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A Culture of Fear: Atomic America

Allie Garris

On August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb demonstrated its power to change the world as the aircraft the *Enola Gay* dropped it on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.[1] Three days later another mushroom cloud erupted over the city of Nagasaki, killing a vast portion of its inhabitants via the blast, intense heat, and toxic radiation levels.[2] The massive destruction caused by these two bombs differed from any seen in previous wars and forced the Japanese to surrender, ending World War II in the Paci f c.[3] These American displays of nuclear power and corresponding damage not only changed the concept of warfare but they also impacted American society and culture. While the creation of the atomic bomb ended World War II, it started another war with the Soviet Union. The Cold War began as the Soviet Union emerged from World War II more powerful than ever. The U.S.S.R. aimed to surpass the nuclear power of the United States, asserting its

1. Lindy Biggs, James Hansen and William Trimble, *Readings in Technology and Civilization*, Vol. 2. (Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2005), 253.

2. *Atomic Cafe,* video, directed by Jayne Loader, Kevin Rafferty and Pierce Rafferty (New York: Thorn Emi Video, 1982).

3. Biggs, *Readings in Technology and Civilization*, 253.

strength and ability.[4] In September of 1949, the Soviet Union successfully detonated an A-bomb and entered the "atomic club."[5] With another country holding the key to f ssion, American scientists hurried to produce a more powerful weapon. In 1952, the United States created the hydrogen bomb.[6]

roles with a new purpose. They now had the responsibility of preparing their family members and their home for the possibility of nuclear invasion. Books and magazine articles continually covered the concept of nuclear war and helped in initiating the popularity of fallout shelters and the dispersal of Americans to the suburbs. The common perception that the atomic bomb and the hydrogen bomb could eliminate all those living in the United States, caused Americans to adjust their lifestyles accordingly.

The media built upon this terror, publishing articles that confronted the nation's fear of mass destruction. On March 6, 1950 *Time* magazine published an article titled, "Hydrogen Hysteria," examining the likelihood of the U.S. and Soviet Union creating hydrogen bombs. The article illustrates the panic and uncertainty Americans felt in regards to the production of another destructive nuclear weapon. It mentions a radio show broadcasted a week earlier by Associate Professor Harrison Brown at the University of Chicago, in which he stated on national radio,

> The blast effects of hydrogen bombing will only be the beginning…Hydrogen explosions will fll the air with fercely radiating isotopes…The bombs could be exploded in the Pacifc, 1,000 miles west of California. Their radioactivity, drifting eastward, would lawnmower the whole U.S., reaching and sterilizing New York in about fve days.[10]

While the article goes on to claim that scientists express doubt regarding the creation of a bomb with enough radioactive material to allow radiation to be carried uniformly across the country, the fear present in the article is noticeable.[11] The article ends

10. "Hydrogen Hysteria," *Time*, 6 March 1950, 1, http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,858694,00.html.

11. Ibid.

with the statement, “the prevailing atmosphere of fearful secrecy makes it almost impossible for the full facts to be known.”[12] This article foreshadows how the fear of atomic and the notion of the hydrogen bomb first created an atomic culture. Atomic hysteria spread across the country at the same rapid pace Americans feared radioactive fallout traveled. They lived everyday uncertain of what the technology the United States created could really do, and those uncertainties changed the culture of America, starting at the beginning of the 1950s.

As Americans became more uncertain of their future, time

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nuclear radiation even more after reading the book, *No Place to Hide*, written in 1948 by Dr. David Bradley, the physician who observed the effects of radiation on the people affected by the atomic tests performed around the island of Bikini.[22] In his book Bradley explains the effects of radiation released from an atomic bomb on the body, he states,

> Once absorbed into the body –via cuts, or breathing,

radiation out.

The fact that fallout shelters in homes and cities became common illustrates the fear Americans felt regarding atomic radiation. When already frightened people read how radiation poisoning causes a person to die "from lack of blood" or the "formation of fatal bone tumors," protection is the first thought that comes to mind. Since the possibility of nuclear war existed every day in the minds of Americans living in the 1950s all extremes needed to be taken in order to ensure safety. Winkler draws attention to the methods used by society to make fallout shelters appealing to adults. He cites America's fascination with fallout shelters through the use of a mid 1950s *Life* magazine that highlighted an "H-Bomb Hideaway."[25] The title illustrates how the media and civil defense programs tried to make fallout shelters the new trend, causing citizens to build one out of fear and societal pressure. Henriksen references Dr. Kurt Fantl's advice given in the *Science News Letter* in January of 1951, indicating his suggestion that having a bomb shelter built and prepared prior to a nuclear attack could prevent a greater level of hysteria. Dr. Fantl claimed that should Americans find out that an atomic bomb was pointed at the United States, "Panic may be prevented before disaster strikes by providing adequate shelters and lighting them with flashlights, and education…Informing the public of dangers without a master plan…may actually create panic."[26] Henriksen points out that in many cases this is exactly what happened. While mass panic did not ensue, material explaining the risks of nuclear war often times alarmed the American population instead of placing them at ease.[27] Americans uncontrollable fear of the U.S.S.R. dropping a bomb

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25. Allan M. Winkler, "The "Atom" and American Life," 326.; "H-Bomb Hideaway", *Life*, 23 May 1955, 169-170.

26. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age*, 96.; "Mental First Aid," Science News Letter, 27 January 1951, 53.

27. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age*, 97.

on the United States made it virtually impossible for civil defense programs and articles written regarding preparation for an atomic war not to cause atomic hysteria.

As the media hypothesized possible locations for Soviet nuclear attacks, the 1950s witnessed an exodus of Americans from urban cities to the suburbs. It soon became a common belief that cities no longer provided a safe haven for American citizens. Historian Kristina Zarlengo discusses the concept of "urban dispersal" and how the fear that cities provided a prime target for Soviet attack caused Americans to move outside the city limits.[28] Henriksen addresses the removal of Americans from urban cities to the suburbs in response to articles such as the December 18, 1950, edition of *Life* magazine. It contained an article stating that should a nuclear war occur between the United States and the Soviet Union, large U.S. cities provided the best targets.[29] The article "How U.S. Cities Can Prepare for Atomic War" explained, "The particular vulnerability of big American cities to atomic weapons stems from a combination of two factors: the intense congestion of the cities and the immense destructive power of the bomb."[30] This article made people in America think of the panic that could ensue should a nuclear bomb hit a populated urban city. Articles such as this increased the popularity of Norbert Weiner's idea of "life belts" and "safety zones," which helped encourage a move to suburbia.[31] An image depicting the layout of Weiner's ideal city flled the pages of the *Life* magazine. [32]

28. Kristina Zarlengo, "Civilian Threat, the Suburban Citadel, and Atomic Age American Women," Signs 24, no. 4 (1999): 933, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175598.

29. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age*, 95.; "How U.S. Can Prepare for Atomic War," *Life*, 18 December 1950, 77.

30. Ibid.

31. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age*, 95-96.; "How U.S. Can Prepare for Atomic War," *Life*, 79.

32. Zarlengo, "Civilian Threat, the Suburban Citadel, and Atomic Age American

He proposed that the city be surrounded by eight lane life belts, containing hospitals and extra amenities in case there happened to be a nuclear attack and survivors needed a place to go. These safety zones, areas outside the blast range included, parks large enough to shelter nuclear blast refugees, supermarkets,

highways, and population reduction of large cities.[36] The major initiative behind balancing populations between the suburbs and the city was fear, "fewer casualties in case of attack."[37] The fear of nuclear invasion that persisted caused the suburban population to double between the years of 1950 and 1970, and Mintz and Kellogg claimed that 64% of the U.S. population growth occurred in the suburbs.[38] Many Americans welcomed the chance to move to the suburbs if it meant they could still access the city easily and be out of the nuclear target zone.

