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Procrastination and the Pains of Living in a Work-focused Society

Morgan Bizier

PROCRASTINATION: IT IS a problem many struggle with in all facets of life, from the workplace to personal life. The vast majority of people have put something off at some point in their lives, and I would wager most of us have procrastinated much more than once. But is it truly so bad? Procrastination is often seen as a problem we must overcome, and indeed, it often creates roadblocks against productivity and can lead to many issues down the line. However, procrastination itself might not be the issue; what if our concept of productivity is itself flawed? The way our society views those who struggle with procrastination or similar issues is ableist and enforces the idea that said people are "lazy" and do not properly contribute. This is incredibly harmful to those who are neurodivergent. In reality, procrastination is a complex phenomenon and those who suffer from it chronically are going through a lot more than what might be apparent on the surface. While the advice people often provide to procrastinators can assist them at a surface level, it is rarely ever helpful beyond a superficial layer and can oftentimes be patronizing or dismissive.

It is very easy to say that procrastination is a problem, but sources often differ on the causes, effects, and solutions. It seems that nobody is quite able to agree on what procrastination does and does not do, leading to a plethora of conflicting sources giving those seeking help varying solutions to follow. It also does not help that perspectives differ wildly in regard to the topic, and oftentimes are influenced heavily by the author's unconscious biases. Take, for example, Eric Jaffe's discussion of the topic in his article "Why Wait? The Science Behind Procrastination," in which he attempts to dissect the behavior and find out its causes and effects. He concludes that procrastination is a "complicated failure of self-regulation" which delays work in favor of pursuing pleasure, regardless of whether the person involved genuinely wishes to procrastinate or not (Jaffe). According to his research, solutions include counseling, chopping up tasks into smaller tasks, and self-forgiveness, as "students who forgave themselves after procrastinating on the first exam were less likely to delay studying for the second one" (Jaffe). The actual content of this article is decently helpful, but it has a tone which can best be described as unfriendly to those who suffer from procrastinating. Jaffe describes it as a "peculiar behavior" and a "maladaptive lifestyle," and for somebody who directly acknowledges the importance of self-forgiveness, he does not consider once how describing procrastination as a complete failure to regulate one's emotions will impact those self-conscious about their struggles. Even the title has a hint of aggression; "Why Wait?" it

asks, challenging readers directly for an answer to why they procrastinate. These might appear to be minor and innocuous, but together they can scare away those seeking help since they ultimately demonize the target audience: procrastinators in need of assistance. Articles about procrastination need to be helpful, not harmful, and yet many can end up doing just that, further amplifying the guilt many procrastinators struggle with.

Other sources might not necessarily be condescending to their audience, but might end up offering advice that can be tone-deaf or shallow. One such article that those seeking help might turn to if they are feeling philosophical is Dr. Timothy Pychyl's "'Wash Your Bowl': Insight From a Koan," which uses a traditional Zen practice to reflect on how procrastination works. His viewpoint is admittedly unique but quite simplistic and more aspirational than helpful. According to Pychyl and his koan interpretation, we all have a "reactive stance" when thinking about a task (i.e. "But that'll take forever" or "It's such a slog to get through") and negative reactions to a task are what causes procrastination. This is an interesting perspective on the subject, as pessimism can certainly worsen morale and therefore make it harder to be productive. However, the solution proposed by Pychyl is to simply not "get caught up" in such feelings, which is about as helpful as telling a depressed person to stop feeling so sad. He does propose meditation, which has been shown to have positive effects on those who practice it. According to "Transcendental Meditation and Productivity," by David R. Frew, those who meditate "reported they experienced increased job satisfaction, better performance and better relationships with supervisors and co-workers." But unfortunately, it is also equally as difficult to get into a rigorous routine such as daily meditation for serial procrastinators, so

while it could be an improvement to some, the advice offered by Pychyl gives little to no benefits to those who struggle excessively with the problem at hand. Pychyl's advice seems good-intentioned, and it's certainly not harmful in any way, but in a similar vein to other writings about procrastination it fails to break the subject down and instead offers a shallow solution to an unfortunately complex problem.

Neither author previously mentioned discussed how underlying conditions can seriously impact one's workflow; procrastination is linked with many other factors which should also be addressed in the conversation, but always seem to slip out of focus in favor of repeating self-help advice and bickering over the potential vices and virtues of the subject. For example, take the concept of executive dysfunction. As defined by Jaime Herndon in "Understanding Executive Dysfunction and How It Shows Up," executive dysfunction is a state caused by "irregular and slower development in the parts of the brain responsible for working memory and emotional regulation." It is correlated with difficulties in making plans, forgetfulness and misplacement of belongings, problems staying organized, and problems with impulse control, among many other potential symptoms. Executive dysfunction is linked to many common mental conditions, including ADHD, ASD, depression, and anxiety disorders, and many of the symptoms manifest in ways akin to procrastination. People with these conditions cannot just magically make their symptoms go away. Regardless of therapy, medication, and the practically infinite number of self-help tips out there for managing procrastination, it can be debilitating and result in real-world repercussions. An article by the Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA) found that "1 out of 3 persons diagnosed with ADHD is jobless at any time," due to a variety of factors that

include "poor planning skills, memory issues, self-discipline, behavior awareness, lack of motivation and concentration" ("Impact of ADHD at Work"). If those factors seem familiar, it is because they are: these are often issues which contribute to procrastination. The correlation between procrastination and mental health/neurodivergence cannot be understated, and yet it is often omitted, as is often the case when mental health is involved.

Despite the often lackluster quality of advice given to help with procrastination, there are outliers which provide a clearer picture of the issues surrounding procrastination. One article which does care about the underlying causes of procrastination is Aidan Doyle's "I Was Going to Write an Essay on Procrastination." Extracted from his book The Writer's Book of Doubt and later published separately, this essay views procrastination as the result of a multitude of factors. From Doyle's perspective, "a procrastinator becomes disproportionately motivated by the pain of failure" as well as other factors such as anxiety, low self-esteem, perfectionism, indecisiveness, and a poor work-life balance. Doyle's willingness to bring attention to the serious mental health issues that can often cause procrastination is commendable and a breath of fresh air when compared to the endless sea of discussions around the topic which remain blind to the internal causes. He suggests trying to reduce the anxiety of the situation by prioritizing rest and setting time aside for focusing, but also goes in-depth into more fundamental changes that can be made to rework problems procrastinators often face. He brings attention to Neil Fiore's "Unschedule" technique, wherein leisure time is directly planned for and any projects which are being procrastinated have specific 30 minute blocks of time allotted to them in order to break up the work and make it less daunting. Another concept

he recommends is making fake deadlines which others might help enforce, as public accountability can assist in influencing productivity. Of course, these strategies are not foolproof; for those who struggle with establishing routines in the first place or hate excess pressure, these solutions are not going to work. But at the very least, Doyle's writing is willing to give a more thorough analysis of the topic, and he does so with care and empathy. When discussing a topic with negative connotations like procrastination, prioritizing your audience's well-being and being honest about the topic's nature is vital.

As someone with both ADHD and GAD, I have quite a lot of experience with getting overwhelmed and consequently procrastinating until the last second. In an almost humorous sense of irony, I have even struggled with procrastinating this very essay about procrastination. It is not necessarily my fault; executive dysfunction is simply something that I live with every day, even with the assistance of medication. I do not think it should have to be a horrible thing I am ashamed of. But unfortunately, I am not at liberty to make that decision, as I have constant deadlines looming over my head and expectations to always succeed. It is how our world has been built, and so be it if some get swept under the waves of production.

Trying to function in a world built without any consideration for people like you is exhausting. It is a demeaning, draining experience that requires a subjugation of the self to maintain behavior which those around you see as acceptable. Procrastination is something that everybody has done, but those who suffer from it the most hardly receive any sympathy for their way of processing work, even if it is completely out of their control. It is not beneficial, by any means, but it is also not just a lack of work ethic; it is a complex topic that cannot be

solved with a shallow article and the journalistic equivalent of snake oil. I do not want to come off as nihilistic; I am sure that somebody could find value in any one of the articles presented here, and I applaud them for that. But in reality, serial procrastination and those who suffer from it would benefit most from a therapist or professional if they require dire assistance. We as a society cannot keep making people feel worthless for what they are going through; we need to work to help each other up and give consideration to those who process things differently, or else we will continue to isolate and work against neurodivergent people.

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Exploring Masculinity Through Men's Lifestyle Magazines

Paul Buckley

Throughout the history of American print media, advertising has normalized ideas of hegemonic masculinity. In recent times, magazines have become an essential carrier of these depictions of masculine power. Men's lifestyle magazines commonly support a specific view of a masculine ideal, with their appeal to a broad male readership interested in topics such as health, fashion, and wealth. These magazines influence men to meet the gender expectations that advertisements and articles inside them support. Analyzing the methods these types of magazines use to portray masculinity and male expectations of masculinity can help us understand why and how most male readers are influenced.

In the article on "Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity," Rosemary Ricciardelli and her associates address the content of men's lifestyle magazines. Her analysis includes eight magazines sold in Canada from 2004 to 2006, where they research how masculinity is portrayed. Ricciardelli hypothesizes that you can find social relations of hegemonic masculinity in each magazine by looking at the similarities to in terms of expectations of body, aesthetics, and fashion. As the author notes, "appearance can be manipulated—but it should also be enhanced" (Ricciardelli et al. 64) She accurately summarizes the supposed ideals that these lifestyle magazines support.

Ricciardelli and colleagues start their investigation by explaining past thoughts on hegemonic masculinity. They describes hegemony as a culturally normal ideal of masculinity. With this in mind, one can view masculine hegemony as a status, role, or set of behaviors given by society (Ricciardelli et al. 64). There are many different norms regarding masculinity. However, physical power and evident authority often outshine the other ideals. A professional athlete along with the CEO of a major company both embody the societal norm of masculinity (Ricciardelli et al. 64). Although the athlete represents physical strength and the CEO has authority over others, the idea of power is consistent throughout. The masculine hegemony idealized in these magazines can drastically affect readers' thoughts on their appearance, sexuality, behavior, violence, valuing public occupation over family, and domination over women (Ricciardelli et al. 64).

Past research has been performed dealing with gender expectations created in magazines. However, these portrayals were usually a part of women's lifestyle magazines (Ricciardelli et al. 67). Ricciardelli and others discuss the lack of studies on this men's lifestyle magazine, explaining that the majority of articles examining masculine expectations were based on male fitness magazines. She also compares the trends men's

magazines have followed versus women's, noting that most magazines aimed towards men supported occupational work roles far more than women's magazines.

Using a range of magazines that were popular between November 2004 and August 2006, the researchers start by analyzing the most-read magazines in Canada during that time period. Their analysis looks at all aspects of the magazines, from the cover to each picture, graphic, and article. They chose their sample by grouping genre, popularity, and gender of target audience. With these limitations, the eight men's lifestyle magazines researched in this article include Details, OUT, GQ, Men's Health, Esquire, Maxim, Stuff, and FHM. Most men and women are likely aware of the popularity of these choices. Each page of the magazine is coded into a table based on given categories. Some stories might be put into a "sports" category and others might be grouped in an "entertainment" category (Ricciardelli et al. 68). Following the categorization, each sample is then rated on the relevance of the researched topic. Over 95% of the pages were included in the analysis, showing how relevant most aspects of the magazines are to the research (Ricciardelli et al. 68).

