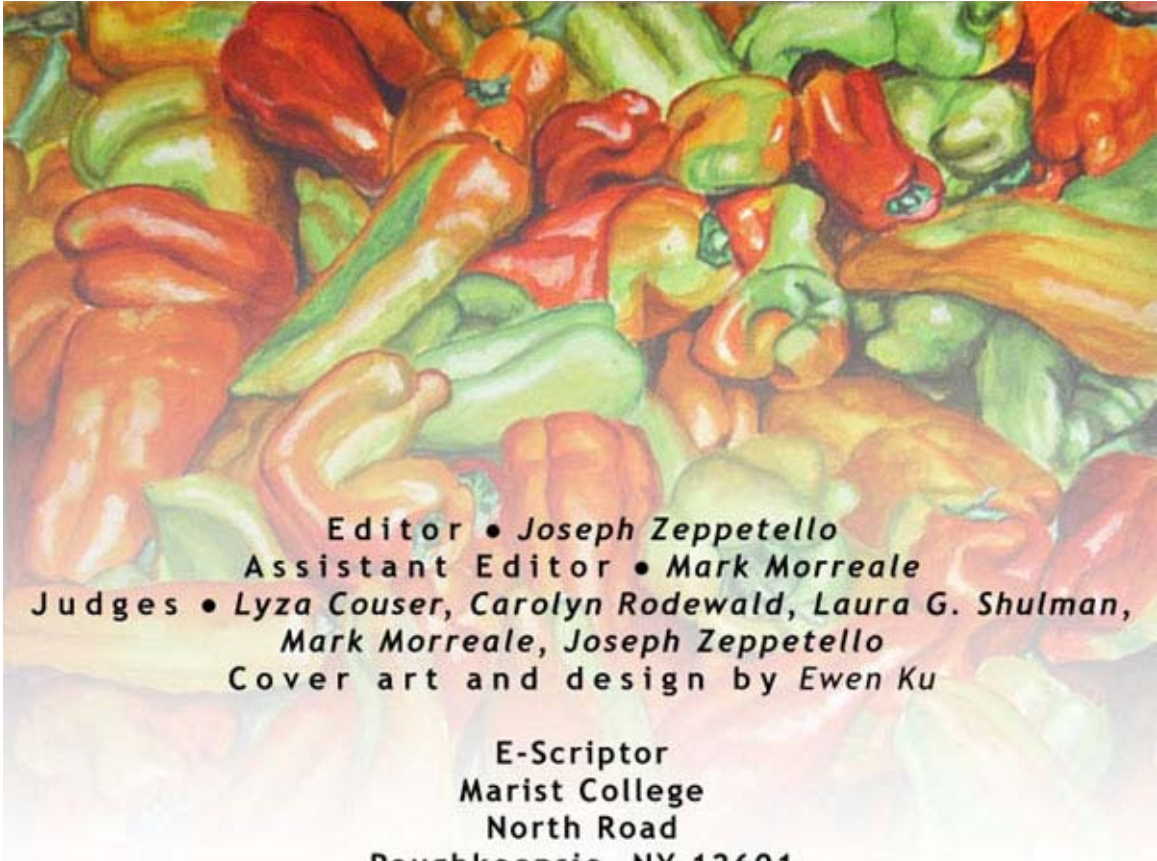


E-SCRIPTOR

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Preface

This journal of student writing is a collection of essays written for College Writing II classes at Marist College for the 2003-2004 academic year. Each teacher of College Writing II was asked to submit an outstanding essay from his/her class. Two editors then reviewed the essays, and works were chosen from each semester to be included in this volume.

Contributors Fall 2003

Amy Nyitray is currently in her sophomore year, as a Psychology/Special Education major. She is from Southbury, Connecticut and enjoys dancing, punk music and volunteering through Campus Ministry. Her Essay "Mr. and Mr. John Doe" won first prize for the Fall 2003 semester and was prepared for Professor Raphaele Kosek's College Writing II class.

Christie Martyniuk, daughter of Peter and Carol Martyniuk, is from Vernon, New Jersey. She is currently a sophomore here at Marist College, majoring in English with a concentration in writing. She is active in the Marist College Dance Club, of which she is treasurer, and she has always enjoyed reading and writing in her free time. Christie's essay, "The Noble Earthworm," was written during the first semester of her freshman year for Professor Judith Saunders. College Writing II class, and is the second place winner for the Fall 2003 semester.