Zarlengo claims that the move of families to suburbs created a new role for women, shifting cultural ideas of femininity. She mentions the move of Americans to the suburbs and the important role women played in preparing the suburbs to function properly should it act as a refuge during a nuclear war, stating, "The American housewife inspired a whole cannon of propaganda since the rhetoric of civil defense taught that the household was a bunker where women's expertise and competence were vital to a nation at risk –providing refuge from the incipient war zone."[39] Zarlengo explains the expectations placed on women during the Cold War era when she states,

> The American household, run by housewives, had become an agency of the nation, patriotism a domestic duty, and housework a civic obligation

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of us.[42]

The words that stick out the most in this statement are "in our uncertain age," highlighting the fears driving the atomic culture. One of the reasons why women reverted back to traditional roles, Poffenberger also identifed as the reason couples married for love, fear that the apocalypse approached. As money and security no longer raised an issue in a society that felt the end could come at any time, love and happiness took precedence.

The fear that shaped the culture of the atomic era caused a return of women to the incredibly traditional role of homemaker because of a renewed emphasis placed on values. Willard Waller

Civil defense campaigns took advantage of these new cultural standards expected of women in their promotion of bomb shelters. Fear of not having a place to hide should a bomb hit created the concept of bomb shelters, and the campaigns made it evident that good American women should want to protect their families.

The Grandma's Pantry campaign endorsed by The Federal Civil Defense Administration placed importance on women to not only have a bomb shelter and keep it stocked, but also to make it homey, and add a womanly touch.[45] This is evident through observing the ad, which depicted a kitchen stocked and prepared. These posters reinforced the fear of a nuclear attack, encouraging good wives and mothers to create well stocked fallout shelters. The *Time* article "Atomic Cave," published on September 11, 1950, reinforced this idea:

Mrs. Kathleen MacDona d9Tj/Spnich depicted a kitchen stock,an2

our children protection…A mother must calm the fears of her child. Make a game out of it: Playing Civil Defense."[47] These statements illustrate how the new role women took on during this era as patrons of civil defense and preparation merged with the nurturing role of being a wife and mother. Fear caused women to do whatever society expected of them to protect themselves and their family from nuclear destruction.

When the atomic bombs detonated on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the weapon the United States created caused a terrifying power struggle. The Cold War, which started over the Soviet Union's desire to match the United States nuclear potential differed from other wars. Paul Boyer quoted journalist Robert Manoff's statement, "Nuclear weapons have not and never will be an inert presence in American life. Merely by existing they have already set off chain reactions throughout American society and within every one of its institutions".[48] This quote describes the atomic culture that consumed the early Cold War era, explaining that nuclear weapons did not just exist, they invaded every component of American life, just as Manoff predicted. This war did not have battle felds containing trenches with men fghting for their lives, the United States acted as the battle feld and all Americans, even children became soldiers. Psychological trauma replaced bullet wounds as Americans altered their lives, constantly fearful, preparing for an end that could come at anytime. This fear of possibility ushered in a new American Culture, a culture revolving around civil defense and action, creating an anxious unity that evolved and endured. The citizens of America, while

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47. May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era,*104.; Jean Wood Fuller, "Wisdom Is Defense," address before the state meeting of Women in Civil Defense , Richmond Hotel, Augusta Ga., 10 November 1954, 2-4 and 6-8.

48. Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age*, xv.; Robert Karl Manoff, "The Media: Nuclear Security vs. Democracy," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, January 1984, 29.

panicked, prepared in any way they could to protect themselves and their nation. Children and adults learned how to duck and cover, families fed to the suburbs, and women reverted back to the home and encouraged moral values. During the fear period of the Cold War, America learned the value of national unity and hard work. Through this time of struggle, doubt, and terror Americans prepared and survived, making the nation stronger.

Culture of Power: Defining an Elite Identity in Post-Revolutionary Haiti

Daniel Williford

In many ways, the identity of Haiti's largely mulatto upper class had already begun to develop by the time the island declared independence from France in 1804. During the colonial period, a propertied class composed mostly of mulattos but including some free blacks positioned itself culturally and socially between Saint Domingue's white rulers and the enslaved masses. In his study of the Haitian Revolution from 1791 to 1804, C.L.R. James portrays the *gens de couleur* (people of mixed race) as a distinct faction that eventually sided with the island's revolting slaves against the French.[1] Many mulattos managed to maintain their traditional privileges in the aftermath of the western hemisphere's largest slave rebellion by assuming the roles of the former French elite as the political and intellectual leaders of the island. They were joined by previously enslaved military commanders who rose through the ranks during the series of violent struggles that preceded Haitian independence.

This new upper class set about defining its boundaries by constructing an identity to distinguish itself from the Haitian

the European connections of the *gens de couleur*, the island's new rulers also adapted their public image to reflect the colossal shifts in the power structure brought on by the Revolution. Haitian elites combined an affinity for Western culture, symbols of the former French authority, a vague sense of African heritage, and a legally

\attachment to their own institutions among elites, offer some evidence to suggest that the upper class's condemnation of European barbarity did not extend to art, literature, dress, and dance. When an unusually powerful hurricane struck Port-au-Prince in 1816, the Quaker missionary Stephen Grellet was present to witness both the destruction and the response of the mulatto-led government to the disaster. Grellet recalls how "his [Pétion's] first inquiry was, 'Is the library safe?' Being told it was, 'Blessed be the Lord…' He had lately placed in it a considerable number of valuable books."[4] Though based on hearsay, this account proves that there existed at least a perception of mulatto elites as preoccupied with the physical symbols of European culture. Other witnesses attested to the impressive volume of the book trade in Port-au-Prince, which was maintained primarily through the purchases of educated administrators.[5] The fact that the vast majority of texts sold in the capital were written in French, a language that most commoners could not speak, much less read, made this association with the trade a valuable means of self-definition for the upper class.[6] However, assuming the positions of former colonial elites as patrons of the arts was only one of the ways that Haiti's new rulers mimicked their predecessors. High ranking civil and military officials also incorporated many of the more tangible symbols of the deposed colonial power into the image of their distinct class.

The British consul, Charles Mackenzie, visited Haiti shortly after Pétion's successor, Jean-Pierre Boyer, had consolidated his power over the entire island in 1822. The diplomat noted with interest that the Republic's administration had adopted many of

4. Stephen Grellet, *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labors of Stephen Grellet*, ed. Benjamin Seebohm, (Philadelphia: Book Association of Friends, 1870), 176-182.

5. Charles Mackenzie, *Notes on Haiti Made During a Residence in that Republic* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 43.

6. Mackenzie, 43. many

the trappings of the older colonial authority. For example, he found the president residing in the *Palais du Gouvernment*, the former home of the French governor-general.[7] On meeting the chief executive, he comments that his manners "had been formed on a good French model,"[8] and mentions (with perhaps a touch of jealousy) Boyer's preference for the French consul general.[9] In describing the fashions of high status Haitians, he observes that "the toilettes of the ladies closely resemble that on the eastern side of the Atlantic."[10] Such affectations served to distance members of the upper class from the masses, in much the same way that white colonials had once differentiated themselves from the *gens de couleur*.

Education also played a

drew closer to their former colonizers while at the same time outwardly stressing their nationality. Romane, like other patriotic poets, uses the palm tree as a symbol for Haiti, but interestingly he refers to "Haiti mixing the lily [symbol of the Bourbon monarchy] / with the palms…."[19] This image suggests more than simply a reconciliation between the two countries; it indicates a synthesis. By blending their French heritage with a burgeoning patriotism and a sense of "Haitianness," elites like Romane were consciously selecting their cultural associations. However, for many upper class intellectuals the exact nature of their relationship with white Europeans and their rationalist and artistic traditions was anything but clear. Defining this connection would involve a complex process of negotiation for the new nation's leading thinkers.

The meditations of mulatto intellectuals such as Pompée Vastey and Julien Raimond on the subqn.>of racia9als sumrejuBD2 Ractughe pa
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that advanced societies could spring from Africa's womb.[35] By relying on examples that would have been familiar to Europeans, Vastey attempts to vindicate Africa in the eyes of French who, as William Cohen and James Le Sueur have pointed out, still based the majority of their ideas about "the dark continent" on classical Latin and Greek texts.[36] However, the mulatto writer seems to have agreed that the "inhabitants…of Benin, of Zanguebar, and of Monomotapa"[37] were ignorant savages possessing scarcely any culture at all. He nevertheless refectively remarks, "As for myself, descended from an African stock, I am, I imagine, suffciently identifed with the Africans."[38] It is unclear how exactly Vastey has culturally indentifed with Africans. The poet Antoine Dupré betrays a similarly generalized understanding of his African heritage in *Le dernier soupir d'un Haïtien*. The poem begins with an appeal to the "Sun, God of my Ancestors"[39] and then proceeds to address a deity remarkably close to the Judeo-Christian conception:

Oh thou whose warmth
Causes all beings to exist,
Opus of the Creator,
Your life's work nearly fnished[40]

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35. Vastey, *Refections on the Blacks and Whites*, 33-37.