In their results, Ricciardelli and others identified a few key characteristics of each magazine that distinguishes them from the rest. For example, FHM, Stuff, and Maxim used more women in advertisements compared to the others. This type of content likely appeals to men's heterosexual attraction towards women, showing pictures of women in various sexualized poses and clothing (Ricciardelli et al. 69). These three magazines also had more violent sports, video games, and stunts, generalizing a representation of a youthful masculinity. In contrast, Details and GQ focus on business and high fashion. Aiming towards a "classier" audience, female models are dressed far more modestly while posing with polished,

manicured men (Ricciardelli et al. 72). Similarly, GQ and Details also publish far more on material wealth such as exclusive brand watches, appearance concerns, and other status symbols (Ricciardelli et al. 72). Esquire and OUT share characteristics of their content such as the importance of status symbols and an appeal to an older age demographic of readers. OUT magazine is known for its largely gay audience, as reflected in its sexualized representations of men in the advertisements. Finally, Men's Health has a greater focus on fitness and muscularity, including issues concerning dieting, strength training, and supplements (Ricciardelli et al. 73). Men's Health is the most distinguishable from the rest, using a far less metrosexual approach to the ideal performance of masculinity.

Ricciardelli and her constituents define the importance of muscularity regarding masculinity, meaning physical strength. While the need for physical strength has varied over time and place, the ideological centrality of masculine strength has maintained structural continuity. Whenever the societal norms of masculinity were challenged, a new idea of masculinity would always take its place, continuing the cycle (Ricciardelli et al. 65). For example, a recent form of masculinity is metrosexuality. This form distinguishes itself from the more traditional muscularity expectation of masculinity. Metrosexuality involves the idea that one can still be masculine without having oppressive relationships with men, women, and children (Ricciardelli et al. 65). Furthermore, the researchers write "metrosexuality places less focus on previously dominant manifestations of masculinity and instead emphasizes self-presentation, appearance, and grooming" (Ricciardelli et al. 65), accurately describing the difference between metrosexuality and traditional depictions of male sexuality. This information is important for the reader to know what

the author means when she discusses masculinity as a socially and historically defined concept, and to understand the past and current trends of male hegemony.

In "The Construction of Masculinity: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Men's Lifestyle Magazine Advertisements," Yue Tan and his fellow researchers address advertisements in men's lifestyle magazines in a more global manner. Tan offers an in-depth analysis of 636 ads across the three most popular magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States, with the objective of determining how masculinity is portrayed throughout these countries, as well as any variations in the portrayals.

Tan and colleagues note that during the 1980s, magazines became a dependable way to advertise idealized representations of masculinity (Tan et al. 237). This newfound popularity of these types of magazines increased the use of male care products and fashion, resulting in a "branded masculinity, which is rooted in U.S. men's insecurities, generated by consumer capitalism." (Tan et al. 237). The researchers chose China due to the lack of research on this topic conducted outside of the West. With one of the largest growing markets of male products, examining China's advertisements might give a different perspective (Tan et al. 238). However, the author explains that men's magazines in China are based on Western perspectives, with the U.S. and the U.K. supplying the vast majority of media content. The globalization of the same content perpetuates the production of the same masculine ideologies, starting a bottleneck of local standards based on cultural norms. Along with the knowledge of how each magazine maintains hegemonic ideologies, exploring these similarities and differences can shed light on how global expectations of masculinity alter social norms, cultural norms, and local traditions (Tan et al. 238).

Tan et al.'s study focuses on three questions. First, to explain the idea of global hegemonic masculinity by analyzing the similarities between men's magazines throughout the three countries. In contrast to the first question, the second question investigates the different cross-cultural portrayals of masculinity by exploring the ideologies each country mainly supports. The final question simply asks which role each type of masculinity plays in advertisements. All of these questions can be summarized in the general study of the 636 ads Tan and his researchers studied.

Tan and others start their methodology by looking at the advertisements shown in men's lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States from 2008 to 2010. The magazine selection consists of GQ, Esquire, and Men's Health (United States), Esquire, Men's Health, and FHM (China), Cool GQ, and Men's UNO (Taiwan). These magazines are chosen based on general popularity in each country. A randomized selection of twenty-seven issues is chosen, with an equal amount from each magazine. The scholars code types of masculinity portrayed by the main model on each page of the magazines into seven categories "Tough and Macho," "Refined and Gentle," "Stern and Sophisticated," "Vigorous and Sunny," "Trendy and Cool," "Sensual and Sexy," and "Androgynous." (Tan et al. 243). This categorization of masculinities is based on visual portrayals. Using this method, the researchers create percentages of the ideologies each male model represents and what role they are playing (Tan et al. 245).

The most prevalent type of masculinity throughout the magazines in all three countries is the "Stern and Sophisticated" look, with "Trendy and Cool" as a close follow-up (Tan et al. 244). Using a chi-square analysis, Tan and others discover that there are no statistically different trends in each culture. For the most part, all three countries followed a global model of masculinity.

However, the authors did note that cultural differences within the popular portrayals of masculinity are noticeably seen throughout each country. The roles male models are idealized to achieve varied in each culture. The U.S. shows models playing recreational roles such as sports and physical strength more frequently than China or Taiwan (Tan et al. 245). Taiwan and China support more professional and entertainment role models compared to the U.S. (Tan et al. 246). Tan et al. explain that although his results are not what he hypothesized, the information he discovers accurately portrays the complexity of a global perspective on views of masculinity. Furthermore, the researchers' work in all three countries will support new and more specific work within the field.

The book, Masculinity and Men's Lifestyle Magazines accurately summarizes the overarching topics on masculinities in men's magazines in its introduction. Written by Bethan Benwall, the introduction begins with a discussion of the magazine Loaded. Gaining popularity in Britain starting in the mid-nineties, Loaded introduced the idea of the 'new lad.' This term is used to describe an embodiment of masculinity that is common today, idealizing attributes such as strength, playboy attitudes/aspirations, and "tongue-in-cheek" sexism (Benwall 3). Benwall suggests a power connection between masculinity and popular culture. Men's lifestyle magazines can be seen as a popularizer of this connection (Benwall 4). After describing the definition of masculinity and the challenges that come with it, the author theorizes the ever-changing concept of masculinity. In regards to men's magazines, popular discourses have evolved from 'new man' to 'new lad' (Benwall 10). Benwall describes the 'new man' as a presentation of more traditional manhood, consisting of ideas of narcissism but also including the commitment of a father and a protector, contrasting with the 'new lad' ideology

popular in many men's lifestyle magazines today. Comparing the two clearly shows how the content of men's magazines and general masculine popularity stand in contrast to each other, granting variety to depictions of masculinity, thereby fortifying the structure of societal masculinity.

Approaching the 'new lad' concept, analyzing forms of new masculinity accurately shows the evolved state of today's ideologies. To preserve privilege, men construct a type of 'certitude.' Regarding men's magazines, the discourse of the content emphasizes exaggerated gender binarism, excluding anything that is other than masculine and feminine (Benwall 16). Benwall explains the innocence of general sexism these ideas support by noting the use of irony. Specifically, readers and writers of men's magazines use irony to slip out of accountability, relying on the forced knowledge that "sexism in 'new lad' culture is ironically, nostalgically and harmlessly meant," and only aimed toward "men who should know better." (Benwall 17) The author says it is not certain what future ideologies will be supported by men's lifestyle magazines. Within the magazine market as a whole, it is difficult to pinpoint an overall decline or gain. However small, statistical evidence is leaning toward a decline in popularity of the 'new lad' (Benwall 22). Although this article uses only the introduction of a book analyzing the topic, the ideas Benwall summarizes accurately depict the grand scheme of masculinities in men's lifestyle magazines, taking notions from the previous articles and condensing the content into an understandable and readable introduction.

Studying a specific medium for the transmission of masculine beliefs helps narrow down the ultimate role that magazine advertising, in this case, plays in our society. All three articles give a different outlook on the topic. "Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity" provides an accurate

depiction of hegemonic masculinity while also completing a well-executed analysis of issues of eight magazines popular in Canada. "The Construction of Masculinity: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Men's Lifestyle Magazine Advertisements" offers the idea of the globalization of masculinity, explaining how mass media affects and homogenizes cultural beliefs and ideologies. Finally, the introduction to the book Masculinity and Men's Lifestyle Magazines condenses all of the previous content into the general idea of a 'new lad', summing up today's views on masculinity. Analyzing men's lifestyle magazines can chart the circulation of popular notions of masculinity. By now, the articles discussed in this paper are between ten and twenty years old. Further research would show the extent to which their conclusions still stand true, and what new forms of masculinity have emerged.

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The Long Shadow of History at Wounded Knee and the Pine Ridge Reservation

Douglas "Puck" S. Hall

WHEN A GROUP feels hopelessly oppressed, and their cries are confronted contemptuously by their oppressors, a civil dispute can spiral into crisis— burning buildings, blood in the streets, smashed windows, smoke rising in the air, screams against injustice, the clash of civilians and armed law enforcement, the normal civility of cities and towns collapsing into warzones.

In April 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. shared his opinions on the reasons that riots occur, and why they will continue to persist, when he told Stanford University about The Other America: "[R]iots do not develop out of thin air. Certain conditions continue to exist in our society which must be condemned as vigorously as we condemn riots. But in the final analysis, a riot is the language of the unheard." Peaceful protests can quickly descend into civil unrest when the voices of the discontent are muzzled, justice is denied, and the disenfranchised are left with no other recourse.

In February 1973, a peaceful demonstration planned by the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, turned into chaotic civil disorder when heavily armed federal agents surrounded a few hundred Native American protestors, and the protestors refused to leave. Leading up to the winter of 1973, AIM made concerted efforts to draw attention to the desperate circumstances faced by the indigenous population. The events that unfolded at Wounded Knee in 1973 were a result of the federal governments disregard for the lives and experiences of Native Americans. Tension and resentment accumulated when their attempts to address their circumstances were will willfully ignored and suppressed. Their calls for justice and sovereignty were unheard, and when the federal government attempted to silence the demonstrator at Wounded Knee, the chaos that followed finally captured the world's attention. Although AIM succeeded in capturing worldwide attention when they refused to leave Wounded Knee, the federal government made great effort to suppress their cries, many of their demands remain unfulfilled, and the conditions they were protesting either remain unchanged or have become worse. Dire and disempowering conditions persist today at Pine Ridge and other reservations across the nation, and violent repression of Native American protests continue.

In the 50 years since the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee, there has been no progress, no justice. Dr. King's warning has not been heeded. In this essay I explore the

events that triggered the 1973 standoff between Native American protestors and the federal government, what the protestors were trying to achieve, the immediate aftermath following the events at Wounded Knee, and the long shadow that continues to be cast over the Pine Ridge Reservation.

A dark shadow was already cast over the South Dakota town in 1973. This was not the first violent suppression of Native Americans at Wounded Knee: 83 years earlier, in 1890 Wounded Knee was the scene of one of the "bloodiest massacres inflicted on indigenous people in North America. . . [when US] soldiers killed between 150 and 300 Lakota" (Strickland). The US government has inflicted deep historical trauma on the citizens of Pine Ridge Reservation and Wounded Knee. In the fifty years since the unrest of 1973, the circumstances at Pine Ridge have not improved, and the cries of its residents remain unheard. 1973 was not the first time violence elevated Pine Ridge or Wounded Knee to historical importance, and I would be surprised if it is the last.

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution establishes our collective right to gather, to speak out against injustices, and address problems in our society within the framework of our governing institutions. The fact that civil unrest exists and persists indicate the system is not functioning as described for all members of our society. Not all voices are equally heard or considered, and the spectacle of civil disorder is timeless and all too familiar. Even though the First Amendment guarantees the right to a voice for the people, King points out that America has not honored its commitments to the entirety of the population. And, when society fails to listen to voices of the discontent, pressure and frustration build, and unrest and disorder are the results. King warns us later in his speech that these results will repeat themselves, in perpetuity, until the cause is addressed.

