with the original British version. This version ends with “a colored boy confessing to the crime” and “love triumphant and the mixed-race couple are united.”²⁶ This deviates from the American version of Boucicault’s stage version of *The Octoroon*, where the ending had to be changed to have a tragic ending in which Zoe dies. The original American ending was required by theater owners before the play could be performed, to provide a stark warning to white American audiences of the supposed perils of pursuing a mixed-race marriage.²⁷ It is uncertain why Sidney Olcott specifically opted for the original British ending as opposed to the more familiar American ending of *The Octoroon*, but it indicates the Kalem Company was at time indifferent to any potential response toward an overt display of miscegenation on the screen.

Although it is unlikely that Olcott and company intended to make any explicit social commentary in their films, there still remained elements of diffused commentary on slavery and racial violence in their films. Another notable multi-reel serial in Kalem’s first Florida Series, was one that Gene Gauntier wrote and directed, *The Northern Schoolmaster* (1909). This may be one of the first films to feature the Ku Klux Klan on the screen.²⁸ The film was promoted in *Moving Picture World* as “a true to-the-life story of the scorn of the Southern gentleman for the negro and their ill-treatment of a northern schoolmaster who takes the part of the one who is being persecuted.”²⁹ What is noteworthy about the film is that it portrayed the Klan as the antagonists who assault the northern teacher and set fire to a Southern mansion. Ultimately the film concludes with “the heroic rescue of a young lady [ostensibly from the Klan] by the schoolmaster which lets the people see what courage is in him and they are quick to atone for their past misdeeds.”³⁰ It is uncertain specifically how either *The Octoroon* or *Northern Schoolmaster*, or for that matter Kalem’s other early Civil War-themed films were received by Jacksonville audiences. However, these two films do demonstrate a however-feeble effort on the producers’ part to portray slaveholders and Klansmen as amoral villains. At the same time both films serve as an ominous predictor of things to come regarding depictions of race on film.

²⁵ Ibid, 102.

²⁶ Ibid, 102; Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 393.

²⁷ John A. Degen, “How to End ‘The Octoroon,’” *Educational Theatre Journal* 27, no. 2 (May 1975), 170–178.

²⁸ Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 394.

²⁹ “The Northern Schoolmaster,” MPW, 17 Apr. 1909, 477.

³⁰ Ibid.

As the first Civil War films were being produced in North Florida, the Dunning School of Reconstruction emerged as the predominant historiography of the period. This distorted account of Civil War history, which Eric Foner considers “the edifice of the Jim Crow system,” used as a means “for the white South resisting outside efforts in changing race relations because of the worry of having another Reconstruction.”³¹ William A. Dunning, the namesake and standard bearer for nearly a half-century of Redemptionist historical narratives, established a perspective that in varying degrees of modulation would be amplified by the writings of Thomas Dixon and Margaret Mitchell, and of course their filmic counterparts. The most dangerous aspect of Dunning’s view of the Civil War and Reconstruction, “that the ultimate root of the trouble in the South had been, not the institution of slavery, but the coexistence in one society of two races so distinct in characteristics as to render coalescence impossible,”³² can first be seen in the Civil War films produced in Jacksonville. Another key element of both Dunning School accounts of Civil War history and the budding Southern film genre, was to place an emphasis on North-South reconciliation as a recurrent theme. While early Southern films may have focused on the villainy of slave masters and Klansmen, the agency of its African American characters was marginalized. According to Nelson, in Kalem’s Civil War films, “the blacks were invariably pawns in the conflict, rather than independent individuals with minds and wills of their own.”³³

Kalem’s Florida Series introduced certain key elements that would later be mimicked and repeated by other film studios. One such film that truly set the tone for the genre was *The Girl Spy* (1909), written by and starring Gene Gauntier. This series of films was a loosely adapted telling of the exploits of real-life Confederate Spy Belle Boyd.³⁴ Although the *Girl Spy* films fell perfectly in-line with Kalem’s mission of location-based stories, they also provided an important turning point in the Civil War genre. Gauntier’s *Girl Spy* films effectively countered the existing tropes of stodgy Union-focused stage adaptations in favor of using a Southern heroine, a Confederate point of view, and Southern locations.

As with Kalem’s other releases in their Florida Series, a recurring theme was an emphasis on the film’s authenticity and use of the local landscape to portray “real history.” Promotions in *Moving Picture World* and exhibitor synopses offered in Kalem Kalendar demonstrate these familiar tropes. One of the earliest depictions of the eponymous *Girl Spy* describes Gauntier’s character as a daring young girl

³¹ Mike Konczal, “How Radical Change Occurs: An Interview with Eric Foner,” *The Nation*, 3 Feb. 2015, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/how-radical-change-occurs-interview-historian-eric-foner/>.

³² William A. Dunning, “The Undoing of Reconstruction,” *Atlantic* (Oct. 1901), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1901/10/the-undoing-of-reconstruction/429219/>.

³³ Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 395.

³⁴ Tony Tracy, “Outside the System: Gene Gauntier and the Consolidation of Early American Cinema,” *Film History* 28 no. 1 (2016), 77. Gauntier starred in all five of the *Girl Spy* films produced in Jacksonville between 1909-1911. They included: *The Girl Spy* (1909); *An Incident of the Civil War* (May 1909); *The Love Romance of the Girl Spy* (Apr. 1910); *The Further Adventures of the Girl Spy* (Apr. 1910); *The Girl Spy Before Vicksburg* (Dec. 1910); *To the Aid of Stonewall Jackson: An Exploit of the Girl Spy* (July 1911).

who “had consecrated her entire life to the cause of their beloved Southland.”³⁵ The films’ synopses also emphasized the production’s use of authentic costumes and props (actual period uniforms and weapons).³⁶ The trope of a plucky heroine is further complicated in *A Daughter of Dixie* (1910), which focused on a love triangle between the heroine and a Northern and Southern officer. As she “wavers between love and duty,” the film resolves with the heroine saving the life of her Unionist beau. The film’s emphasis on reconciliation further plays out when upon professing her love, the Union officer and his Confederate rival shake hands and “pledged to forget the past and renew the friendship of the Blue and Gray.”³⁷

Gene Gauntier’s *The Confederate Spy: A Story of the Civil War* (1910), took on a more shaded perspective on North-South relations. The film tells of a Confederate officer who infiltrates the Union army and his wife – played by Gauntier – who is chased from her home after a Union soldier attempts to assault her and burns their plantation to the ground. Gauntier’s heroine is rescued from her near rape by her slave “Uncle Daniel,” who attacks the soldier and helps her escape. Daniel later aids the eponymous Confederate spy after he is captured behind enemy lines, who delivers the young family to safety from the onslaught of “lawless men who made the war their excuse for plunder and robbery.” The film concludes with the couple holding hands with their slave as they “gaze at him affectionately as he murmurs gently, ‘It was for massa’s sake and little missa.’”³⁸

The established archetype of the “faithful slave narrative” was yet another tenet of the cinematic Lost Cause. According to Micki McCelya, characters such as Uncle Daniel “often summed up in the phrase that certain slaves (and later free domestic workers) were like one of the family.”³⁹ In *The Confederate Spy*, the pervading threat of sexual violence toward unprotected white women, (which is alarmingly flipped in *The Birth of a Nation*) along with the notion of the dutiful slave found in *Gone With the Wind* are both presented. As Thomas Cripps had noted, the early Kalem films produced in Florida “reassured audiences of the sincerity of the Southern cause by presenting it in sacrificial terms,”⁴⁰ and established a “cycle of war movies shaped the outlines of heroism and villainy in purely Southern terms.” Nelson adds that with such films, “the thrust was by implication a justification of the South and the neo-segregation then in practice.”⁴¹

³⁵ “Kalem MFG. Co.,” MPW, 15 May 1909, 643.

³⁶ “Authentic Equipment for Kalem’s War Dramas,” *Kalem Kalendar*, 15 Dec. 1911, 8. In the description for their upcoming season in Jacksonville, “The Kalem Photo play is based upon incidences in the civil war have thrilled audiences throughout the world and from every standpoint these productions remain without peer. A striking example of Kalem’s thoroughness in the staging these romantic places to be found in their great labor an expense incident to the securing of authentic costumes to be used in productions of this character.”

³⁷ “Kalem Co.,” MPW, 30 July 1910, 259.

³⁸ “Kalem Company,” February 12, 1910, *The Film Index*, 14-15.

³⁹ Micki McCelya, “The Faithful Slave,” *Atlantic*, 31 May 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/05/the-faithful-slave/528630/>.

⁴⁰ Cripps, 30, 32.

⁴¹ Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 393.

What is perhaps most confounding about Kalem's predilection to tell Civil War themed stories from a Southern perspective in North Florida is that Jacksonville was essentially rebuilt from the ground-up after the 1901 fire. Furthermore, aside from the Battle of Olustee, very few large-scale military engagements actually took place in Florida proper. Regardless, the aspiration of these early Civil War narratives was to showcase "real history" and producing such stories in the South certainly influenced the shape these narratives took. Despite Kalem's goal to utilize authentic locations and offer "historically accurate" renditions of the Civil War period, Jacksonville itself was not necessarily the most realistic backdrop.

The same year Kalem arrived in Jacksonville coincided with the first stage of a city-wide building boom initiated by city trade organizations. In 1908, as many as four skyscrapers were simultaneously under construction, as the city's Board of Trade embarked on a focused campaign to attract new industries and arrivals to the city. These efforts coalesced with a building boom which culminated in the construction of upwards of 10,000 buildings allowed the city to spread out in nearly every direction. This boom brought new skyscrapers, churches, department stores, a city hall, a public library, and theaters.⁴² Despite Jacksonville's seeming exterior signs of growth and progress, architectural historian Robert C. Broward argues that although "Jacksonville's building boom mirrored the national and local prosperity of the times," while the tension between the agricultural and industrial sectors that were common in the emerging centers of the New South, as well as the second class status of its African American citizens, indicated that the city's "material growth and the need for cultural growth was not yet evident."⁴³

The imposition of the city's Jim Crow regime just one year before in 1907 made this existing disparity even more prevalent. James Crooks observes, "Jacksonville remained a city limited in its growth potential, in part due to barriers of racial segregation and prejudice that blocked substantial upward mobility for one half the population. The Chamber of Commerce at the end of the era presented an image of a prosperous Jacksonville. Behind the affluence of downtown, Riverside, and Springfield, however, lay widespread poverty in Oakland, Hansontown, LaVilla, and Brooklyn. Both were characteristics of New South cities."⁴⁴ The subsequent solidification of white "home-rule" in Jacksonville directly influenced the emergence of the city's motion picture industry. To uphold this new order, "observers of the New South rightly saw boards of trade and chambers of commerce as engines for economic development. They also welcomed northern capitalists and upheld white supremacy."⁴⁵

⁴² H.S. Kealhofer, *Industrial Survey of Jacksonville, Florida* (Jacksonville: Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, 1915), 3.

⁴³ Robert C. Broward, *The Architecture of Henry John Klutho: The Prairie School in Jacksonville* (Jacksonville: University of North Florida Press, 1983), 107.

⁴⁴ James Crooks, *Jacksonville: After the Fire, 1901-1919* (Jacksonville: University of North Florida Press, 1991), 41.

⁴⁵ Crooks, *After the Fire*, 94.

As Jacksonville experienced a dramatic decade of demographic and economic growth, the city's indigenous motion picture industry served as an important chronicler of the broader cultural shifts that took place within the city.⁴⁶ Between 1900 and 1910, Jacksonville's slight African American majority was systematically eroded by the arrival of whites from neighboring Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina. It is no surprise that with the migration of an increased number of whites from surrounding Deep South states, segregationist sentiments soon also followed. In addition to this vast demographic shift, Jacksonville soon had new arrivals from the Edison Manufacturing Company and aspirational independent filmmakers eager to establish seasonal residence in the city that had been deigned "The World's Winter Film Capital."⁴⁷ In Fall 1909, the Selig Polyscope Company of Chicago leased a portion of South Jacksonville's Dixieland Amusement Park to make motion pictures using elephants, lions, tigers, and camels. Selig was soon followed by several major and minor production outlets such as Majestic, Vim Studios, the Thanhouser Film Company, Gaumont Productions, and Metro, among others.⁴⁸

The influence of the recent influx of "movie people" further shaped the city's entertainment district. By the end of 1910, eight theaters offered movies, vaudeville, minstrel shows, and touring stock companies for the community as a whole. The *Florida Times-Union* exaggerated only a little in describing Main Street as the local "Great White Way." Meanwhile the city's African American theater goers generally sat in segregated balconies, except at the Bijou and Globe theaters which served primarily the city's African American community.⁴⁹ With the construction of skyscrapers, new industries, theaters, and film studios, Jacksonville became a boon for aspirational investors and producers on both sides of the color line. To a lesser extent, despite the full imposition of segregation and disenfranchisement, Jacksonville's African American community had marginally expanded its economic and cultural life during the decade as well. Although the 1910 City Directory listed 342 small businesses owned by blacks, almost double the number listed nine years earlier, there were notable bars toward opportunities for employment, education, and social mobility, which hindered the city's overall development.⁵⁰

Jacksonville's motion picture industry proves to be a stark metric of the self-imposed limitations its Jim Crow regime had placed on its own growth. It can even be argued that this repudiation of African American agency by the Jacksonville film

⁴⁶ Crooks, "Changing Face of Jacksonville, 1900-1910," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (Apr. 1984), 460. Between 1901 and 1911 the population of Jacksonville had nearly doubled from 28,429 in 1900 to over 57,699 in 1911. The net white population increase of 16,171 (plus 120 percent) exceeded the net black increase of 13,057 (plus eighty percent), resulting in an almost numerical balance in the city of 29,293 blacks and 28,329 whites.

⁴⁷ James C. Craig, "Jacksonville: World Film Capital," *Jacksonville Historical Society* 3 (1954), 125.

⁴⁸ Doll and Morrow, 2.

⁴⁹ Crooks, "Changing Face of Jacksonville," 449-450.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 462-3.

community ultimately influenced the segregation of the American film industry for almost a half century. In *Black in Black and White*, Henry T. Sampson makes the case that the “de-facto economic boycott of the first black film producers,” which was first initiated in Jacksonville, “gave birth to a separate black film industry in the United States, which during the next 40 years produced over 500 films featuring blacks which were shown in theaters catering to blacks with little distribution anywhere else.”⁵¹ In 1910, William D. Foster, considered the “Dean of Negro Motion Pictures,” saw potential in establishing a production facility in Jacksonville to produce motion pictures that could “off-set so many insults of the race – could tell their side of the birth of this great race.”⁵² Upon traveling to Florida he learned that local rental and distribution companies (in solidarity with their Dixie hosts), were initially hesitant and later outright refused to book his prospective films in white theaters, he elected to locate his Foster Photoplay Company in Chicago instead.⁵³

Further dimensions of the ongoing racial tensions within Jacksonville and the nation played out on 4 July 4 1910, in the aftermath of the racially charged heavyweight showdown between Jack Johnson and Jim Jefferies. In *Emancipation Betrayed*, Paul Ortiz writes, “moments after Johnson triumphed, elated African Americans celebrated while white Floridians seethed.”⁵⁴ Meanwhile, “in Jacksonville, African Americans clashed in the streets with whites enraged over ‘their manner and manifestations of joy’ after Johnson’s victory.”⁵⁵ The subsequent controversy in Jacksonville and nation-wide came to also impact the further perpetuation of Lost Cause narratives on film. As film historian Dan Streible has argued, “no discussion of race and early cinema in the United States would be complete without considering the impact of Jack Johnson’s cinematic image on the racial order of things.”⁵⁶ Subsequent efforts by the U.S. Congress to outlaw the interstate transportation of prizefight films negated a direct discussion on the distribution of the film of the *Johnson-Jefferies Fight* (1910) in Jacksonville’s theaters. Yet as Streible argues, Jack Johnson films could be considered “one of the earliest forms of an African American cinema,” and that “censorship of that image and the imposing segregation of theatrical space remained a defining reminder of white rule.”⁵⁷ The ensuing backlash that then followed from the public response to attempted screenings of the *Johnson-Jefferies* fight can be correlated with a

⁵¹ Henry T. Sampson, *Blacks in Black and White: A Source Book on Black Films* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 3; Lupack, 14.

⁵² Pearl Bowser and Louise Spence, *Writing Himself into History: Oscar Micheaux, His Silent Films, and His Audiences* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 97; Barbara Tera Lupack, Richard E. Norman and Race Filmmaking (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 9, 13.

⁵³ Jesse Rhines, *Black Film, White Money* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 14.

⁵⁴ Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 126.

⁵⁵ “Result of Reno Affair Starts Mob Violence in the City,” *Florida Times Union*, 5 July 1910, 1.

⁵⁶ Dan Streible, “Race and Reception of Jack Johnson Fight Films,” in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*, ed. Daniel Bernardi (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 170.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 194.

marked shift in the portrayal of African Americans (or lack thereof) on the screen for much of the remainder of the 1910s.

The box office success of Kalem's "Florida Series" proved critical not only in encouraging Kalem to return next year, but also in triggering interest in the region by other producing firms. In 1912, Kalem constructed the world's then largest outdoor stage for "yard pictures" to be sued by the three troupes of Kalem players in residence.⁵⁸ At this point, the company was now a larger and more diverse organization with seven stock companies scattered across the United States, three production facilities (in New Jersey, Florida, and Hollywood), and a growing roster of stars, with a new roster of "Kalem Girls" including early silent stars such as Alice Joyce, Anna Q. Nilsson, and Ruth Roland. Meanwhile Gauntier and Olcott had since splintered from the company to become the first talents signed by the newly formed Warner's Features distribution business, which set out to disrupt the monopoly establish by the Edison Trust (of which Kalem was a member). Kalem for their part had revisited a number of pro-Confederate themed films in the 1912-1913 season. Including an updated three-reel version of *The Octoroon* (1913), this time with the original American stage ending, which ends in the tragic death of Zoe the titular octoroon.⁵⁹

As the Kalem Studio in Jacksonville was completed, Gauntier and Olcott also returned to Jacksonville to form their own production company, the Gene Gauntier Players or the GGs.⁶⁰ With their return to Jacksonville, Gauntier and Olcott returned to their Southern roots and during their twenty weeks in North Florida produced a series of productions. Of the films Gauntier expressed, "I think this story which touches on the psychological, is one of the best things the company has done. It is filled with strong situations of real heart interest."⁶¹ Another theme the GGs decided to revisit was the subject of Klan violence during the Reconstruction period. While Sidney Olcott was incapacitated with a bout of appendicitis, Gauntier's husband, Jack J. Clark, assumed charge of the day-to-day operations of the company. He collaborated with his wife to produce *In the Power of the Ku Klux Klan* (1913), where Clark volunteered to play the role of a lynching victim. While filming the sequence, Clark was nearly strangled, "which may be laughed at now."⁶² There is no surviving plot synopsis or reel of this particular film, but from what can be gathered by an article fragment from *Moving Picture World*, it does appear that the Klan played an antagonist role in this particular film. However, Clark's

⁵⁸ Nelson, *Lights! Camera! Florida!*, 16-19.

⁵⁹ "New Items of the Kalem Companies," *Kalem Kalendar*, 13 Apr. 1912, 4; "Kalem Producing 'The Octoroon,'" *MPW*, 10 May 1913, 602; "The Octoroon," *Kalem Kalendar*, 15 Nov. 1913, 10-11. Other Southern films produced the in the previous season in 1912 by Kalem included, *The Battle of Pottsburg Bridge*, *A Spartan Mother*, *War's Havoc*, and *'Fighting Dan' McCool*. For the production of these films, Kalem also hired hundreds of Jacksonvillians to serve as reenactors and look after the props, costumes, and period weapons.

⁶⁰ George Blaisdell, "At the Sign of the Flaming Arcs," *MPW*, 10 May 1913, 601; Tony Tracy, "Outside the System: Gene Gauntier and the Consolidation of Early American Cinema," *Film History* 28 no. 1 (2016), 89-90.

⁶¹ "Gene Gauntier Players Return," *MPW*, 31 May 1913, 926. The various films included titles such as *A Daughter of the Confederacy*, *The Little Rebel*, *On the Fighting Line*, and *When Men Hate: A Southern Feud Story*.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 926.

dismissal of his experience in reenacting the lynching scene, or description how a Duval County sheriff “induced a gentleman of color” to perform in a scene where he would be chased by bloodhounds, indicates much of deliberate dismissiveness toward representations of race as their earlier Florida Series films. Of the situation Clark explained, “the negro was given a safe start. The hounds jumped at the scent and in full cry were away like the wind. But they had nothing on the negro, you could have played checkers on his coattails.”⁶³

In *Slow Fade to Black*, Thomas Cripps periodizes the deterioration of the agency and identity of African American characters on the screen, although he still struggles to find an exanimation for the shift. “Between 1910 and 1915 the drift toward older black stereotypes proceeded apace, although the reason was not wholly clear.”⁶⁴ One possible point of explanation is to correlate the changes of black characterizations on film with the changing social dimensions in the South during this same period. Assertions of white southern dominance were vindicated at the national level with Woodrow Wilson’s election to the presidency in the 1912 Presidential election. Wilson’s *History of the American People* (1902), worked in tandem with William Dunning’s efforts to perpetuate Lost Cause mythology. Wilson’s election was in essence a national triumph for the Jim Crow movement.