36. William B. Cohen and James D. Le Sueur, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 5-6.

37. Vastey, *Refections on the Blacks and Whites*, 34.

38. Vastey, *Refections on the Blacks and Whites*, 32.

39. Antoine Dupré, "Le Dernier soupir d'un Haïtien" in *Panorama de la poésie Haïtienne*, Carlos St.-Louis and Maurice A. Lubin ed. (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1970), 2.

40. Dupré, "Le Dernier soupir d'un Haïtien." In this translation I have tried to communicate as closely as possible the sense of the original French. I used the English "thou" to correspond to the French second person informal pronoun

closer look at how political factors affected the development of an upper class identity in Haiti.

The relationship between Haitian political elites and peasant laborers greatly contributed to the fabrication of a national identity by members of the upper class. While the state continued to practice a form of "agrarian militarism"[44] and patriotic rhetoric rarely represented the political realities of the time, the fact that mulatto and black members of the ruling class felt compelled to emphasize their "Haitianness" over their distinct class identity served as a form of compromise with the laboring backbone of their society. Also, by selecting specifc, socially acceptable traits to represent the Haitian nationality, elites propagated a moral code that reinforced their control over the masses.

The mostly mulatto elite primarily made rhetorical and symbolic, rather than real economic, concessions to the lower classes. The coercive agricultural system, which originated under the revolutionary general Toussaint l'Overture and shared several features with colonial slavery, was the main source of tension between elites and the lower classes. One of the more demonstrative pieces of quasi-oppressive post-Revolutionary legislation, *Le code rural* of 1826, underscores the Haitian economy's continued dependence on plantation-style cultivation. Sparked by economic underperformance, *Le code* called for the creation of new rural estates with civil and military offcials acting as their proprietors.[45] Unsurprisingly, property fell increasingly into the hands of mulattos who continued to hold the majority of the posts in Boyer's government. Analysis of *Le code* also provides a view into the inner workings of an economic system that strangled the possibility of social advancement by heavily

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44. Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 270.

45. James Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti, (Saint Domingo,): with Remarks on its Agriculture, Commerce, Laws, Religion, Finances, and Population, etc. etc*. (London: John Murray, 1828), 332.

restricting geographic and occupational mobility.[46] The use of force to bind Haitian laborers to their estates was certainly not limited to this period of the nation's history. One European observer noted, however, that Boyer was considerably more lenient in his treatment of agricultural laborers than the island's frst two black rulers, Toussaint and Dessalines, had been, to the detriment of Haitian exports.[47] His predecessor Pétion, known as *Papa bon ké* (Father with a good heart) among the lower classes,[48] may also have hesitated when it came to instituting a repressive labor system. Some scholars have discussed the possibility that because of their positions as mulattos ruling over the black masses, Pétion and Boyer were forced to be more accommodating to the interests of Haitian laborers than were darker autocrats such as Dessalines and Christophe.[49] However, the brutal measures embodied in *Le code rural* of 1826 largely dispel this theory, at least in reference to Boyer. The clearest evidence of elites attempting to widen their appeal to the masses comes instead in the politically charged rhetoric of Haitian nationalism.

In the immediate aftermath of independence, the island's black generals expected mulattos to prove their loyalty to the nascent state by displaying disdain for the French. Dessalines was said to have forced one mulatto elite to kill a French friend in order to lay claim to his rights as a Haitian citizen.[50] Even mulattos in the highest positions of authority were sometimes expected to express their fdelity in similar ways. Contemporary witnesses

of the Haitian political system during Boyer's twenty-five year term as president testified to the influence the masses could exert on elite administrators. The British Consul, Charles Mackenzie, saw the prohibition on white property ownership as an instance of "enlightened chiefs…[deferring] to the prejudices of the many."[51] Another traveler, Dr. Jonathan Brown, commented on the racial dynamics at play in the process of negotiation between the rulers and the ruled:

> [Control] resides in the jealousy existing between the two colors; as the mulattos, to preserve the sceptre [sic] of power in the possession of their caste, are driven to compliances which a negro president would feel empowered to spurn from him as the basest infringements on his dignity.[52]

In the eyes of European observers, the racial identity of a Haitian *homme politique* was inseparable from his political role and his relationship to the masses. Since the majority of the laboring class was excluded from the electorate, government officials and property holders, mostly mulattos, effectively monopolized the democratic process.[53] Not that local or even national elections had a great deal of meaning in a system that concentrated nearly

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51. Mackenzie, 26; The prohibition of white property ownership, was often simply a formality and did not necessarily constitute a real political concession to the masses. Rev. Hanna recounts how whites, presumably wealthy merchants, live in large and luxurious houses which are legally owned by their mistresses and pseudo-wives. Rev. S.W. Hanna, *Notes of a Visit to Some Parts of Haiti Jan. Feb. 1835*, (London: R.B. Seeley & W. Burnside & L.G. Seeley , 1836), 97.

52. Jonathan Brown, *The History and Present Condition of St. Domingo* (Philadelphia: William Marshall and Co., 1837), 259.

53. Brown, 259-261.

absolute power in the hands of the chief executive.[54] In such a repressive context, those excluded from voicing their opinions through political avenues sought alternative means of expression and received in turn not political but rhetorical concessions from elites.

Following the breakdown of negotiations between Haiti and France in 1816 over the question of recolonization, Pétion issued a proclamation containing his correspondence with Louis XVIII. This calculated piece of demagoguery forcefully rejects all possibility of a return to French rule while at the same time placing the power to spurn such offers in the hands of the people.[55] Pétion alludes to the ever present threat of slavery's reinstatement, the strength and authority of the masses, and their never dying "will to be free and independent."[56] Since the vast majority of urban and agricultural laborers were denied an electoral voice, and military oppression limited other means of protest, the "authority" of the masses that Pétion refers to was little more than a politically useful fction. This is an example of the type of rhetorical recognition elites were willing to grant the lower classes, which along with symbolic laws such as the denial of white property rights established a connection with the masses while maintaining the "sceptre [sic] of power"[57] in their own hands.

Haiti's rulers met challenges to this fabricated ik/Gie When an African imigrant newspaper, *L'Eclipse*, to protest the exclusion of blacks from high offce, he was quickly run out of business, court marshaled (though

54. Brown, 259-261.

55. Alexader Pétion, "Republic of Hayti Proclamation," *Niles Weekly Register*, January 4, 1817, 308.

56. Pétion.

57. Brown, 259.

a civilian), and executed by Boyer's government.[58] The main threat that Darfour posed to the Haitian state was a rhetorical one. His publications directly contradicted the standard line of mulatto elites: that Haitian society was free from racial discrimination. In his study of the infuence of race on Haitian politics, Nicholls discusses how mulatto-run newspapers, such as *Le Républicain* and *L'Union*, could openly criticize the policies of Boyer's government.[59] However, contributors to these journals tended to avoid issues of class and race altogether.[60] For this reason, their critiques proved less damaging to the government's fctionalized portrayal of race relations than those of Darfour.

In one of his more perceptive moments, Mackenzie noticed that "the government asserts that all feelings and prejudices… on the subject of colour…have been absorbed by an intense patriotism."[61] This omnipresent devotion to the *patrie* was, of course, largely the invention of Haiti's elite community. In general, discussions of the divisions between blacks and mulattos were absent from the national discourse during this period. However, a few elite poets mentioned the separation in order to emphasize how the Revolution had bound the two groups together in a kind of national brotherhood. Pierre Faubert in his "Aux Haitiens" refers to "Yellows [mulattos] and Blacks, burning a heroic fame."[62] Later in the same poem, he categorizes blacks and mulattos as essentially the same race, a race which has made Haiti, "a motherland with [its] blood." This attempt to downplay

58. Charles Mackenzie, *Notes on Haiti Made during a Residence in that Republic* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 27-28.