Riots are a symptom, not the disease itself.

On February 27, 1973, symptoms of the disease manifested in Wounded Knee when "a culmination of frustration felt by Native Americans" (Lindsley 115) erupted "in a violent and incomprehensible protest that [produced] a cry of agony from every American Indian" (Morris 171). Richard Morris, who was an assistant professor at the Department of Rhetoric and Communication at the University of California, Davis, wrote about the event at Wounded Knee. In his work Morris tells us that the United States government imposed on the reservations an inert tribal government system that disempowered its citizens while sponsoring corrupt tribal leaders that prioritized the interest of the US government. The established governing structure separated the residents of the Pine Ridge Reservation from any agency to improve their circumstances and eventually pushed the situation past the breaking point.

Upheaval had been brewing for a long time. As Dr. King pointed out, ". . .riots do not develop out of thin air." While it was some five hundred years of oppression through "massacres, forced removal from homelands, disease, forced removal of American Indian children to boarding schools, prohibition of spiritual practices, and other acculturation strategies" (Dennis 9) that ultimately led to the event at Wounded Knee, it was the political and economic conditions at Pine Ridge that triggered the protest.

Two key events in 1972 began the escalation of tensions at Pine Ridge: the murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder in February and Richard Wilson taking office as tribal chairman April. Philip Roos, who was a professor of sociology at the Denver campus of the University of Colorado, wrote about the political, spiritual, and economic conditions at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation before, after, and during the

Occupation at Wounded Knee. Roos notes that unsolved murders of Native Americans were common in the small towns that surround the reservation (90). The authorities were uninterested and did not prioritize investigating these cases.

Murders committed against the indigenous population were not important to the police. Sheryl Lindsley, who was an Associate Professor of Communication at California State University, wrote about the rhetorical strategies of the Native American protestors who occupied the village of Wounded Knee. When Lindsley details the lead up to the standoff in her article, she mentions that authorities apprehended two white men suspected of beating Yellow Thunder to death, but later they released the men (118). Local law enforcement was apathetic toward investigating crimes against indigenous peoples. When local authorities were unwilling to help, Yellow Thunder's family reached out to AIM for support (Roos 90). Yellow Thunder's family needed a megaphone.

Answering the call for help, AIM brought their megaphones and members to Pine Ridge. In solidarity with Yellow Thunder's family and all residents with missing or murdered family members, AIM staged several protests against the indifference of law enforcement and in support of justice for Yellow Thunder (Lindsley 118). Convictions in cases like these were highly unusual. The attention that AIMs protests brought to the case arguably led to the two white men being charged with Yellow Thunder's death, and AIM gained notoriety amongst the residents of Pine Ridge for their involvement (Roos 90). In the months between Yellow Thunder's murder and the conviction of his assailants, a tribal election ended in political upset when Richard Wilson replaced the incumbent as the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Chairman of Pine Ridge (Lindsley 118). The tribal elections and

government were imposed on the reservations. These resembled an installed state imposed by the colonizing power, not a representative and democratic government.

The terms "Tribal Chairman" and "election" have the ring of a democratic system— almost as if citizens of the reservation are an autonomous self-governing people. However, the tribal government system is a structure put in place by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is an agency of the federal government within the Department of the Interior. Braatz explains that the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934 mandated the tribal government system which "creat[ed] elected offices [within the tribe] with the authority to disperse reservation jobs and federal funds" (147). The structure forced on the tribe at Pine Ridge went against the traditional Lakota tribal governing practices and "deepened political schism between so-called 'progressives,' who were more willing to cooperate with the. . .BIA, and 'traditionalists,' who put up greater resistance to federal paternalism" (Braatz 147). Unsurprisingly, Roos informs us leaders of the more traditional Oglalas, who are the Lakota tribe at Pine Ridge, "disdain[ed] and condemn[ed] [the] tribal government" system. Despite their contempt for the structure imposed on them, the leaders of the traditional Oglala faction unofficially embraced candidates and had often swayed tribal elections. This election was different. The leaders of the traditional faction made no endorsement, and Richard Wilson, an acrimonious AIM adversary, became Chairman (93). This time the traditionalist faction of the Oglalas did not participate in the illegitimate governing structure.

The traditional Ogalas found no representation in the new tribal administration. In his article Roos described the economic and political divides at Pine Ridge: BIA representatives and employees had an

assimilationist agenda, and did not hold the same values as the traditionalists. Most of the jobs, income, and economic opportunities went to those who lived in the more urbanized areas of the reservation, adopted the values system of the colonizing society, and were more likely to support the aims and agenda of the federal government. Meanwhile, the citizens of Pine Ridge who followed the cultural traditions of their ancestors were confined to rural poverty (Roos 94). Willingness, or unwillingness, to assimilate into the colonizing society determined a segregated class disparity on the reservation. For a while, more traditional Native Americans were able to secure most of the political offices created by the BIA's tribal government system (Roos 94). With more traditional Native Americans holding some political power to represent their values and interests, this kept the political, economic, and cultural balance at Pine Ridge from becoming completely unbalanced.

With Wilson's election all semblance of balance was lost. Wilson, with the power to "disperse reservation jobs and federal funds among an otherwise impoverished population. . . blatantly rewarded" and catered to the most privileged residents who had assimilated into the colonial society (Braatz 147). He served the interests of the federal government instead of his tribe (Braatz 147), and used his own private militia to "ruthlessly. . . quash his. . . political opponents by any means necessary'" (Lindsley 118). Wilson's actions rapidly exacerbated and escalated "the political tensions he inherited" (Lindsley 118). Wilson used his newfound power to line his pockets.

Wilson carried out his atrocities with a financial motivation. According to Morris, two wealthy white men financed Wilson's campaign and Wilson later awarded the men with land and business contracts on the reservation that exceeded $15 million dollars (172). Morris goes on to say:

"[Wilson] was a pawn of the BIA and the federal government who hired people like him 'to mistreat the Indians.' He was, in effect, the embodiment of everyone who had prevented Native Americans from achieving self-determination" (172). Morris's point is, as an elected official, Wilson had a duty to be a public servant to the Oglala Sioux of Pine Ridge. Instead, he abused his office to enrich himself and his white cronies. He used violence and intimidation to repress his oppositional constituents, and directed his administration to fulfill the wishes of the federal government which did not have the tribe's best interest in mind. Wilson became a symbol of corruption and systemic oppression (172-173).

AIM began an "intensive organization drive" at Pine Ridge "reaching virtually everyone old enough to talk" (Roos 89). The traditionalist faction at Pine Ridge then created the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO) "to seek redress for 'some 150 separate written complaints of civil rights violations' involving [Wilson and] the reservation government" (Morris 171). "OSCRO members presented their grievances in the form of a signed impeachment petition to the Tribal Council. The petition charged Wilson with misconduct, misappropriation of tribal funds, nepotism, and initiating actions and policies contrary to the interests of the Oglala Sioux" (Morris 171). The disenfranchised citizens of Pine Ridge attempted to exercise their First Amendment right to organize and to correct the corruption and injustices they were facing. However, at the end of 1972, Wilson used his power as Tribal Chairman to retaliate, and he banned AIM from the reservation after attempts to remove him from office failed (Lindsley 118). The cries of the marginalized were silenced and remained "unheard."

AIM and OSCRO were not to be muzzled for long, though. AIM quickly resumed

organizing protests in South Dakota at the turn of the year after another Native American was murdered in a nearby town. OSCRO and AIM stepped up their resistance to Wilson by filing "additional complaints against [him]" (Lindsley 118). AIM's resurgence alarmed the BIA, and out of fear, the agency called the federal government for reinforcements (Lindsley 118). A crowd of OSCRO and AIM activists gathered as Wilson faced another impeachment hearing on February 23, 1973. OSCRO contends that Wilson and the judge met privately to strategize. Once again, Wilson was exonerated. Furious protestors departed the courtroom and held several days of meetings and demonstration after dubious justice had been served (Morris 171). Perhaps Dr. King would have called this "postponement of justice" in February 1973 another "winter of delay."

The conditions were conducive for a violent storm. AIM called for a press conference to take place during a demonstration, and on February 27, "several hundred Oglala Sioux, along with supporters from other tribes" descended on the town of Wounded Knee (Lindsley 118). According to Lindsley, AIM leaders had only planned for a peaceful demonstration and intended to use the event to elevate public awareness by speaking to the press about the issues faced by the residents of Pine Ridge. The federal cavalry arrived as the activists were getting ready for the press conference, and the government agents were heavily armed. The FBI, the BIA, and the US Marshals surrounded the town "supported by nineteen armored personnel carriers, 130,000 rounds of M-16 ammunition, 41,000 rounds of M-40 high-explosive (for M-79 grenade launchers), helicopters, and Phantom jets" (118). The deployment formidably armed federal troops was an extreme and excessive response to a press conference and political demonstration. Wounded Knee was unable to escape the long dark shadow of history when "Eighty-three years after the. . .[massacre], US officials had, once again, sent an army to crush a Native resistance movement" (Braatz 148). Commanded by their superiors to prevent the press from entering the town, the federal agents blocked off all roads and access points to Wounded Knee (Lindsley 118). Once again, the government attempted to forcibly silence the Native Americans from telling the world of their despair. Lindsley contends that the activists were surprised and alarmed by suddenly being encircled by armed forces, and in an act of defense they armed themselves by purchasing ammunition and firearms in the town. The protestors perceived themselves to be under siege as they "found themselves in a situation in which they perceived limited choices, constrained by government forces" (Lindsley 118-119). On the other side of the roadblocks AIM's actions were cast as an "aggressive and intentional" "'takeover' of Wounded Knee" (Lindsley 118-119). The Oglala Sioux's attempts to improve their circumstances and seek justice were blocked repeatedly. As Dennis Banks would put it months later, they were "abuse[ed] for so long that the only thing they [could] turn to [was] confrontation. . ." (Lindgren 02:02). Heavily armed federal agents surrounded the protestors, who then armed themselves. The situation escalated past the breaking point and a violent 71-day standoff ensued.

Despite the optics of armed, militant, combative protestors taking over a small town, this was not an attempted insurrection (Morris 179-180). Just as Dr. King acknowledged the "impracticality" of African Americans securing freedom from oppression through "violent revolution," Morris noted that "the protestors [at Wounded Knee] could not hope and did not pretend to be able to secure their demands through violence." A few weeks after the standoff at

Wounded Knee began, AIM leader Russel Means clarified that "we've known that the United States Government can come in and squash us, militarily. We never thought we could beat them, overthrow them" (Morris 179). AIM used militant and confrontational tactics, refusing to leave Wounded Knee in order to ensure that Native Americans would finally get the attention their situation warranted (Morris 180). A quiet and orderly peaceful protest would not have given the activists the world's attention and a chance to be heard.

Finally, with the world's attention, the Oglala Sioux agitated for the return of all of South Dakota west of the Missouri River that the US government had promised to them in the Sioux Treaty of 1868, as well as the investigation of all treaty violations. Furthermore, they wanted to see the reversal of poverty and destitution at Pine Ridge through the improvement of the economic conditions and increased job opportunities. Finally, the protestors demanded the removal of the corrupt tribal president Richard Wilson (Roos 92).