In Florida, African Americans had long witnessed a systematic dissolution of Reconstruction’s promises long before 1912. As early as 1882, Governor William Bloxham oversaw the implementation of the state’s first Jim Crow laws by segregating all railcars in the state. In 1885, a revised Florida State Constitution effectively barred white teachers from instructing black pupils (as addressed in the plot of *The Northern Schoolmaster*) and paved the way for black disfranchisement via a state-wide poll tax, put into effect in 1889. By 1897, blacks were banned from participating in the state’s Democratic Party primaries, and with the gerrymandering of Jacksonville’s sixth ward and subsequent removal of the city’s last two city councilors in 1907, African Americans were effectively barred from holding public office until the 1960s.⁶⁵ The same year as Jacksonville’s sixth ward was redistricted, Governor Napoleon Broward, a self-described “unapologetic segregationist,” proposed to the U.S. Congress “to purchase territory, either domestic or foreign, and provide means to purchase the property of the negroes at a reasonable price and to transport them to the territory purchased by the United States.”⁶⁶ Taking the cue from Florida’s governor, more than 40,000 Florida blacks took the hint and fled in search of more congenial surroundings.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid, 926.

⁶⁴ Cripps, 24.

⁶⁵ Crooks, “Changing Face of Jacksonville,” 461; Michael Newton, *The Invisible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan in Florida* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2001), 28-31; Cassanello, 103-104.

⁶⁶ Napoleon Bonaparte Broward, “Race Relations,” in *Speeches and Writings*, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00102915/00012/1>; T.D. Allman, *Finding Florida: The True Story of the Sunshine State* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2013), 337.

⁶⁷ Newton, 31.

As Kalem and subsequent production companies started to firmly entrench themselves as a fixture within the Florida community, they too adopted and echoed the ideologies of Florida's Jim Crow government. The films produced in Kalem's Florida Series and later the Gene Gauntier Players served both as a lens in which to view America's descent into "the nadir of race relations." The shared timing of the arrival of the first film production companies in Jacksonville and the imposition of a city-wide segregationist regime, is certainly incidental. The influence that the North Florida community had either directly, through community organizing, or indirectly, through exposing Northern filmmakers to "the South's perspective," ultimately helped shape how the Civil War and Reconstruction would be portrayed on the screen for much of the first half of the twentieth century. While the pernicious influence of D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) certainly reinforced Jim Crow's agenda and even received a hardy endorsement from the President of the United States, it certainly is neither the beginning nor end point for analysis of race in American cinema studies.

This essay has set out to highlight the progression (or regression) of racial representations in Southern genre films produced in the Greater Jacksonville region in the years preceding *The Birth of a Nation*, and offers fertile ground for examining how the motion picture became complicit in propagated existing trends in favor of spreading Jim Crow ideology nation-wide. Discussions on the aesthetics of Jim Crow and the deliberate and unconscious racism portrayed on film during the first half of the twentieth century, neither begins or ends with D.W. Griffith and *The Birth of a Nation*. It certainly was not a coincidence that the arrival of film on the national scene also coincided with the semicentennial of the end of the American Civil War. Clyde Taylor describes Griffith's film as "certainly the most negative in U.S. film history, and the wider theme of Hollywood negrophobia, arguably the most massive racist assault in the history of mass communications."⁶⁸ In-depth analyses of the social and cultural influence of *The Birth of a Nation* have served as "one of the ideal places to begin the long-overdue analysis of race in U.S. cinema studies."⁶⁹ While, "*The Birth of a Nation* stands as the swan song of Radicalism as a major, acceptable position, a position whose fervor Dixon, one of its most passionate ideologues, passed on to his suddenly inspired converts, D.W. Griffith."⁷⁰

These early Florida film productions embarked on amplifying Lost Cause propaganda, for both narrative convenience as well as the community influence inspired by filming on location in the Jim Crow South. Kalem and the GGs were by no means the only studios active in Jacksonville during this period, or the only

⁶⁸ Clyde Taylor, "The Re-Birth of the Aesthetic Cinema," in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 17.

⁶⁹ Michelle Faith Wallace, "The Good Lynching and 'The Birth of a Nation': Discourses and Aesthetics of Jim Crow," *Cinema Journal* 43, no. 1 (Autumn, 2003), 101.

⁷⁰ Taylor, 31.

companies complicit in spreading such archetypes. Perhaps most indicative of how the Jacksonville studios had become fully indoctrinated into the legends of the Lost Cause, came in May 1914, when the various studios came together to film the annual meeting of the United Confederate Veterans, which had nearly 48,000 former Confederates converge on the city.⁷¹ As the cameras started to roll, Jacksonville participated in a *blumenkreige* invasion of former Confederate battalions converged for the twenty-fourth annual reunion of the Legion of the Lost Cause. The veterans were accompanied by an additional 12,000 Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy to swell their numbers to 60,000 and greeted by Governor Park Trammell who shook the hand of every battalion commander. The *Florida Times Union* marveled as “bands and bunting and open arms greeted the Sons of the South, now being gracefully supplanted by their sons and daughters, progeny sustaining and lending a new elan to the old tradition.”⁷² Yet this event also was only a momentary valediction for many of Jacksonville’s film pioneers.

Shortly after the United Confederate Veterans parade, Sidney Olcott and Gene Gauntier ended their partnership, and separately set out to establish independent operations in Los Angeles, which increasingly had become the center of gravity for the American motion picture industry.⁷³ With the breakup of the Edison Trust following the Supreme Court ruling in *Mutual v. Ohio* (1915), Kalem lost one of its primary backers and sources of funding. By the 1914-1915 winter season, the Kalem Company had increasingly turned toward the West Coast as well, although a small contingent of actors and filmmakers remained active in Jacksonville until March 1918. At its apex, more than one hundred movie companies operated in North Florida, but almost as quickly as the studios had popped up, Jacksonville became a ghost town as far as motion picture productions were concerned.⁷⁴

As an added tinge of irony, in 1924, a decade after William Foster was denied by the collective of white Jacksonville filmmakers to build his own race picture studio in the city, filmmaker Richard Norman purchased the abandoned grounds of the Eagle Film Company in the Jacksonville suburb of Arlington to establish the only studio in the United States entirely dedicated to the production of race films.⁷⁵ Additional study on the relationship between Richard Norman Studios and the Jacksonville community can help to further illuminate the manner in which the motion picture was used as an instrument of oppression and resistance during Florida’s Jim Crow era. As Floridians set out to revise their own narratives

⁷¹ James C. Craig, “Jacksonville World Film Capital,” *Jacksonville Historical Society* 3 (1954), 124. Uniting for the project were: J. Williams of the Edison company, Arthur B. Hotelling of Lubin, Sid Olcott of International Production and R.G. Vignola and Keanan Buell of the Kalem Company.

⁷² Bill Foley, “Today in Jacksonville History: May 4, 1914,” *FTU*, 4 May 2019, <https://www.jacksonville.com/news/20190504/today-in-jacksonville-history-may-4-1914>.

⁷³ Tracy, 90-91.

⁷⁴ Richard Alan Nelson, “Florida: The Forgotten Film Capital,” *Journal of the University Film Association* 29 no. 3 (Summer 1977), 16; Nelson, *Florida and the American Motion Picture Industry*, 189; Shawn Bean, *The First Hollywood: Florida and the Golden Age of Silent Filmmaking* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), 99.

⁷⁵ Lupack, 70-71.

pertaining to “heroism and villainy” in the twentieth century, the films produced by Kalem’s Florida Series and the GGs during cinema’s transitional period, serve an important marker toward better understanding the dimensions of race in Florida cinema studies. This serves as a call to further explore the dimensions of how Florida’s motion picture industry influenced the first visualizations of Lost Cause propaganda on the screen. Equally important, there exists a need for closer examination into how Jacksonville’s African American community sought to counter and resist stereotypes and racial imagery conveyed by early Southern-genre films, which can further illuminate how the motion picture both *reflected* and *influenced* existing tensions regarding visual depictions of race and memory.

The Interpretation and Historicity of the Healing of the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter

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Introduction and Arguments

In Mark's Gospel, a Gentile woman finds Jesus as he journeys toward Tyre and asks him to heal her demon-possessed daughter. But Jesus says, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." To this apparent rebuke, the woman replies, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."¹ Impressed by the woman's clever saying, Jesus grants her request and heals her daughter. Matthew's Gospel includes a similar healing, and although the immediate setting of the interaction is slightly different in each Gospel, they are clearly telling the same healing story.²

This essay seeks to answer two questions: "what is the historical meaning of Jesus' healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter? And does some form of the story go back to Jesus?" Most New Testament historians agree that this miracle is part of an evangelistic explanation that the church is open to Gentiles as well as Jews. They agree that Mark's version carries this message while disagreeing on exactly how inclusive Matthew's version of the same story is. There is also some debate about the meaning of the details in the story, especially regarding Jesus' puzzling statement and the woman's brilliant reply. Additionally, historians are divided about whether the story is historical or a creative interpretation of the early Christians; some experts posit up to four stages of development, while others avoid speculating on the origin of this tradition. This essay has three primary arguments. First, it will argue that Mark's exorcism story was meant to teach his community that Gentiles, as well as Jews, could become followers of Jesus. Then it will argue that Matthew's version allowed Gentile conversion but focused on the primacy of Israel in the new Christian faith. Finally, the essay will maintain, with appropriate modesty, that the story goes back in some form to the historical Jesus.³

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¹ Mark 7:24-30, NRSV.

² Matthew 15:21-28, NRSV.

³ For common interpretations of this passage about Gentile inclusion, see David M. Rhoads, "Jesus and the Syrophenician Woman in Mark: A Narrative-Critical Study," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 2 (1994): 370-1; see also René Latourelle, *The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 171-2; T. A. Burkill, "The Historical Development of the Story of the Syrophenician Woman (Mark VII: 24-31)," *Novum Testamentum* 9, no. 3 (1967): 163; Daniel N. Gullotta, "Among Dogs and Disciples: An Examination of the Story of the Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15:21-28) and the Question of the Gentile Mission within the Matthean Community," *Neotestamentica* 48, no. 2 (July 2014): 325; for the view that the story underwent four stages, see Burkill, 175-7; for a critique of that view, see John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 767.

Interpreting Mark 7:24-30

The first argument of this essay is that Mark intended the story of the Syrophenician woman to teach that both Jews and Gentiles can participate in the Kingdom of God. Several lines of evidence point to this interpretation. The historical context of Mark's Gospel is one indicator. Mark was probably written between the 60s and 70s AD, and popular suggestions for its place of origin include Rome and Galilee. While scholars debate the precise nature of Mark's community, there are reasons to believe Gentiles composed a significant group, if not the majority. The text also reveals the author's concerns for religious issues affecting his community. In this context, it is unlikely that Mark taught any type of Gentile exclusion in this healing story, for that would have disqualified much, or perhaps most, of his audience from participation in the Kingdom of God.⁴

The concept of "type-scenes" also implies that Jesus' healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter is meant to teach Gentile inclusion. One discovers type-scenes by comparing similar stories in the Gospels to see what common shapes they take. One type-scene in Mark is the healing story. Healing stories in Mark are designed to show that the Kingdom of God is being inaugurated through Jesus, and the recipients of miracles are the beneficiaries of this inauguration. The healing type-scenes in Mark have the following pattern: setting, ailment, request, obstacle, healing, command, and amazement. The story of the Syrophenician woman's daughter corresponds with the other miracle type-scenes that express the Kingdom of God. It includes the same elements in the following order. The setting is the area of Tyre. The ailment is demon-possession. The request is the woman's petition for the healing of her daughter. The obstacle is Jesus' initial dismissal, which she overcomes with her reply. The result is that the daughter is healed, and then Jesus commands her to go (except with no public amazement in this case because the miracle occurs in private). Thus, since miracle stories in Mark demonstrate the Kingdom of God, the fact that Mark used that type-scene here indicates that in Markan theology, Gentiles can enter the Kingdom of God if they come to Jesus in faith.⁵

Narrative criticism, too, is a powerful piece of evidence for the inclusive view. Narrative criticism is the interpretation of a passage within the context of the entire document, taking into account the plot, setting, characters, and other literary devices. The story of the Syrophenician woman is set in a string of stories that Mark arranged to argue his point. First, Jesus' feeds five thousand Jews and heals the Jews who approach him. Then he teaches that all foods are clean, which serves as a transition episode. Then he travels toward Tyre and heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter. Finally, Jesus heals a deaf-mute Gentile and feeds four

⁴ For the date of composition of Mark and his religious community, William Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

⁵ For an explanation of "type-scenes" in Mark, see Rhoads, 348-52.

thousand Gentiles. The progression clearly shows Jesus as healing and feeding Jews first, after which he provides the same benefits to Gentiles. It is clear that Mark is portraying Jesus as doing the same types of miracles for both groups of people. In other words, the wonderful deeds that Jesus does for the Jews, he also does for the Gentiles. Thus, in Mark's view, Jesus brings the Kingdom of God to both Jews and Gentiles.⁶

Jesus' conversation with the woman, however, is the most important indication that Gentiles can enter the Kingdom. As far as the interpretation of Mark is concerned, Jesus' apparent denigration of the woman and the Gentiles as "dogs" is best interpreted as an invitation for the woman to state her case for healing. This verse is the most puzzling and fascinating part of the passage.⁷ Jesus at first seems to deny her request when he says, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."⁸ While modern readers are easily repulsed by such language, Mark probably did not intend this saying to sound rude or bigoted. If he had, it would not have matched his overall portrayal of Jesus as compassionate and forgiving, which would have weakened the literary style of his Gospel.⁹ The word that Jesus uses for "dogs" is *kunariois*, which is best rendered "little dogs" or even "puppies."¹⁰ If he had wanted to be harsher, the better term to use would have been something like *therion*, which refers to a wild dog.¹¹ Some experts think that the statement is actually a wisdom saying or a popular maxim similar to "charity begins at home," but in any case, Jesus seems deliberately to be evoking a response from the woman.¹²

Furthermore, the woman's reply even more clearly shows Mark's intention was not to cast Jesus as unkind. "Sir," she says, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."¹³ When she says this, she is most likely giving the answer that the Markan Jesus wants her to give. If Mark's intent were to record an offensive saying of Jesus, then he would have indicated some displeasure on the woman's part.¹⁴ Instead, the woman is not offended by Jesus' saying, and in her response, she does not challenge the truth of his statement. Rather, she accepts her place and offers humble faith that Jesus can heal her daughter. Hearing the woman's proper

⁶ Rhoads, 348.

⁷ Burkill, 176; Latourelle, 173-4; Meier, vol. 2, 660.

⁸ Mark 7:27, NRSV.

⁹ Lawrence D. Hart, "The Canaanite Woman: Meeting Jesus as Sage and Lord: Matthew 15:21-28 & Mark 7:24-30," *Expository Times* 122, no. 1 (2010): 21.

¹⁰ Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 314.

¹¹ Gullotta, 333.

¹² Gundry, 314; Hart, 21-4.

¹³ Mark 7:28, NRSV.

¹⁴ Perhaps some exegetes would counter that a lack of negative emotion on the woman's part does not necessarily indicate that Jesus' statement was neutral or not bigoted. While that may be the case, it seems more likely that Mark would include some form of negative reaction if her character was meant to take Jesus' remark as a slur. In fact, Mark does portray Jesus' petitioners as reacting negatively to him in other stories. For example, the rich man in Mark 10:17-22 grieves when Jesus tells him to sell his possessions and give to the poor, which seems to be a much softer statement than calling someone a dog. Yet the woman reacts much better than the rich man when Jesus tells her something she does not want to hear.

response, Jesus declares her daughter healed and sends the woman away. Thus, Mark places the focus on the individual's words of faith rather than on her race; in other words, one gains access to the Kingdom of God through faith in Jesus. This interpretation best matches the overall themes of Mark's Gospel.¹⁵

Matthew 15:21-28: The Redactions of Mark

The second argument of this essay is the following: although Matthew preserves Mark's major theme that Gentiles can become Christians, he also emphasizes the primary role of the Jews in the church. Two lines of evidence demonstrate his view of evangelism. First, the Jewish context of Matthew shows his emphasis on the Jews in God's redemptive purpose. According to some New Testament commentators, Matthew wrote his Gospel to a community of Christians that, by his time, had both Jews and Gentiles in it. Of the four Gospels, Matthew is the most respectful of Jewish laws and customs, although he still heavily criticizes the groups that he considers to be opposed to Jesus, such as the popular Pharisees, the priestly Sadducees, and the political authorities in Jerusalem. Additionally, Matthew replaces the phrase "Kingdom of God" that is found in the other Gospels with "Kingdom of Heaven," which many scholars consider an intentional, Jewish-friendly redaction of the original term attested in the other Gospels. Most importantly, Matthew's Jesus emphasizes that he upholds the Jewish law. "Do not think I have come to abolish the law or the prophets," says the Matthean Jesus, "I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."¹⁶ Then Jesus goes on to say that whoever breaks one of those commandments and teaches others to do so will have lesser status in the kingdom. All this implies that Matthew is less likely than the other Gospels to discard the traditional view that the Jews serve a distinct and central function in God's salvific plan.¹⁷

Second, redaction criticism of Matthew indicates he is highlighting the primacy of Israel while preserving Mark's original theme. Redaction criticism is simply looking at how an author borrows a story from an earlier text and edits the story for his own purposes. This type of criticism can be applied to Matthew because Matthew almost certainly borrowed the story from Mark, whereas redaction criticism cannot easily be applied to Mark because his sources have not been found in textual form.¹⁸ Matthew's changes to the story and its literary context seem to make a Gentile healing even more exceptional to Jesus' ministerial scope than Mark's story. A close analysis of the surrounding passages shows that Matthew's Gospel reworks the sequence of events and downplays Mark's emphasis on

¹⁵ Gundry, 314; see also Hart, 21-4.

¹⁶ Matthew 5:17-18, NRSV.

¹⁷ Gundry, 5-6, 43; Gullotta, 326.

¹⁸ Latourelle, 169.

multiple Gentile healings. Matthew keeps Mark's passage about eating with undefiled hands, but he excises Mark's comment about declaring all foods clean; the best explanation here is that Matthew did not want his readers to think that the distinction of clean and unclean foods no longer matters for Jewish followers of Jesus. Matthew also deletes the Gentile environment of the feeding of the crowd following the Tyre episode, and he removes the healing of the deaf and mute Gentile man. Matthew most likely reworked the narrative in order to address pertinent issues in his heavily Jewish Christian community, and those edits placed the emphasis back on Jesus' actions among the Jews.¹⁹

Regarding the story itself, Matthew expands the conversation between Jesus and the woman, which also indicates a Jewish focus while still allowing Gentile conversion. One can see several different expressions here. Matthew refers to the woman as a "Canaanite" to remind his readers of the ancient, troubled relationship between Israel and Canaan, apparently highlighting her as an outsider.²⁰ In Matthew, the woman comes out to Jesus rather than going into the house where he is staying. She calls out persistently, while the disciples ask Jesus to send her away. He says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."²¹ But she kneels before him and implores, "Lord, help me."²² After this dramatic build-up, the exchange takes place about the children and little dogs. Whereas in Mark Jesus commends her words, in Matthew, Jesus commends her act of trust, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."²³ Here, the Matthean Jesus makes clear that it is the woman's outstanding faith that results in her daughter's healing. It seems that Matthew was explaining that an early Gentile convert is an exception to the general rule that Jews are the first respondents to the Gospel. But at the same time, he did not in any way exclude Gentiles from his Christian community.²⁴

The Historicity of the Healing Story

Since the post-Easter debate about Gentile inclusion among the early Christians is central to the pericope about the Syrophenician woman, it is also interesting to see whether the miracle story goes back in some form to the historical Jesus. Experts disagree on the historicity of this episode, citing one criterion or another in their arguments. The most powerful argument against historicity is that the story betrays too much Christian evangelistic theology to be considered historical.²⁵

¹⁹ Gundry, 305-6; Gullotta, 326-9. Gullotta believes that Matthew is not only pro-Israel but also openly anti-Gentile in its agenda. While some scholars accept this thesis, which includes the idea that Matthew did not expect the church to seek out Gentile converts, it does not seem to explain why Matthew includes the Great Commission at the end of his Gospel in 28:18-20.

²⁰ Gundry, 310; see also Latourelle, 170.

²¹ Matthew 15:24, NRSV.

²² Matthew 15:25, NRSV.

²³ Matthew 15:28, NRSV.

²⁴ Latourelle, 172; Gullotta, 332-3. Gullotta thinks that Matthew was teaching his followers not to seek out Gentile converts. While that thesis is disputed, Gullotta does agree that Matthew wanted his community to accept Gentiles if they came of their own initiative.

²⁵ Meier, vol. 2, 660-1.