59. David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier:Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* F&KDUOHV[illegible]

associations based on skin color and to put in their place a single national identity goes as far back as Dessalines' original 1805 Constitution. In its thirteenth and fourteenth articles, the document states that all Haitians are to be legally considered blacks, even those Germans and Poles who have been naturalized by the government.[63] The Constitution's framers have in effect co-opted the formerly racial category of "black" and transformed it into a nationality.

Though Dessalines' provision did not make its way into future constitutions, the upper class continued to stress the importance of a unifying national identity in the place of one that was divisive and class-based. In these later documents,

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voice, restricted mobility, and economic backwardness severely disadvantage a populace still coping with the transition from slavery to freedom. In such an environment, it is unsurprising that the mulatto dominated administration gradually closed its doors to outsiders during Boyer's quarter-of-a-century in offce.[70] Not until 1843 did a coup led by a rival faction within the mulatto community fnally depose the President.[71] After Boyer's overthrow, the now established elite handpicked a series of black authoritarians who ruled the nation for the next half century. Several of these sought political endorsement from the masses by criticizing the privilege and authority of the upper class that had installed them. Ironically, elites were vulnerable to attacks by black demagogues because of their long-enforced separation from the rest of Haitian populace.

During the early years of Haitian independence, the island's ruling caste defned its boundaries by way of its cultural affnities with Europe, its assumption of many former colonial customs, its obscure sense of "Africanness," and its legally enforced distance from the predominantly black masses. This group accomplished the last of these feats partially by rhetorically maneuvering within the ideologies of the Revolution. Elite poets and administrators stressed platitudes such as national fraternity, liberty for all, and equality of opportunity when even these amorphous concepts were obviously false characterizations of the political situation. Also, by limiting the access of the lower classes to education, the government reinforced the dominance of those already occupying high status positions. While an odd mixture of European and African affectations set them apart from both white outsiders and average Haitians, members of the upper class were prepared to point out their similarities to either group depending on the

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70. David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier:Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 69-73.

71. Nicholls, 69-70.

context. By the middle of the nineteenth century, elites had firmly laid the foundations for their singularity as a class. As a distinct force, they would ultimately leave a dramatic imprint on a nation coping simultaneously with independence and emancipation.

"O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord!": Puritans, Nature, and God in New England

Graham Gordon

> Bespread with Roses Sommer 'gins take place with hasty speed,
> Whose parching heate Strawberries coole doth moderation
> breed.
> Ayre darkening sholes of pigeons picke their berries sweet and
> good,
> The lovely Cherries birds entice to feast themselves in woods.[1]
> (Edward Johnson, "Good News From New England")

If the scholarship of many reputable colonial and environmental historians is accepted, then a Puritan could not have written the preceding lines. The Puritans' view of nature has predominantly been characterized as harsh or exploitative, yet in this poem Puritan Edward Johnson describes the coming of summer with celebratory language. And Johnsonís poem is only a small part of a wealth of primary sources depicting the Puritan attitude toward nature as respectful and benevolent. Seemingly ignoring such evidence, historians frame the discussion of Puritans' attitude toward nature around two concepts: the Puritans' belief in a "transcendent God" and the Puritans' belief in their God-given

1. Edward Johnson, "Good News From New England," (1648), lines 162-165, quoted in Robert S. Daly, *God's Altar: The World and the Flesh in Puritan Poetry,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 142.

dominion over nature. As a result of these two beliefs, many colonial and environmental historians have concluded that Puritans encouraged a disrespectful attitude toward nature and subsequently abused the environment. A close examination of Puritan literature, from theology to poetry to personal correspondence, however, reveals that Puritans could express a positive characterization of nature that encouraged them to use the land in moderation and preserve it for future generations. By reexamining Puritan views about the existence of God in nature and the Puritan approach toward the land, this paper seeks to expand an underdeveloped and often misinterpreted aspect of Puritan life.

There has been a great deal of historical literature on Puritan's belief in a "transcendent God" as completely removed from the earth. Rhys H. Williams claims, "Puritan thought insisted on the total otherness of a transcendent God." The Puritans saw themselves as separated from an "awesome Creator and Judge" by a "huge gulf."[2] Ruth H. Bloch describes 17th century Protestantism as the belief in "the omnipotence and stern judgment of a transcendent God." She contrasts this with the 18th century belief that "God had gradually grown more dependable, more forgiving, and more accessible."[3] The image of a "transcendent God" is depicted in even harsher terms by Max Weber who argues that the God of the Puritans was "a transcendental being, beyond the reach of human understanding, who with His quite incomprehensible decrees decided the fate of every individual." According to Weber, the Puritan concept of a "transcendent God" caused them to view "everything pertaining to the fesh" as wholly corrupt and to have a "disillusioned and pessimistic" disposition.[4] These three

2. Rhys H. Williams, "Visions of the Good Society and the Religious Roots of American Political Culture," *Sociology of Religion* 60, no. 1 (1999): 10.

3. Ruth H. Bloch, "Untangling the Roots of Modern Sex Roles: A Survey of Four Centuries of Change," *Signs* 4, no. 2 (1978): 249.

4. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* trans. Talcott

historians describe Puritan beliefs in negative terms, and Weber

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God-lacking nature must be controlled by humans, and historians argue that the Puritans' belief in their God-given control caused them to exploit the environment.[11]

Based on all the previous arguments it is possible to come up with a lengthy de f nition of the term "transcendent God" for the Puritan New England context. The Puritans' "transcendent God" was entirely removed from the natural world and viewed the world through a judgmental lens. Because God was apart from nature, Puritans viewed the natural world merely as an instrument, a resource, or a thing to be mastered. The God-given mandate to subdue the earth and the belief that the earth was devoid of God worked in tandem to provide justi f cation for exploitative environmental practices on the part of the Puritans.

This de f nition is unsatisfactory. The term ìtranscendent Godî oversimpli f es the Puritansí understanding of both God and nature. The Puritans perceived God as existing in close proximity to them because he both manifested himself in nature and exhorted Puritans through nature. As a result, Puritans were often unreserved in their praise of creation and formed ethics of land use that centered on improvement and moderation. Historiansí insistence that Puritans exploited nature is not only unduly judgmental for scholarly work but also anachronistic because Puritans lacked the modern concept of environmental responsibility. While these

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Scribner's Sons, 1972), 20.

11. Interestingly most of the historians cited take for granted Puritans' exploitative enironmental practices and fail to provide speci f c examples of how Puritans abused nature. Carloyn Merchant is one exception, and she describes the Puritan abuse of the land as deforestation, excessive hunting, and a general overworking of the land. She also argues that the disruption of Native American communities by Europeans prevented the New England environment from receiving the bene f cial husbandry provided by Native Americans. See Merchant, "Animals into Resources," in *Ecological Revolutions.* Determining whether the Puritans actually abused or manipulated the environment is not my main concern. I am interested in discovering whether Puritans' attitudes and intentions toward nature were as harsh as depicted by many historians.

historiansí arguments are based in good research, they neglect a substantial body of primary sources that provides much-needed nuance in the discussion of colonial land use. An examination of these sources calls into question the established de f nition of the term ìtranscendent Godî and its accompanying connotations which are found in the preceding paragraph.

Setting aside for a moment environmental considerations, how “distant” was the Puritan’s God? If he was completely removed from the natural world, then would not he also be removed from humanity? While Puritans believed that God was incomprehensibly superior to them, they did not equate this with separation. Instead they believed in a God who was capable of living with them, as John Winthrop writes, “the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us.”[12] John Hooker describes the nearness of God in very physical terms by comparing the relationship between God and man to parent and child. He writes, “The child holds the father, not because it hath any power of it selfe, but because the father holds him, so we hold the Lord Jesus Christ because we are holden of him.”[13] God is not a distant concept but a being close enough to hold humans. Moreover Puritans believed God’s presence was a result of his undeniable pursuit of them. Thomas Shepard, for example, acknowledges that humans are not worthy of the attention of God; however, he marvels that God desires relationship with humans by writing, “The Lord can never get near enough to His people…and therefore unites and binds and fastens them close to himself.”[14]

12. John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity,” in Perry Miller, ed., *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry.* Garden City, (NY: Doubleday & Company, 1956), 83.