However, the removal of the corrupt leader of Pine Ridge would not be enough. Morris notes that "Wilson was not 'the problem,' but a result, a symptom of a larger set of problems, [and] simply replacing a 'bad Indian' would not suffice. A corrupt structure constructed by the dominant society had created Richard Wilson, and it would continue to create more like him" (173) unless the root of the problem was also addressed.

To address the root of their suffering, Morris said: "[t]he protestors immediately assured a sustained focus on structural issues by issuing a set of demands": they wanted Congress to hold hearings on treaties made with American Indian Nations, investigations of the BIA and the Department of the Interior, and a congressional investigation of activity on all Sioux Reservations in South Dakota (173). Shortly after declaring their demands, the Oglala chiefs invoked the Treaty of 1868 and announced themselves a sovereign nation (Morris 172). They drafted a constitution which had been endorsed by 1,400 tribe members (Lindsley 120). The Oglala dared to dream of independence and autonomy. "Their goal was to gain 'the freedom to determine their own lives and destinies as a sovereign people' by establishing 'their own government, where they [could] run their affairs according to their own traditions'" (Morris 172). Roos contends that "AIM and traditional Lakotas consider[ed] their position legal, not radical or revolutionary" (91). They attempted to legitimize their movement by invoking the Treaty of 1868, using that document to guide their conduct (Roos 91), while modeling their declaration of freedom and constitution after those of the Unites States (Lindsley 121). However, in the eyes of the US government, the protestor's actions were those of rebel insurgents (Roos 91), and as Lindsley contends, "The responses of the US government officials clearly did not reflect that they perceived the Native Americans [to be] due the same rights as those who were descendants of the conquerors" (121). The Oglala wanted their land back, they wanted the agency to govern themselves, and they wanted their citizens to attain the ability to live their lives without the meddling imposition of a hostile foreign occupying power.

The protestors held their ground for 71 days, but after two casualties they surrendered, and "their demands for [a] federal investigation of reservation injustices were quickly dismissed" (Braatz 148). The traditional Oglalas' strenuous efforts to break the grips of their occupiers, seek freedom, self-sovereignty, and the territories promised to them in the Sioux Treaty of 1868 ultimately failed, and the tribe was punished. After the standoff at Wounded Knee, many

of the problems at Pine Ridge became worse. Wilson was not defeated, retained power for three more years, and used his private militia to "Terrorize Pine Ridge" (Braatz 148). Braatz goes on to report that "FBI agents declined to investigate the deaths of Wilson['s] opponents" (148). AIM's hands were tied by a tangled web of legal battles with state and federal governments which drew their energy and resources away from the reservation (Roos 89). As AIM's presence was disappearing, BIA's presence surged. In 1974 and 1975, the BIA inserted bureaucrats and established offices in many villages in Pine Ridge (Roos 95). The BIA focused its resources on "law and order programs" and cut many social programs; more than half of the Sioux who had been employed by the programs lost their jobs (Roos 95). Roos notes that by 1975 "[t]he 'normalcy' of 'unemployment, apathy, violence, drunkenness, hostility, dependency, illness and factionalism' had returned" (89) to Pine Ridge Reservation. The BIA's and the federal government's actions appear to have been a reprisal. Sadly, this is not just a history from decades ago; similar events have played out recently, and conditions at Pine Ridge continue to be abysmal.

Philip Deloria, who is a professor of history at Harvard University, made a comparison of "the mobilization of the American military against Indian activists" (6) during the 1973 protests at Wounded Knee to the government's response to the Dakota Access Pipeline protest of 2016. Deloria charged that "environmental racism" was committed against the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers "willing[ly] endanger[ed] an Indian community in order to distance a White community from danger" (6-7) when they "rerouted [an oil pipeline] away from the city of Bismarck, North Dakota" (7) and instead planned to pass it under the Missouri River a half mile away from Standing Rock. According to Deloria, no one had made a genuine effort to consult the residents of Standing Rock who were concerned that a leak would poison their land and ruin their water (6-7). Over the course of a few months, a small prayer camp in protest to the pipeline swelled to ten thousand people when "Lakota and Dakota peoples were joined by Indigenous peoples from across North America and around the world" (Deloria 7). Once again "the protests were met with an astonishing display of militarized police power. Camouflage, gas mask, and body armor – wearing, AK-47-toting private guards, North Dakota law enforcement, and National Guardsmen faced down protesters" (Deloria 7). We would be naive to consider the scenes from Wounded Knee to be a relic of the 1970s.

The terrible conditions at Pine Ridge did not end in the 1970s, either; the suffering continues to this day. Dr. Mary Kate Dennis, who has a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Michigan, a Masters of Social Work from Washington University and is an interdisciplinary researcher who focuses on Indigenous elders living in the US and Canada, interviewed 25 Lakota elders from Pine Ridge aged 55–98 years and "explored the traumatic events across the elders' life span" (9). Dennis found that her interviewees were not only carrying the emotional wounds from their personal experiences living at Pine Ridge but also that "the experiences of a massacre more than 100 years ago are fresh in the memory of the elders. . .although the boundaries of the event are outside of their lived experiences" (14). Citing a study by Duran et al., Dennis argues that 500 years of oppression has "result in elevated rates of suicide, substance abuse, depression, interpersonal trauma, and health problems" (9). One does not need to directly experience an event to suffer from its effects. Finally, citing the conclusions from Whitbeck et al., Dennis

reiterates that "'holocaust is not over for many American Indian people. It continues to affect their perceptions on a daily basis and impinges on their psychological and physical health'" (9-10). The horrors of their ancestors continue to haunt them today.

In addition to the emotional scars the Oglala at Pine Ridge are confronted with challenging economic conditions. As of 2012 there were approximately 40,000 Oglala Sioux living on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Dennis 11). Oglala Lakota County is completely within the reservation, and in 2012 the US Census found that the county ". . .was the third poorest county in the United States, with unemployment on the reservation reaching nearly 89.5%, 53.2% living below the federal poverty line, and 60% of children under the age of 18 living below the poverty line" (Dennis 11). With few opportunities to find work and a lack of assets to fall back on, residents of Pine Ridge face an uphill battle as they navigate the obstacles that they are forced to endure. Katherine Bauer, who has a doctorate of epidemiology from the University of Minnesota, conducted a study of 432 families on the reservation (1346). Bauer found that "food insecurity is prevalent among families living on the Pine Ridge Reservation," with forty percent of the families struggling to find adequate sustenance (1346). With no savings, no work, and poor access to food those on Pine Ridge find themselves in desperate circumstances.

These desperate circumstances are taking a toll on the physical and mental health of those who must endure them. Timoth Braatz, who is a professor of history and nonviolence at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California, found that on Pine Ridge "hopelessness is pervasive (149). At Pine Ridge infants die at three times the rate as compared to what is considered normal across the rest of the country, and the average life expectancy for adults is only 50 years of age (Braatz 149). In his 2016 feature article on Al Jazeera, Patrick Strickland, who is the news editor at the Dallas Observer and a former senior reporter at Al Jazeera English, details the poverty, destitution, and violence that can be found presently at the reservation. Citing data from Re-Member, a nonprofit whose mission is to improve the living conditions at Pine Ridge, Strickland uncovers further implications on the public health at the reservation when he reports that more than eighty percent of residents suffer from alcoholism. Many are turning to the bottle as their only refuge from their circumstances. Heartbreakingly, Braatzs reports that the suicide rate is "extremely high" (149). The avenues for escape are grim. Strickland interviews one resident who considers Pine Ridge to be POW camp for the US governments war against the Native Americans. However, considering how residents of the US prison system often receive food and healthcare, it seems our government treats Native Americans worse than its' prisoners, and our society has either forgotten about them or just does not care. There has been no progress at Pine Ridge since the protests at Wounded Knee in 1973.

Dr. King warned us in 1967 that "as long as America postpones justice, we stand in the position of having these recurrences of violence…over and over again. Social justice and progress are the absolute guarantors of riot prevention" (King). Leader and co-founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Dennis Banks, took a more militant tone when he spoke out during the Custor Courthouse Riot of 1973: "It is sad when mistreatment, and abuse, and neglect, and murder against Indian people become common. This is where it started and this is where it's going to end. When you abuse people for so long that the only thing they can turn to is confrontational politics,

they are going to do that. It is a good day to die" (Lindgren 02:02). Dr. King tells us "riot[s] [are] the language of the unheard" (King) and Banks insists that militant protest is the only tool left when the cries of the disenfranchised go unanswered.

Out of frustration for what the Oglala were facing at Pine Ridge in 1973, protestors risked their lives and refused to stand down when confronted with fiercely armed government forces. They risked their lives so the world could know of their circumstances, know of their pain. Believing their cause worthy of dying over, they hoped their struggle would force change, improving their lives and the lives of their descendants. Despite the protestors' bravery a desperate situation persists at Pine Ridge. This is not just a story of historical conditions; this is a story of today! The events leading up to the Dakota Access Pipeline protest of 2016 and the militarized response to the protestors serve as one contemporary example. Braatz provides another when he recounts

an example that is reminiscent of 1973: "In 2000, a grassroots Lakota movement occupied the tribal headquarters [of Pine Ridge] in protest of tribal council corruption and neocolonialism" (149). The shadows from 1973 are cast on the present day. Not much has changed for the Native Americans since before the 1970s.

In the course of my research, I have long since concluded that future violence may come from our society's failure to respond to the agony and suffering inflicted on Native Americans. In a parallel line of thinking, Braatz apparently has come to a similar conclusion when he postulates that "with structural violence on Pine Ridge and other Sioux reservations intact, and with cultural violence of US society frequently reinforced, it may just be matter of time before the next outbreak of armed combat on the northern Plains" (149). Will we wake up and confront this problem? Failure to intervene risks another bloody, regretful, and repugnant chapter in US history.

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High Socioeconomic Status of Young Adults in Relation to Substance Usage

Gywnyth Hansen

Substance usage and abuse is a topic that is commonly researched, theorized, and criticized when it comes to the poor and while many people who are marginalized deal with high rates of substance abuse, there's not much talk about the substance abuse that happens in households of higher socioeconomic statuses. Even though substance use and abuse, such as binge drinking, marijuana use, cocaine, and other substances is seen as taboo in higher classes, it happens quite often in new adults (aged 18 to 25) of high socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status is the position one or a household is in society based on multiple factors. These factors are including but not limited to income, wealth, education level, race, and profession. Most of the time, those in a higher socioeconomic status have higher education levels along with a higher income. Typically, the more money one makes, the more there is to use on common substances such as alcohol and drugs such as cocaine. These habits found in households of high statuses can heavily affect the young adults raised in those environments, especially as they are navigating through adult life and college. This idea that stable financial income can lead to correlations with certain substance abuse habits has intrigued many researchers. Multiple studies have found that young adults of higher socioeconomic statuses are more likely to abuse and rely on alcohol and in some cases marijuana.

Depending on what socioeconomic status an adolescent was raised in, it can heavily impact what substances one could start abusing. In the article 'Socioeconomic Status and Substance Use Among Young Adults: A Comparison Across Constructs and Drugs' the authors Megan Patrick, Patrick Wightman, Robert Schoeni, and John Schulenburg from the University of Michigan, look at how high and low socioeconomic statuses differ in what substances are abused. They did this by looking at indicators of a family's socioeconomic status, like wealth, income, profession, and education level. Then they compared it to what substances were being used and how they were being used during young adulthood. The data they looked at was collected from young adults aged 18 to 23 from the National Study of Income Dynamics 2005-2007. This study looked at data from adolescents and their parent's socioeconomic status and the adolescent's habits of substance use such as alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. This allowed them to look into socioeconomic status' habits between the three substances being compared and how

these habits can relate to each other, societal norms, and pressures.