However, if that argument is framed as a negative application of the criterion of discontinuity, it is fallacious. The criterion of discontinuity states that if a recorded deed or saying of Jesus has no connection to the Judaism before him or to the Christian church after him, then that saying is more likely to be historical.²⁶ Since the idea of accepting Gentiles can be traced to the church, Jesus' acceptance of Gentiles is not distinct to him and thus the saying could have been influenced by post-Easter theology.²⁷ However, it is critical to note that just because something is not discontinuous does not mean it is un-historical. A negative conclusion does not follow logically from the negative application of the criterion. Just because the later church accepted Gentiles does not mean automatically that Jesus rejected them. In fact, several positive arguments can be made in favor of historicity (although not with the primary criteria). Thus, the modest claim here is that while the story of the Syrophenician woman may not make the "short list" of historical sayings and deeds of Jesus, it probably does make the "long list."

One important point to make here is that Jesus' ministry of miracles in general is extremely well-attested, so the historicity of this story has a higher probability in that context. Along with his baptism and crucifixion, Jesus' reputation as a miracle-worker is one of the most certain facts about his life. All of the independent Gospel sources, namely, Q, M, L, Mark, and John, as well as Josephus, attest that Jesus performed marvelous deeds that people around him understood to be miracles, such as healings and exorcisms. If the Syrophenician woman's story had appeared alone or almost alone in the Gospel traditions, then it might be easier to label it as legendary. That is not the case, however, since even though the story itself does not have multiple independent attestation, the miraculous deeds collectively do.²⁸

Despite lacking multiple attestation, embarrassment, and discontinuity, an interesting argument for historicity makes use of the exceptional and unusual elements of the story, most of which are not found in other miracle stories of the same type. This pericope involves a Gentile woman asking Jesus to heal her daughter in the region of Tyre, which is a situation that appears nowhere else in the Gospels. Some argue that these exceptions reflect a strong memory that stood out in the minds of Jesus' original followers. In this view, the historical core of the story may have been passed on relatively faithfully until Mark received it and redacted it.²⁹

Also, the cultural and social milieu of the story's setting and composition makes it more likely to be historical. By the time of the Gospels, there was a community of Christians in the city of Tyre. The fact that Mark narrates Jesus as only going to

²⁶ Meier, vol. 1, 171-2.

²⁷ For the idea that this story is discontinuous, see Latourelle, 173-4. He thinks that Jesus' healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter is discontinuous, but it can really only be said to be discontinuous from earlier Judaism and Jesus' normal activity but not the evangelistic outlook of the early church.

²⁸ For the historicity of Jesus' reputation as a miracle-worker, see Meier, vol. 2, 619. Meier believes that the references to miracles in Mark, John, M, L, Q, and Josephus provide a solid basis for thinking that Jesus was known to perform miracles.

²⁹ Meier, vol. 2, 660-1; see also Rhoads, 351.

the rural area surrounding Tyre and not into the city itself indicates that the story could go back to “the real pre-Easter situation,” as one critic writes.³⁰ If Mark had invented the story with the knowledge that Christians lived within the city, he would have made Jesus go into the city itself rather than wander around into a rural area. And by the time of Jesus, the rural region of Tyre had a significant Jewish population in the form of small villages. It was from here that the revolutionary figure John of Gischala gained his most fanatic followers during the Jewish revolt against Rome in the late 60s AD, about thirty years after Jesus’ crucifixion. And since Jews were there in his day, it is reasonable to think Jesus would have carried his ministry there.³¹

Archaeology and coin distribution further show the interactions between Galilee and Tyre, thus making Jesus’ activity in the region more realistic. Recent research shows that Galileans and Tyrians traded with each other during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, based on the presence of Tyrian coins in Galilee. Although the number of coins from Tyre decreased around Jesus’ time compared to the earlier Roman and Hellenistic periods, experts attribute this to changes in Tyrian minting practices rather than a decrease in commerce between Tyre and Galilee.³² As one might expect, Judean coins were dominant in the area, but Tyrian coins still had a consistent presence. This setting coheres with what is known about the setting of Tyre’s rural regions, where a mixture of Jews and Gentiles lived. If the divide between Tyrian and Galilean population and trade were more explicit, one could make a case that Jesus had no reason to venture far out of his way, but the current understanding of the local archaeology makes his journey more plausible.³³

In this context, it makes sense for Jesus to enter Tyrian territory for the sake of continuing his ministry to his own people. However, when the Syrophenician woman appears, even though she is not a Jew, Jesus tests her faith and then heals her daughter as a sign of the imminent Kingdom of God. The cultural context also eliminates the linguistic argument against historicity, namely, that the Aramaic-speaking Jesus could not have communicated with the Greek-speaking Syrophenician woman. Many of the inhabitants of Tyre would have been able to speak both Greek and Aramaic, not to mention the likelihood that Jesus himself knew at least some Greek. Overall, there is much historically plausible material in the story. Of course, it is true that the stories as they appear in the Gospels tell more about the theology of the Christians of the late first century than they do about the historical Jesus, but critical examination can give insight into what parts of their writings go beyond their theological and communal interests and back to Jesus

³⁰ Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 67.

³¹ Theissen, 67.

³² Danny Syon, *Small Change in Hellenistic Roman Galilee* (Jerusalem: Israel Numismatic Society, 2015), 184.

³³ Syon, 171-3.

himself. In this case, there is a reasonable probability that an exorcism similar to what the Gospels narrate happened in the region of Tyre.³⁴

Summary and Conclusions

To conclude, Mark used the story of the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter to teach his readers that Gentiles can become followers of Jesus as well as Jews. Matthew preserved Mark's view of Gentile inclusion while stressing the primacy of Israel in his version of the story. There are no strong reasons to think that the story was a creation of the early church, and there are several positive arguments for thinking that the historical Jesus did heal a Syrophenician woman's daughter in Tyre. Of course, these conclusions are rendered with a dose of humility and generosity toward opposing views on the interpretation and historicity of the story. Ancient history is a difficult business because it is often hindered by imperfect methods and limited sources. Despite those challenges, at least one thing may be said with certainty. Regardless of exactly how this story relates back to the historical Jesus, it is clear that his followers understood it to mean that they had a responsibility to perpetuate his movement. Some of them expressed that conviction in the words of the Great Commission, and they believed Jesus would have them "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."³⁵ For the early Christians, telling about the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter was just one way to illustrate the responsibility of discipleship and to spread the word of their conviction that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and the savior of the world.

³⁴ Theissen, 66-70; Meier, vol. 1, 266-7.

³⁵ Matthew 28:19, NRSV.

The Canadian Parliament Fire of 1916: A Severely Flawed Investigation

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At 8:55 pm on 3 February 1916 the Canadian Parliament was buzzing with activity. Members of the House of Commons congregated in the western wing of the 1859 Victorian building. Aides rushed through common areas and lobbies carrying papers and messages. Member of Parliament Francis Glass was alone in the reading room at the rear of the Centre Block. Separated through carefully detailed iron gates by a corridor was the library with its more than 600,000 tomes of law, philosophy, and parliamentary history. Glass noticed a sudden feeling of heat.¹ As he turned to the source, he saw a fire that had started under a stack of newspapers. The MP immediately called for help. A constable gave a fire alarm at 8:57 pm and ran into the room with an extinguisher. To no avail. At 9:00 the fire was rapidly spreading through the entire mid-section of the building. At 9:30 the roof collapsed. By 11:00 the Victoria clock tower was on fire and collapsed at 1:21 am. It took until 3:00 am for crews to gain control over the fire. When first daylight touched the smoldering remains of the Parliament building, the public could see the catastrophic damage to the Centre Block. Seven people, including a Member of Parliament, died in the fire.

A Royal Commission investigated the sources of the disaster and issued a report only three months later.² Investigators found that the conflagration had likely been the result of a carelessly discarded match or cigar. The fire, the commission believed, spread so rapidly because of the highly flammable paper and oiled pine wall paneling in the reading room, as well as the freshly shellacked floors and furniture. The building also lacked even the most basic fire safety, such as a sprinkler system or fire doors. The question of German sabotage and building security received a glancing view. The commission lacked expertise and pursued a flawed investigative approach. While no definite proof has surfaced in the hundred years since, the possibility that German saboteurs caused the conflagration received little attention from investigators at the time. The fatally flawed approach of the Canadian investigators to this day makes a conclusive answer to the question of what caused the parliament fire of 1916 hard to establish. While relying on circumstantial evidence, allowing only for conjecture as to the possibility of an act of sabotage, this paper examines the German operations against the United States and Canada at the time, the technology saboteurs used, and the existing evidence

¹ Royal Commission RE Parliament Buildings Fire at Ottawa, 3 Feb. 1916 (Ottawa: J. Del. Tache, 5 May 1916), p. 16. Hereafter Commission Report.

² *Ibid.*, published 5 May 1916.

in the available primary sources that supports the thesis of a carefully planned and executed German operation.

Only a week after the Parliament Fire, the *New York Times* reported on the indictment of the German consul general in San Francisco, Franz Bopp, for sabotage activities along the U.S. West coast and in Canada.³ The German sabotage campaign that had started in January 1915 had been in the news since the fall of that year, including the firebombing of ships.⁴ Except for mentioning an attack on the international bridge between Vanceboro, Maine and St. Croix, New Brunswick exactly one year before, the commission failed entirely to evaluate the public facts of multiple German attacks against Canada that existed. It does not appear that the commission even contacted U.S. investigators with knowledge of German activities such as A. Bruce Bielaski of the Bureau of Investigation or Thomas Tunney of the New York Bomb Squad. These investigators as well as British naval intelligence were hot on the heels of the German sabotage agents by the second half of 1915. But no witnesses of the American or British investigative and intelligence community dealing with Germany's attacks were ever called.

This flawed investigative approach caused the careless cleanup of the rubble, destroying the telltale signs of a pencil bomb attack. Investigators should have searched the area of the outbreak of the fire for evidence of lead (from the by-then discovered German lead-hulled pencil bomb devices) and high heat residue to prove use of a chemical accelerant. Lacking the information about the German firebombs, commissioners arrived at the suspicion of a chemical accelerant having caused the fire but asked the wrong questions. Chemists dedicated much time to evaluating accelerants that theoretically could have been used but for which the commission had no evidence of prior use.

The commission ruled on the causes of the fire within three months, likely bowing to public pressure for closure and possibly attempting to cover up an embarrassing security breach in the heart of the Canadian power structure. This was hardly enough time to fully investigate all angles of the causes of the fire, and the investigation thus concluded several months before public trials of German sabotage agents in the United States began. These trials uncovered mounting evidence of the German firebombing campaign not only against ships but also against buildings. The commission did not rule out arson but turned up no firm evidence either. Despite writing that the investigation should be re-opened "at a later day to obtain evidence . . . which might establish beyond question whether this fire was incendiary or accident," there is no evidence that the investigation ever re-opened.⁵

³ "Consul of Germany and his Aid indicted," *New York Times*, 9 February 1916.

⁴ Franz Rintelen, a German agent provocateur who had organized the firebombing of ships sailing from U.S. ports was arrested in England on 3 August 1915. He was indicted by a grand jury in December 1915 and was convicted after extradition in April 1917 of, among other offenses, causing the fire on the SS Kirk Oswald.

⁵ Commission Report, 9.

Only a year later, American trials of German saboteurs revealed pertinent information for the investigation of the Ottawa Parliament Fire, such as the names of saboteurs and the description of the timed firebombs used. In 1918, German bombmaker and sabotage agent Dr. Walter Scheele switched sides and supported the American military in the War. He lived out his years as an American citizen in Hoboken, New Jersey. The British navy arrested the German sabotage agent Hans Boehm in 1917. He was thoroughly debriefed, incarcerated, and released after the war. He became a businessman, traveled frequently to the United States, and lived peacefully in Germany until 1959. Because of his work on behalf of Irish independence, Boehm is a revered national hero there. Franz Rintelen, after serving his sentence in the United States, settled in England after falling out with the Hitler regime and published books about his work as a sabotage agent, including a foreword from British Naval Intelligence chief, Reginald "Blinker" Hall.⁶ No Canadian investigator seems to have attempted to interview any suspects in 1917 or any time after. The U.S. and British interrogations of the suspects reveal that those investigators were not interested in, nor had any knowledge of, and therefore did not ask questions about the Canadian Parliament Fire of 1916. This investigative blunder has allowed the fire to remain shrouded in mystery to this day with all the main actors having passed away.

The commission ruled that the rapid acceleration of the fire resulted from careless smoking in the entire building and especially in the common areas such as the reading room where the fire started. Several fires had occurred in the past, one as recently as two days before, that clearly had discarded matches and smoldering ashes as their source.⁷ In addition to the easily ignitable newspapers stacked on tables and hanging from walls, the commission found the oiled pine paneling and shellacked floors and furniture to have made the reading room a tinder box and, according to Ottawa Chief Police Commissioner A. P. Sherwood, the entire wing of the parliament building "a veritable forest of timber."⁸ The building lacked a sprinkler system and other adequate fire prevention and retardation installations. A ventilation system designed to move air through the building added fresh oxygen to the conflagration and likely accelerated it further. Evidence also supports the thesis that the constables who initially fought the fire might have spread it (causing burning paper to fly across the room) rather than extinguish the flames. These conclusions seem reasonable in explaining how the fire spread. But the commission provided no clear explanation of how the fire started and thus admitted they were "of the opinion that there are many circumstances connected with this fire that lead to a strong suspicion of incendiarism, especially in view of the fact that the

⁶ Franz Rintelen von Kleist, *The Dark Invader: Wartime Reminiscences of a German Naval Intelligence Officer* (London: Lovat Dickson Publishers Ltd., 1933); Rintelen von Kleist, *The Return of the Dark Invader* (London: Lovat Dickson Publishers Ltd., 1935).

⁷ Commission Report, 139-140.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

evidence is clear that no one was smoking in the reading room for some time previous to the outbreak of fire. . . . But, while your commissioners are of such opinion, there is nothing in the evidence to justify your commissioners in finding that the fire was maliciously set.”⁹

The main witness of the fire was Member of Parliament Francis Glass. He had entered the reading room about 8:45 pm, ten minutes before he noticed the fire. Another Member of Parliament, William B. Northrop, was also reading newspapers but left the room at about 8:54 pm, three minutes before his colleague sounded the alarm. He did not smell smoke or notice anything burning. Northrop claimed to not have been smoking then but admitted to being a cigar aficionado.¹⁰ A third person in the room was Josephine Verville, the wife of MP Alphonse Verville. She also left shortly before the fire alarm and did not smell anything burning or notice smoke. It is important to note that none of the people who the commission identified to have been in the room admitted to smoking at the time shortly before the fire. It would be conceivable that someone had been smoking but, according to all witnesses, not within ten minutes before the outbreak of the fire.¹¹

The fire started on a shelf close to the floor in the table immediately behind where Francis Glass was standing at 8:55 pm. “I felt a wave of heat passing up alongside me, as if from a hot air register, and I turned around and almost immediately with my turning I smelt the burning of paper and I stooped down and saw the smoke coming out, and my recollection is that this burning was on the second horizontal part of the desk, and the one behind me—it was well in on the pile of papers.”¹² “Q. Did you notice any odor of any kind in the reading room while you were reading there? — A [Glass] Not the slightest — I did not detect the fire by the smell of smoke — it was by the heat first.”¹³

The commission investigated the description Glass gave of the beginning of the fire. The conclusion was, and Glass agreed with it, that a chemical accelerant would be much more fitting of the description the MP gave of what he noticed. A carelessly discarded match that landed on a pile of newspapers would have smoldered for several minutes; in fact, as the commission concluded, for at least ten minutes, since no one smoked in the room during that time. If it took ten minutes of smoldering before ignition, there would have been smoke and the smell of burning paper in the room. But according to testimony, that could be excluded. No one smelled anything until 8:55 pm.

At the time of the investigation, neither the commission nor the fire marshal John W. Graham knew the chemical details of German firebombs used on ships and in munitions factories. However, expert witnesses, and the fire chief in particular,

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 44, 50, 138.

¹² *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 51.

dismissed the theory of cigar ashes or a decarded match smoldering for ten minutes as the cause of the fire. The commission brought in a chemist, Edgar Standsfield, to show the effects and possibilities of chemical accelerants that could be timed to go off up to ninety minutes after application. Did someone sprinkle powder or pour a liquid on the newspapers at an earlier time and thus time the fire? Witnesses discarded this avenue for two reasons: the accelerant had a pungent smell as it evaporated that could not have gone unnoticed, and the security personnel in place did not see any strangers since the start of their shift at 7:30 pm.

Fire Chief Graham was convinced that the fire started as a result of an incendiary chemical or accelerant of some type not only in one place but all over the reading room.¹⁴ Glass, when viewing the chemist's demonstration and in comparison with a fire started with a match, agreed that the chemical accelerant looked much more like what he had witnessed on the night of February 3.¹⁵ The theory of multiple sources of the fire, however, did not withstand the eyewitness accounts. All recounted the fire starting at the desk behind Glass. The chemist also submitted a report, in which he asserted that "it would not be impossible to devise a small vessel, from which fire-causing material could be ejected after a more prolonged period."¹⁶ This would have resolved the question of why there was no smell of an evaporating accelerant.

The expert witness was correct. Not only could something like that be devised, but a skilled chemist and German agent in Hoboken, New Jersey, had in fact devised, perfected, and supplied timed chemical firebombs in small lead pipes for over a year. By the time of the Parliament fire, U.S. authorities had identified Dr. Walter T. Scheele, his bomb making facilities in New Jersey, and his associates. On 15 April 1916, three weeks before the Commission published its results, the *New York Times* reported on the arrest of German agents in New Jersey and described the firebombs they had used.¹⁷ In their rush to satisfy the public or whitewash an embarrassing security lapse, the Commission ignored what the chemist Standsfield had asserted, which would have given the investigation a clear direction in the search for the cause, and would have filled the gaps in the investigation.

The chemical accelerant timed in a small vessel to cause a fire hours or days after placing the bomb was an engineering marvel. Emmanuel Voska, a British agent in New York in 1915, described the cigar or pencil bomb design Scheele had perfected in his memoirs:

the device was so simple that one cannot even call it ingenious. The literature of the First World War has named these infernal devices indifferently "pencil bombs" and "cigar bombs." They looked externally like a cross between the two. Inside, a copper disk bisected the bomb vertically. A chemical which has

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40

¹⁷ "Bomb Plot Men, Deserted in Jail, May Name Chiefs," *New York Times*, 15 Apr. 1916.

a rapid corrosive effect on copper filled the upper compartment. When it had eaten through the disk, it came into contact with the chemical in the lower compartment. The combination produced instantly an intensely hot flame. The acid did not begin to work on the copper until one broke off a little knob at the upper end. Then it became a time-bomb, the time – from two days to a week – being regulated by the thickness or thinness of the copper disk.¹⁸

Scheele had solved the issue of size. His six to eight-inch device with a one-inch diameter relegated the complicated timing and firing mechanisms of yesteryear to the heap of outdated bomb-building technology.¹⁹ The little bombs burnt so hot that their lead hulls melted completely or possibly even burnt with such heat that extinguishing became impossible. Even the use of lead screws made sure that the incendiary devices left virtually no trace. Agents could easily hide the six-inch “cigars” in their clothes and casually drop them within their target, such as a wastepaper basket or a pile of newspapers. The firebombs developed such intense heat that it became very difficult to extinguish the resulting fire.²⁰

Returning to the eyewitness accounts of the fire in Canada, the sudden development of intense heat Glass had described fit the description of Scheele’s device. As the Fire Chief Graham and chemist Standsfield correctly asserted, other circumstantial evidence corroborates the theory of a chemical accelerant. The fire could not be extinguished. Although eyewitnesses easily smothered previous fires, one just two days before on a shelf loaded with newspapers in the same room, this fire was different. When the constables pointed fire extinguishers and shortly thereafter water hoses at the source, the fire accelerated rather than vanished. This is Glass’ testimony:

Q. Did that fire spread rapidly?

A. For the first few seconds it did not seem to spread faster than ordinary paper would burn, but it seemed to become wonderfully accelerated in blazing from the time the officer ran to get the extinguisher.

Q. Then where the officer came back with the extinguisher what effect did that have on the fire?

¹⁸ Emanuel Victor Voska and Will Irwin, *Spy and Counter-Spy* (London: George G. Harrap and Co. Ltd., 1941), 112. The timing could be set to hours not just days. It is not entirely clear what the separation material really was. Some accounts mention aluminum, others lead, zinc, paraffin, or copper. It is safe to assume from the various U.S. agents’ reports that the first separators consisted of paraffin that sometimes did not deteriorate, thus making the bomb a dud. Later, Scheele seemed to have used aluminum plates of different thicknesses that corroded in sulfuric acid. NA RG 65 FBI Case Files, File 8000-925. According to Scheele’s debriefers in 1918, the chemicals used were hexamethylene tetraamine on one side, and powdered sodium peroxide on the other. Thomas J. Tunney, *Throttled: The Detection of the German and Anarchist Bomb Plotters in the United States* (Boston: Small Maynard and Company, 1919), 138. Tunney of the New York bomb squad described the chemicals as potassium chlorate on one side and sulfuric acid on the other.

¹⁹ RG 131, Alien Property Custodian, Entry 199, Box 123, File 3141, Interview with Capt. Karl von Kleist, undated (on the day of his arrest, 15 Apr. 1916).