13. John Hooker, “The Soules Ingrafting,” quoted in Babette M. Levy, *Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History,*

Interestingly Puritans often employed sexual metaphors to describe their relationship with God. Thomas Hooker describes a Christian as "so joined unto the Lord, that he becomes one spirit: as the adulterer and the adulteress is one flesh."[15] There is no closer physical connection between two people than intercourse. Edward Taylor makes use of the same imagery, but is more subtle: "Together joyn'd in Him that's Thou, and I./ Flesh of my Flesh, Bone of my Bone."[16] Taylor is referencing the creation of Eve from Adam's rib in the book of Genesis. After Eve's creation, she became Adam's mate, and Taylor believes that the individual Christian and God are united in the same way as Adam and Eve. In another poem Taylor describes an equally if not more provocative metaphor for God and humans. Drawing from a passage from Song of Solomon which describes the breasts of a woman, Taylor asserts that these are God's breasts filled with spiritual milk for God's children. After making this connection Taylor writes, "Lord put these nibbles then my mouth into/ And suckle me therewith I humbly pray."[17] The abstract imagery of child and parent to describe God's relationship with humans is not unusual in Puritan writing; however, Taylor moves out of abstraction and into the very tangible image of a mother breastfeeding her child. Obviously the Puritans did not believe in a wholly distant God. Though he differed in nature from humans, Puritans' belief in God's spiritual proximity was so fervent they could only describe it in terms of physical contact.

Puritans' descriptions of the natural environment are also filled with images of God's presence. Cotton Mather's book *The*

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15. Thomas Hooker, "The Soules Union with Christ," (1638), quoted in Robert S. Daly, *God's Altar: The World and the Flesh in Puritan Poetry,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 26.

16. Edward Taylor, "The Experience," *The Poems of Edward Taylor,* in Donald E. Stanford, ed., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 8-9.

17. Edward Taylor, "Meditation. Cant. 7.3. Thy two breasts are like two young Roes that are twins," in Stanford, 354.

act of creating the world as a sculptor forming a statue or a painter fashioning a work of art.[20] Preston praises the beauty of the world and makes no attempt to separate God from the world. His reverence for the created world stems from his frm belief that God is an active participant in nature. Preston does not degrade nature but affrms its dignity as a revelation from God.

Nature not only shows the existence of God but also reveals that he actively uses his creation to bless his people. Edward Johnson wrote *Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence* in order to reveal God's participation in the settling of New England. Johnson cannot describe the progress of settlement without giving credit to God's hand in New England, and he occasionally singles out God's use of nature as evidence of God's favor toward New England. He describes a drought that "began to scorch the Herbs and Fruits" of the colonists. After an intense time of community prayer Johnson writes, "The Lord showred down water on their Gardens and Fields," and the people received "the rich mercies of Christ."[21] A process of the natural world strengthened these Puritans' faith in God. Not only did God exist, but he also heard the cries of his people and answered them through his creation. Nature served as an affrmation to Puritans of the existence and benevolence of God.

Puritans also praised God for the blessings bestowed on them in nature. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the mercy of God was shown to the Puritans in the form of drought relief, and they praised him for it. However, it did not always take such a dramatic event for Puritans to praise God. Often Puritans saw very ordinary objects and could not help but glorify their creator. Cotton Mather includes a chapter on vegetables in his book *The Christian Philosopher*. His effusive praise for the vegetable radiates from his writing and leads him to honor his God. He begins the chapter

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20. Ibid, 244-245.

21. Edward Johnson, *Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence 1628-1651,* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 86-87.

by writing, "The Contrivance of our most Glorious Creator in the VEGETABLES growing upon this Globe, cannot be wisely observed without Admiration and Astonishment. We will single out some Remarkables, and glorify our God!"[22] Mather's affinity for vegetables is undeniably contagious and neither harsh nor exploitative. At one point he claims that a man cannot look at a vegetable "without some wishing, that if a Metamorphosis were to befall him, it might be into one of these."[23] How can anyone read this and still conceive of Puritans' attitude toward the natural world as harsh and exploitative?

Throughout the chapter Mather marvels at certain vegetables, their composition and use, and writes that anyone who does not see the beauty in vegetables is "sunk into a forlorn pitch of Degeneracy, and stupid as a Beast."[24] The term "beast" is an indicator of what Mather, and by extension, many Puritans, thought was an inappropriate response to the natural world. A "beast" or an animal only sees the produce of the earth as something to eat, purely utilitarian; however, Mather derives spiritual meaning from the vegetable and exhorts others to do the same. Humans are differentiated from animals because they acknowledge that the beauty and usefulness of the vegetable are a reflection of a wonderful creator. Mather concludes the chapter by writing, "The herbs and flowers, by their fragrance, beauty, and variety of colors, show forth the might and wisdom of their Maker…They call upon mankind…to praise and glorify God."[25] Mather has not "disenchanted the world" or made it "purely material" as Alan Taylor would argue. Instead he has imbued the world with spiritual significance, and he has made his argument with vegetables.

In addition to providing evidence of God's existence,

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22. Cotton Mather, 129.

23. Cotton Mather, 140.

24. Cotton Mather, 133.

25. Cotton Mather, 150.

Cotton Mather and Edward Johnson's descriptions of the natural world reveal characteristics of the Puritan God. For Johnson, the mercy of God is displayed through rain. For Mather, the might and wisdom of God are shown through vegetables. Nature reveals the existence of God but also teaches the Puritans about their God. John Preston writes, "If you look to all particular things else you shall see that they have an end, and if they have an end it is certain there is one did aim at it and did give those creatures those several fashions which those several ends did require."[26] Preston's wording is slightly convoluted, but he is claiming that the relationship between the design of animals and the function of animals is evidence of a God who is purposeful. God does not act randomly. The design and order of nature testifies to the sovereignty of the Puritan God. Animals have a specific function. As Preston writes, "a horse was made to run…the oxen to plow, and a dog to hunt."[27] When animals fulfill their functions, they reveal that God's purposes are accomplished. For a group of people who were attempting to live in an unfamiliar land, the belief in a purposeful God must have been comforting.

In the event of natural phenomena, nature could simultaneously make known qualities of the divine and warn Puritans of sin. Samuel Sewall writes, " I remember the Earthquake of 1662/3 and my being shaken by it, as I sat in my Father's house at Newbury in a jam of the chimney. Oh that I could learn to fear the Lord and his Goodness!"[28] The earthquake serves as a reminder to Sewall of the power of his God. Furthermore, because Sewall survived the earthquake, he is reminded of the goodness of God. Nature functions as an instrument of divine reproof, and while Sewall's survival proves he is not being directly

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26. Preston, 247.

27. John Preston, 247.

28. Samuel Sewall, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall,* vol. 2, *1709-1729* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1973), 1055.

punished, the earthquake reminds him of the awe-inspiring nature of God. Sewall experiences another earthquake in 1727 and writes, "considering the Terrible Earth-Quakes we have had, shaking all our Foundations, it behooves us to walk humbly before our God."[29] Again a process of the natural world provides spiritual instruction for Sewall. Though Sewall does not explicitly state it, he is also made aware of the character of God. By desiring to "walk humbly" before his God, Sewall is acknowledging the power of God. God's power is not separated from nature; rather it is a power that is undeniably evident in the earthquakes Sewall experienced. Cotton Mather also writes about earthquakes but unlike Sewall, does not relate a personal experience with an earthquake. Mather is concerned with how earthquakes occur; however, during his discussion he states that an earthquake should cause men "to tremble before the Justice of God."[30] Once again nature reveals the character of God. One of Mather's final comments on earthquakes summarizes one function of earthquakes, and nature in general, in Puritan culture: "I take *Earthquakes* to be very *moving Preachers* unto *worldly-minded Men:* Their Address may be very agreeably put into the Terms of the Prophet; *O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord!"*[31] God did not just create the world and then stand back from it. Puritans' understanding of earthquakes depicts a God who uses nature to earnestly speak to his people. Nature is not a spirit-less resource, but a transmitter of the word of God. While historians have argued that Puritans thought of land as an instrument in their hands, in the case of earthquakes Puritans perceived nature as an instrument in God's hands rather than in human hands. Far from being detached from the earth, the

29. Samuel Sewall, Samuel Sewall to the Pastors and brethren of the South Church, assembled 27 Feb. 1727/8, in Judith S. Graham, *Puritan Family Life,* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000), 198.