The results of this experiment that related most to many others were alcohol's relationship with adolescence in higher socioeconomic statuses. In the article, Patrick, et al. wrote that "Young adults in the highest income, highest wealth, and highest parental education had at least twice the odds as those in the lowest SES categories of being current drinkers" (Patrick et al. 777). On top of that, they found that those in higher socioeconomic statuses were more likely to binge drink and become reliant on alcohol or marijuana to relieve daily stresses. This is a much different outcome than what the young adults in lower socioeconomic statuses had. Those in lower status families were more likely to smoke cigarettes rather than binge drink or use marijuana. Based on income alone, the 28% of the young adults in the top quartile of income suffered from heavy binge drinking, whereas in the lowest quartile only 8.3% suffered from drinking episodes. (Patrick et al. 776) Similar patterns follow when looking at young adults with large amounts of wealth or ones that have college educated parents. The binge drinking rate is always higher among the higher status young adults.

It is quite clear that the socioeconomic status of a household or parents can heavily impact whether a young adult, typically the child of well-off parents, gets into alcohol use and abuse. In the article "Are Adolescents with High Socioeconomic Status More Likely to Engage in Alcohol and Illicit Drug Use in Early Adulthood?" Jennifer L. Humensky dives into whether one's socioeconomic class factors into addiction and abuse rates. While researching for this journal, she noticed that most articles and journals written about adolescents and substance abuse all had one thing in common, having a low socioeconomic status. This is what sparked the idea to review data from

the 1994-1995 data collection from the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health and write the article to shed light that substance abuse can affect all adolescents, not just the ones in a lower socioeconomic class. In this journal, Humensky reveals that, against societal expectations, but aligning with Patrick et al. 's findings, teenagers and adolescents coming from households with higher socioeconomic statuses typically deal with higher levels of alcohol and marijuana usage.

In order to come to the conclusion that alcohol and marijuana rates increase with socioeconomic status, Humensky used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health. This data set was conducted on school aged American kids from grades 7-12 in 1994-1995. This study clustered the students based on race, school size, school type (public or private), ethnicity, income, and region. The parents of these children were also interviewed, and their data was based on their race, income, region, and education level. She also had a follow up interview with some of the respondents in 2001. The variables of substances in this study was alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and an 'other' category.

It was found that, especially as inflation and higher prices plague America, the prices for substances for commonly accessible drugs and alcohol have heavily increased. So for adolescents, those who have more money are typically more likely to fall into substance abuse and dependence because they have the most accessibility to said substances. Humensky describes the relationship between money and alcohol-specific abuse by saying, "adolescents with more spending money were more likely to drink frequently, binge drink and to drink in public" (Humensky 2). She also found that as the parent's education level gets higher, the rate of binge drinking and marijuana use

correlates with it. When a parent has a college-level education the likelihood to binge drink is 1.458 times higher than someone with high school educated parents (Humensky 4). Likewise, marijuana use follows this same pattern. Adolescents with parents that are college educated are 1.265 times more likely to use marijuana than their counterparts (Humensky 4). Thus, drawing to the conclusion that adolescents with higher socioeconomic statuses are more likely to fall into substance dependence.

This idea of having more money to spend equating to higher likelihood of substance abuse heavily applies to college and university students of higher socioeconomic statuses. In Chris Martin's article called 'High Socioeconomic Status Predicts Substance Use and Alcohol Consumption in U.S. Undergraduates', he finds a similar outcome to Humensky's experiment within America's universities and colleges. In order to determine whether socioeconomic status dictated college student's addiction or abuse rates, Martin used a sample from Healthy Mind's 2016 study of 18,611 undergraduate students from across the nation. Each student was asked a few questions in the survey; their race, ethnicity, residency type (where they were living while attending school), relationship status, if they've done certain drugs over the past 30 days, frequency of alcohol usage, and how they cope with stress. Then, they had questions asked about their parent's socioeconomic statuses; two questions about the parent's degree of education and one question about how the participant would describe their household's finances growing up.

Once Martin collected and analyzed the data, he found that there was a distinct correlation between socioeconomic status and substance abuse. Martin found that race was one of the biggest factors that impacted substance usage. Because besides income, race can heavily dictate one's socioeconomic status. He states that, "Although SES was a predictor of consumption, as hypothesized, race was a stronger predictor. Alcohol and drug usage were highest among Whites and lowest among Asians" (Martin 5). Race comes into play when looking at how likely an adolescent is to abuse and use substances. White adolescents typically have the highest rates because for a lot of students and adolescents of color, drug and alcohol abuse is too much of a risk, as they are more likely to be punished than their white counterparts (Martin 6).

White men and women are also the main demographic of fraternity and sorority housing on college campuses, and housing also has a huge impact on substance use. Martin found that, as expected, college students who live with their parents are less likely to abuse substances, while those living in fraternity or sorority housing were the most likely. He explained this correlation as, "Living with parents is a manifestation of low SES, representing fiscal constraints and attendance at a local school, but living in a fraternity or sorority house is a value-driven choice. The high effect sizes suggest that physical proximity and socially normative consumption robustly predict the individual consumption" (Martin 7). So in environments such as fraternities, it is much more normalized, almost expected even, that students drink and party more often. And because of the price tags and actions necessary to get into a sorority or fraternity, they typically are made up of students who come from wealthier backgrounds and are typically white.

In conclusion, socioeconomic status affects substance abuse on all levels, but the young adults in higher statuses are much more likely to fall into marijuana use and alcohol abuse. In all articles reviewed, they all came to that same conclusion. Alcohol and marijuana are some of the easiest substances to come across, with both being used as common stress reliefs. This can greatly appeal to young adults who have

some extra money to spend and are just getting into the world, dealing with school and daily stresses. Alcohol, especially, can cause a lot of harm when abused. It is commonly found in adolescent parties and gatherings but it is a strong depressant that can heavily take over one's life. And while it is important to recognize and speak up on the addiction problems in low socioeconomic statuses, they are constantly being investigated, persecuted and berated by those of higher socioeconomic statuses even though they are falling to addiction as well. However, they just don't recognize it because these substances are such normal parts of society that they aren't realizing the heavy reliance that so many young adults have on a substance. This causes the devastating effects of the rampant alcoholism running through these young adults to not be taken seriously and many will suffer the consequences that come with such a strong addiction.

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Higher Standards for Bicyclist Safety in an Evolving Cycling Culture

Alexis Jones

CYCLING IS GROWING in popularity in America, not only as a sport and leisure activity, but as an ordinary means of transportation. This is excellent news for the environment—and for our wallets—but cycling has been a fringe activity for decades in this country and unfortunately, this growing popularity is not well supported by our car-centric infrastructure. As a result, cycling can be incredibly dangerous in some areas, made so either by poor infrastructure or hostile drivers (Walsh). Advocates have been pushing to improve safety and infrastructure for cyclists for years, and cities are finally starting to respond, primarily with painted bike lanes and educational PSAs ("Bicycle Safety"). After years of inaction these are encouraging first steps, insomuch as they promote awareness, but they are not enough and cyclist deaths are still rising. Although minor improvements to cyclist safety can be made by adding painted bicycle lanes and encouraging cyclists to be alert and wear helmets, widescale infrastructure changes are necessary to reduce cyclist fatalities in any meaningful way.

For years, the only safety measure taken to protect cyclists was "wear bright clothes and a helmet!" In many areas this is still the case; even in bike-friendly areas some people will argue that there would not be so many cyclist fatalities if more cyclists wore helmets. This kind of discourse is not productive or effective in preventing cyclist injury for two reasons. First, this kind of dialogue pins the blame on the injured cyclist who was not wearing a helmet for being irresponsible while diverting attention from the distracted driver who was on his phone and hit them with a 3000lb vehicle. Canadian Journalist Cailynn Klingbeil researched this exact topic and pointed out that, "Your head is just one body part that can be injured, and helmets only protect you after you have been in a crash; they do not protect you from having a crash in the first place" (Bobin and Klingbeil 15:35). She is making two points, the first being that helmets help prevent head trauma, but they do not prevent road rash, broken bones, internal bleeding, or paralysis due to spinal injuries. They do the job they are designed for, but that job is limited. Her second point is that helmets are useful for mitigating damage but do nothing to prevent crashes. Mitigation is a distraction when we need to start talking about prevention. My second concern is that helmets have been shown to increase risky behavior. Helmets give both cyclists and drivers a false sense of security, resulting in more frequent risk-taking behavior. Drivers in particular, will often give cyclists without protective gear a wider berth and pass closer to cyclists wearing helmets (Bobin and Klingbeil 24:38).

There are several things that cyclists

can do to protect themselves that are more effective for injury prevention than wearing a helmet. Adding lights, reflectors, and mirrors to a bike are safety measures that are often overshadowed. Planning routes along roads with slower speeds and less traffic is even more effective. Riding at slower speeds and sitting in an upright position can also improve a cyclist's awareness and ability to react in a crisis (Bobin and Klingbeil 16:30). Although most American bikes are not designed to be ridden this way, many European bikes are, and they are slowly becoming more accessible in North America due to increasing demand (Riediger). Unfortunately, the most effective method of injury prevention is not something that individual cyclists can do for themselves. What would make the biggest difference is building protective infrastructure.

Bicycle lanes are being built in cities across the country, and surveys indicate that people feel safer riding on streets with bike lanes, but they do have some major flaws that need to be addressed (McNeil et al.). Bicycle lanes can be excellent safety measures when built correctly, but painted bicycle lanes, the most common kind in North America, can be more dangerous than having no cycling infrastructure at all. I have cycled on and off over the years in different areas and environments. What I have found is that many of the safety issues that are obvious to me when I am on a bike become invisible when I am in a car. Painted bicycle lanes look exactly like the rest of the road and quickly become another part of the landscape for drivers. They are narrow and often interrupted by driveways and side streets in residential areas. Sometimes they are broken up by big intersections or come to a dead end without warning. In urban areas, bike lanes often double as turn lanes or get used as overflow parking. This is illegal but rarely enforced. Even when the lane itself is not being used as overflow,

parking is often positioned between a bicycle lane and the sidewalk, meaning that a car must drive through the bicycle lane to park and create further obstructions when opening driver side doors. In some cities a bike lane might be bisected down the middle: half storm drain, half pavement, and totally unusable. This kind of construction has been disdainfully dubbed "the painted bicycle gutter" ("Half Green").

Bicycle lanes are unsafe to use. They are constantly being obstructed and misused by careless drivers. They offer a false sense of security to drivers and cyclists alike, but a line of paint is not going to stop a car. For bicycle lanes to be truly effective, they need to include physical barriers separating cyclists from motor vehicles. Physical barriers can include a raised curb, concrete planter boxes, parking, or even simple flex poles ("What Does Good"). A driver can go over a curb or flex pole of course, but the purpose of the barrier is not to be totally impassible. The purpose is to clearly demonstrate that bike lanes are not a part of the road that is accessible to cars. Unfortunately, even without taking barriers into consideration, many areas are still severely underserviced, and proposals to build cycling infrastructure can be a hard sell, even without the additional complication of physical barriers.

When I say that big infrastructure changes are a hard sell, I am not just talking about government opposition; ordinary people will argue against bike lanes as well. They usually insist that it is too expensive or that we should not waste taxpayer money on cyclists. These people do make a valid point: cycling infrastructure is expensive and often underused. People who do not ride a bike regularly do not want to pay taxes on something that they will not use, but these complaints seem to stem from the erroneous assumption that cycling infrastructure only benefits cyclists. There are in fact, several measurable ways that

cycling infrastructure will benefit everyone, not just cyclists. One benefit is that alternative forms of transportation are better for the environment. Motor vehicles are one of the primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation in general produces around a quarter of the world's emissions (Xia et al.).