Jacki Toplitz's essay "Adolescent Homicide," won third place, and was prepared for Professor Phil Pardi's College Writing II class.

Anthony Florio is 2nd year student from Elmsford, New York. He is majoring in history, plans to minor in IT and is considering a career in education. In his free time he enjoys watching football, working with computers, reading, and creating artwork, and is a fan of all forms of auto racing. His essay "The USA P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act" won fourth place for the Fall 2003 semester and was prepared for Professor Lynn Koch's College Writing II class.

Spring 2004

Ashley Herrott, daughter of Bill and Cindy Herrott, is currently in her sophomore year at Marist College. She grew up in Vernon, NJ. Her major at this time is Mathematics, although she plans on changing it to Accounting with a minor in Mathematics in the near future. Her essay, "Against Capital Punishment," won first place for the Spring 2004 semester and was prepared for Professor Joseph Zeppetello's College Writing II class.

Brian Belfiore attended Whippany Park High School in Hanover Township, NJ. He is currently a sophomore at Marist College majoring in communications. Brian is also involved with the band program and the Marist Poll. His essay, "Slaves at Cedar Grove," won second place for the Spring 2004 Semester and was written for Professor Mark Morreale's College Writing II class.

Julie Honeycutt is from Bethel, Connecticut, an hour away from Marist College. Here at Marist, she is a sophomore majoring in fashion merchandising with a minor in business administration. Her essay "Images in Literature" won third place for the Spring 2004 Semester and was prepared for Professor Gail Jaitin's College Writing II class.

Katherine Pagliaro is currently a sophomore at Marist and graduated from Ramsey High School in Ramsey, New Jersey. She is a Fashion Merchandising major and tried to relate her research paper to the fashion industry. She won fourth place for the Spring 2004 Semester for her essay, "Slavery and Sweatshops," written for Professor Lynn Koch's College Writing II class.

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Mr. and Mr. John Doe

by Amy Nyitray

Imagine for just a moment that your loved one is in critical condition and on life support. You know there is a good chance he will not survive the night. However, you are not allowed to see him. You are not allowed to say goodbye. You cannot be with him when he passes on. You cannot tell him one last time just how much you love him.

Sound too horrific to be true?

That was the exact scenario that occurred between Bill Flanigan and his life partner, Robert Daniel. Daniel had AIDS, and knew his time on earth was limited. Flanigan had obtained legal documents stating that he was able to make decisions for his partner pertaining to his health. However, while Daniel lay in a hospital bed in critical condition, Flanigan was forced to wait outside the door. He was not allowed to be with Daniel. By the time Flanigan was given permission to see him, by Daniel's sister and mother, he had slipped into a coma, and died shortly after. Flanigan was never allowed to say goodbye and tell his partner that he loved him (Jost 5).

Had the two men been allowed to legally marry, this situation would not have occurred. Flanigan and Daniel would have all the rights and benefits that straight couples enjoy and even take for granted. However, Daniel and Flanigan were in a homosexual relationship, and were barred by law from marrying.

Currently, the United States Senate and House of Representatives are considering amending the constitution to bar same-sex marriage. This amendment would not only destroy the chance of homosexual marriage, but would go so far as to disregard any attempt at a civil union or arrangement of benefits which the couples could share (Jost 4). Essentially, the U.S. government would be stepping back in time, and asking the nation to do the same. Homosexual couples who have fought difficult battles for the right to share a home mortgage or make medical decisions for one another would have these rights taken away. It seems as though public opinion is in favor of this amendment, particularly among religious groups (USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll qtd. in Jost 3). However, the proposed constitutional amendment which would bar same-sex marriage and any marriage-like union must not be ratified because it would deny civil rights to homosexuals and discriminate against them.

Many of the strongest opponents of same sex marriage come from Christian religious groups, particularly Catholic, Fundamentalist, and Mormon churches. They claim to be able to cite actual biblical references denouncing homosexuality. They also argue that marriage is for procreation, and obviously homosexuals cannot reproduce naturally. However, these arguments contain faulty logic, and should have no standing in our nation's decision.

Religious groups cite the Bible as reason to denounce homosexuality. Upon closer inspection, less than twelve such verses can be found out of 31,173 (Blumenfeld and Raymond qtd. in web.Xperts). The intended meaning of these verses is questionable, as the word homosexual did not appear in any translation of the Bible until 1946 (Blumenfeld and Raymond qtd. in web.Xperts). There are words in the Greek language which refer to same-sex activities, yet they are not found in the original text of the New Testament (Blumenfeld and Raymond qtd. in web.Xperts). No solid biblical argument can be found.