30. Cotton Mather, 108.

31. Cotton Mather, 110.

Puritans' God provided, through earthquakes, tangible evidence of his involvement in the earth.

Puritans were also quite capable of making simple remarks on the beauty of the natural world without mention of God. Samuel Sewall, for instance, mentions rainbows over twenty-f ve times in his journal and uses descriptions such as, "very glorious," "perfect," "large and fair," and "very noble."[32] Only one time does he connect a rainbow with some biblical concept. During the winter of 1640, after describing the heated events of a court case, John Winthrop is struck by the beauty of a snowf ake: "In this winter, in a close, calm day, there fell divers f akes of snow of this form *, very thin, and as exactly pointed as art could have cut them in paper."[33] Clearly he was smitten by the form of a snowf ake, even drawing the snowf ake in his journal, and his description of the snowf ake is as delicate as the snowf ake itself. Shortly after Edmund Browne arrived in Massachusetts, he sent a description of New England to a Sir Simonds D'Ewes who was still living in England. He does not refrain from speaking honestly about the unpleasantness of the environment; however, he f nds room to describe a few things he does enjoy about New England. He mentions "most delectable" melons, the "fatness" of the mackerel, and an "abundance" of such animals as deer, rabbits, partridges, and duck.[34] His descriptions are very simple yet reveal a pleasure taken from nature without regard to the "hand of God."

Other Puritans relate an affection for nature that many historians overlook. Samuel Sewall, for example, provides one of the most charming descriptions of New England by a Puritan in his

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32. Samuel Sewall, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*, 663, 665, 765, 692.

33. John Winthrop, *The Journal of John Winthrop: 1630-1649,* Richard S. Dunn, James Savage, and Laetitia Yeandle, eds., (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 321.

34. Edmund Browne to Sir Simonds D'Ewes, September 7, 1638 in Everett Emerson, ed., *Letters from New England*: *The Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1629-1638*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976), 227-228.

book *Phaenomena quaedam Apocalyptica ad Aspectum Novi Orbis confgurata.* The title is frightening, and Perry Miller describes

of the Puritans. While Puritans did not believe that individual spirits inhabited plants or animals, they did believe that God was evident in nature. But God was more than just evident in nature; by working through nature, his spirit was present in the world. Whether it was through an earthquake or a vegetable, God was continually using nature to reveal himself to the Puritans. Furthermore, nature was not just valued because it was God's teaching tool, as a product of God's creative power, nature was given signifcance simply because God made it.

Since the natural world was so clearly connected to God, the Puritans had specifc beliefs governing their use of both land and animals. In "The Example of Adam and Eve" William Whately uses the story of the Garden of Eden to encourage proper behavior in his audience. He writes, in regard to Adam and Eve, that God gave them "dominion over all creatures, planting so excellent a place for them as Paradise,…and putting on them so pleasant a service as that of dressing and keeping the garden."[38] Many historians have interpreted the Puritans' belief in their God-given dominion over the earth as evidence for exploitative environmental practices. However in this instance dominion leads simply to "dressing and keeping the garden." Dominion over the earth did not give Puritans the right to exploit the earth; it gave them the responsibility and pleasure of using the earth. While their use of the land might not match modern environmental sensibilities, the Puritans' did not believe their "God-given dominion" justifed an exploitative extraction of resources.

Edward Johnson condemns both overindulgence and underindulgence of the land's produce. He writes, "Yet are there here…some that use these good creatures of God to excess, and others, to hoard up in a wretched and miserable manner…and

38. William Whately, "The Example of Adam and Eve," in Everett H. Emerson, ed., *English Puritanism from John Hooper to John Milton,* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1968), 269-270.

not tats of the good creatures God hath given for that end."[39] Johnson argues that there is an appropriate use for the things of the natural world. Puritans could condone neither the abusive use of creation nor the inability to enjoy creation. Rather they strove for moderation. In a similar manner John Winthrop writes that new colonists are welcome to Massachusetts Bay, but "people must come well provided and not too many at once."[40] While Winthrop is probably more concerned with the possibility of food shortage than the potential environmental damage caused by overpopulation, he is still aware of the limits of the land. Because he is trying to establish a permanent settlement, he realizes that future generations rely on his generation's ability to use the land in moderation.

A vital concept governing Puritan land use was "improvement." For land to be owned, a farmer had to show he was improving it. John Eliot describes how New England is being governed and claims, concerning land, that men can "have what they can improve."[41] Improvement could involve grazing cattle, raising crops, or fertilizing the land among other things. An anonymous Puritan relates the diffcult growing conditions in New England then writes, "I do believe that if we had marl, lime, or other manure, this barrenness might in part be cured."[42] This writer is not concerned with extracting what he can from the land and moving on to a new location. He is attempting to improve the land for permanent settlement and better crops. In order to establish a plantation, Edmund Browne advises Sir Simonds D'Ewes to send

39. Edward Johnson, 211.

40. John Winthrop to John Winthrop, Jr., July 23, 1630, in Emerson, *Letters from New England*, 50.

41. John Eliot to Sir Simonds D'Ewes, Sept. 18, 1633, in Emerson, *Letters from New England,* 105.

42. Letter by an anonymous Puritan, early 1637, in Emerson, *Letters from New England*, 214.

over "able men in agriculture" and several head of cattle. He also claims that the soil is relatively fertile but can be made "exceeding good with manure."[43] Puritans' intent for the land was to make it productive. Though their improvements altered the environment of New England, most say for the worst, Puritans did not doubt they were making proper use of the land.

Puritans interpreted their use of the land as an attempt to regain the original purpose of the natural world. William Hubbard writes, "It was order that gave beauty to this goodly fabric of the world…Order is as the soul of the universe, the life and health of things natural."[44] The order evident in a successful harvest revealed beauty and stimulated the praise of God. Samuel Hieron wrote three mealtime prayers which portray Puritans as thankful recipients of God's gifts in the form of harvested food. One prayers begins, "Sanctify, O Lord, unto us the use of these Thy creatures."[45] Hieron clearly praises God for the produce of a harvest, but he also gives a tremendous amount of respect to nature by asking God to make him worthy of what he is about to eat. Cotton Mather expands the Puritans' respect for nature by writing, "The earth praises God when it is fruitful and multiplying."[46] In this instance humans are not required for the praise of God. Puritan respect for nature must have been substantial if they believed it could praise God by itself.

For Puritans, nature was tangible evidence of God. God both manifested himself in nature and exhorted Puritans through nature. Consequently Puritans perceived God as existing in

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43.

Berdache Identity and "Third Gender" Ideology

Andy Crooks

Scholarship pertaining to berdache Indians has evolved significantly throughout the past century as North American historians have struggled to identify the concept of a "mixed gender" or "third gender" ideology. Labeled as homosexuals or transvestites by a majority of 19th and early 20th century Euro-American anthropologists and missionaries, berdaches were Native American men and women who adopted, typically from a very young age, the dress and lifestyle of the opposite sex. The term "berdaches," which was coined in the 16th century by French-Canadian fur traders, originates from the French language and literally translates into "man woman" or "would-be woman." Contemporary scholars believe that the first witnesses of third gender identity labeled berdaches in this manner due to their adoption of women's dress and social duties.[1] It is important to note that while berdaches assumed all mannerisms of the opposite sex, including sexual relations with members of their same biological sex, they were not deemed "homosexual" in the Western sense of the term, by their tribes. They were seen, rather, as being part of a separate gender, or third gender.

1. Charles Callendar and Lee Kochems, "The North American Berdache," *Current Anthropology,* (August-October 1983): 443

The seemingly simple task of defining the term "berdache" has led to disagreement amongst scholars. In attempts to locate an English synonym for the word, assimilation-era anthropologists often used the terms homosexual, transvestite, hermaphrodite, or transsexual to describe berdache identity in conditions recognizable to Western cultures.[2] Such attempts served no valuable purpose because they assumed binary and essentialist ways of thinking in regards to gender and sexuality.