Emissions contribute not only to climate change, but to air pollution, which is harmful to human health. The impact is most noticeable in large cities and around motor ways, where emissions are most concentrated (Xia et al.). One study found that in 2009, "Approximately 1.3 million premature deaths worldwide [were] attributed to outdoor air pollution," and a Dutch study found that, "Traffic intensity on the nearest road would increase mortality of natural causes, cardiovascular, respiratory, and lung cancer by 5%, 4%, 22%, and 3%, respectively." Further studies indicated that people living near motorways were significantly more likely to suffer these types of illnesses than those who moved away from major roads (Xia et al.). These studies mean that greenhouse gas emissions are not only harmful to human health, but deadly. Emissions are not the only health issue caused by motor vehicles. Fast-moving cars on major roads also create a significant amount of noise pollution. While noise pollution may seem like a minor concern, the EPA states that, "There are direct links between noise and health. Problems related to noise include stress related illnesses, high blood pressure, speech interference, hearing loss, sleep disruption, and lost productivity" ("Clean Air Act"). Collectively, these studies mean that, not only is our primary method of transportation harming the planet, but that it is a tragically preventable cause of death and illness. Ting Xia and his co-authors included active transportation among their recommendations for reducing motor vehicle usage. Active transit refers to walking or cycling and comes with the additional benefit of regular exercise. It has been proven in studies across four countries to reduce mortality and obesity rates, potentially saving hundreds of lives every year (Xia et al.). The health benefits specific to active transit would not apply to people who continue to drive, but fewer cars on the road will still reduce air pollution, and we all breathe the same air.

None of these benefits, however, can change that fact that building new infrastructure is expensive. Those who are concerned with economic impacts may be surprised to hear that good cycling infrastructure benefits the economy and more than pays for itself. This happens in a few ways. The main economic benefits are natural consequences of improvements to human health and the environment. First, reducing air and noise pollution also reduces preventable illness and death. Those who choose to cycle will also improve their own health and reduce obesity rates. Together, these improvements will reduce the strain on our medical system. A study of metropolitan areas in the mid-west estimates that, "The combined benefits of improved air quality and physical fitness would exceed $8 billion/year." (Xia et al.). The health benefits alone are massive, but there is another possible benefit. Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions could reduce spending on air pollution control and climate change mitigation strategies (Xia et al.). This outcome is more likely to occur if cycling infrastructure improves to a point where large portions of the population are choosing to ride bikes rather than drive, but even if we never get to that point, the health benefits would more than make up for the initial costs involved in building the infrastructure ("Costs for Pedestrian"). The major economic benefits are all long term but there may be a few short-term benefits as well, such as increasing productivity in the workforce and

reducing traffic congestion (Kingham). Initial costs can also be reduced by building cycling infrastructure in tandem with new roads, road repairs, or other preexisting infrastructure projects.

The question of personal responsibility versus government responsibility when it comes to cyclist safety is part of an evolving conversation in America. We are experiencing something of a cultural shift, made evident by the fact that we are having these conversations at all. Ultimately, I think that this is a good thing and that a change in mindset is long overdue. For years cyclists in America have been considered a plague upon the roads, an inconvenience, or an enemy, to be discouraged and harassed (Walsh). Cyclists were once envisioned as male athletes riding expensive sport bikes at high speeds and weaving dangerously through traffic. That perception is starting to change, and the definition of a cyclist is broadening to include commuters, tourists, and students. I think this shift needs to continue. I am not a cyclist now but I have been before, and I will be again. This is not because of any desire to make life difficult for drivers or because I am particularly enthusiastic about cycling, but because it is my fastest and most reliable method of transportation. I am a student. I have classes and clubs to attend and places that I need to be. I cannot afford a car, and quite frankly I do not want one, but I do need to be able to get around. For me, this often means relying on friends and family for rides or taking unreliable and painfully inefficient public transportation. I will not be riding the bus for an hour to go five miles. If I want to have any real independence, my options are walking or biking. I have not talked about

accessibility much but it is an important element of this conversation. Easy, popular solutions like 'wear a helmet' and painted bicycle gutters do not make cycling accessible. Some people may be afraid to ride in those conditions. For others, the demands of navigating dangerous and inconsistent bike infrastructure may not be feasible at all. Most people never notice. They never have to think twice about driving, but I am far from the only person who is faced with these issues. There are many people who cannot or do not drive, for legal, medical, financial, or personal reasons, and all of them still need to get around. My hope is that this culture shift comes with the recognition that cycling is a legitimate and necessary means of transportation that should be available to all people.

There are many ways that bike infrastructure and cyclist safety can be improved in America. Unfortunately, cheap and popular solutions just are not enough to meet the growing demand for cycling as an alternative form of transportation. Cyclists desperately need protected bicycle lanes. We need physical barriers and consistent infrastructure. We need to promote awareness, accessibility, and safety conscious behavior from all those who use the road, and we need cycling culture to continue to evolve. I understand that many people may be uninterested in bicycle lanes, and either unwilling or unable to commute by bicycle, but advocating for improvements to cycling infrastructure is one way that we can contribute to the health and well-being of all people in American society. If people do not care about cycling that is fine, but I would argue that everyone should care about preserving human life.

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Sleepless Lights: What Evolution Teaches About Repairing Human Sleep

Benjamin Marcus

Sleep is a human universal. Every person on the planet requires sleep to operate properly, both mentally and physically. Over millions of years, evolution has fine-tuned human sleep so as to maximize our fitness, making it so that we could drift off to sleep in the darkness of night and rise with the sun refreshed in body and mind, ready to take on the challenges that our evolutionary environment presented. However, that environment of our ancestors is no more. Modern humanity has so completely transformed the world around us that it is nearly unrecognizable, while the once well-tuned mechanism that is our sleep has remained adjusted to the way we once lived.

The biological clocks that govern our sleep in order to provide us with the rest we need to function are themselves no longer functional, and we have ourselves to blame for it. Now, over 30% of America's population gets less than six hours of sleep every night (Rosenberg 12), and over 70 million Americans suffer from disorders related to sleep (Fahmy and Alic). This lack of sleep takes its toll — both on individuals and society as a whole. Lack of adequate sleep leads to underperformance at work, compromised immune health, and dangerous chronic disorders such as diabetes and obesity (Rosenberg 12-13). Of course, we have found ways to deal with these issues individually, but they are all tied to our chronic lack of sleep, and that lack of sleep comes from the environment we have made for ourselves. In order to address all of these issues, we must fix our sleep. And to achieve this, we must look to the lessons of our evolutionary past. We must make changes to our current environment so that it can fit properly with our programmed sleep functions.

Within our brains, there is a region called the suprachiasmatic cortex, a biological clock that tells our bodies what time of day it is. It controls the hormones that regulate human sleep, using the light the eyes detect as a guide. In our evolutionary past, we would not have needed to think about when we should be getting to bed; we would not have needed to decide on a particular point and declare it "bedtime." Our bodies handled that for us, recognizing when it was day from the light of the sun and easing us toward sleep as the sun set. It was not as simple as detecting when there and was not light, as the light of the moon or of our campfires was common once night had come. Instead, the suprachiasmatic cortex works with the eyes to identify the intensity and wavelength of light. Nothing was able to glow brighter than the sun, and daylight is closer to the blue end of our visual spectrum (Heying and Weinstein 97). With the advent of electric lighting, this is no longer a good metric. Candles, gaslights, and the

other forms of illumination we invented before the lightbulb were all far more advanced than the campfires of our ancestors, but they were still within the same spectrum and so did not cause any issues. As evolutionary biologists Heather Heying and Bret Weinstein explain it,

Humans have such a long history with fire that our pineal glands are well equipped to encounter red, fire-spectrum light well past sundown, without negative consequences for sleep. Being able to turn on blue, day-spectrum light at any moment, however, is a brand new phenomenon, one for which we are less well adapted. (99)

Of the alterations to our environment, the prevalence of blue light is the most serious. We have given ourselves the power to trick our bodies into thinking it is daytime at any moment we please and we are suffering for it.

Unfortunately, electric lighting has become a crucial part of society's functionality. We cannot simply stop using electric lights because of the issues they cause with sleep. Otherwise, massive worldwide change would be necessary to compensate. Jobs, education, and more are adapted to a world in which we can have as much light as we want at any point necessary. Businesses can be open well into the night thanks to electric lighting, bright street lights and car headlights allow for travel no matter the hour, and life-saving services such as hospitals require night shifts in staff to operate properly. All of this societal infrastructure is a threat to our sleep, but the scale of the changes that would be necessary to completely reinvent our relationship to electric light would likely cause too many issues to be feasible. Thankfully, some change for the better can be achieved through the principles of light already discussed above. Light that is on the same spectrum as fire does not impact sleep in the same way as blue light (Heying and Weinstein 99).

To begin, not all white light bulbs are on the same part of the color spectrum. Low-energy fluorescent and LED light bulbs have higher amounts of blue light than white incandescent light bulbs (Rosenberg 24). On an infrastructural level, then, we should use incandescent light bulbs or others designed to be low in blue light wherever possible. This way, street lights, headlights, and other necessary illumination can be made less harmful to the sleep of those who use them. On an individual level, we should promote knowledge of how blue light affects sleep so that people can know to control what type of lights they have on in their homes after dark. Already, many devices with screens have settings that filter out blue light, and there are specialized glasses designed to be worn while looking at screens. The more people know about the threats blue light poses to their sleep, the more precautions they can take, and the more incentive various companies will have to produce products to make that easier.

Beyond the corrections to deal with blue light, there are several other issues that go hand in hand with it that must also be addressed before sleep can be fully restored to its former functionality. Thanks to electric lighting, the rhythms of society are divorced from the rhythms of sleep, leading to conflicts that will often result in further sleep issues (Nunn, et al.). Work and socialization are no longer firmly tied to day and night. Work shifts may require someone to wake up at midnight, a party may last from sundown to near sunrise, and socialization through the internet makes it possible to be constantly in contact with others. Even if the lights that illuminate these activities are free of blue light and cause no sleep issues in that way, the human body's internal clock can still be thrown off by inconsistent patterns of wakefulness (Nunn, et al.).

Rising at the same time each morning

thanks to an alarm, for example, but going to bed at arbitrary times depending on what socialization is available at that time or what TV programs are available results in sleep abnormalities and their consequences. It may not be possible to change society in such a way that sleeping and waking are consistent with the evolutionary environment, but this can be improved at least in part on the level of individuals. The brain is adaptive enough to handle a non-standard sleep pattern if the pattern is made consistent and allows for enough time to sleep. Individuals struggling with sleep issues who cannot afford to change their schedule to match the sun should try to make their schedule consistent enough for their bodies to recognize it and adapt. Although a consistent sleep cycle would likely be best if it was tuned to day and night, any consistency would be better than none at all (Nunn, et al.).

Some may argue that these changes are unnecessarily intensive when it is much simpler to let medical professionals prescribe various medicines to help people get to sleep better. This is not an unfounded position. After all, prescriptions can be more personalized than large-scale changes in the design of electronic lighting, and there is already a great deal of research and production when it comes to sleep medication. Why create something from almost scratch when there is already an industry that can be expanded to deal with these issues better? The core reason to prefer environmental changes to this approach is the same reason to consider environmental changes in the first place. As Weinstine and Heying emphasize throughout The Hunter Gatherer's Guide to the Twenty-First Century, the source of many modern issues is the novelty of our modern situation when compared to what we were evolved for (Heying and Weinsteine).