Many opponents argue that marriage is for the purpose of procreation. However, this notion is not consistently applied. Sterile men and women are allowed to marry every day, and no one thinks twice about it. Lesbians can procreate if they so choose, through the use of a sperm donor and artificial insemination. Male and female homosexuals could relieve some of the strain placed on adoption and foster care systems which are already overburdened (Bidstrup). However, fear of the "gay agenda" is a concern of these groups who would prefer children remain in a state system rather than be raised by a loving homosexual couple (Crews 2). Our world is currently overpopulated (Bidstrup), and it is doubtful that it would be detrimental if those who are married could not procreate. Christian groups can cite many arguments against gay marriage, but these should not be of the nation's concern.

The forefathers laid out certain principles when founding our nation, including freedom of religion. As men who were persecuted for their beliefs, they planned for a nation of liberty. Freedom of religion and the separation of church and state are two doctrines which they created when forging the United States of America. Article I of the Bill of Rights states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof[.]" If the church were allowed to sway the Congress to change laws, it would be unconstitutional. Freedom of religion includes freedom from religion, and no single religious group should be allowed to sway the policies of the country.

The gravest fault in the argument of Christian groups is that they have absolutely no right to prevent a legal marriage. Homosexuals are looking for the right to a legal civil union (Bonauto 2). They are not asking the government to legalize church marriages, as that would impinge on the separation of church and state. It is left up to each individual church to decide if they want to perform the wedding ceremony for homosexual couples. Homosexuals respect that religion and the government should remain separate, and religious groups should do the same.

A variety of legal arguments against the proposed constitutional amendment exist. Many argue that the Constitution is not for the purpose of denying a right to any group. Various court cases have proven that people in general are becoming more accepting of homosexuality. This is an issue of basic civil rights and legal benefits being denied to gays.

The Constitution is our most sacred document. It has provided a model for many other countries, and is a constant reminder of the purpose for the founding of America. Among the most important concepts are freedom, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and these are all denied to homosexuals if they are not allowed to marry. One purpose of the Constitution is to protect minorities against the unjust majority. In two-hundred and forty-one years, the document has only been amended eighteen times, once to include the Bill of Rights (Human Rights Campaign 1). In every instance, the purpose has been the protection of the people's rights, never to single people out for discrimination (Human Rights Campaign 1). This new amendment would discriminate against a group and deny them rights, rather than protect them.

Even opponents of homosexual marriage agree that the Constitution should not be amended to include the anti-gay marriage clause. Bob Barr, a consultant to the American Civil Liberties Union and a well-known adversary of the gay rights movement, has expressed disagreement with the possibility of a constitutional amendment barring gay marriage. When interviewed, he stated: "I hold the Constitution in highest regard and I don't like to see it trifled with. Even though I'm not an advocate for same-sex marriage, I want the states to decide the issue" (Bull 18). He is a strong supporter of federalism, one of our nation's leading concepts, which maintains the ability to move from one state to another to find more preferable laws (Bull 18). John Kerry, a presidential candidate for the Democratic Party, has stated that although he does not agree with homosexual marriage, he would never vote for the constitutional amendment, because it could adversely affect health rights (Bull 19). Both express doubt that there would be the necessary majority to ratify the amendment.

Various court cases have proven that it is possible for homosexuals to gain the right to marriage. Vermont allows legal civil unions due to the case of *Baker v. The State of Vermont*, which allowed homosexual couples to have the same rights as they would have in marriage, but not an actual legal marriage (Moats 2). An important breakthrough for the case of homosexual marriage occurred as a result of the *Lawrence v. Texas* case in which sodomy laws were struck down in the remaining thirteen states (Jost 4). The laws were labeled as unconstitutional. While they existed, homosexual sex was illegal, so the legalization broke down the last remaining solid legal argument against gay marriage.

The most prominent breakthrough for same-sex marriage came very recently, with the conclusion of the *Goodridge v. Massachusetts* case. In this case, seven couples filed for civil unions to be granted and recognized in their state. Some of the couples had been legally married in Canada, but their unions were not recognized by the state, and they were thus denied the benefits of marriage (Jost 8). Other couples wished to be married by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to obtain these benefits (Jost). As stated by Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall, the State Supreme Court decided "the commonwealth may [not] deny the protections, benefits and obligations conferred by civil marriage to two individuals of the same sex who wish to marry" (qtd. in Belluck 1). However, the ruling fell just short of actually granting the marriage licenses, and gave the Legislature one hundred and eighty days to make it possible (Belluck 1). Massachusetts may lead the way for other states to begin recognizing and granting civil unions.