As Western influence on North American tribes increased during the nineteenth century, Euro-Americans became alarmed by the presence of berdaches in various tribes across the continent. Seen through the eyes of missionaries and agents as "abominable" or "evil", berdaches quickly became a primary target in Euro-American policies of assimilation.[3] Inherently challenging in the study of berdaches is the absence of an equivalent being in Western society. Berdaches were unique to Native American cultures and signified a gender structure completely foreign to that of the Euro-American world. There is little historical evidence regarding the presence of berdaches in North America, and the material that survives is largely tainted by Western perceptions of homosexuality. The value in uncovering the essence of Native American berdaches lies, therefore, not only in their absence from the historical record, but in the necessity to honor them with a historically unbiased assessment rather than one based on WKHRQRQLQÀXHQFHRQ

anthropologist George Devereux presented a hypothesis equating berdaches to homosexuals. Devereux used the two terms interchangeably, arguing that North American Mohave Indians recognized berdache status to protect homosexuals, while also creating advantages for Mohave society. In requiring homosexuals to dress in women's clothing, he argues, the Mohave prevented the possibility of berdaches misrepresenting themselves in order to seduce and recruit unsuspecting heterosexuals.[4] Devereux's flawed analysis, in which he comments solely on the physical and sexual elements of berdaches and portrays homosexuals as uncontrollable and animalistic beings, exemplifies one instance of Euro-Americans misinterpreting third gender ideology due to their own preconceived notions pertaining to sex and gender.

Many questions posed by scholars regarding berdaches, such as their roles in society and their integration from man or woman to mixed gendered, are rather difficult to assess on a grand scale due to the influences of time and space. Cultural and geographical differences among various tribes across the continent account, in part, for the disparities in berdache acceptance and behavior in the many tribes. Furthermore, tribes were influenced by the Western world at different times and to various degrees allowing some tribes to maintain traditional customs and ideologies longer than others.

Western influence and the history of Euro-American relations with Native American tribes have also aided in explaining the diversity in attitudes toward berdaches.[5] In some tribes, berdaches were widely accepted and they held a prominent social status. In others, they were frowned upon.[6] As Western contact increased and policies of assimilation began to alter tribal dogmas and social attitudes, acceptance of berdache decreased, and

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4. Callender and Kochems, 454.

5. Ibid., 447.

6. Ibid., 453.

consequently, so did their visible presence in tribal society. While berdaches are known to have existed in all corners of the continent at one time or another, they became rare and absent from many tribes, suggesting growing discomfort and rejection towards them.

The discrepancies in berdache acceptance and treatment have posed a challenge in Western research and scholarship of a third gender ideology. Many early scholars were quick to assume an analysis of one berdache or tribe to be representative of all Indian tribes and berdaches. Consensus among contemporary scholars however, points to the more plausible theory that disapproval or rejection of berdaches did not begin to develop until the arrival of Euro-American settlers. In what is considered a revolutionary essay on berdache identity in North America, Charles Callendar's and Lee Kochems' article "The North American Berdaches" attempts to emphasize the diversity of berdaches across North America by highlighting the varying views of mix gendered beings and the influence Western mores had on Indian social customs:

> The attitudes toward berdaches reported for North American cultures varied from awe and reverence through indifference to scorn and contempt. We contribute this diversity to declining esteem, influences by Western views…Attitudes toward berdaches may have varied in the past. …We hold that statements ascribing low status to berdaches generally represent shifts away from older and very different views.[7]

Callendar and Kochems contend that the social status of most berdaches was respectable, especially in pre-contact Indian

7. Callender and Kochems, 453.

men."[10] Similarly, Roscoe describes Woman Jim's and other Crow bedaches' struggles against Western agents of assimilation. Agents and missionaries often disapproved of the acceptance and status of third gender beings, and some attempted "to crush the viciousness" through physical violence.[11] Following preliminary attempts to physically rid the Crow Indians of their berdaches, Euro-American agents unleashed a "campaign of morals" to mete out all "moral sins". Woman Jim was not able to escape assimilation, and agents tried to force him to wear men's clothing, but the Crows resisted, claiming that it was "against his nature."[12]

In contrast with the Winnebago, Woman Jim received support from his Chief and fellow tribe members throughout the process of assimilation. The Crows continued to view berdaches as "integral, even necessary members of their society." The tribe passionately believed that it was a chief's duty to protect his tribe's berdaches.[13] It is easy to understand from the case of the Crows and of Woman Jim how Euro-American agents and missionaries were often able to turn a tribe against their berdaches. After all, Indian victims of assimilation were taught that gender and sex were binary and essentialist categories that could not be altered or transformed.

To this day, scholars remain divided regarding the question of how an individual became berdache. Anthropologists have hypothesized two views regarding this journey: one secular and the other religious.[14] The secular view suggests that children

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10. Will Roscoe, "That is my Road: The Life and Times of a Crow Berdache," *Montana; The Magazine of Western History* 40:1 (Winter 1990): 47.

11. Roscoe, "That is my Road," 54.

12. Robert H. Lowie, "Social Life of the Crow Indians," *Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History* 9(2) (1912): 226. (As cited in Roscoe, "That is my Road," 54).

13. Roscoe, "That is my Road," 54.

14. Callendar and Kochems, 451.

became berdaches when they showed interest in the occupations and lifestyles of the opposite sex, spent most of their time with them, and were accepted by them as members of their social group. The religious view suggests that berdaches took a supernatural role and were formally confirmed as berdache in a

Marquette concerning the Illinois berdaches and their seemingly supernatural roles in society. In his attempt to describe berdaches, Marquette strongly implies that they received visions and were seen to have a supernatural role in society. He declares: “they pass for Manitous - that is to say, for Spirits.”[17] According to Marquette, the Illinois held berdaches in high regard. For example, they were often given special duties at religious ceremonies because they were considered to have supernatural powers. [18] Noting that several other tribes considered berdaches to have supernatural powers, Hauser suggests that tribes who adhered to the religious view of berdache integration placed their berdaches in high esteem and often accredited them with powerful traits, and therefore, powerful positions in tribal society. Berdache integration policies often signifed a tribes’ perceived relationship with the berdaches in their society.

The more fruitful and effective studies of Berdaches have come from close, intimate analyses that avoid generalizations. Some contemporary scholars of berdaches, including Will Roscoe and Claude Schaeffer, have excelled at implementing this method of studying berdaches. Their extensive research focuses primarily on the individual berdache. Roscoe studied We’Wha of the Zuni and Schaeffer studied Watter-Sitting Grizzly of the Kutenai. For Roscoe and Schaeffer, comprehending the mentality of a berdache is the most effcient way to understanding what third gender identity truly entails. We’Wha and Water-sitting Grizzly do not represent all berdaches, and the Zuni and Kutenai treatment of third gender beings does not represent how all Indian tribes treated berdaches; nevertheless, intimate, extensive research, as opposed to generalized and stereotypical accounts, has produced a more accurate and meaningful understanding of what it meant to be berdache in America.