New drugs to deal with these issues would be by necessity novel and another step away from our evolutionary past. In an attempt to solve our sleep problems — an attempt that we could not guarantee success in — we would be falling directly into the same pitfall of novelty that led to sleep problems in the first place. Even if there was some way to ensure no negative side effects of the drugs, it is still fundamentally safer to use our evolutionary past as a guide in bettering our present than to create yet more changes that push us further away from that past and into the unknown. The simpler solution is, in fact, to change the environment. It carries less inherent risk and is more certain to work.

As we are faced with the many issues related to human sleep in the modern context, the best solution is to try to bring our modern environment closer to the environment in which human sleep first evolved. It is key to the long-term well-being of individuals and society as a whole that these issues be resolved, but the balancing act to make the necessary changes without causing catastrophic disruption must be approached carefully. It may appear daunting, especially with how long we have been dependent on electric light to give us mastery over the night, but if we can approach this delicate issue with the necessary care, using our evolutionary environment as our guide, and changing our own environment instead of letting it govern us, we may be able to sleep soundly once more.

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The Effect Donor Conception has on Identity

Mia Martinez

WITH THE RISE of non-nuclear families, people are looking towards other methods of starting a family. There are many more ways for a family to have children than ever before, thanks to the help of modern technology. One way that is gaining popularity is having donor-conceived children, whether it be by egg or sperm donation. Children born by donor conception are usually raised with one parent they are biologically related to and one they are not biologically related to. Upon finding out that they are donor-conceived, there is a mix of emotions a person can experience. Some have been aware of their genealogy since childhood and have formed their sense of identity with the information. At the same time, most people are unaware that they are donor conceived until adulthood and therefore experience an extreme sense of identity loss. Research studies have examined how being donor-conceived can affect the development of identity within a person.

There are a variety of identities that a donor-conceived person can assume, as seen in "'It's Just Who I Am … I Have Brown Hair. I Have a Mysterious Father': An Exploration of Donor-Conceived Offspring's Identity Construction," a research study published by the Journal of Family Communication. Authors Harrigan et al. examine how donor-conceived offspring (DCO) construct their identities and make sense of their experiences. The study consisted of short interviews with fourteen DCOs and online testimonies from donor-conceived offspring to gain insight into their views on being donor-conceived through network sampling. Researchers were encouraged to share the basis of the experiment with their network in hopes of someone in their network recruiting someone else. All the people interviewed were ages nineteen through fifty-four and were conceived through sperm donation. In their study, Harrigan et al. found that there are five personal identity statements that DCOs relate to. These are often presentations of how one views themself and how one perceives the world to view them. The five statements found are: I am a victim, wanted, enigmatic, a storyteller, and a process.

The first and most common personal identity statement is "I am a victim." The DCO feels victimized by their donor, family, and society. DCOs who identify as victims perceive themselves as commodities their parent(s) bought. They often feel as though they were purposely alienated from their sperm donor, the rest of the family, and their genealogy. One online posting is quoted as saying, "Who are you to deny me half of my family tree—Branches rich and strong with stories I may never be told? Who are you to give away my heritage,

knowing it will be replaced with something false?" (Harrigan et al. 82) The next is "I am wanted". Like the victim, DCOs who identify as wanted view their parent(s) are the choice makers. They view themselves highly as their guardian(s) who chose to conceive them and generally have a more positive outlook on their identity than those conceived by accident. Although the DCO interviewed stressed that they felt loved, their feelings of victimization were not absolved. Some DCOs also identify with the term "I am enigmatic". They hold uncertainty for their future and past, including family history and whether they are predisposed to developing a particular health condition. DCOs also report believing they are expected to be grateful and are shamed for feeling conflicted regarding their identity. They often do not have anyone they can relate to in their immediate circle, often leading them to feel isolated. Due to this, it can seem as if a DCO is half a person, often stuck between two worlds. This further illuminates how DCOs can construct their self based on their experiences. If a DCO associates themselves with the "I am a storyteller" label, they see themselves as unique and that they have an exciting story to tell. Some may see their experiences as something that sets them apart, becoming an essential aspect of their identity. Growing up, they often made stories about their donor's identity, although the DCO often do not tell their entire story as it progresses. As they age, a person's view of themselves will change, and with it the story they choose to portray. Lastly, many DCOs see themselves as a "process" due to the phases of identity development they went through after discovering they were donor-conceived. A DCO may undergo negative feelings from when they first discover they are donor conceived to many years after they have come to terms with their identity. One participant stated, "I have felt differently about being

donor-conceived throughout the nine years I have known. I go through phases where I think about it more or less and phases where it weighs on me more heavily or not" (Harrigan et al. 87). Another explained their view of themselves as a process because, during the different stages of life, they had different views on their conception. For example, a child is not concerned about their identity and is happy to be alive. In contrast, an adult who has recently had children might be more concerned about the identity of their sperm donor. This study shows that DCOs can form multifaceted identities based on their experience. Being donor-conceived affected how the DCOs view themselves and interact with the world.

The article "Establishing identity: how direct-to-consumer genetic testing challenges the assumption of donor anonymity" focuses on the lessening anonymity donors have due to the rise in online genetic testing. More importantly, the authors ask the questions: what are DCOs' relationship with identity, and why are they likely to seek out their anonymous donors through online genetic tests? Darroch and Smith use a variety of studies from recent years to argue their case. The authors note that DCOs are interested in learning about their genetic identity, whether it is basic medical history or getting in contact with individuals from their donor family. Knowing that one was donor conceived early in life leads to positive feelings regarding their identity. The article comments, "Research suggests that late disclosure (after the age of 3 years) can have a negative impact on adoptees in relation to identity formation; similarly, those who uncover misattributed parentage secrets, including around donor conception, are likely to face significant challenges to their identity." (Darroch and Smith, 103). Until recently, people using donor conception were advised not to tell their children how

they were conceived. This, in turn, damages a person's psychological and emotional well-being when they find out later in life. When a DCO discovers that they are donor conceived through an online genetic test, they are more likely to develop negative feelings towards their identity. Most DCOs in the United States are unaware that they are not related to one or both of their parents. This is why so many DCOs find out that they are donor conceived later in life through at-home genetic tests such as Ancestry DNA or 23andMe. When their genetic results are revealed, a DCO may feel an extreme loss of identity due to the information they were denied, along with the anonymity of their donor. Some experience a "fracturing" due to their feelings of being betrayed by their not biological parent. They may also experience a fracture as they feel lied to about their identity. With one recreational DNA test, a seemingly ordinary person's sense of self can be destroyed. Some of the feelings one may experience are anger, betrayal, depression, and anxiety. The study by Darroch and Smith exemplifies the need to contact donor parents to determine one's identity.

While the research by Darroch and Smith highlights the desire to contact a DCO's donor parent, a study conducted by Persaud et al. seeks to answer the question: does meeting with one's genetic family influence a donor-conceived offspring's identity? The academic article "Adolescents Conceived through Donor Insemination in Mother-Headed Families: A Qualitative Study of Motivations and Experiences of Contacting and Meeting Same-donor Offspring" suggests that another factor of being donor conceived that may affect one's identity formation is meeting the same donor offspring. Same donor offspring are defined as two donor-conceived offspring who have been raised in separate families but share the same donor parent. This study focuses

on discovering whether meeting with the same donor offspring dramatically impacts how a DCO is likely to view themselves and, thus, how they form their identity after the initial meeting.

The data collection method was a qualitative interview with twenty-three DCOs aged twelve to nineteen. All people interviewed had been aware of their conception status from a young age and had met with at least one half-sibling conceived by the same donor at the time of the interview. Persaud et al. found that knowing people genetically related to them provided DCO with a more nuanced sense of identity. Meeting with half siblings gives the DCO a better idea of what their donor is like and provides them a way to explore their identity. A young man in the study reported cultivating an interest in music after meeting his half-siblings and finding that they also enjoyed creating music. He comments, "It's yeah [meeting my same donor offspring] been great, I mean it's been awesome to meet them, hang out with them, have this new kind of relative, explore like I mean through meeting them I've gotten to know more about myself you know and uh you know who I am, what the donor's like" (Persaud et al. 17). In some cases, DCOs felt curious about meeting their same donor offspring as it would lead to more information about their donor, and therefore, themselves. Due to the fact that they had been aware of their donor conception from a young age, many of the DCOs regarded their donor conception as who they were and heavily identified with it. Persaud et al. highlight the importance of contacting the same donor offspring during adolescence while one still forms their core identity.

The factor that these three studies have in common is that identity is greatly affected by conception status. The identity formation of a DCO will be different in those who have been notified of their conception

status at a young age compared to those who discovered it later. However, a donor-conceived person's identity will always be impacted. Similarly, contacting genetic family members will shape how DCOs view themselves and the world around them. The opportunity to gain knowledge about their genetic identity influences the DCO to incorporate their findings into their personal sense of identity. As stated earlier, many DCOs are unaware of their conception status later in life. If more qualitative research is conducted, it could save many people the hardship of refiguring their identity later in life after initial identity formation has been completed. Donor conception affects every aspect of a DCO's life, and denying one's genetic identity to them will only cause more difficulties in the future.

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An Idea Whose Time Has Come Again

Samuel Stallings

Let us think back to our US history lessons and the invention and expansion of the railroad. It connected our country together. It allowed someone to go from the East Coast to the West Coast in a matter of days rather than spending grueling months in a wagon, like that great 90's computer game The Oregon Trail. There have been so many technological improvements since those days. We invented not only the automobile but eventually the airplane. Now a passenger can travel from the East to the West in a matter of hours. But at what cost? A plane burns through fossil fuels at an alarming rate. Cars and trucks, though allowing more flexibility and slightly more space, are not much more fuel efficient. Although passenger trains are not always as fast or convenient as planes and automobiles, I believe that they have a larger role to play in fulfilling our nation's transportation needs owing to their greater comfort and better use of resources.

Amtrak provides the United States with all its intercity passenger rail transportation. According to Amtrak's Vice President of Health and Safety, Roy Deitchman, Amtrak now operates 515 stations across the country and employs 20,000 people (190). It was established by Congress in the seventies. Before Amtrak, passenger rail was made up of a hodgepodge of routes maintained by various freight companies. The implementation of a national system made for a more complete set of routes and a better rider experience. Amtrak now owns 626 miles of passenger rail specific track and otherwise operates on shared freight rail track (Deitchman, et al. 191). After settling a case with the EPA in 2001, Amtrak has thrown itself into an effort to lead the way towards environmental sustainability. They now employ thirty environmental managers nationwide, dedicated to keeping the company "on track" towards their environmental goals.

The Biden administration has made fighting climate change a major cornerstone of its agenda. Joe Biden, well known for loving Amtrak, famously spent years commuting from Delaware to Washington, DC, when he worked as a senator. According to Time Magazine's Patrick Lucas Austin, part of the American Job's Plan is investing $80 billion in Amtrak to encourage train use instead of fossil fuel guzzlers like flying and driving (24). Part of that investment will go to adding lines to new city stations and more frequent service to other existing stations. Most railroads are already congested and can only handle trains running at certain speeds. High speed rail lines require their own tracks, and that will require more investment. Seth Moulton, a Democratic congressman from Massachusetts, introduced the American High-Speed Rail Act in the hopes of creating a larger network of faster trains. About his bill, Moulton said, "Americans will ride the train if the service is better. That's the bottom line," (qtd. in

Austin 24). He has a very good point.