²⁰ Heribert von Feilitzsch, *The Secret War on the United States in 1915: A Tale of Sabotage, Labor Unrest and Border Troubles* (Amissville: Henselstone Verlag, 2015), 28.

A. As I could see it he had not even time to operate it, for the instant he held it in position he was shot back – the flame enveloped him.

Q. Could you give any idea of the colour of the smoke?

A. Only that it was bright red – I took it for fire—in fact my impression was it seemed as if the smoke turned to fire almost instantly.

Q. Of course you are not a chemist and cannot tell us what the colour of smoke might be from a chemical preparation?

A. No, sir.

Q. But you could speak from the fact in saying the smoke seemed to be a very reddish colour?

A. Yes – as soon as it developed sufficiently to get through the room it seemed to turn almost like into a blaze.²¹

Most noteworthy is the combustion, which enveloped the constable in flames when he pointed the chemical extinguisher into the flame. Heat significantly higher than burning paper likely caused the explosion. An expert in chemical accelerants suspects that a metal fire (chemically heated lead of the cigar or magnesium or phosphorus as part of the bomb) caused water being poured on the fire to separate into hydrogen (an explosive gas) and oxygen (an accelerant).²² The accelerant also caused burning paper to spread and catch the newspapers hanging along the wall on fire. A second noteworthy observation is the color of the smoke: Instead of a grey to black smoke emanating from burning paper and shellacked furniture, the member of parliament noticed a reddish color, which points to a chemical accelerant, not paper, as the source. The third observation is noted earlier in the paper: Glass felt the intense heat of the fire before he noticed the smoke. This also clearly points to a chemical accelerant as the one Voska described in his memoirs.

Assuming that the thesis of a German agent setting fire to the Parliament is feasible, the question of what he or she used appears to be obvious. The questions of who could have done this and how become eminent. With the inception of the World War in August 1914, the German War Department issued orders to all military and naval attachés (in charge of clandestine assets around the world) to hurt British interests.²³ In North America, naval attaché Karl Boy-Ed and military attaché Franz von Papen took charge of the order. Von Papen organized two attempts to prevent Canadian troops from entering the European battlefields in the fall of 1914. Under the command of his chief of the German secret service in New York Paul Koenig, he sent two teams to Canada. Alfred E. Fritzen commanded the first one and set out to blow up the Welland Canal in September 1914. The second team under the command of Koenig headed to Valcartier with orders to sink a barge in the Saint Lawrence River that would prevent troop ships from leaving.

²¹ Commission Report, p. 18.

²² Interview with Trey Mayo, Fire Chief, City of Winston-Salem, N.C., 26 September 2019, after he assembled a team of specialists to discuss the eyewitness accounts of the fire.

²³ NA, RG 76 Mixed Claims Commission, Box 12, Memorandum, 7 June 1938.

Both missions failed. U.S. authorities arrested Koenig in December 1915 and indicted him for the attack on the Welland canal. The indictment became national news.²⁴ The U.S. government expelled the two attachés von Papen and Boy-Ed as a result of this and other hostile acts that had come to light in the summer of 1915.

On 3 January 1915, Franz von Papen received specific orders from Arthur Zimmermann of the Foreign Office to attack the Canadian Pacific Railroad “for the purpose of causing a lengthy interruption of traffic. Captain Boehm who is well known in America and who will shortly return to that country [he arrived in April 1915] is furnished with expert informations [sic] on that subject.”²⁵ Von Papen furnished Boehm and Werner Horn, a sabotage agent suffering from syphilis-induced hallucinations, with nitro-glycerin and sent them to Maine. Horn managed to cause minor damage to the international bridge at Vanceboro before the local sheriff arrested him. He served a lengthy sentence first in a U.S. penitentiary and then in Canada.²⁶ Boehm got away, at least until 1917.

In March 1915, von Papen ordered the German consul in Detroit, Kurt von Reiszwitz, to organize sabotage in Canada. The targets were Canadian munitions factories and railroad bridges in Ontario.²⁷ On 21 June, a team of German agents firebombed the Peabody Overall Factory in Windsor, Ontario, and caused serious damage. A second attack on the Windsor Armouries failed.²⁸ Two of the agents, Albert Kaltschmidt and Karl Respa, faced trial in the United States in 1917. In charge of these agents was Hans Boehm, who got away undiscovered once more. Finally, von Papen sent a team of sabotage agents into Canada on the West Coast to blow up logistics installations. While the group failed yet again in Canada, they did manage to set the Seattle harbor on fire in May 1915 causing significant damage. While investigators of the Royal Commission did not have all the information available to historians today, these attacks prove that by February 1916, plenty of evidence existed of German sabotage against Canada.

Evidence of the identity of Hans Boehm, however, did not yet exist. Hans Walther Luigi Boehm was born on 25 January 1873 in Altkirch, Alsace. He served as an army officer from 1890 to 1903 when he retired as a captain. After his retirement he came to the United States and lived in Hoboken for a year. The German army kept retired officers with important capabilities - Boehm was fluent in English and French - on retainer while on foreign soil. It is likely that he met Walter T. Scheele, himself an army veteran and sleeper agent of the German military, at that time. However, while Scheele worked as a chemist for Bayer Company, Boehm moved

²⁴ See for example “Indictments Are Found in Canal Plots,” *Press Democrat* (Santa Rosa, California), 24 Dec. 1915; “Nation Wide Conspiracy,” *Herald Democrat* (Leadville, Colorado), 19 Dec. 1915; “German Plot to Blow Up Fort William Harbor, Soo Locks and Welland Canal Unearthed by Detectives in New York,” *Fort William Daily Times-Journal*, 18 Dec. 1916; “Metzler Lays Bare Koenig’s Activities,” *New York Times*, 22 Dec. 1915.

²⁵ Tunney, *Throttled*, p. 32.

²⁶ Heribert von Feilitzsch, *The Secret War Council: The German Fight Against the Entente in 1914* (Amissville: Henselstone Verlag, 2015), 134-135.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

on to Billings, Chicago, and Portland working as a mining engineer, accountant, and hotel cashier. Just like Walter Scheele, the German military activated Boehm in August 1914 and ordered him to report to Franz von Papen for duty. Von Papen furnished him with a fake passport and sent him to Berlin in October 1914. Having successfully eluded the British patrols, the War Department in Berlin assigned Boehm to Department IIIb of the General Staff, the military intelligence division. Boehm returned to New York in December 1914. In January 1915, immediately after receiving orders to sabotage American and Canadian installations, Karl Boy-Ed gave Boehm \$50,000 (\$1 million in today's dollars) to initiate sabotage along the Canadian border.²⁹

Barely escaping detection in the Vanceboro Bridge bombing, Boehm paid back the \$50,000 and returned to Germany in the end of March 1915.³⁰ The War Department entrusted him with the mission to cause an uprising in Ireland with the help of Roger Casement. The German agent spent the spring and summer of 1915 helping organize the Irish Brigade from Irish prisoners of war and training the insurgents.

On his way to Germany, British intelligence places him in London at the end of March. In April he arrived back in Germany. In September 1915, the War Department dispatched Boehm back to the United States to conduct sabotage against Canadian installations. The German government feared that Japanese troops could be shipped across Canada to join the Allied forces in Europe. Boehm arrived in October 1915 in New York. Since his assignment was sabotage, the agent likely had received cigar bombs for his mission, either already in Berlin or in New Jersey. Just like Boehm, two other sabotage agents, Dr. Anton Dilger and Fred Herrmann, met with the head of military intelligence in Berlin earlier in 1915. In a meeting in February, Herrmann received pencil bombs for attacks against American factories, which he smuggled to the United States.³¹ The German agent was a member of the sabotage cell in Baltimore that blew up the Lehigh Valley Railroad terminals on Black Tom Island in New Jersey in July 1916.³²

In testimony given to the Mixed Claims Commission set up after the World War to investigate German sabotage during the neutrality period 1914 to 1917 in the United States, Herrmann admitted to having placed a firebomb in the Kingsland, New Jersey plant of the Montreal based Canadian Car and Foundry Co. The resulting explosion on 11 January 1917 destroyed the entire factory. An eyewitness described the fire: "the first I saw of the fire was burning rags on the floor, and the man at the machine #1, a Russian, trying to stamp them out with his feet."³³ Like in

²⁹ NA RG 131, Alien Property Custodian, entry 199, Box 131, File 3221, Accounts of Karl Boy-Ed, entry 7 January 1915, "Capt. H. W. Bohm for special purposes."

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Boehm returned the money when he was reassigned to Germany on 26 March 1915, "Returned by Capt. Bohme."

³¹ Mixed Claims Commission, United States and Germany: Opinions and Decisions in the Sabotage Claims Handed Down June 15, 1939, October 30, 1939, (undated, publisher not listed), p. 75.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ NA RG 76 Mixed Claims Commission, Box 10, Statement of Anthony Adamo - #1547.

Ottawa, the firebomb activated in a medium guaranteeing rapid acceleration, oiled rags in one case, newspapers in the other. Of course, because of the intense heat of the chemical accelerant neither fire could be extinguished and rapidly spread to destroy both targets.

On 31 December 1915, Boehm took a room with Mrs. Jelks Leroy Thrasher in Chicago using the alias "Harry Blake."³⁴ The financial records of the German Military Intelligence Office in New York show that Boehm was on an assignment that required significant funding. Von Papen's successor (von Papen was expelled from the United States in January 1916) Wolf von Igel paid \$2,000 to Boehm on 20 March 1916. In an undated note to von Igel written sometime between January and April 1916, Boehm complained about not being paid. "Of the \$10,000 assigned and due to me, I have received after the very greatest exertions altogether \$3,200."³⁵ Boehm received \$200 from von Igel as a result of the complaint. One month later, on 28 April he received another \$1,000, marked "expenses of return journey."³⁶ He did not return to Germany until June, which raises the question of what journey he submitted expenses and receipts for. Clearly, in the months before his complaint, Boehm had received \$1,200 (approximately \$25,000 in today's dollars) as compensation and to cover expenses for his assignment.

He took a room in Chicago with Mrs. Thrasher. He also frequently traveled all along the Canadian border between December 1915 and April 1916. Agents of the Bureau of Investigation documented Boehm's frequent trips between New York, Chicago, and several cities in Oregon between 31 December 1915 and June 1916, when he returned to Europe. On 5 January 1916, Boehm checked out of the Biltmore Hotel in New York City. February 7, BI agents placed him in Chicago. Shortly after that date he met with a "group of Germans" in Salem, Oregon. February 15, Boehm is back in New York City.³⁷

The timeline does not account for Boehm, despite being watched closely, between 5 January and 7 February other than he was in Chicago on the latter date. What had been "the very greatest exertions," he mentioned in his note to von Igel? German military intelligence had selected Boehm in particular because of his fluency in multiple languages and his apparent gift to slip frequently through to Germany, Spain, the United States, and Britain under the prying eyes of British and American authorities. Born and raised in the Alsace region of Germany, his French was flawless and free of a German accent. Could he have slipped across to Canada in January or the beginning of February 1916 and placed a firebomb in the parliament? He certainly had the motivation (assignment to sabotage Canadian targets), the means (money and bombing material), the skill (slipping across

³⁴ NA RG 65 FBI Files, file 8000-2930, Re. Hans Boehm, timeline.

³⁵ NA RG 65 Albert Papers, Box 13, Folder 69, Boehm to von Igel, undated (in the file between memos dated March 20 and April 28, 1916).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, payment memo. April 28, 1916.

³⁷ NA RG 65 FBI Files, File 8000-2930, interrogation by British authorities, 12 January 1917.

enemy lines frequently, mastery of French), and the time (undocumented location between 5 January and 7 February).

The security situation of the Canadian Parliament at the time of the fire certainly allowed for intruders. The building was only guarded when the House or Senate were in session.³⁸ The session on the night of the fire started at 8:30 pm. After the beginning of the 7:00 pm shift, there was “one [guard] on each corridor of the Chamber, on [sic] of the speaker’s door, one at each angle, and upstairs one of at the entrance of the visitor’s gallery, and one at the entrance to the ladies’ gallery.”³⁹ A plain clothes officer was also on duty that night. These guards remained on duty all night.⁴⁰ Indeed, the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry R. Smith, asserted that the building was “rather over policed.”⁴¹

That was not so. Senator Dr. Thomas Simpson Sproule, the former speaker of the House of Commons, testified

“I saw in the *Citizen* the day before that there had been strict orders given that all doors entering the House of Commons were to be closed at six o’clock excepting one or two which were constantly guarded, and after that all access to the House was shut off from the outside to the public. I saw that, and to my knowledge it was not being carried out, and drew the Sergeant-at-Arms’ attention to it. The second night after that, I was writing letters in my office until after ten — it must have been after ten-thirty, when some of the members were going west towards Winnipeg, and I took some letters and put stamps on them and walked to the general post office to post them. I went around the House of Commons towards the West and North and passed the Senate side and passed the Eastern Block, I saw the door of the corridor to the basement wide open and the electric light burning at that time in the basement — I saw two windows where the newspaper men usually do their work both raised up, and my impression was if the intention was and I felt it as to prevent people getting in, these windows should not be open because anybody could put a seven or ten foot ladder in there and get up. I went around that side of the building, and met no policeman nor anybody else, and went past the Eastern Block and saw three windows there with the lower sash hoisted up so that anybody could put up a ladder and get in. I came back on the canal side, of the Eastern Block, and around the northeast side of the Commons, and this window was still open, and I went into the entrance and along the basement to the corridor of the House of Commons and entered Room 16, and in front of the post office and back to the reading-room and I saw no person inside or outside, and I went back and unlocked the door of my Chambers and went in. The next morning I called the attention of the Sergeant-at-Arms to this, and

³⁸ Commission Report, p. 15.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

he advised me that the Dominion police have that under their authority and control, and I said that there either was or was not need of protection, and the information I got was that there was protection, and I said we must have better arrangements. He said he would have another consultation with the Chief and see that that was stopped.”⁴²

The commission interviewed all employees and guards on duty when the fire started. The shift of the curators had started at 7:00 pm, that of the police forces at 7:30 pm. The commission thoroughly questioned these men as to where they were, what they saw, how they perceived security. However, in another curious twist in the investigation, none of the police officers on duty that day, before the evening when the House was in session, were called, despite the chemist’s assertion that a chemical accelerant could be timed. Thus, it is not documented if anyone saw a stranger wandering the halls of the Parliament building the day of the fire or in the days before.

The Parliament building also contained a press room, where journalists could assemble and file their reports. These journalists could walk the halls and common areas of the building unencumbered, including the reading room. Other employees had unfettered access to the building as well. The commission report refers to contractors, electricians, plumbers, and other personnel crisscrossing the building at will in pursuit of their duties. Without question, it would have been easy for a German agent as skilled as Boehm to gain access to the building unnoticed when the House was not in session, and therefore virtually unguarded.

The speaker of the house, Albert Seigny, testified that in the days before the fire a photographer purported to be French came to his chamber and asked if he could take pictures inside the building. The MP rejected the request. The photographer came back the next day and, again, was refused his request. The significance of this episode is that a stranger, not accredited to the press corps, marched all through the building, for example could have gone into the reading room in the day time when the House was not in session, and he did that not once but twice in the days before the fire. As a matter of fact, this photographer, who the Dominion police vetted as legitimate later in the investigation, intruded two days before the fire, within the timeframe of a pencil bomb being activated to cause the fire.

Q. Do you know how far he had access to the building — did he get right to your chamber?

A (Seigny). Yes.

Q. Right through the corridor?

A. Yes — he came to the door of the Speaker’s apartments.

⁴² Ibid., 56-57.

Q. That is what I want to know — he evidently had no difficulty in passing the guards, if guards, and reaching the door of your apartment? You say he would be in the corridor?

A. Yes.⁴³

Strangers frequently walked the corridors of the building and the security can only be described as lax. Asked if “it [would] have been possible for a man to enter there and place a liquid on those papers without you detecting him?” the assistant curator Stanley Spencer responded, “if I see any strangers there I put them out—I have orders to that effect.” Question: “But strangers have gone in there?” Spencer: “Yes, but not lately since policeman are on the two doors.”⁴⁴ Stanley Spencer’s testimony was idealistic with respect to the possibility of a highly trained and experienced German agent coming into the building and placing a bomb.

The circumstantial evidence of a possible German sabotage act being behind the Parliament Fire of 1916 is compelling. The commission, the Canadian police, and fire authorities badly bungled the evidence that could have been secured in the days after the fire. No thorough analysis of the source of the fire is available. The experiments with chemical accelerants in the weeks after the fire confirmed the eyewitness accounts that this fire was different. However, the commission failed to follow up with expert witness accounts that should have come from British naval intelligence and the New York Bomb Squad. These organizations had seen the pencil bombs and knew how they worked, as well as what to look for in the available evidence. The commission also failed to look for possible saboteurs casing and accessing the parliament building in the days before the fire. In the years after the fire, interviews with the main sabotage agents could easily have been arranged since the main culprits had been arrested and interned in England. This included Hans Boehm, the prime suspect of this historian for the parliament fire in 1916. At the very least investigators of the Canadian parliament fire should have briefed the interrogators at Scotland Yard and Whitehall to ask the German suspects in custody about the sabotage targets in the beginning of 1916. Boehm feared execution as a spy and was quite open about his work with the Irish Brigade and might have been willing to solve the mystery of the fire.

Despite the apparent failures of a hastily assembled commission under public pressure to produce a judgement and possibly motivated to cover up serious lapses in security around the Canadian parliament in the spring of 1916, the chances of quickly solving German sabotage acts were slim. It took until the 1930s for the American investigators to solve the largest sabotage attack of the War, the Black Tom. Most other fires never saw a resolution. Of the more than seventy ships Franz Rintelen and his co-conspirators set on fire, only thirty-five ended up resolved.⁴⁵

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁵ Von Feilitzsch, *The Secret War on the United States in 1915*, 246-247. Also see appendix of ship fires, 252-257.

The huge fires at the Roebling and Sons cable plant, which German agents likely set ablaze twice with deadly accuracy, have never been resolved. In all twenty-seven major fires that occurred in American factories producing war materials for the Allies between January 1915 and January 1916, only the Kingsland fire of January 1917 received closure when Fred Herrmann admitted in 1930 that he indeed had bombed the factory under the direction of Friedrich Hinsch, the organizer of the Black Tom explosion.⁴⁶ The harbors of Seattle, Norfolk, San Francisco, and Baltimore all suffered huge damages from devastating fires. Despite working for a quarter of a century on resolving the causes, investigators could not definitely attribute any of these fires to German agents. Unless future historians are able to discover new evidence, hidden somewhere in the depths of American, British, or German archives, or among the papers of one of the saboteurs, the case of whether the fire of the Canadian Parliament was intentional or accidental might remain unresolved forever.

⁴⁶ NA RG 76 Mixed Claims Commission, Memorandum, 31 Mar. 1930.

Commemorating the “Penguin Movement”: Teaching Social Movements in Latin America

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Interest in teaching history using sites, markers, and monuments has grown considerably in Europe and the United States during the past several decades. In 1991, the National Register of Historic Places, under the auspices of the U.S. National Park Service, established a program titled “Teaching with Historic Places,” which was one of the first public initiatives to advocate using historical sites as an alternative method for teaching the past.¹ Since then, educators from all levels have developed a wide variety of innovative learning activities, including lesson plans, professional development activities, and other valuable teaching resources.² These teachers and scholars have created assignments that push students to think more critically about how historical events are represented (or misrepresented) in the public sphere. More often, the assignments involve posing a series of “journalistic questions” in order to investigate the history of monuments, markers, and statues and the various motives of those who created them.³ The broader goal is for students to understand that commemorative sites alter historical truth in the name of promoting a romanticized, nationalist version of the past.⁴ Incorporating this idea into his own work, James W. Loewen, in his seminal book, *Lies Across America*, found that dozens of these sites throughout the United States “relate inaccurate and misleading history owing to the ideological demands of the time and the purpose of their erection or preservation.” In the closing pages of his work, Loewen implored readers to ask critical questions when visiting historical sites.⁵

Many scholars examining historical sites within Latin America have also shared these concerns. In 2007, the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), a non-governmental teaching and research organization, issued a

This project was developed thanks to funds provided by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education.

¹ National Register of Historic Places, “Teaching with Historic Places,” United States National Parks Service, <http://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/>.

² “Creating Teaching with Historic Places,” *Cultural Resource Management* 23, no. 8 (2000); Alan S. Marcus, “Representing the Past and Reflecting the Present: Museums, Memorials, and the Secondary History Classroom,” *The Social Studies* 98, no. 3 (2007): 105-110; Chris Culpin, “No Puzzle, No Learning: How to Make Your Site Visits Rigorous, Fascinating and Indispensable,” *Teaching History* 97 (Nov. 1999): 29-35; Gerald A. Danzer, “Teaching with Historic Places,” *Social Education* 62, no. 3 (1998): 167-183.

³ Rita G. Koman, “Historic Places: Their Use as Teaching Tools,” *Perspectives on Teaching Innovations: Teaching to Think Historically* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1994), 97, 99; Christian Laville, “Historical Consciousness and Historical Education: What to Expect from the First to the Second,” in *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, ed. Peter Seixas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 167.