The one most prominent issue which many opponents of gay marriage seem to have difficulty comprehending is that this is an issue of basic civil rights. In terms of marriage and child adoption, homosexuals have fewer rights than many convicted criminals, including pedophiles (Bidstrup). Gays are not treated like other minorities, such as racial and religious groups. All civil rights have been extended to these minorities, so it seems only logical that homosexuals would gain them as well. They need to have civil rights to protect both their partners and themselves from discrimination and injustices. By being denied civil rights, they are essentially being denied their human rights.

Married couples often take their legal rights for granted. They do not realize how difficult it is to function as a couple when they have no legal relationship to their partner. Today, hundreds of state protections and benefits, and over one thousand under the federal government exist (Bonauto 1). John Jacobi, a lawyer, stated:

Without trying too hard, I can list health insurance, the right to inheritance from a spouse, alimony and property division, ERISA (pension) rights, Social Security benefits, retirement benefits, damages for wrongful death, loss of consortium and COBRA (health insurance) rights as flowing from marriage. (qtd. in "Gay Marriage" 1)

Homosexual couples do not receive the same tax breaks as married people and are redlined for insurance purposes. In terms of citizenship, they are not allowed to marry a foreign partner, and thus he or she cannot receive a green card (Conlin and Hempel 5). Many opponents argue that there are ways to obtain these benefits, and it is true that some can be obtained through other measures in certain states. However, the procedure is time consuming, stressful and difficult for homosexual couples (Bonauto 2). The legal rights and benefits of marriage are countless and undeniable.

Marriage is one of the longest standing, respected social institutions. It cannot be denied that marriage expresses the ultimate commitment between lovers. Opponents of gay marriage express concern that homosexual marriage would adversely affect heterosexual marriage, that homosexual homes are not the ideal environment in which to raise children, and that marriage is a tradition reserved strictly for one man and one woman. However, all of these reasons are faulty and stem from fear of the "gay agenda."

Marriage is the most pertinent sign of commitment to a partner. Homosexuals have expressed the desire to be married because it will show their friends and family the love and commitment which is socially acknowledged through marriage (Bonauto 2). It is difficult to be associated as a faithful couple when you are unmarried. Sometimes, even the children of gay couples have difficulty accepting that their parents love one another. This became evident to Julie Goodridge, who filed for the recognition of her civil union in Massachusetts, when she questioned her daughter about people she knew who loved one another (Jost 4). Her daughter did not mention her and her partner, Hillary, stating that if they truly loved one another, they would be married (Jost 4). Public social

commitment is an important aspect of marriage and love which homosexuals hope to be able to share one day.

Opponents of same-sex marriage fear that heterosexual marriage will suffer if gays are allowed to marry. However, this is a paradox in itself, because it states that marriage will be threatened by allowing loving people to marry one another. These couples want to marry because they acknowledge the importance of marriage as a social institution (Bonauto 2). They want to strengthen the gay community and commitment (Bonauto 2). Some of the most vehement opponents of same-sex marriage stress marriage's importance to our way of life. Wardle, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, states: "Marriage is the most preferred institution in the law, and for good reason. It contributes to a society in which rights, values and cultures are passed on, and liberties are protected. It is critical to our way of life" (qtd. in Jost 7). He declares the value of marriage and liberty to our nation, yet feels these rights should be denied to homosexuals. Many opponents seem to forget that homosexuals are Americans and human beings, just like themselves.

Many same-sex couples have the desire to raise children, but are given little opportunity to do so, because they are unmarried. If granted the right to marry, they cannot be denied the right to adopt. The system of adoption is terribly overburdened (Bidstrup), and it is irrefutable that living in a steady household of two loving same-sex parents is preferable to children being bounced around the state system. Various scientific and psychological studies have shown that children raised in gay households are just as emotionally stable and healthy as those raised in straight households (Jost 9). If given the right to marry, children of homosexuals will benefit, as will children waiting to be adopted by loving parents. The final social argument given by opponents of same-gender marriage is the most flawed. They argue that marriage is a tradition between one man and one woman, thus making it the only "right" way. However, many old social traditions have come to be denounced and unacceptable in society today. Interracial marriage was once seen as a crime against nature, just as homosexual marriage is currently viewed (Bidstrup). It is now a commonly accepted social practice, and had the same difficulties that same-sex marriage is experiencing when attempting to be legalized. As was seen in this case, tradition does not always make something correct or acceptable. Another example is that slavery was a tradition (Bidstrup), but there is no question in today's society that it was an awful and demeaning institution. Tradition is not a valid argument to deny a valid group their rights.