There are examples of American passenger train networks showing great promise. In California, there are three lines running along the coast that are paying off with increasing ridership. The Pacific Surfliner, the Capitol, and the San Joaquin travel between the large cities throughout California. In his article for Railway Age, Julian Walinsky details the rise in investment in these California rails and the reward we are now seeing. These three lines now account for 15% of all Amtrak's passengers. They have achieved this by escalating the number of trains running per day to increase the usability for commuters. California is also working on a twenty-year plan to increase train speeds to 125 mph and open new routes (Walinsky 95-7). This is a great example of what we should be trying to implement throughout the more populated portions the country.

The two things that restrain intercontinental customers from using trains over airplanes are the availability of departures and the speed at which they travel. There are usually only two options per day for rail customers outside of the big coastal corridors. For individuals that live in the Northeast or California there already are plenty of options and this is where we see rail travel working. Naturally, planes travel much faster than trains can, not to mention, they can cross large bodies of water with ease. Besides the fact that train tickets are cheaper than airfare, the saving grace for the railroad industry is the lack of time one must spend in airport security. If we must tack two hours on to every flight to be processed through the extra checkpoints, then maybe planes aren't quite as fast as we thought. In Hope Jahren's The Story of More, she writes that across Western civilization, the number of railroad jobs has steadily decreased over the last twenty years and the railroads themselves have degraded or have been scrapped

altogether. At the same time the ridership has been slowly increasing (Jahren). Clearly the demand for rail travel is there, but an increased number of passengers combined with a decreased quality of experience does not make for a good situation. America should respond to this uptick in ridership with investment.

A train ride is a luxurious experience when compared with an economy class plane seat. When arriving at the station, there is no fuss about checking in, there are no long lines to wade through, and no extra luggage fees to pay. After a short time in the waiting room the train arrives, it is on time, boarding and finding the reserved seat is simple. The seat is like a throne as opposed to the cramped little space reserved on a flight. If more space is needed or wanted, a compartment can be reserved instead of a seat. Luggage stows in the ample space provided, and the train leaves the station, no delays waiting to taxi. If a rider finds that they are hungry, instead of waiting what feels like forever for a steward to bring something, they walk down to the dining car and order whatever they like, all while sitting at an actual table. They can read, work on their computer, get up and walk around, or just enjoy the view of America rolling by the window. We can have this whole experience, all while saving money and burning a fraction of the fossil fuel, all it costs is a little more time. I used to ride the train down to my grandmothers every summer, and I will never forget those trips. The romanticism of train travel is tied to the nostalgia of a younger America. As the America of our memory gets further out of touch and the planet heats up from excess carbon emissions, our chance for a better America of the future slides further out of reach.

Climate change is affecting the whole planet and the exponential increase in carbon pollution is at fault. In their study on

transportation emissions, Moshe Givoni, Christian Brand and Paul Watkiss found that in a trip from London to Paris, the CO_2 emissions per person of airplane passengers were more than four times that of train passengers (80). These numbers are ludicrous when considering that a train takes only an hour longer. It is understandable that flying across entire oceans won't be replaced by long voyages by sea, but any time a train can be used for short distances instead of flying, it should be. If America invested in a stronger, more consistent and more extensive train system, we could cut our CO_2 emissions significantly. Most decent sized American towns already have a train track running through them. We could lower highway congestion; people could spend the time they would have spent in traffic working on their laptops while taking advantage of the free WIFI. It would be worth it to just avoid the hypertension and stress brought on by stand-still traffic. When vacationing throughout the United States and visiting relatives the train is much easier and safer than a car, and there is no need for unnecessary bathroom breaks and snack stops. Parents can interact and spend quality time with their children instead of driving. There are so many reasons to replace some of our plane trips with train travel, so many opportunities to ride the train instead or drive our cars. Instead of looking to the technologies of the future, often we can look to those of our past to see the best way forward. Let us look to trains to help solve our climate crisis and still carry us from point A to point B.

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How Social Media Affects Body Image in Young Women

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With the use of social media becoming so popular in this generation, young women are feeling insecure due to unrealistic beauty standards. They are comparing themselves to images of other women, attempting to edit their pictures, and developing unhealthy eating habits to achieve "thinness." Oversexualized images on social media may be another culprit of objectifying women as well. These factors may influence young women to digitally alter their bodies, to shrink their waist, increase their breast size, remove their blemishes and slim their waists all in the hopes of validation from others. This idea of image editing influences people's belief that women are objects while also creating unattainable bodies. Although social media provides widespread communication and other helpful information among young people, research has shown that the constant viewing of certain media negatively affects women's body image, physical health, and mental well-being.

Our society has been greatly influenced by the media's objectification and over-sexualization of women. The article "Why Don't I Look Like Her?" by Alana Papageorgiou, Colleen Fisher, and Donna Cross reveals that sexualized pictures online can increase body dysmorphia and objectification of women in the media. This can result in young females feeling insecure about their appearance and that "their value is based on their appearance" (Papageorgiou et al. 1). While there are some positive effects of social media usage, such as "increased peer connection and support, and opportunities to learn" (Papageorgiou et al. 1), it also has impacted adolescents' mental health such as depression and eating disorders.

A qualitative study was conducted in Perth, Western Australia to "explore the unique perspectives of adolescent girls using one-on-one in-depth interviews to elicit their thoughts, knowledge, and experiences" (Papageorgiou et al. 3). The objection theory was used in this study to grasp the understanding of the effects of being a woman in today's society where they are sexualized. In this research, twenty-four young girls between the ages of 14 through 17 from an Australian student organization were studied. The participants used active social media for one or more hours a day and were then interviewed with open-ended questions using a snowball sampling method. Researchers use the snowball method to find additional subjects by asking their participants if they know anyone who would be a good fit for the study. During the interview process which was recorded and transcribed, adolescents were asked questions concerning their "relation to publicly available images of celebrities

from Instagram using third person disclosures" (Papageorgiou et al. 4). By using this method, it revealed personal experiences, which unfortunately caused some discomfort to the participants. The participants reported that a reason why sexualized images may affect them was because of "self-objectification whereby females internalize an observer's perspective as a primary view of themselves and their bodies" (Papageorgiou et al 3).

Through conducting this experiment, the researchers were able to conclude that the participants did in fact feel self-conscious and insecure about their bodies from using Instagram. They were able to find a link between social media use, and unhealthy body images which may cause young girls to seek validation through likes and comments, resulting in edited pictures of one's body. One other possible reason why social media may be negatively affecting young women's mental health is through the roles of "selfie feedback."

Selfies are images taken by individuals to capture their self-portraits to post on popular media sites like Instagram. The role of social media is to interact and stay connected with your peers, so when individuals are posting selfies online, it is to put their self-image of themselves for peers to see. Young women will go to great lengths to make sure they provide the best version of themselves to receive comments of praise and compliments along with likes. While it seems like a harmless task, it results in both positive and negative feedback on the physical appearance of an individual.

The article "Body Surveillance on Instagram," by Chelsea Butkowski, Travis Dixon, and Kristopher Weeks, discusses "how value placed on selfie feedback among young women relates to markers of body image disturbance, including body dissatisfaction, drive for thinness and bulimia action tendencies" (Butkowski et al.

385). Social media is a common cause of disordered eating habits such as anorexia and bulimia nervosa, both life-threatening diseases. Young girls have the desire to achieve "thinness" through extreme diets and weight loss methods which is identified as anorexia. Bulimia is when an individual will eat an excessive amount of food followed by purging. Body dissatisfaction is the negative evaluation of one's self-body image. All three of these factors are consequences of the use of social media.

A study examined how selfie feedback among young women can lead to body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. One hundred and seventeen English-speaking women between the ages of 18 through 30 were contacted by Mturk to participate in an online survey. To participate in the experiment, participants were required to be females and have a public Instagram account with at least ten selfies posted. The researchers tested the role of likes and comments young women receive on their selfies and how their body image could be influenced. Two hypotheses were proposed: firstly, investment in selfie feedback will have only a positive correlation, or secondly will have both a positive and negative effect on body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. Researchers stated that "the more highly invested individuals are in Instagram selfie feedback the more likely they will be to experience disordered eating symptoms" (Butkowski et al. 389).

This study examined behaviors regarding social media feedback that would play a negative role in body image among young women. Researchers believed that investment in selfie feedback would positively affect body dissatisfaction, the drive for thinness, and bulimia. However, bulimia was not directly correlated with selfie feedback. Results show how the effect of body surveillance behaviors and selfie feedback investment could cause body dissatisfaction and

the desire for thinness. Furthermore, new studies could expand on the current study's focus on selfie feedback by creating and using more thorough quantitative measures of attitudes and behaviors linked to social media feedback across and within social networks. Another study created is appearance related social media consciousness.

In the article "Camera-Ready: Young Women's Appearance-Related Social Media Consciousness (ASMC)" by Sophia Choukas-Bradley, JacquelineNesi, Laura Widman, and M.K Higgins, question how is ASMC related to women's constant wondering whether or not she appears attractive to an online following. While using social media, physical appearance can be an important aspect for many young women as it influences their well-being due to unrealistic beauty standards. Recent studies have shown that "specific photo-related online behaviors and attitudes may be more important for body esteem than overall time spent online" (Choukas et al. 7). To be specific, selfies are shown to have a higher risk of body image concerns.

The study investigated the conditions and causes of ASMC with a focus on depression and body image issues. Using the objection theory, researchers were able to provide a helpful foundation for understanding how women perceive themselves to an online audience. In a culture where women are viewed as sexual objects, young girls are being brainwashed to believe their physical appearance does not meet society's beauty standards. With social media becoming more prevalent in young women's everyday lives, photos are being altered to fulfill the beauty "standard" leading to peers comparing themselves.

This research used previous literature and other sources to investigate how "awareness of the social media audience may intrude into her offline experiences in the form of thoughts about how physically

attractive she may look in social media photos"(Choukas et al. 8) in young women. Three hundred-thirty women between the ages of 18 and 19, who were enrolled in a psychology class in large southern colleges, participated in this study. Participants completed a 45-minute survey to report their "time spent on social media, ASMC, body surveillance, body comparison, body esteem, and depressive symptoms" (Choukas et al. 9). Researchers examined how often one may use social media and participate in appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC), zero to ten hours a day was the average reported time. The researchers used a path analysis method, ASMC, and body image concerns and signs of depression were studied to find a correlation between the three factors.

The results show "the importance of this construct for young women's psychological experiences: ASMC was common in this sample, and higher levels were associated with maladaptive correlates" (Choukas et al. 14). Young women who responded to higher ASMC were more likely to have lower self-esteem, body comparison, and depression. Only one participant reported not having experienced ASMC, while 99.7% of young girls suggested experiencing it. This study revealed that the social media adolescent girls are viewing have more of an impact on their body-related issues, rather than the amount of time spent online. Knowing what young girls are viewing on social media will help with their mental health and may reduce ASMC.

With the introduction and popularization of technologies like the handheld phone and the rapidly growing consumerism that has taken hold of the current generation, it is no surprise that so many young women are developing many different forms of unhealthy habits with dieting, exercising, etc. The intention of this paper was to inform and present information

about the negative impacts that social media has on young women in the hopes that someone can learn about forming a healthy perception of one's self-worth through their own actions and thoughts, rather than having their personal worth tied to a social media account and how many likes one is getting. Despite the fact that young people frequently communicate through social media, research has found that women's body image, physical health, and mental well-being are significantly affected by constant exposure to particular media and validation from peers on Instagram.

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