⁴ Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

⁵ James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: Touchstone, 1999), 36, 459.

report on the recent proliferation of public monuments and memorials dedicated to the victims of human rights atrocities in Argentina, Chile, Peru, and other countries in Latin America that have experienced authoritarianism. FLACSO's scholars concluded that in order to remain connected with the public, these places must "be characterized by transparency, inclusiveness, public participation, truthfulness, responsiveness, and other criteria."⁶ In addition to U.S. scholars' concerns regarding accuracy and the influence of nationalist perspectives on historical site creation, however, Latin Americanists worry about the influence of globalization.⁷ In fact, these scholars tend to view the growing encroachment of commercialization, or what some have called the "specter of 'disneyfication,'" as more dangerous than concerns about accuracy or promoting a distorted nationalist past.⁸ These criticisms have been squarely aimed at the groups most often in charge of erecting historical sites: politicians, urban planners, non-governmental organizations, and historical commissions. In his examination of nine *centros históricos* throughout Latin America, geographer Joseph L. Scarpaci noted that "the pace and quality of historic preservation remain uneven." As he notes, the main reason for this is that in Latin American countries, heritage preservation projects rank far below those in favor of "promoting tourism and commercial enterprises of all sizes."⁹

Considering the growth of the literature on heritage tourism and site commemoration in Latin America, there has been a growing need for practical ideas on how to raise awareness about the problems of representing the past in the region's historical sites. What is needed are more assignments and teaching materials on historical site analysis that account for the unique experience of Latin America. The idea is to bridge the divide between learning about the most recent theories of heritage tourism and the need to understand the practical issues inherent in commemorating past events, places, and people. The activities proposed in this essay may be adapted for a variety of history courses at the high school, community college, and university levels, and they have been specifically tested on campus with on-line resources, in preparation to visit historical sites, or (in this case) a study abroad program. These assignments also fit well regardless of how the course is organized (e.g., around themes or a select number of countries as case studies) or what political, economic, or social perspectives are emphasized. The specific course taught here is a study abroad course on modern Latin America,

⁶ Sebastian Brett, Louis Bickford, Liz Ševčenko, and Marcela Rios, *Memorialization and Democracy: State Policy and Civic Action* (Santiago, Chile: FLACSO-Chile, 2007), 29; Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen, eds., *Geography and Memory: Explorations in Identity, Place and Becoming* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁷ G. J. Ashworth and P. J. Larkham, eds., *Building a New Heritage: Tourism, Culture and Identity in the New Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Yorke Rowan and Uzi Baram, eds., *Globalization and the Commodification of Heritage: A Review of Marketing Heritage* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2004); David Boswell and Jessica Evans, eds., *Representing the Nation: A Reader: Histories, Heritage and Museums* (London: Routledge, 1999).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁹ Joseph L. Scarpaci, *Plazas and Barrios: Heritage Tourism and Globalization in the Latin American Centro Histórico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004), 8-9, 27.

which provides fertile ground for discussions on monuments, markers, sites, and the process of commemoration.

These assignments tie in many of the goals articulated in those developed in the United States and Europe. Students are taught to look for the conscious decision-making processes that go into creating statues, monuments, and markers and the multiple meanings that these sites (and perhaps, the sites' creators) convey. The overall project is intended to combine the skills and approaches that students have learned but also make certain that they are aware of the underlying values, processes, and motivations that go into the creation of historical sites. Different from the site analysis assignments developed in the United States, however, students are prompted to ask questions about the unique ways in which the past is preserved in Latin America and how local and international issues affect heritage preservation and management.

These exercises employ a problem-based learning (PBL) approach, which has gained a widespread following among teachers at all levels during the last decade. Emerging first in the field of medical education in Canada and the United States during the late 1960s, PBL is a pedagogical method that places emphasis on "the learning that results from the process of working toward the understanding or resolution of a problem."¹⁰ This process begins when an instructor, drawing from his or her own expertise and experience, proposes a dilemma, which is supposed to reflect a real-world concern.¹¹ These tend to have multiple solutions whereby, according to Mary E. Huba and Jann E. Freed, "experts disagree about the appropriate solution to an ill-defined problem, and they may even disagree about whether or not the problem can be solved."¹² PBL is also an active learning approach intended to supplement traditional didactic methods in that the instructor acts more as a facilitator, probing what knowledge students need and constantly providing feedback with regard to their decision-making and direction.¹³ Students work collaboratively in teams and hold each other accountable in order to propose solutions to a problem. PBL has an advantage in that it prepares students for independent thinking and learning. Researchers have demonstrated that students using this approach have benefited

¹⁰ Howard S. Barrows and Robin M. Tamblyn, *Problem-Based Learning: An Approach to Medical Education* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1980), 18.

¹¹ John Craig and Sarah Hale, "Implementing Problem-Based Learning in Politics," *European Political Science* 7 (2008): 168; M. Anne Britt, Charles A. Perfetti, Julie A. Van Dyke, and Gareth Gabrys, "The Sourcer's Apprentice: A Tool for Document-Supported History Instruction," in *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives*, eds. Peter N. Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 446.

¹² Mary E. Huba and Jann E. Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: Shifting the Focus from Teaching to Learning* (Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon, 2000), 202-204; Barbara J. Duch, Susan E. Groh, and Deborah E. Allen, eds., *The Power of Problem-Based Learning* (Sterling: Stylus Publishing, 2001).

¹³ This is a significant point of contention between critics and advocates of the PBL method. Critics point to the passive role of a faculty guide and also the assertion by Barrows and Tamblyn that a "faculty person who is a good tutor can successfully tutor in any area" (p. 107). PBL advocates now argue that teachers not only need to be very knowledgeable about a subject but also assertive in their role as guide. See Alan J. Neville, "The Problem-Based Learning Tutor: Teacher? Facilitator? Evaluator?" *Medical Teacher* 21, no. 4 (1999): 393-401.

from a deeper engagement with difficult concepts and principles.¹⁴ PBL methods are now being employed in fields as diverse as nursing, biology, social work, geography, political science, and international relations.¹⁵

A PBL approach has enormous potential in introducing students to important issues related to the commemoration of past events and historical site interpretation in Latin America and elsewhere. The scenarios may be designed to challenge students to address a wide range of thorny conceptual issues.¹⁶ In terms of examining commemoration, these could include the problems associated with allocating scarce resources for heritage preservation projects versus other societal needs, how different groups remember traumatic events, and whether or not historical sites adequately addresses reconciliation after a period of political and social conflict. Exploring these issues raises awareness about the impacts of current political debates and social forces on the preservation of collective memory in Latin American countries. Moreover, each successive exercise challenges students to take on more decision-making. This scaffolding technique is an important component of problem-based learning.¹⁷ Follow-up inquiries, not necessarily built into the descriptions of the exercises, are necessary to probe students' thinking, and potential questions that may arise will be discussed below.¹⁸ What makes this an exciting approach is that the direction of the project may follow an unpredictable path.

The following discussion will be based on experiences with groups of college-level students examining historical sites, monuments, and other landmarks within Chile, an ideal setting for this type of project. Although its historical development is unique compared with other countries within Latin America, Chile has also followed similar historical trends and patterns generally shaping the region. For example, memorials erected as a result of the human rights atrocities committed during the reign of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990) serve as powerful visual reminders of the country's authoritarian past but also the deep social and political divisions that still exist within the country.¹⁹

¹⁴ See M. Savin-Baden, *Problem-Based Learning in Higher Education: Untold Stories* (Buckingham: SHRE and Open University, 2000); David Boud and Grahame Feletti, eds., *The Challenge of Problem-Based Learning*, 2nd ed. (London: Kogan Page, 1997).

¹⁵ Peter Scott Brown and Jace Hargis, "Undergraduate Research in Art History Using Project-Based Learning," *Journal of Faculty Development* 22, no. 2 (May 2008): 152-158; Sarah Hale, "Politics and the Real World: A Case Study in Case Based Learning," *European Political Science* 5, no. 1 (2006): 84-96; Kurt Burch, "A Primer on Problem-Based Learning for International Relations Course," *International Studies Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (2000): 31-44; Robert Delisle, *How to Use Problem-Based Learning in the Classroom* (Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997).

¹⁶ Craig and Hale, "Implementing Problem-Based Learning in Politics," 166.

¹⁷ Cindy E. Hmelo-Silver, Ravit Golan Duncan, and Clark A. Chinn, "Scaffolding and Achievement in Problem-Based and Inquiry Learning," *Educational Psychologist* 42, no. 2 (2007): 99-107.

¹⁸ Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, Elizabeth Beaumont, and Jason Stephens, *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civil Responsibility* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 135, 139-140.

¹⁹ Steve J. Stern, *Battling for Heart and Minds: Memory Struggle in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Teresa Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable: Chile's 'Sitios de Memoria' and the History of Torture, Disappearance, and Death," *Radical History Review* 79 (Winter 2001): 123-139; Victoria Baxter, "Civil

Another consideration in choosing Chile as a case study for examining the problems of commemorating the past is that many of its historical sites are recognized nationally and internationally, including La Moneda, the presidential palace, in Santiago or the Heroes of Iquique monument in Valparaíso. Other more obscure sites that were formerly torture centers during the Pinochet era, such as Villa Grimaldi or La Venda Sexy, are not as well known, either by foreign visitors or locals, but these places are gaining notoriety.²⁰ In recent years, Chile's government has aggressively promoted heritage tourism, especially of the recent past, and these efforts have made an enormous number of published resources available to the public.²¹ As a starting point, two publications, *Monumentos nacionales de Chile* and *Monumentos y sitios de Chile*, list hundreds of sites throughout the country.²² In addition, non-governmental organizations, such as the International Center for Transitional Justice, FLACSO, the Chile Information Project, and the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscious have sponsored tours and conferences.

Representations of Authoritarianism in Chile's Sitios de Memoria

Since 1990, the year Pinochet left the presidency, the number of sitios de memoria (or literally, memory sites) dedicated to the victims of human rights abuses committed by his regime has steadily increased.²³ In 2003, the Estadio Nacional, long a symbol for repression after thousands were detained and tortured there during the 1973 coup, was turned into a national monument.²⁴ During the presidency of Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010; 2014-2018), herself detained at Villa Grimaldi, Chile's government has undertaken an even more aggressive campaign to memorialize these victims. She has conducted official visits to Villa Grimaldi, dedicated the Memory and Human Rights Museum, and officially sanctioned 11 September as a day of commemoration. In late 2008, Chile's government, under the auspices of the Ministerio de Bienes Nacionales, published a pamphlet titled *Ruta de la Memoria* (Memory Heritage Route), which provides maps and detailed directions for a self-guided walking tour of fourteen human rights heritage sites in and around Santiago.²⁵ Since 2010, government support has been inconsistent and has become a partisan issue. The right-leaning government of Sebastián Piñera

Society Promotion of Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation in Chile: Villa Grimaldi," *Peace and Change* 30, no. 1 (2005): 120-136; Elizabeth A. Cole, ed., *Teaching the Violence Past: History Education and Reconciliation* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

²⁰ Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable," 123.

²¹ Brett et al., *Memorialization and Democracy*, 3.

²² Roberto Montandón and Silvia Pirotte, *Monumentos nacionales de Chile* (Santiago: Imprenta Biblioteca Nacional, 1992); *Monumentos y sitios de Chile* (Santiago: Ediciones Altazar y Ediciones de la Universidad Internacional SEK, 1999). An additional Spanish language source is an academic journal titled *Cuadernos del Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales*, sponsored by Chile's Ministerio de Educación.

²³ Elizabeth Jelin, "The Minefields of Memory," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 32, no. 2 (1998): 23-29.

²⁴ Larry Rohter, "Musicians Gather in Homage to Allende," *New York Times*, 8 Sept. 2003.

²⁵ "Gobierno chileno crea 'Ruta de la Memoria' para recordar crímenes de Pinochet," *EFE News Service* (Miami, Fla.), 21 Oct. 2008.

(2010-2014) defunded the project, but Michel Bachelet's second government (2014-2018) attempted to restore funding and expand the Route to other parts of the country. Piñera's return in 2018 has stifled this effort once again.

Examining the history of the sitios de memoria is a great place to start this project (see Appendix A, Problem #1). The government provides enough resources and information to begin the discussion (see Appendix B). More importantly, these materials provide a solid model for students to research the history of sites not included in the route, the second phase of the assignment.²⁶ Adding to what has already been done also helps those students who are already overwhelmed by the study abroad experience itself. Instructors and students might discuss ways to find out more about this history, which could involve interviewing, if possible, those responsible for maintaining the sites (e.g., park rangers, curators, or archivists) and asking questions about the decision-making processes that went into creating them, including the backgrounds of those who created the sites and why, how they are maintained today, and if there are any threats to their existence today. Relying on questions gleaned from the fields of anthropology and heritage studies, this exercise sheds light on how social actors and groups influence how the past is remembered. Scholars of this perspective advocate the need to gain an appreciation of the multi-layered political, economic, social, and cultural contexts within which these sites are created.²⁷

Investigating the history of a site's erection, however, is only part of the story. It is also important to explore how sites change over time and how events, practices, and places may become part of the collective memory, or what Karen E. Till calls the "biography" of a site. This involves not only the story of its original creation but also what "subsequent generations" do with it.²⁸ In La Serena, an important coastal city located approximately six hours by bus northwest of Santiago, students noticed one local monument dedicated to those who died in the massacre of students and workers at Santa María de Iquique School in 1907. In researching the background of the site's construction, this monument was actually one among many that had been erected in key cities throughout Chile in the aftermath of Pinochet's exit from power. In 2007, pro-labor groups organized a national coordinating committee in order to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the massacre, although business groups and right-leaning politicians resisted the move. Students also discovered that the memory of those who had died was kept alive by Luis Advis's composition of the "Cantata de Santa María de Iquique" in

²⁶ In assigning this project, students quickly realize James W. Loewen's observation that evaluating historical sites will invariably uncover a "tale of two eras." The first is the "manifest narrative," or the story of the event or person that is communicated or "heralded" by the sites' creators. He notes that another critical part of analyzing historical sites is to reconstruct the "story of its erection and preservation." See Loewen, *Lies Across America*, 36.

²⁷ Benjamin W. Porter and Noel B. Salazar, "Heritage Tourism, Conflict, and the Public Interest: An Introduction," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 11, no. 5 (2005), 363; Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Society*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002).

²⁸ Karen E. Till, "Memory Studies," *History Workshop Journal* 62, no. 1 (2006): 325-341.

1969. One student in particular was able to obtain a copy of the reading from this cantata, which noted that 3,600 people had died in the massacre. Students' interest in the monument grew when they were working with music and lyrics as primary sources. More importantly, they came to realize on their own how powerful these structures can be in influencing the collective memory of an event and that these songs continue to connect these monuments with the events that they represent. It is also interesting that Pinochet's death has allowed for the commemoration of events that have little or nothing to do with his regime.

Scholars, too, are beginning to uncover the biographies of torture centers at Villa Grimaldi, Londres 38, La Vanda Sexy, and numerous others. These works provide a solid foundation for students to ask more probing questions about the representations of authoritarianism in Latin America during the Cold War.²⁹ Touring the former detention center at Villa Grimaldi, in Santiago, for example, reminds visitors of the capricious and brutal nature of justice under Pinochet. Since 1996, human rights groups, including Families of Executed Prisoners and the Assembly of Human Rights of District 24, have managed the site. The creation of the Parque por la Paz-Villa Grimaldi site was a direct challenge to Pinochet, still in charge of the armed forces, and his legacy. Within the park, visitors see a fountain where prisoners were beaten, paving stones marking the location of prisoners' cells, and a wooden tower, rebuilt after being burned down by DINA, Chile's intelligence service. There is also a wall naming 226 people known to have been executed. What is also interesting is that artifacts of torture campaigns throughout Chile have been transported to this facility. For example, the park's organizers brought in several railroad ties that were used to weigh down victims who were dumped into the Pacific Ocean. This was a moving experience for many of the students.

As already suggested, the existence of these places owes to the significant political changes in the post-Pinochet era. The momentum to create historical sites has been due, in large measure, to a combination of public and private initiatives. At first, human rights groups, victims, and families had established several of these sites with only limited support from the national government.³⁰ It should be pointed out to students that Villa Grimaldi is now simultaneously promoted by both the Chilean government and non-governmental organizations, such as the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience. These interests have often clashed. State sponsorship was not always evident or welcome, and international groups have criticized the Chilean government for not doing enough to remember the victims of the regime. Many members of FLACSO have taken a distinct position on this subject: "When governments drive memorialization initiatives, therefore, they often seek to neutralize disagreements about the past and develop a unified national narrative. In contrast, when civil society drives

²⁹ See Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable;" Baxter, "Civil Society Promotion;" Stern, *Battling for Heart and Minds*.

³⁰ Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable," 124.

memorialization efforts, the narrative may seek to challenge official truths.”³¹ However, human rights activists generally agree that Villa Grimaldi largely reflects “a key component of reform and ‘transitional justice’” not just in Chile but throughout Latin America.³² A post-visit discussion of a site, like Villa Grimaldi, is a good place to ask students some follow-up questions: Do these overlapping jurisdictions affect how the site is promoted or run? How does viewing Villa Grimaldi as an international “site of conscience” compare and contrast with how the Chilean state or people see it? Does comparing Chile’s experiences with other countries obscure or illuminate our understanding of repression in Latin America, in general?³³

Students new to Chile often wonder why it is so hard by contrast to find sites dedicated to Pinochet, considering how long he ruled the country. Indeed, since 1998, when he stepped down as commander of the armed forces, some monuments have been removed altogether. For example, the Eternal Flame of Liberty, built in 1975 by Pinochet’s government and located just outside the presidential palace, was taken out during renovations in 2005 and never restored. To that extent, students will inevitably wrestle with a challenging question: should historical sites dedicated to Pinochet be afforded equal space in the public square? Students more often disagree. In a recent study abroad through Santiago, a few observed that the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, for example, completely ignored Pinochet because he was not mentioned by name in any of the works and that this was an attempt to erase him (regardless of how he is portrayed) from Chile’s past. However, another student noted that while Pinochet was not specifically mentioned, his presence was felt everywhere: “there is, however, no statue of Pinochet, no monument to his memory or anything that really catches the eye of a visitor to show that he was ever in power. It seems that Pinochet’s presidency was just a bad dream that the country does not want to remember.” Taking into account that the number of public representations of Pinochet is in decline, most students come to agree with scholars who doubt that public spaces are arenas for all groups in civil society to articulate their versions of the past.³⁴ Many students conclude that the demands of human rights groups have completely drowned out those by Pinochet’s supporters.

Changes in the plazas and public spaces notwithstanding, students understand that ordinary Chileans still seem divided over whether or not Pinochet was justified in orchestrating Allende’s overthrow and whether or not the regime’s policies have improved the country.³⁵ Apologists for Pinochet’s rule, including military officers

³¹ Brett et al., *Memorialization and Democracy*, 23.

³² *Ibid.*, 1.

³³ Rosabelle Boswell, “Heritage Tourism and Identity in the Mauritanian Villages of Chamarel and Le Morne,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 31, no. 2 (June 2005): 283-295; Paul Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (New York: Berg, 2007).

³⁴ Joan Henderson, “Heritage, Identity and Tourism in Hong Kong,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7, no. 3 (2001): 221.

³⁵ See Stern, *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile*.

and their families, are resilient and continue to hold their own commemorations, including one on 11 September, the day when the armed forces ousted Allende. The Pinochet Foundation, an organization financed by private donations and until recently government subsidies, funds a museum (Museo del Presidente Pinochet), not included on the Memory Heritage Route.³⁶ Yet travel agencies now sponsor human rights tours that bring visitors to these sites but also to the Pinochet Foundation and the National Military Academy.³⁷ An instructor might ask students if a site might achieve some degree of historical equivalency in promoting a particular version of the past.

Students might also be asked to decide how local landmarks should be used. During the early 1990s, the property at Villa Grimaldi was turned over to human rights activists, who had petitioned the government to sponsor a site there. Pedro Matta, a former detainee and the site director, organized a meeting with other former political prisoners to discuss how the space should be organized and what structures should be preserved and erected to educate the public about what had happened there. To his surprise, victims argued that these sites would never be able to represent accurately what happened. In a personal interview with Victoria Baxter, Matta said: “the group was divided in their opinions: part of the group wanted to rebuild the former torture center as it was during the time of its functioning (which proved to be impossible because there was not enough funding to do that); another part wanted to demolish everything that remained there and to build a beautiful park to the memory of those who disappeared or were killed at the site, and finally, another group, in which I counted myself, proposed that all the artifacts and buildings that were not destroyed by the dictatorship should be preserved for the memory of this country and a park should be built around them. This was the proposition that was finally approved.”³⁸ Considering this and other examples, other issues that students might discuss: Do the *sitios de memoria* enhance democratic dialogue? Is giving a voice in a *sitio* that important or desirable? Is Chile at the point that it has reached what Steve Stern calls a “memory impasse” in which the competing memories of the Pinochet era prevent any meaningful dialogue or reconciliation?³⁹ In his work, *The Guilt of Nations*, Elazar Barkan argues that national commemorations of violent pasts or crimes against humanity may actually be used to ignore or forget other present-day state responses to social unrest.⁴⁰ In Chile’s case, students might want to consider whether the recent rise in

³⁶ The Foundation currently does not have a website but has a Facebook page.