Same-sex marriage is an issue of religious, legal and social importance. As much as religious groups may dislike the concept of gay marriage, they cannot legitimately deny it in a legal sense. It is up to each church to decide if a ceremony will be performed, but within the current arguments only the legalization of civil unions is requested. Homosexuals are denied many legal benefits as well as the social acceptance of the love that is associated with matrimony. Many court cases that have ruled in favor of same-sex marriage have paved the way for national legalization, but also caused a great backlash in the rush for a constitutional amendment that would completely obliterate the chance for homosexuals to marry. Gays are being denied basic civil and human rights.

Our constitution was forged on the principle that all men are created equal. It was never meant to allow the government to discriminate against any group, including gays. There is an overwhelming fear that gays have a "secret agenda" to recruit people into homosexuality. The true reason behind this was best stated by Andrew Sullivan: It seems as if heterosexuals are willing to tolerate homosexuals, but only from a position of power. They have few qualms about providing legal protections, decrying hate crimes, watching gay TV shows, even having a relative bring her female spouse to Thanksgiving dinner. Yet arguing that the lesbian couple is legally or morally indistinguishable from a straight couple is where many draw the line. That's why marriage is such a fundamental issue. Allowing gay marriage is not saying, We Will Tolerate You. It's saying, We Are You. This, it seems, we have a hard time doing. (Sullivan 35)

A constitutional amendment which would ban gay marriage, and any marriage-like arrangement, must not be ratified because it would deny civil rights to homosexuals and discriminate against them. If it is put in place, situations like that of Bill Flanigan and Robert Daniel will continue to occur (Jost 5). Put yourself in the place of a homosexual person. Imagine that you cannot have any legal relationship or reliance on your partner and cannot share any rights or benefits of straight marriage. If you find this to be an injustice, there are ways to help in the campaign against the proposed constitutional amendment. If there is a lack of support in any particular state, and the state representative must vote against the amendment, it will help to deny the majority vote required for ratification. You can write to your state representatives by logging on to www.hrc.org, where you can send them a direct email denouncing the proposed amendment. Petitions, such as the one at millionformarriage.com, and marches are another way to get involved. Stop the injustice against homosexuals. Allow them to marry. Give them basic civil rights. And most importantly, recognize them as *human beings*.

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The Noble Earthworm

By Christie Martynuk

In general, destructive forces in nature are believed to be evil, since creation is usually more beneficial than destruction. Consider the earthworm. Its sole reason for existence is to consume and break down decaying materials--an unattractive job, to say the least. But the earthworm is a natural destroyer that actually does a great deal of building. Although we may not typically acknowledge the helpfulness of these creatures in our daily lives, they are universally known to break down enormous quantities of decaying matter, transforming it into rich soil. Not only is the earthworm unique in its reproductive, feeding and behavioral methods, it is also very helpful to humans and the ecosystem.

For centuries, man has associated the earthworm with death. It has come to be known as the slimy invader of flesh underground--one who eats away at former human existence. The idea of being consumed by worms is a universally acknowledged fate, and one that is equally dreaded. Even the Book of Job in the bible refers to the earthworm, recognizing the fact that "after my skin, worms destroy this body," and "the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered" (quoted in Bartlett). Benjamin Franklin even declared his certain morbid fate in his "Epitaph on Himself", saying, "The body of Benjamin Franklin lies here, food for worms" (quoted in Bartlett). The "conqueror worm" is indeed "a blood-red thing that writhes from out / The scenic solitude" to feast on man's demise (Poe 107). Because of these rather repulsive connotations, the worm is often glanced upon disdainfully, disregarded, and too often taken for granted. If humans see it as "a little, wretched, despicable creature; the worm a mere nothing, and less than nothing," then they are quite mistaken (Edwards quoted in Bartlett).