17. Hauser, 47.

18. Ibid.

While the majority of scholarship and correspondence regarding berdaches has focused on male berdaches, the preponderance of Indian societies who acknowledged berdache identity as a "third gender" status accepted it for both men and women. One unique but popular case of a female berdache is recalled by several scholars, including Beverly Hungry Wolf and the aforementioned Claude Schaeffer. Water-sitting Grizzly became a well-known berdache in the Kutenai tribe, which was located just west of the Rocky Mountains. Eventually she became one of the more famous Indian women of the era.[19] In 1808, Water-sitting Grizzly encountered David Thompson, a one-time member of the Hudson's Bay Fur Trading Company and a Western explorer, and his servant Boisverd. After establishing a relationship with the servant, Water-sitting Grizzly and Boisverd married and were taken in by Thompson. Upon marriage, Water-sitting Grizzly became widely known as Madame Boisverd. After only a short time, Madame Boisverd's behavior uncharacteristically radicalized, prompting Thompson to send her back to her people, subsequently ending her marriage to Boisverd.[20] Upon returning to her tribe, Madame Boisverd quickly informed her community that her husband had transformed her into a man through an operation unknown to Indians. In recounting the story to her relatives, she is credited as saying, "I'm a man now. We Indians did not believe the white people possessed such power from the supernaturals. I can tell you that they do, greater power than we have. They changed my sex while I was with them. No Indian is able to do that."[21] Following her return, Madame Boisverd began to adopt a

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19. Beverly Hungry

man's lifestyle by dressing in men's clothing, carrying a gun, and even choosing another woman as her wife. Interestingly enough, Madame Boisverd was accepted as a berdache by her tribe and became highly regarded as an esteemed guide and peacemaker, allowing her to avoid the sedentary role of women in Kutenai society.[22] While in some Indian tribes berdaches were seen as outcasts and were scorned for their sexual and gender preferences, Madame Boisverd and the Kutenai exemplifed the diversity of reactions to berdache among North American Indian tribes. The Kutenai held Madame Boisverd in very high esteem. They marveled at her abilities as warrior and peacemaker, and they believed in the supernatural tendencies she claimed to have due to her status as berdache.

In his book *The Zuni Man-Woman*, Will Roscoe recalls the story of We'Wha, and in so doing, presents one of the most extensive and meaningful studies of a berdache yet generated. In prefacing his book, Roscoe acknowledges his extensive use of the research and feld notes of Matilda Coxe Stevenson, the wife, and later widow, of James Stevenson, the offcial leader Ad.

Stevenson was one of few nineteenth century women fortunate enough to receive a formal education. Cognizant of her husband's research regarding the Zunis, Stevenson became one of the leading authorities on the tribe after the death of her husband in 1888.[25] As a widow and childless anthropologist, Stevenson was a rare breed in the American west because she defied gender role expectations. Consequently, she was treated as though she was a man by several Zunis. In her field notes, Stevenson described an occasion during a religious offering in which the Zunis presented prayer sticks as offerings to their ancestors. The men were to offer prayer sticks to the sun, while the women would offer prayer sticks to the moon, but Stevenson was instructed to do as the men did. She recalled the Zunis telling her "though you are a woman you have a head and a heart like a man, and you work like a man, and you must therefore make offerings such as men make."[26] Stevenson's unique status among the Zunis allowed her the opportunity to form a profound relationship with the Zunis' most highly regarded berdache, We'Wha.

Stevenson's acceptance of We'Wha was certainly the exception in the 1890's, not the rule. Alexander Stephen, an anthropologist who lived among the Hopis in the 1890's, noted in his journal in 1893, "We'Wha is a man, but of the abominable sort known to the Hopi as *ho'va*, to the Navaho as *nutlehi*, to the Zuni as *lah'ma* i.e. hermaphrodite."[27] Furthermore, Western agent and school-teacher Mary Dissette labeled We'Wha "a creature," while another Euro-American observer saw her as "one of those unspeakable professional perverts connected with the Phallic

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25. Roscoe, 9.

26. Matilda Coxe Stevenson, "Zuni Indians: Their Mythology, Esoteric Fraternities, and Ceremonies," (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904) 119. (As cited in Roscoe, 9-10).

27. Alexander M. Stephen, *The Hopi Journals of Alexander M. Stephen*. Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 23. (New York, 1936) 276. (As cited in Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman*, 25)

ceremonies in primitive cults."[28]

In the 1890's, the U.S. Office of Indian Affairs began to strengthen its policy of assimilation; one of the objectives of this policy was to alter Zuni values and mores regarding gender and sexuality.[29] While We'Wha remained a valued member of the Zuni community, pressure from the outside challenged the Zunis' and Stevenson's perceptions of berdaches. Throughout her friendship with We'Wha, Stevenson never pressured her to conform to western binary views of sexuality; in fact, she expressed approval and understanding of We'Wha by always referring to her using female pronouns. Stevenson's relationship with We'Wha signified the unlikeliest of friendships; during a decade of intense assimilation and Americanization, We'Wha and Stevenson established a bond that undermined gender, race and sexual customs of the era, thereby paving the way for a rare intimate portrait of a 19th century berdache.

Stevenson sheds nothing but positive light on "the Zuni girl", leading many scholars and observers to suggest, without proof or substance, that Stevenson and We'Wha had an intimate relationship.[30] Her observations of We'Wha are intriguing in that they portray her as a superior being in many aspects of life, including physically, intellectually, socially, and religiously,

> She was perhaps the tallest person in Zuni; certainly the strongest, both mentally and physically…She possessed an indomitable will and an insatiable thirst for knowledge…Owing to her bright mind and excellent memory, she was called upon by her clan when a long prayer had to be repeated or a grace was to be offered over a feast. In fact she was the chief personage

28. Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman*, 194

29. Ibid., 98.

30. Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman*, 49.

> on many occasions. On account of her physical strength all the household work was left for her . . . [31]

According to Stevenson, We'Wha was a valued member of society; her physical and intellectual strengths were put to good use, whether dealing with domestic labor or religious rituals. Judging by the depiction of We'Wha by both Roscoe and Stevenson, the social rank of berdaches in Zuni society, and particularly that of

not only of the respect and acceptance she garnered, but also of the success the Zuni gained in resisting policies of assimilation. While We'Wha was able to maintain her social status in Zuni society, American contact and subsequent policies of assimilation had an enormous impact on the presence of berdaches in Native American tribes and ultimately led to the virtual disappearance of berdaches.

While analyses of Native American berdaches in recent scholarship have focused primarily on the implications of life as a berdache, research pertaining to berdache identity has not always focused on unraveling the roles and customs of this unique third gender being; rather, early scholarship often consisted of misunderstandings and oversimpli f cations. It has become apparent through in-depth research of Berdaches that mixed gender beings were widely accepted throughout North America prior to Western in f uence. The presence of berdaches in America slowly disintegrated as Euro-Americans moved westward and the federal government implemented policies of assimilation. Upon the close of the frontier in the last decade of the 19th century, berdaches had all but disappeared from Native American tribes.

Scholarship pertaining to Native American berdaches has been transformed since the close of the frontier and the end of Euro-American policies of assimilation, but there continues to exist a sense of discomfort regarding the subject of sexuality, and of homosexuality in particular. While scholars have come to reject the notion of essentialist and binary categories of gender and sexuality, there remains an unwillingness to accept sexual minorities as equal members of society. American relations with Native American tribes have also been transformed

society. Berdaches' history highlights the struggle for acceptance and equality in America and suggests reluctance on the part of Euro-Americans to accept sexual minorities as equals. The study of berdachehood offers not only valuable insight into the mores and ideologies of individual Indian tribes before Western contact, but offers also an important instrument for uncovering the core of American identity during the decades of westward expansion and Indian contact.

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About The Contributors:

Allie Garris is a junior history major from Narragansett, Rhode Island. This past summer she worked at a camp as a behavior specialist, aiding children with mental and physical disabilities. After graduation she plans on taking a year off to volunteer through the Jesuit Volunteer Corps before entering applying for graduate school.

Graham Gordon is a Senior History major at Rhodes College. If he is not doing homework, he enjoys woodturning, photography, playing the piano, playing any sport, or just playing in general. After he graduates, he plans to go to Uganda with his grandparents and anyone else who wants to go with him. The only other plan he has for the future is growing a really good tomato.

My name is **Robert Anderson Crooks Jr**. I am a senior double major in history and French. Originally from Portland, Oregon, I currently reside in New Haven, Connecticut. I am an active member of Phi Alpha Theta and am also the current president of the French Club on campus. This year has been especially fulfilling thanks to my research partnership with Professor Jeffrey Jackson. I recently presented my research pertaining to berdaches Indians at the biennial Associated Colleges of the South (ACS) Gender and Sexuality Studies Conference. After graduation this spring, I hope to attend law school. But first, I will take a year off from academics to spend time with my family and to recuperate.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Professors Gail Murray and Jeffrey Jackson, who have provided me with tremendous encouragement and moral support throughout my experience at Rhodes. I also need to

A Culture of Fear: Atomic America

by Allie Garris

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 changed the world, and more speci f cally,