³⁷ Some of these are bicycle tours available in Santiago, the capital.

³⁸ Baxter, “Civil Society,” 129; In another case, in Argentina, a conflict ensued between human rights groups and the military over control of the Navy Mechanics School building, where tortures and murders of political prisoners took place during the so-called Dirty War (1976-1983). The Navy was scheduled to vacate the building, which was to be turned into a human rights museum. Instead of sharing the building with outgoing Navy personnel, however, human rights groups refused to enter until it was completely empty. See Brett et al., *Memorialization and Democracy*, 9.

³⁹ Stern, *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile*, xxx.

⁴⁰ See Elazar Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

the number of memorials dedicated to victims of human rights abuses masks other concerns in the country, such as the continued assault on minority groups, such as the Mapuche people. In the process, students may begin to adopt a more critical stance on the *sitios de memoria*.

The Memory Heritage Route provides a solid basis to continue the project for other places in Chile or elsewhere in Latin America, and travelling to other regions, cities, and municipalities is a great way to gauge local perspectives of Chile's authoritarian past. Thus, additional questions posed to students: What landmarks should be added to the *Ruta*? For example, the Estadio Nacional was turned into a historical site in 2003 and eventually included in the *Ruta*, but Santiago's Metro, built during (and an important symbol of) Pinochet's reign, was not. Should it also be included? What about various police stations or jails where human rights abuses took place? Is there anything off limits to being turned into a historical site? Answering these questions forces students to make difficult choices, a key component of the PBL approach.

Past student groups have been encouraged to interview and invite several local stakeholders, such as local members of tourism boards, urban planners, architects, geographers, local historians, and museum curators. One group organized a mock tourism conference in which they sought input of various local groups in a larger project on national and international (e.g., UNESCO) heritage policies. This also allows students to become familiar with various career options in history and also the particular interests of individuals, who have a stake in a particular way that history is represented. This activity reinforces the idea that history is not only taught and learned in classroom settings.⁴¹

Commemorating the Penguin Movement⁴²

Educational research has shown that an important element in a satisfactory PBL experience is the "trigger" that sparks students' interest in an issue.⁴³ Such an event occurred while preparing for a recent study abroad program in Chile. Throughout our travels, the students could not help but notice protest graffiti omnipresent on the walls, sidewalks, public buildings, and private homes. Protesters did not even spare statues and other historical sites, so central to the study abroad experience. In Santiago, for example, the large protective walls of the Palacio Cousiño, the home-turned-museum of one of the wealthiest families in Chile's history, were covered in graffiti that read: "NO LGE!" or "NO LOCE!". Without prompting, the students asked: What did these acronyms mean? Who were the people who wrote these messages? Our group seemed appalled as to why anyone would "commit vandalism," in one student's words, especially to private property. We asked our

⁴¹ Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 68-69, 76-77.

⁴² This PBL exercise is adapted from a history assignment published by the McREL Institute. See Huba and Freed, 204.

⁴³ Boud and Feletti, *The Challenge of Problem-Based Learning*, 205.

on-site study abroad coordinators about the graffiti and were told that a month before we arrived, student leaders had organized a series of protests against a sweeping educational reform measure that had cleared a key legislative hurdle. Students refused to attend classes, held mass demonstrations in the streets of Chile's major cities, and in some cases, organized a "toma," literally a "take," or an occupation, of several universities. I immediately saw my students' interest pique, although many of them confessed that they never would have conceived of participating in this type of protest in their home universities.

In the course of our research of local media accounts of the event, we learned that a broader student movement had nurtured the toma, which was only the latest in a series of on-going disputes between various student groups and Chile's government. In March 2006, as president-elect Michelle Bachelet was entering office, students from various public and private schools launched a general strike after she had failed to address the issue of educational reforms in a national speech. Significant in part because it was the largest of its kind in Chile's history, participants in the Penguin Movement focused their energies on the repeal of the Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Enseñanza (LOCE), a key educational reform that Augusto Pinochet had approved in 1990, just as he was leaving office.⁴⁴ Under this law, the national government recognized three types of schools: public schools controlled directly by municipalities, private schools subsidized by the national government, and private schools that did not receive any public assistance. Municipal and subsidized private schools were given more authority over their schools but received a set amount of funding per child. What resulted was that schools in more affluent areas had better paid teachers, more resources, and better prepared students for college because they could afford to make up the difference by relying on local tax revenues. Indeed, among the chief complaints of the "penguins" was that public schools more often failed to provide adequate preparation for college. Their position was strengthened when the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development issued a highly critical report indicating that only half of public school students earned passing scores on college entrance exams while 91 percent of those in private school did.⁴⁵

The mass demonstrations shocked Bachelet's government, which immediately drafted a reform package, titled the Ley General de Educación (LGE). In an effort aimed at centralizing the public school system, the LGE created a National Council for Education that would coordinate with local "independent public organizations."⁴⁶ However, leaders of one of the largest national student organizations, the Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile (CON-FECH), argued that the LGE still

⁴⁴ The Penguin Movement gets its name from the public school students, who wear black and white uniforms while protesting.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Franklin, "Protests Paralyse Chile's Education System," *Guardian* (London), 7 June 2006.

⁴⁶ Cate Setterfield, "Chile's Bachelet Sinks Her Teeth into Education Reform," *Santiago Times* (Chile), 13 Apr. 2007.

failed to address the movement's key concern: the lack of adequate funding to schools. Since the 2006 demonstrations, other teacher and student groups have joined the broader movement and participated in street protests, occupations of buildings, and other forms of civil disobedience. The police have responded aggressively with mass arrests, and the process has repeated itself since. Indeed, protests have flared up each time the LGE overcomes a legislative or legal barrier.⁴⁷ In May 2008, the Senate approved the LGE. In response, over 390,000 public high school students throughout Chile refused to attend classes in an effort to put additional pressure on the government. At several universities, students barricaded the doors of administrative and classroom buildings, preventing astonished faculty and staff from going to work. Just days before we arrived, many of these students resumed attending classes, and the occupations ended in a stalemate.

Examining the Penguin Movement offered an extraordinary opportunity to explore the recent past and its historical roots but also to think about how such an event would be remembered. The students also helped in creating the PBL itself (see Appendix A, Problem #2). When discussing the parameters of the project, the students kept a number of criteria in mind. The first was that a problem-solving activity should be applicable in a real world setting. We then agreed that students would create a committee to decide how to commemorate the Penguin Movement. This was certainly not out of the realm of possibility since many scholars, especially Latin Americanists, have served on truth commissions, election oversight boards, and a variety of international cultural and economic forums.⁴⁸ Students then delegated responsibilities in gathering information about the movement, including examining the root causes of the protests, interviewing eyewitnesses and participants, and eventually drafting some type of report or plan of action. Researchers have shown that posing real world problems in this way can be an effective way for learners to maintain their interest in a topic and “acquire a cognitive skill or concept.”⁴⁹

Understanding the backdrop of the Penguin Movement was essential for our class to move forward. The project's first phase involved conducting oral interviews with those who had witnessed the *toma* and how they understood the broader movement. To prepare the interviews, we created and translated several questions. We wanted to learn different perspectives about what had happened and made a conscious effort to interview a diverse group of people. Overall, only sixteen people, a manageable number given our time constraints, were interviewed, including high school and university students, teachers, administrators, and other members of the community otherwise unaffiliated with a high school or university.

⁴⁷ “Jornada de protesta no consiguió adhesión que querían los líderes,” *El Día* (La Serena, Chile) 9 July 2008; Lucy McDonald-Stewart, “Teachers Protest Chile’s New Education Law,” *Santiago Times* (Chile), 6 Apr. 2009.

⁴⁸ Greg Grandin, “The Instruction of Great Catastrophe: Truth Commissions, National History, and State Formation in Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala,” *American Historical Review* 110, no. 1 (2005): 46-67.

⁴⁹ Britt et al., “The Sourcer’s Apprentice,” 446.

Those in the group less fluent in Spanish paired with those who were, but we found that numerous interviewees had a working knowledge of English.

In compiling interviewees' responses, a general picture of the movement and the *toma* began to emerge. Most of those interviewed supported the notion that reforms of the educational system were badly needed, but opinions diverged on the degree of support for the protests among students and the larger community and whether or not it was a success. One faculty member was certain that "less than 5 percent of the students" were "participants;" this contrasted with an engineering student, who claimed that "all the students" were involved. A few university students majoring in non-science fields, such as education and English, complained that protest leaders focused on organizing young people enrolled in the engineering school and never addressed their concerns. In terms of rating the occupations a success, most interviewees argued that there was no difference after the strike, but one cited modest concessions by the administration, including improved medical services at the university.

Our students were expecting more support for the protests among young people but were quite taken aback when various students rejected the practice of occupying buildings. Some in our group sympathized with those interviewees who cited practical reasons for not wanting the schools to be shut down, such as finishing degree requirements and missing class time. Some faculty members, whose opinions tended to reflect the variety of conservative professional and teaching organizations, had also rejected the occupations. Our students also noticed that the protests against the LGE merged in certain respects with a broader anti-globalization movement. They were particularly struck by the iconic image of Ernesto "Che" Guevara wearing a Mickey Mouse hat spray painted on sidewalks throughout the ULS campus. They tended to reject these protests as evidence of "anti-capitalism," perhaps confirming the idea that U.S. students tend to accept a triumphalist narrative of western capitalism and believe that neoliberal policies will solve Latin America's economic woes.⁵⁰ However, they also saw the root cause of the student movement reflected in what they heard from Chilean interviewees, who saw higher pass rates among private school students as evidence that these schools were better than public ones. Thus, many Chilean students and teachers saw privatization as an acceptable alternative to help fix the problems within the public school system.

Did these events warrant a commemoration? If so, what would a commemorative site look like? If not, why not? After the interviews, our students realized that as foreigners and as neophytes to these recent events their own identities would impact how the project proceeded and that historical perspective and hindsight were important. The good news was that these initial questions about whether or

⁵⁰ Daniel Greenberg, "Teaching Global Citizenship, Social Change, and Economic Development in a History Course: A Course Model in Latin American Travel/Service Learning," *History Teacher* 41, no. 3 (2008): 283-284.

not to commemorate the “penguins” inspired other questions: If we decide to create a site, how can it appeal to subsequent generations? Should attracting tourists be a consideration? What should people do at the site? These are intended to be open-ended questions with no precise answers, but this is the point of a PBL exercise. Studies on motivating learners suggest that the best problem-solving activities are those that have “uncertain outcomes” and allow for “limited student choice.”⁵¹ At any rate, the students agreed that commemorating the Penguin Movement was, indeed, appropriate. They offered a number of ways to do so. They were often influenced by the locals that they interviewed to designate particular buildings or other non-descript structures. Also under consideration were re-naming schools, universities (or university buildings), streets, bridges, and many other public places. They disagreed on whether a statue or a monument would be appropriate, especially if they had to design it.

One student came up with the idea of a site design contest open to the public. She was inspired by a trip to the state-sponsored museum dedicated to famed Chilean poet, Gabriela Mistral, in the hamlet of Vicuña, just hours outside of La Serena. A replica of Mistral’s house stands just inside the museum gates, and visitors can see how Mistral and her family might have lived. The museum’s curators organize an annual writing and drawing contest in which school children throughout Chile write to Mistral to let her know how important she is to the nation. This activity clearly connects children to Mistral’s memory, but it also serves to connect her to a larger national story. In this way, the student reasoned, the public could “have a voice” in how the monument was designed.⁵²

The idea of students creating their own monument or marker benefitted the study abroad experience overall because it helped transition the students to think more independently and creatively. It also gave students agency in shaping how the past is remembered rather than passively consume it. In the process, this exercise made students more aware (and perhaps, self-conscious) of their own biases. They understood the purpose of leaving out particular elements of the Penguin Movement (e.g., the rare instances of street violence). In fact, some students lamented that a balanced perspective was all but impossible. Most students developed a greater awareness (and in some cases, a sympathy) for the viewpoints and voices that are often excluded from a monument’s construction.⁵³ This is similar to what public interest anthropologists determine when they work with communities in constructing monuments commemorating the past.⁵⁴ Would partisans go to such length to consider the other side? Probably not, but the idea is to push students to justify why they make particular decisions.

⁵¹ Britt et al., “The Sourcer’s Apprentice,” 450-451.

⁵² Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, eds., *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Memory* (London: Routledge, 2003), 5.

⁵³ Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, 242-243.

⁵⁴ Porter and Salazar, “Heritage Tourism, Conflict, and the Public Interest,” 363.

Conclusion

There are very few assignments on historical site analysis which address the particular concerns for understanding Latin America's past. This assignment brings together the various themes that scholars of commemoration have examined in their works: the issues of nationalism, globalization, ideology, the problem of accuracy, the politics of commemoration, etc. At the same time, this project is designed to help students understand the theoretical and practical approaches to analyzing historical sites. The PBL exercises proposed in this essay have several tangible benefits. First, they take advantage of the pedagogical strengths of the PBL approach with its emphasis on interdisciplinary, project-based, open-ended, and collaborative learning. They challenge students to think about the conscious decisions that go into commemorating the past. They are designed to facilitate a discussion of a very broad range of issues related to heritage preservation, including the contested nature of creating sites. The hope, too, is that students will make broader connections to these issues in their own communities and foster gradual independent thinking. These exercises are designed to challenge students to think collaboratively by considering other viewpoints, coordinating plans of action, and delegating responsibility.⁵⁵

Before adopting this approach, however, a faculty guide should keep in mind some initial concerns unique in a study abroad setting. Although a growing list of resources are available to English-speakers, much of the work analyzing primary and secondary source materials and perhaps conducting interviews has to be done in Spanish. Thus, it is useful to survey the students' background knowledge, special skills, and interests, in order to assess what each can contribute in completing the project. Language barriers may be overcome by patience on both the part of the student and instructor. Another consideration important to remember is that each successive exercise becomes gradually more open-ended. The problems proposed in this essay contain concrete instructions and expectations, but a solution is not necessary. By the time students begin the final exercise, students are asked to formulate their own questions, work out their own solutions, and rely less on the faculty facilitator.

Future incarnations might incorporate role-playing exercises, similar to the "Reacting to the Past" project organized by Mark Carnes at Barnard College, or a service learning component. Closer collaboration with site organizers would also enhance the learning experience. An additional advantage is that students are introduced to the broad range of potential career paths in history outside of teaching and academia. They learn a great deal about occupations, such as park rangers, re-enactors, museum curators, and archivists, who are charged with making the practical daily decisions on how to preserve and represent historical events in

⁵⁵ Burch, "A Primer on Problem-Based Learning," 37.

the public sphere.⁵⁶ They also learn more than they ever wanted to know about the politics of commemoration. Adapting this project for other settings, students and teachers might also reflect on how their own backgrounds, as foreigners for example, influence their perspectives of the past and how they look at or interact with historical sites.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ A growing number of community colleges and universities are infusing workplace skills into the general education curriculum. A report published by the League for Innovation in the Community College stressed the need to “incorporate the ‘hard’ skills of literacy, numeracy, and information technology literacy, as well as the ‘soft’ skills of teamwork, communication, problem solving, and the ability to work with diverse groups, and that success in the workforce or in further education depends on acquisition of these skills.” See Cynthia D. Wilson, Cindy L. Miles, Ronald L. Baker, and R. Laurence Schoenberger, *Learning Outcomes for the 21st Century: Report of a Community College Study* (Mission Viejo: League for Innovation in the Community College and the Pew Charitable Trusts, February 2000), 11.

⁵⁷ Rick Crownshaw, “Photography and Memory in Holocaust Museums,” *Mortality* 12, no. 2 (1997), 177-179; Sandra L. Richards, “What Is to Be Remembered? Tourism to Ghana’s Slave Castle-Dungeons,” in *Critical Theory and Performance*, ed., Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2007), 87.

APPENDIX A: PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES USING HERITAGE SITES IN MODERN LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY

Using Chile as a case study, this project concerns how key figures and events in modern Latin American history are represented in various historical sites. You will play the role of a historian, which involves functioning as a researcher and critic. The work you turn in must be typed, well-written, and edited for clarity, quality, and organization.

PROBLEM #1: REPRESENTATIONS OF AUTHORITARIANISM

The recent history of authoritarianism in Chile has left a deep impression on the lives of ordinary Chileans. This may be seen in the country's "sitios de memoria," or "memory sites," which are various parks, museums, buildings, and monuments dedicated to those who suffered at the hands of the Pinochet regime. The Ministry of National Property is trying to gauge the effectiveness of the "Ruta de la Memoria," or Memory Heritage Route, which encompasses a series of "memory sites" in and around Santiago. Choose three to five of these sites, and consider the following questions:

- **Symbols and Messages:** In your view, which site is most effective at conveying its message? Why? What are the criteria for an effective site? Which perspectives are missing or distorted? Should any site be "toppled" for any reason? The Ministry is expected to expand the Memory Heritage Route to other cities and regions. What specific recommendations, if any, would you make to improve on it?
- **"What Would You Do?"** You have been asked to give your advice on whether or not to add a local building, used during the dictatorship to "disappear" people, as a "memory site" to the Memory Heritage Route. On the one hand, some families and human rights groups support this effort in order to honor those who died. However, other victims' families are siding against it, arguing that no physical structure is sufficient to remember the victims of human rights atrocities. The latter group of families has also found themselves in an uncomfortable alliance with those supporting the dictatorship and the local police which own the building. Considering the range of arguments for and against this idea, how would you resolve these differences? Which side would you support and why?

PROBLEM #2: COMMEMORATING THE PENGUIN MOVEMENT

It is 2026, and Chile's president has requested that you serve as an adviser on a task force commissioned to achieve two objectives: 1) draft a brief history of the Penguin Movement, a series of the largest protests in Chile's history during the late 2000s that sought reform of the nation's educational system, and 2) decide whether or not to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Penguin Movement

In order to accomplish the first objective, you will want to use a variety of sources of information—books, articles (from journals, newspapers, and magazines), oral interviews with those who had witnessed and participated in the movement, and other sources. The following is a preliminary set of questions:

- Why did protests begin in 2006, and what was your role, if any, in the student protests?
- Why did the students use the toma or occupations as a protest strategy? What was your opinion of the toma as a protest strategy?
- How did your peers and the community at large respond to the protests?
- How do you feel about some of the key figures and groups who participated in the movement?
- How were you affected by the toma?

For the second objective, you will need to justify whether or not a commemoration is needed. Identify the alternatives that you are considering and the criteria involved in making this decision. If necessary, be prepared to describe what form a commemoration will take (e.g., publicly built structure or activity). As a group, present your findings and proposals in at least two of the following ways:

- A written report
- A letter to the president following the completion of the committee meeting
- An article written for *The Santiago Times*
- An encyclopedia or textbook style entry on the event
- A videotape of a dramatization of the committee meeting
- A mock newscast
- An audiotape

CLASS PRESENTATION: You will need to provide a presentation on all aspects of the project. Consult with me if you want to use slides, pictures, or PowerPoint. In no more than 20 minutes, you should describe the historic sites that you examined and address issues and problems that you encountered during the course of the larger project. Afterward, you will field questions and be graded on the quality of your responses.

**APPENDIX B: SELECT LIST OF ONLINE RESOURCES FOR
EXAMINING HISTORICAL SITES IN CHILE**

Archivo digital de las Violaciones de los Derechos Humanos de la Dictadura Militar en Chile (1973-1990)

<http://www.memoriaviva.com/>

Gobierno de Chile, Ministerio del Interior, Programa de Derechos Humanos

<http://www.ddhh.gov.cl>

Ministerio de Bienes Nacionales: “Ruta de la Memoria” (Available in Spanish and English)

<http://www.bienesnacionales.cl>

Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos

<http://www.cedocmuseodelamemoria.cl>

National Security Archive

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv>

Santiago Times

www.santiagotimes.cl

Vicaría de la Solidaridad

<http://www.archivovicaria.cl>

Villa Grimaldi-Parque por la Paz

<http://www.villagrimaldicorp.cl/>

“This is a Business Proposition — Not Peanut Politics”: Wartime Lobbying for southern Florida

Augustine Meaher
Air University

The Second World War brought a massive military presence and economic expansion to southern Florida. It is tempting to see this as inevitable, but an examination of America's defense buildup following Pearl Harbor reveals that southern Florida was initially considered unsuitable to support the war effort because of its isolated location and tourist-based economic infrastructure. Southern Florida was itself unsure what its wartime role should be and how to deal with the challenges and opportunities presented by the war. The papers of state senator Ernest “Cap” Graham who represented southern Florida in the state legislature provide a valuable insight into how southern Florida attracted wartime bases and industries while also revealing that the popular image of “the good war” is overly simplistic. Graham encountered a sea of red tape which caused him, a life-long democrat, to question the New Deal and even his fellow democrats' commitment to victory.

Seven December 1941 heralded the opening of the winter tourist season on which southern Florida's local economy relied. It was unclear at first how American entry into the Second World War would affect the heavily seasonal tourist-based economy. Fear soon gripped southern Florida as many believed they were “absolutely defenseless.”¹ The tightening of gasoline restrictions coupled with the freezing of the sale of new automobile tires in early 1942, the unavailability of extra railroad equipment, and the cessation of coastal steamers meant that by late January 1942 southern Florida's economy was under severe pressure. Tourists could no longer get to southern Florida and those already there were increasingly worried that they would be unable to leave.

The political and business elites of southern Florida realized American entry into the Second World War presented a golden opportunity to diversify their economy and ensure that the tourist dollars that had driven the economy were replaced by war dollars. One of the first to realize the potential opportunities the war presented and driven by patriotic zeal to ensure that southern Florida played its part in the war effort was State Senator Ernest Graham. A trained engineer who had moved to southern Florida from Michigan in 1921 to serve as manager of the Pennsylvania Sugar Company's properties to the west of Miami, Graham had purchased some of the company's land and buildings in 1931 and converted them into the dominant

¹ Letter from John K. Knight to Ernest Graham, 14 February 1942, Ernest R. Graham Papers, Special and Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville, Legislative Papers, Box 13: General Correspondence 1941-1942. [Hereafter Graham Papers]

dairy and beef farm in southern Florida when the Pennsylvania Sugar Company pulled out.²

Always active in civic affairs, Graham served on the Dade Drainage District and the State Road Department boards before running for the Florida State Senate as a Democrat reformer in 1936 advocating repeal of the poll tax while seeking to cripple the Hialeah political machine which protected racing and gambling interests.³ He was reelected to the State Senate in 1940 having won recognition as “the best informed man in the body on Florida’s financial affairs,”⁴ while also having an “uncanny ability at the quick memorizing of figures and statistics” which were always “at the tip of his tongue.”⁵ Graham had a political machine in southern Florida facilitated by his milkmen who distributed political advertisements with Graham Dairy milk and butter. His man of the people image which was supported by his frequent recounting of the time he had meet Calamity Jane played well in southern Florida. Graham departed for Washington in January 1942 supporting the mayor of Miami on his trip to see how Miami could support the war effort. Graham firmly believed

Miami has lost great opportunities during recent years in not selling to the thousands of outstanding manufacturing and government officials some of its assets besides the tourist and entertainment realm.⁶

Even before Graham returned, he was nominated

by militant community leaders to be Miami’s trouble-shooter and business go-getter at Washington until a permanent capital agent may be found.⁷

The Dade County Commission immediately allocated funds for Graham to represent the county in Washington.⁸ The Miami City Commission however balked at making a decision until Graham had returned from Washington and reported on what he had found and Miami mayor C. H. Reeder could express his views on appointing Graham.⁹

Graham returned from Washington announcing “I am not seeking a job!”¹⁰ but gave every impression of having given considerable thought to how he would serve as southern Florida’s ambassador to Washington. Ever the politician, he began by announcing the “proper effort would place 15,000 to 20,000 men at

² William A. Graham, “The Pennsoco Sugar Experiment,” *Tequesta*, 11, (1951): 48.

³ Graham’s early political career is described in Peter Klingman, “Ernest Graham and the Hialeah Charter Fight of 1937,” *Tequesta*, 34, (1974): 37-44.

⁴ S. W. Matthews, “Capital to Find Graham is an unusual Lobbyist: Miamian is not a Schemer, Has area’s interests at Heart,” *Miami News*, 8 Feb. 1942, 14.

⁵ “Figures Help Graham,” *Miami News*, 12 April 1942, 12

⁶ Letter from J. Kennard Johnson to WPB, forwarded to Graham 3 April 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 9: Correspondence 1941-1943.

⁷ “Miami Delays of Appointment of Graham: Decides to Consult Candidate First,” *Miami Herald*, 31 Jan. 1942, 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ “War Industry Forecast Here: Graham Says Proper Effort Would Place 15,000 at Work in Miami,” *Miami Herald*, 1 Feb. 1942, 3.

work in war industry in the Miami area,” but only if Washington was presented “with a united front and the common purpose of selling one good idea at a time” which would ensure the bureaucratic bottle-neck was cleared.¹¹ Graham believed southern Florida had “natural advantages to four war industries — agriculture, boat building, parts making, and the production of auxiliary material.”¹²

Mayor Reeder agreed with Graham and thought Graham would be an excellent representative in Washington. The only commissioner opposed to Graham’s appointment was Richard Cherry (R. C.) Gardner, a local grocer and wily populist who feared that Graham would use his time in Washington as a springboard to higher office.¹³ Gardner, one of the first grocers in Miami, was also “one of the most volatile commissioners ever to grace city hall,” who proudly voted against every appropriation bill to come before the commission.¹⁴ Although Gardner described Graham as “the best friend I have in the world,”¹⁵ his opposition to Graham representing southern Florida in Washington would continue to grow. Despite Gardner’s opposition, the Miami City Commission voted to fund Graham as their representative to Washington for the remainder of the year in line with the days-earlier Dade County Commission vote, although Graham had said his business and legislative duties would preclude him being away for more than six months. Graham immediately expanded his role declaring to the city commission “You have got to quit thinking about Dade county — this community extends for 300 miles.”¹⁶ The major Miami newspapers supported his appointment, but the *Miami Herald* warned “His ability and his achievements will be under constant surveillance. He will be measured by results.”¹⁷

Graham did not believe that new wartime industries could immediately offset the loss of tourist dollars. He thus subtly turned southern Florida’s most significant weakness to the war effort, its location, into a potential benefit. Predicting the housing shortages that would bedevil already existing industrial centers, Graham argued

it is not good sense to move men from this area, where we have ideal climate, housing facilities, and building facilities, to an area where building facilities must be enlarged, houses built and with climatic conditions incomparable to our own.¹⁸

He believed southern Florida should offer itself as a residential center for those not involved in war related industries but living in industrial centers. Graham hoped

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “Point of View,” *Miami News*, 31 Jan. 1942, 1.

¹⁴ “Gardner, Noted Miamian is Dead,” *Miami Herald*, 3 Aug. 1959, 3A.

¹⁵ “Point of View,” *Miami News*, 31 Jan. 1942, 1.

¹⁶ “Labor to Aid Graham in Promoting Jobs,” undated, and unidentified newspaper clipping, Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book, 1944 (scrapbook titles refer to the date of the last clipping therein and many scrapbooks cover multiple years).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

that their exposure to southern Florida in the off season would lead some to decide to permanently relocate. The war was thus an excellent opportunity to sell southern Florida not just to the Federal Government but to middle-class America. Graham's vision for southern Florida as a promised land would dominate his mission in Washington and his subsequent gubernatorial campaign.

Graham's first task was ensuring that southern Florida's elites remained united in support of his mission. The *Miami News* presciently warned the day after Graham's appointment that "the value of his mission could be destroyed by the interference back home of politics and factional bickering."¹⁹ Graham thus spent the first week of his appointment not in Washington but in southern Florida explaining to the political and business elites that they had "not yet shown Washington officials its potentialities both agriculturally and industrially for aiding the war program."²⁰ Yet Graham cautioned "South Florida must forget her own selfish interests in favor of the nation-wide war effort" if it hoped to succeed and support the war effort.²¹

Despite his political background and his connections to local and state elites, Graham was not a natural choice to be southern Florida's representative to Washington. The *Miami News* bluntly declared "capital to find Graham is an unusual lobbyist" noting approvingly that:

he is neither a schemer nor a yes man. The senator prefers to give his opinions in the open, and he'll voice them at the drop of a hat. High-sounding official titles don't impress Graham. He figures every person holding a public job is a public servant. Responsible to the best interests of the people. If he finds they're forgetting their duties, he doesn't hesitate to remind them.²²

Nor did Graham look like a traditional lobbyist wearing a two-dollar blue shirt, a faded polka-dot tie that was "not too carefully tied," usually coatless, and a pocket watch on a chain he looked "more like West Florida than Miami Beach."²³ One critic lamented that he did not look like Miami because he lived with his cows twenty miles out of town.²⁴

Less than a week after Graham had been appointed, R. C. Gardner was advocating sending Graham an assistant, his man, Louis Sevier.²⁵ Although a "one-man minority," Gardener's attempt to politicize the mission to Washington by sending a onetime consultant to the city aviation department and Gardner protégé revealed that the unity Graham needed in southern Florida to succeed was already threatened.²⁶ Graham departed Miami for Washington via Eastern Airlines

¹⁹ "Now Let's Go," *Miami News*, 3 Feb. 1942, 7.

²⁰ "Graham to Meet Miami Leaders, Plan projects: State Senator to Tell Capital How Dade Can Help War Effort," *Miami News*, 3 Feb. 1942, 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² "Graham to Meet Miami Leaders, Plan projects: State Senator to Tell Capital How Dade Can Help War Effort," *Miami News*, 8 Feb. 1942, 14.

²³ "Graham Not Like Miami," *Miami News*, 26 Sept. 1943, 21.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Benton Jacobs, "Commission Puts Politics Ahead at Social Parleys," *Miami News*, 8 Feb. 1942, 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

on 10 February 1942. Officially he was the interim and unpaid city of Miami and Dade County representative in Washington whose mission was “to keep this area expertly advised of those things which we can do for our economic benefit in the war effort, and to see that our efforts to fit into the war picture are successfully directed in the nation's capital.”²⁷

Wartime Washington was “a madhouse”²⁸ and Graham realized that “they don’t know south Florida exists.”²⁹ The expertise in letting and cancelling defense contracts was limited to a small cadre of military officers making it extremely difficult to obtain contracts if a concern had not previously held a government contract for the product they now sought to make.³⁰ Graham therefore viewed his first mission as showing “the government ways in which it could advance national defense and national welfare by recognizing the needs and opportunities of Florida.”³¹ Shortly after Graham arrived in Washington, the War Production Board (WPB) announced in Miami that local industries “would have to take their chances at obtaining supplies. and private building activities faced complete stoppage.”³² Furthermore, most industries in southern Florida catered to the tourist economy which the WPB concluded meant “these workers would have to get out and find defense jobs in ship yards and factories elsewhere.”³³ The Dade County Emergency Coordinating Board (ECB), a group of local businessmen approved by the Miami City and Dade County Commissions had tasked Graham with four priorities:

1. Getting government projects in this area that will bring in a permanent payroll.
2. Have our port designated as a port of embarkation and debarkation.
3. Get the "Go ahead" order on a lighter-than-air base in south Florida.
4. Establish southern Florida as a vegetable a fruit processing and canning center.³⁴

These broadly conformed with the ideas that Graham had proposed on his return from his first trip to Washington. The ECB’s primary function in relation to Washington was “to gather information and forward it to the Senator when he requests it.”³⁵

However, those projects required time as even the government was not sure what the war effort needed. Therefore, on arriving in Washington, Graham launched the

²⁷ “Making a Start,” *Miami Herald*, 3 Feb. 1942, 2.

²⁸ Letter from Graham to Mayor Reeder, 14 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 14: General Correspondence 1941-1943, "N"- "R."

²⁹ Letter from Graham to Bob Newman, 14 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 14: General Correspondence 1941-1943, "N"- "R."

³⁰ Gregory Hooks, *Forging the Military-Industrial Complex : World War II's Battle of the Potomac* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 152.

³¹ “Emissary For All Florida,” *Melbourne Times*, 27 Feb. 1942, 6.

³² “Graham Named Vacation Area Emissary,” *Tampa Bay Times*, 3 Feb. 1942, 15.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Letter from J. Y. Gooch Miami Chamber of Commerce to Graham, 14 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

³⁵ Untitled, undated, unidentified newspaper, found in Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book 3, 1942.

“Move to Southern Florida Campaign,” announcing “anyone who wants to leave Washington should rent his home and live in Florida on the rental.”³⁶ Graham’s campaign was wholeheartedly embraced by the City of Miami Beach which promptly launched an advertising blitz urging families in Akron, Buffalo, Camden, Mobile, and Pontiac to “rent their homes to defense workers.”³⁷ The *Washington News* lamented “Miami Beach Beckons Nation’s Parasites.”³⁸

Graham organized a series of ads in Washington newspapers particularly the *Washington Post*. His oldest son was married to Katherine Graham the daughter of the Washington Post’s owner which facilitated the placement of such ads at reduced prices. The ads, which had the full support of the Dade County Realtors Association, urged Washingtonians to “rent your homes in Washington,” and “come on down to Miami where living costs are ridiculously low” and “live in a climate that’s ideal on the rental from your home in Washington.”³⁹ The city of Miami urged Graham to highlight that the heating oil needed to survive frigid northeastern winters was likely to be rationed but unneeded in balmy southern Florida.⁴⁰ The campaign to bring evacuees to southern Florida was soon ended as Graham turned his attention to military expansion.

Southern Florida had largely missed out on the pre-war military expansion that saw new and expanded bases in northern and central Florida, a frequently cited advantage of having a representative in Washington. However, the outbreak of war required a massive increase in administrative and ground support officers for the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF). Southern Florida’s tourist-based infrastructure and balmy climate made it the perfect location for the necessary training schools. Graham had first mooted the idea of using the hotels in the area to house military personnel in early January at Hialeah Park.⁴¹ Indeed, he had presented a survey of facilities in Miami Beach that could be used for training on his earlier trip to Washington.⁴²

While the initial steps towards establishing the Miami Beach Training School had been taken prior to Graham’s appointment, he arrived just in time to help counter the “considerable opposition” to the school being established in Miami Beach from cities in Texas and Louisiana and most annoyingly Tampa-St.

³⁶ Tom Hagan, “Graham Starts Capital Job of ‘Selling Dade’: Rent homes, Live in Florida, Envoy Tells Washington,” *Miami News*, 12 Feb. 1942, 1.

³⁷ “Miami Beach Beckons Nation’s Parasites” undated, unidentified newspaper, found in Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book 3, 1942.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Charles Gregg, “Brokers See Boost in Realty Activity: Crowded Defense Cities, Air Center Report Aiding Demand,” *Miami News*, 29 Mar. 1942, 26.

⁴⁰ Letter from J. W. Power, Director of Publicity City of Miami to H. R. Sampson Office of Defense Transportation, forwarded to Graham at Mayor of Miami’s suggestion, 24 July 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 14: General Correspondence 1941-1943, “N”-“R.”

⁴¹ Cecil Warren, “About Florida: Graham’s Idea,” *Miami News*, 19 Apr. 1942, 15.

⁴² Letter from John M. Duff, Jr. Chairman Army Coordinating Committee and President Miami Beach Hotel Association to Senator Pepper, cc’d to Graham, 14 May 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 11: General Correspondence 1941-1942, “C”-“D.”

Petersburg.⁴³ Graham presciently warned that southern Florida would need “to lean over backwards” to ensure that the school was a success that enhanced the image of southern Florida.⁴⁴ During the establishment negotiations Graham played a vital role by keeping southern Florida, especially the Miami Beach city manager and the Miami Beach Hotel Association, aware of what was going on in Washington and what was being said about the program in the corridors of power.

This was never more important than when a group of disgruntled hotel owners telegraphed the Florida congressional delegation and President Roosevelt “denouncing the actions of the Army officers in leasing property at Miami Beach.”⁴⁵ Graham was able to warn the Miami Beach administration and hotel owners that the USAAF was giving serious consideration to transferring the school elsewhere and recommended that leases be negotiated by a committee and lease rates based on an appraisal by experts.⁴⁶ Graham reassured Miami Beach that although the school was slated for only 1,000 students, “this is only the beginning,” which was true.⁴⁷ The *Miami News* heralded Graham’s role in acquiring the training schools with: “the work of Senator Graham illustrates the possibilities” of southern Florida.⁴⁸

Boat construction was one of the few existing industries in southern Florida that could easily be converted to wartime production. Shortly after arriving in Washington, Graham noted “we also feel that we are perfect ‘naturals’ for the building of small boats.”⁴⁹ Graham would “chase down all the different purchasers of boats in the Army, Navy, Merchant Marine, and Coast Guard” for southern Florida’s shipyards.⁵⁰ With this knowledge Graham was able to assist Gray Marine Motors Company and Tommy’s Boat Yard when they submitted a joint proposal for construction of Eureka landing boats to the Bureau of Ships.⁵¹ By 1943, the Miami Shipbuilding Corporation was the second largest employer in Miami thanks to wartime contracts.⁵²

Graham had been attracted by agriculture to southern Florida and the rapidly expanding armed forces needed a stable supply of food which Graham felt

⁴³ Letter from Graham to Gooch, Chairman Emergency Coordinating Board and Miami Chamber of Commerce, 25 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ “History of the Fifth District Army Air Forces Technical Training Command: Feb. 1942-01 Nov. 1943: History of Miami Beach Training Base - Part IV” Air Force Historical Research Agency, MS 225.025 Feb. 1942-Nov. 1943, V16.

⁴⁶ “History of the Fifth District Army Air Forces Technical Training Command: Feb. 1942-01 Nov. 1943,” Air Force Historical Research Agency, MS. 225 Feb. 1942-Nov. 1943, VII.

⁴⁷ Letter from Graham to Bob Newman, Florida Taxpayers Association, 27 Feb. 1942, Legislative Papers Box 14: General Correspondence 1941-1943, “N”-“R.”

⁴⁸ “An Example,” *Miami News*, 15 Apr. 1942, 10.

⁴⁹ Letter from Graham to Bob Newman of Florida Taxpayers Association, 14 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 14: General Correspondence 1941-1943, “N”-“R.”

⁵⁰ Letter from Graham to M. R. Harrison, 24 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

⁵¹ Letter from Richard H. Hunt, Circuit Judge, to Graham, 17 Mar. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

⁵² “Miami Shipbuilding Corporation, Miami FL,” last modified 23 Nov. 2016, Shipbuilding History: Construction Records of U.S. and Canadian Shipbuilders and Boatbuilders, <http://shipbuildinghistory.com/shipyards/emergencysmall/miami.htm>.

southern Florida was well placed to provide. On his appointment Graham had urged the city commissioners to “think in terms of a community unit covering the rich agricultural back country” noting that “sugar is our biggest possibility” and “it could be used to produce 300,000,000 gallons of alcohol in addition to the 100,000,000 gallons now available from other sources.”⁵³ As soon as he was appointed, a Miami newspaper proclaimed “Graham Busy on Sugar Plan” and Graham partnered with Senator Claude Pepper to gain WPB approval for increased sugar mill facilities and an alcohol plant for war production.⁵⁴ A mere six weeks after arriving in Washington, the WPB had “approved a general plan for increasing sugar production.”⁵⁵

Although publicizing Florida’s potential to support the war effort took much of Graham’s time, he also performed the valuable role of facilitator when it came to securing government contracts. Construction of the Richmond Naval Air Station, which would initially house a squadron of six blimps, was announced on 20 April 1942.⁵⁶ Graham served as facilitator for numerous local contractors seeking help in obtaining part of the \$6 million contract to build and equip the base.⁵⁷ Graham would also publicize the base and the hundreds of jobs for local craftsmen that the project created.⁵⁸ Despite the feeling that “Miami is located wrong, geographically, to compete on Government contracts”⁵⁹ within Washington and elsewhere, numerous firms contacted Graham to discover how to obtain a contract and who to contact in Washington. Initially, southern Florida firms focused on supplying the ever-expanding military presence. Royal Palm furniture urged Graham to remind the services that:

The furniture manufacturers of Miami are not only fully capable of producing at a reasonable price the furniture necessary at Opa Locka, Key West, the Banana River Air Base and Jacksonville Air Base, but are also so located that the purchasing officials could conveniently call at the plants for inspection or merchandise conferences.⁶⁰

By the next day Graham had assigned “a man to run down your specific case.”⁶¹

War Production Board Chief Donald M. Nelson’s 3 March 1942 order to “bring thousands more of the nation’s 200,000 factories into war production”⁶² unleashed

⁵³ “Labor to Aid Graham in Promoting Jobs,” undated, unidentified, Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book, 1944.

⁵⁴ “Graham Busy on Sugar Plan,” unidentified newspaper, 5 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book, 1944.

⁵⁵ Tom Hagan, “Graham has Difficulties But Reports on Projects,” *Miami News*, 22 Mar. 1942, 17.

⁵⁶ David Macfie, “Richmond Naval Air Station, 1942-1961,” *Tèquesta* 37 (1977): 39.

⁵⁷ See for Example, Letter from George, a contractor, to Graham, 23 Apr. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 10: General Correspondence 1941-1942, “A”-“B.”

⁵⁸ Charles Gregg, “Miami War Role Seen Important, Expanding: Blimp Base, Proposed Shipyards, Virginia Key Boom Construction,” *Miami News*, 12 Apr. 1942, 22.

⁵⁹ See for example, Letter from Charles Crandon, Dade County ECB to Graham, 23 March 1942, *ibid*.

⁶⁰ Letter from Kennard Johnson, Dade County ECB, to Graham, 24 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 9: Correspondence 1941-1943.

⁶¹ Letter from Kennard Johnson to Graham, 25 Feb. 1942, *ibid*.

⁶² “War Contracts Ordered Spread: Competitive Bidding Banned by Nelson; Aids Small Firms,” *Miami*

a flood of requests for assistance in gaining contracts. Graham soon thereafter was able to get a meeting with Nelson and reported "they are most desirous of spreading out this defense work" which Graham believed was essential, as without defense work being spread out amongst small firms one's chances "are very slim for getting work."⁶³ Graham quickly realized that the order did not necessarily mean more contracts for southern Florida, fearing "greed for the almighty dollar and profit is so strong in some of their systems, that I think they would rather lose the war than a dollar."⁶⁴ Graham lamented that 85 percent of the contracts went to a mere 15 percent of firms and that the odds against a Florida firm getting a contract were between 85 percent and 95 percent.⁶⁵ This was not just unpatriotic, it also threatened the economic survival of numerous small firms in southern Florida.⁶⁶

Graham went directly to Nelson with his concerns. Nelson assured him "this bottleneck could be broken and had to be broken."⁶⁷ Graham was not easily convinced and threatened to tell the Miami papers that "there is no work for our area," a threat that led the WPB to agree to a large retraining contract being broken up amongst smaller firms.⁶⁸ It was a process Graham felt epitomized all that was wrong with Washington as "it is like pulling teeth to get any action."⁶⁹

The rationing of fuel was the most pressing concern of the local governments in southern Florida and indeed the state government. How could those tourists already in southern Florida for the winter season make their way back to their northern homes was a growing concern. The City Manager of Miami informed Graham that "inquiries are increasing daily in number" and we need "authentic information."⁷⁰ Once the information was received and relayed from Graham, Miami Beach urged Graham to campaign for a moratorium on gasoline rationing.⁷¹ Graham instead lobbied for a "special winter allotment of gasoline which would enable residents of eastern states to reach Florida to escape the danger of a fuel oil shortage,"⁷² which Graham maintained would "send thousands of Northerners to Miami."⁷³

Supplying fuel to southern Florida was a major issue for Graham and politicians throughout Florida. Graham believed there already existed the means to get

News, 4 Mar. 1942.

⁶³ Letter from Graham to C. F. Graffinn, manager of Beach Boat Slips Corporation, 21 Mar. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

⁶⁴ Letter from Graham to Crandon, 20 Mar. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 11: General Correspondence 1941-1942, "C"- "D."

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Letter from Malone to Graham, 24 Mar. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 13: General Correspondence 1941-1942.

⁶⁷ Letter from Graham to Crandon, 20 Mar. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 11: General Correspondence 1941-1942, "C"- "D."

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Letter from Curry to Graham, 27 Feb. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 11: General Correspondence 1941-1942, "C"- "D."

⁷¹ Letter from John Orr Executive Secretary Miami Beach Apartment Association to Graham, 14 June 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 9: Correspondence 1941-1943.

⁷² "Graham Urges Tourist Gas Allotment: Graham would provide Fuel for Eastern Visitors to Reach Florida," *Miami Herald*, 30 June 1942, 1.

⁷³ "Graham Says State Loses \$10,000 Daily: Blame Placed on Oil Firms," *Miami Herald*, 3 July 1942, 5.

petroleum products from the Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast to southern Florida and the Atlantic seaboard beyond without exposing them to German U-Boats, the Fort Myers-Stuart Canal which Graham labeled "Florida's Burma Road."⁷⁴ Graham charged that those responsible for not using the inland waterways and thereby sending ships and crews into harm's way were "as guilty as those responsible for Pearl Harbor."⁷⁵

Shortly after arriving in Washington, Graham sought out Texas' Joseph Mansfield, the powerful Chairman of the House Rivers and Harbors Committee, to support the modernization of the canal. Mansfield agreed that the Fort Myers-Stuart Canal was "essential as a military project."⁷⁶ Convincing Mansfield was an important first step. Admittedly the 300 or so wooden barges necessary to haul the projected 30,000 barrels a day would have to be built, but Graham believed they could be built in the shipyards of Miami and Fort Lauderdale in a few months.⁷⁷ Furthermore, wooden barges were cheaper and could be built more quickly than tankers, a mere \$12 million would provide for enough barges to replace 36 tankers.⁷⁸ Graham even persuaded Governor Spessard Holland to cable President Roosevelt about the viability of the canal and the ability of Florida shipyards to produce the necessary wooden barges.⁷⁹ Graham would himself see to it that the inland waterways were also brought up to the president via the president's naval aide, Captain John McCrea.⁸⁰

Graham believed Office of Defense Transportation (ODT) intransigence could be overcome by publicizing the advantages of the canal and getting the public to pressure Washington to use the canal. The *Washington Post* noted in an editorial:

the Government is insisting on steel barges, by which petroleum products could be hauled up the inland waterways, thus releasing tankers for direct military purposes. There is not sufficient steel plate for such barges. But there is plenty of wood.

It concluded daringly, "wooden barges have hauled oil before. They probably haul plenty in Axis nations."⁸¹ Graham placed full page newspaper advertisements throughout the Gulf coast and Mid-Atlantic proclaiming "We have protected inland waterways, ready for immediate use, joining Gulf and Atlantic almost unused now." And asking, "One-fifth of all the oil used in the East could be shipped via

⁷⁴ Cecil Warren, "Florida's 'Burma Road' Made Issue by Graham," *Miami News*, 30 Apr. 1942, 1.

⁷⁵ "Graham Presents Estimates to Prove 36 tankers Could be replaced by barges for \$12,000,000: Safe assured passage from Texas East Urged," *Miami News*, 8 Apr. 1942, 13.

⁷⁶ "Canal Support Withdrawn," *Tampa Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1942, 12.

⁷⁷ Thomas W. Hagan, "Cracker in the Capital," *Miami News*, 15 Mar. 1942.

⁷⁸ "Graham Presents Estimates to Prove 36 tankers Could be replaced by barges for \$12,000,000: Safe assured passage from Texas East Urged," *Miami News*, 8 Apr. 1942, 13.

⁷⁹ Telegram from Governor Holland to President Roosevelt, 8 Apr. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 9: Correspondence 1941-1943.

⁸⁰ Letter from Graham to Kennard Johnson Kennard Executive Secretary of the ECB, 22 Apr. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 9: Correspondence 1941-1943.

⁸¹ Alfred Friendly, "Production Lines," *Washington Post*, 15 Mar. 1942, 4.

this route—safely! *WHY NOT USE IT?*” before patriotically ending with “Why not use this route and Save our *Sailors* and our *Tankers*?”⁸² This ad was followed days later by another announcing that there were 20,000 men who could build the necessary barges already in southern Florida.⁸³

By early April 1942 the business community believed enough in Graham’s lobbying efforts to create the Inter Coastal Barge Line at his suggestion to “reduce freight rates into southern Florida and provide shipping with a safe water route.”⁸⁴ Graham even convinced a group of Chesapeake Bay shippers that there was profit to be made on an inland water route between Jacksonville and Baltimore.⁸⁵ The bay boats with their shallow draft and eighty- to one hundred-ton cargo capacity were ideal for inland waterways.

Graham and Ben Herr of the Okeechobee flood control district testified before the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee about the feasibility of wooden barges carrying oil via the canal.⁸⁶ He also met with petroleum coordinator Harold Ickes who had reacted favorably to Graham’s proposal.⁸⁷ Congressman J. Hardin Peterson from middle Florida told his constituents that Graham was making progress.⁸⁸ The *Miami News* declared “Senator Graham is particularly proud of prospects for using the intracoastal waterway and the waterway across state from Fort Myers.”⁸⁹ Graham claimed that “this inland waterway transportation business is at last recognized as a sound substitute for freighters and tankers subject to the perils of open-water travel.”⁹⁰ It was slow going, he described a three hour conference with Army officials as a meeting with “a lot of old fossils” that “we’ve got to get rid of.”⁹¹

The announcement of stricter gasoline rationing in May 1942 gave further impetus to using the Fort Myers-Stuart canal. It received the support of Major General Eugene Reybold of the Corps of Engineers who declared “transportation of oil by inland barge line is the only thing to do to offset the German submarine menace off the Atlantic coast.”⁹² It seemed that even President Roosevelt was now behind the canal with Representative Pat Cannon of Miami announcing that the President had assured him “that army engineers are hastening their survey

⁸² See for example, “South Florida Wants to Help the War Effort,” *Washington Herald*, 16 Mar. 1942, 7.

⁸³ “It Pays to Advertise,” *Miami News*, 29 Mar. 1942, 17.

⁸⁴ “New Barge Line Names Pentland Its President,” undated, and unidentified newspaper clipping, Graham Papers, Ernest Graham Scrap Book 7, 1943.

⁸⁵ “Profit in Florida Bay Boat Seen,” *Baltimore Sun*, 1 Apr. 1942, 1.

⁸⁶ J. Hardin Peterson, “Washington News from Congressman J. Hardin Peterson,” *Florida Advocate*, 3 Apr. 1942, 1.

⁸⁷ “Senator Graham Reports on Waterway,” *Little River Sun*, 3 Apr. 1942, 2.

⁸⁸ “Washington News from Congressman J. Hardin Peterson,” *Florida Advocate*, 3 Apr. 1942, 1.

⁸⁹ “Graham Sees Near Normal Business: Miami War Effort Agent Says Future Looks Brighter,” *Miami News*, 4 Apr. 1942, 2.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ “Oust ‘Fossils’ Graham Urges: Senator Tells C. of C. That U.S. Will Lose Unless Capital Wakes up,” *Miami Herald*, 7 Apr. 1942, 1.

⁹² S. W. Matthews, “Floridians Lay Oil Shortage Relief Plan Before WPB,” *Miami News*, 1 May 1942, 15.

of Florida's neglected "Burma Road."⁹³ Indeed, Graham had convinced Senator Peeper and several Florida Congressmen to support him at a special hearing of the War Production Board.⁹⁴ Shortly after the hearing the Corps of Engineers began a \$200,000 deepening of the canal.⁹⁵ Graham's lobbying seemed to have at last paid off and Florida's shipping interests launched "a campaign to gain federal approval and financing of a corporation to build and operate \$20,000,000 of barges and other equipment for transporting 70,000 barrels of Texas oil a day"⁹⁶ via intracoastal waterways. The *Miami News* opined that "if dredging of the canal were left to the house rivers and harbors committee (alone), the shoals might remain until the armistice."⁹⁷

The dredging was essential as the canal was only six feet deep and the barges carrying the oil had a draft of 8 feet.⁹⁸ The canal's shallow depth meant the MV *Marion Adele* needed thirty hours, not the predicted eight, to tow 176,000 gallons of gasoline from Fort Myers to Stuart on a trial run in June 1942.⁹⁹ Rear Admiral J. F. Hottel of the Coast Guard, made the 148-mile voyage as an observer for the ODT.¹⁰⁰ Hottel and the ODT were unconvinced by the trial voyage, southern Florida simply did not need the fuel more than other areas did. This was a problem that bedeviled Graham and the Florida political elite, they remained painfully provincial, often unable to realize that other regions had greater and more pressing needs than they.

Therein lay the major problem Graham faced, national policies might have differential effects throughout the country, but they remained national policy, and he was unable to carve out an exemption for southern Florida. Indeed, no politician was able to get the sort of local exemptions Graham was seeking. Rationing programs had to be national in scope and enforcement to be effective. Nevertheless, Graham's opponents in southern Florida were ready to pounce on his failures to achieve more and his criticisms of Washington red tape.

Graham returned to southern Florida in early April to report on his achievements and commissioner Gardener, who had opposed Graham's appointment initially, wasted no time in attacking him. The pro-Gardener tabloid *Miami Life* welcomed back Graham with "Miami's red-necked dairyman" who was nothing more than a "bootlicker for John S. Knight, who operates Fascist papers in Miami."¹⁰¹ Graham's speech to the Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet at the Royal Palm Club gave Gardener plenty of ammunition to question whether Graham was truly

⁹³ "FDR Describes Barge Canal as Lifeline: President Tells Cannon Resurvey is Hastened," *Miami Herald*, 3 May 1942, 11.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Tom Hagan, "Cracker in the Capital: Miami Fails to Get Airport Funds," *Miami News*, 10 May 1942, 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ "South Florida's Canal Route," *Pompano Planter*, 30 Apr. 1942, 4.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Tom Hagan, "Cracker in the Capital: Miami Fails to Get Airport Funds," *Miami News*, 21 June 1942, 15.

¹⁰² "Who's the Guilty Party," *Miami Life*, 03 April 1942, 1.

serving southern Florida's interests or the interests of the United States war effort. Graham charged "we're at war, and if you want to know it, we're being licked!" and "the navy said it can't be done! I'd rather take Paul Prigg's word."¹⁰² The *Miami News* was forced to admit that Graham "may have spoken unguardedly" though it believed "he had everything to gain and nothing to lose" by speaking so bluntly.¹⁰³

Gardener swiftly counterattacked, charging in a written submission to the City Commission:

last Monday night some 700 Miami citizens paid \$2.50 each to hear Senator Graham admit that he had been an utter failure in Washington. And to make matters worse he tried to explain his failure in making a bitter attack upon the men President Roosevelt has selected to help us win the war.¹⁰⁴

Gardener believed Graham's charge that "you can't win a war by talking over the radio," was a thinly veiled attack on President Roosevelt, and that the president had Graham in mind when he spoke of "sixth columnists," those who facilitated the work of fifth columnists.¹⁰⁵ Gardener admitted he had voted to send Graham to Washington but claimed it was "against my better judgement after I had strongly opposed his selection." As far as Gardener was concerned it was now time for the Commission to recall Graham, who was "a failure, a poor loser, and not the man for this job."¹⁰⁶ A man who represented "Big Business — Not the People of Miami."¹⁰⁷

It was a request that literally fell on deaf ears as the newspapers refused to print Gardener's statement, and the rest of the commission voted that his statement be stricken from the minutes, although they would stay in the archival record. Graham however was summoned to a special conference of the City Commission the day after Gardener levelled his charges. The Dade County Commission informed the Miami City Commission that Graham's work was satisfactory, it was to the City Commission alone that Graham would report. Gardener began by objecting to the conference not being open to the public. Graham, ever the canny politician, offered Bayfront Park.¹⁰⁸

City Commissioner James A. Dunn, who chaired the session, as the mayor was absent, opened by expressing "the hope that the meeting would progress without any hot-headedness and in a friendly spirit."¹⁰⁹ Graham began by apologizing for first reporting to the committee of businessmen claiming "he had not realized that

¹⁰² "Washington Red Tape Scorned by Sen. Graham: 'Incompetency of War Chiefs Hit by Speaker: Tells of his efforts to put this area on Defense Map,'" *Miami News*, 07 April 1942, 1.

¹⁰³ "Miami's Own Whirligig," *Miami News*, 8 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹⁰⁴ "Miami City Commission Minutes," 8 Apr. 1942, Miami City Clerk's Office.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ John T. Bills, "Graham Blasts Gardner Stand," *Miami Herald*, 9 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹⁰⁹ "Miami City Commission Minutes," 9 Apr. 1942, Miami City Clerk's Office.

the City Commission expected him to make a report to them.”¹¹⁰ He then proceeded to outline what he had accomplished and what he was working on which drew commendations from two commissioners with Commissioner Mac Vicar observing that “considering the obstacles Senator Graham had met and the confusion existing in Washington, the Senator had done a good job.”¹¹¹ Commissioner Dunn, although believing Graham had done “a good job on behalf of the canal,” thought that Graham should make reports first to the city and county commission and should submit expense reports.

Graham accepted Dunn’s mild criticisms and launched a withering counterattack on Gardener, who rather than risk a debate with Graham had submitted his statement the day before. While this tactic did allow Gardener to get his views on the record first and had led to the special session, it also allowed Graham to demolish Gardener’s arguments point by point, “his white locks waving over one eye and wagging a brown finger under Gardner’s nose”¹¹² Graham electrified the commission meeting charging that Gardener was a “disloyal obstructionist” who was “trying to sabotage the community mission” for the purely political reason of not giving Gardener “henchman, Louis Sevier, a job.”¹¹³ The charge was pursued by the other commissioners while “Gardener studied his shoes and squirmed.”¹¹⁴ Desperate to avoid criticism Gardener readily conceded that Graham had made more contacts “in a week there than you could in a month.”¹¹⁵ The concession did not impress Graham who roared “now you shut up and let me talk. You’re the very type of person I criticized.” “You’re ANTI-EVERYTHING.”¹¹⁶

Gardner attempted to read his statement from the day before in response but the rest of the commissioners were satisfied with Graham’s explanation and voted to “expunge Gardener’s statement from the record and endorse Senator Graham’s work.”¹¹⁷ Commissioner MacVicar labelled Gardener’s statement “your typical underhanded method of attempting to harm a man who is trying to accomplish something.”¹¹⁸ Gardener, defeated in the city commission, could only release his statement via a full-page advertisement in the *Miami Herald*.¹¹⁹ The *Miami Herald* treated the entire affair as if it had been a bare knuckled brawl with “Verbal Bombs a’ Bursting.”¹²⁰ that unfortunately had not been open to the public as it was the “best fight we’ve had.”¹²¹ Graham had in their view won by unanimous decision

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² John T. Bills, “Graham Blasts Gardner Stand,” *Miami Herald*, 9 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹¹³ “Miami City Commission Minutes,” 9 Apr. 1942, Miami City Clerk’s Office.

¹¹⁴ John T. Bills, “Graham Blasts Gardner Stand,” *Miami Herald*, 9 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹¹⁵ “Miami City Commission Minutes,” 09 April 1942, Miami City Clerk’s Office.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Richard Cherry Gardner, “They Sure Gave Old Man Gardner Hell—But, Do you know Why?,” *Miami Herald*, 11 Apr. 1942, 15.

¹²⁰ “Verbal Bombs A ‘Bursting,” *Miami News*, 9 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹²¹ Jack Bell, “The Town Crier: Gives Ringside Account of Fierce Bout Between Graham and Commissioner Gardner,” *Miami Herald*, 19 Apr. 1942, 4.

because “experience has taught him the best way is to have a wallop ready.”¹²² *Friday Night* summed up the debate simply with “City Commissioner Gardener will be just as well satisfied if State Senator Ernest Graham never speaks to him again.”¹²³

Although Graham returned to Washington with the support of the City and County Commission his time in Washington was drawing to an end. He could ill-afford to be away from his business interests in southern Florida for much longer and had initially agreed to serve until mid-August 1942.¹²⁴ Gardener, still smarting from his earlier confrontation, informed the mayor and his fellow city commissioners “I shall vote against and take any legal means necessary to prohibit, the expenditure of any further tax money for such a useless purpose.”¹²⁵ Gardener claimed that he was representing the view of the majority Miamians and charged that there was not “one single instance in which he [Graham] has accomplished any results.”¹²⁶

Gardener’s motion failed for want of a second but the mayor did accept a counter proposal from the rest of the commission to have a conference with the county commissioners.¹²⁷ However, Commissioners Hosea and Dunn both indicated that Graham was planning to return to Miami soon. The county commission agreed to a conference, but only once Graham himself had an opportunity to make a report in person.¹²⁸ Graham, however, was not then in southern Florida and Mayor Reeder reported that his informal talks with County Commissioners Peters and Reed had “resulted in agreement that Graham’s services should be discontinued.”¹²⁹ The mayor cited Graham’s own desire to return to southern Florida to manage his business interests and Graham’s recent statement that “no federal projects can be obtained at this time unless they are approved as essential to the war effort.”¹³⁰ Graham had of course already assisted in the obtaining of scores of federal dollars for various projects and the mayor concluded that the decision to cease funding the Washington Office was “no reflection on Senator Graham who has done a fine job.”¹³¹ Money was, however, running short throughout southern Florida governmental agencies as the war deprived the city and county administration of funds while they waited for money to fill their coffers from the expanding military presence. Indeed, the military utilization of some city facilities, such as the port facilities, deprived Miami of normal revenue and precluded borrowing against anticipated revenues while no tax revenues were expected until November.¹³²

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Friday Night*, 24 Apr. 1942, 1.

¹²⁴ “Graham to Confer on Capital Office: City, County Chiefs to Study Continued Area Representation,” *Miami News*, 2 July 1942, 9.

¹²⁵ “Miami City Commission Minutes—Annex,” 1 July 1942, Miami City Clerk’s Office.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Jeanne Bellamy, “Graham Ouster Action Weighed: Gardner Blast Prompts Plan for City-County Discussion,” *Miami Herald*, 30 June 1942, 3.

¹²⁸ “Lowery Promises Hearing to Graham,” *Miami News*, 2 July 1942, 9.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² Letter from A. E. Fuller to Graham, 18 Aug. 1942, Graham Papers, Legislative Papers Box 12: General

The city of Miami simply did not have the money to spare for a representative and the position would remain empty throughout the war. The Miami News admitted that it was difficult to measure what Graham had achieved in Washington but believed that Graham deserved at least some of the credit for the massive military presence and expanding defense industries without which Miami would have faced “a hopeless ‘duration’ because of the loss of the tourist trade.”¹³³ For Graham his time in Washington had allowed him to air many of the ideas that would form the core of his political platform when he unsuccessfully sought the governorship in 1944.

Correspondence 1941-1942.

¹³³ “Washington Post,” *Miami News*, 3 July 1942, 8.