Presently, there are two thousand seven hundred species of earthworms living on the earth ("Worm World"). Earthworms themselves fall into three subgroups based on the ecology of their behaviors. The groups are labeled anecic, endogeic and epigeic, Greek words meaning "out of the earth," "within the earth" and "upon the earth," respectively (Colorado Master Gardener). Anecic worms construct deep and permanent vertical burrows into the soil, only coming to the surface to retrieve organic matter to bring into their burrows. Having the ability to burrow six feet into the ground, these worms have major effects on the formation of soil and the decomposition of matter (Colorado Master Gardener). Endogeic worms burrow below the soil surface in horizontal, branch-like patterns (Colorado Master Gardener). Worms in this group ingest all rich soil and organic matter, but they do not surface until after a heavy rainfall. The epigeic group lives in the topmost soil layers, eating plants that have not yet decomposed. Epigeic worms reproduce quite rapidly and are generally very small (Colorado Master Gardener). Earthworms vary in size depending on the species. *Lumbricus terrestris*, the most common anecic worm, also referred to as "night crawler" or "dew worm," can grow to be from nine to thirty centimeters long ("Earthworms"). Some of the larger species in the

tropics can reach one hundred twenty centimeters in length. The largest earthworm in the world is located in Australia, stretching three hundred centimeters long ("Earthworms").

In all three groupings, earthworms are decomposers with unique behaviors. For instance, if an earthworm is cut in half, it has the ability to regenerate ("Earthworms"; Savage). Contrary to popular belief, it will not become two separate worms, but rather grow a new tail end and let the detached tail die (Savage). In order to regenerate, the front portion of the worm needs to have the mucus-producing clitellum intact as well as ten segments behind it ("Earthworms"). Body shape, length, color and the number of segments on the body are all factors used in identifying earthworms ("Earthworms"). "Streamlined at both ends, double-engined / charged with the energy of cancelled reversals," they tend to move their bodies in a head-first forward motion, yet they also have the ability to move backward (Head 80; "Earthworms"). Even though earthworms don't have eyes or hearing capabilities, they have receptor cells that allow them to sense light and vibrations ("Earthworms"). They have a covering of tiny setae, or bristles, to help them move and to anchor themselves in the soil as they burrow ("Earthworms"). This is why birds are often seen tugging at worms to get them out of the ground when they feed.

Since earthworms breathe through their skin, they need humid or moist conditions in order to survive ("Earthworms"). When the sun is shining, they tend to stay underground so that they don't get dried out. When it rains, however, they are apt to blanket driveways and sidewalks as though the rain were the key to their survival. Rainy weather is good for earthworms, since it keeps them moist, allowing them to breathe through their pores (Kelly). However, heavy rains can lead to the death of many worms, since they are more vulnerable outside of their protective soil homes; they are prone to being stepped on, washed away, or fried by a sudden burst of sunshine through the clouds (Kelly). Since humans have altered nature and paved roads and sidewalks, earthworms have lost the ability to burrow quickly back into the ground to avoid footsteps or washouts (Kelly). Left with no other option, the worm must lie like "a leaky pink garden hose" abandoned on the pavement (Head 80). A common misconception is that earthworms risk their lives in coming out of the soil simply to avoid drowning; on the contrary, they can survive in water, but surfacing in the rain allows them to get better oxygen to their bodies (Kelly). The earthworm would rather be above ground during rain so that it can move more quickly and easily, using "the tense and dilatory motion / of his spring-loaded anatomy" (Head 80). Underground, it would have to burrow to move, but on the wet ground it can move easily without risking dehydration from the sun (Kelly). Earthworms are coated in a slimy mucus layer so that oxygen can get into their blood stream ("Earthworms"). To aid in this process, they have five separate hearts to pump blood to their many different body segments (Savage). Their nervous system is similar to those of humans, and they are capable of storing memory (Savage).

In terms of reproduction, earthworms are hermaphroditic, which means that they have reproductive organs of both sexes. However, the eggs of one worm must be fertilized by the sperm of another worm ("Earthworms"). A tell-tale sign of sexual maturity in earthworms is the presence of the clitellum, which is the large band in the

middle of its body. During the mating process, two earthworms are joined together by the sticky mucus produced by the clitellum. In this mucus layer of nutrients, the two worms exchange sperm and then separate to form cocoons ("Earthworms"). Each cocoon moves forward, picking up eggs at the fourteenth segment of the other worm. It then picks up the sperm left by the other worm at the ninth and tenth segments ("Earthworms"). When this process is complete, the cocoon slides over the earthworm's head and seals itself off so that fertilization can begin inside of it. Within twenty-four hours, the tiny, lemon-shaped cocoons are deposited into the soil ("Earthworms"). These survive underground until conditions are right for hatching. Fertilization of earthworms is similar to the way that chicks develop inside of eggs: when the embryos absorb all of the nutritive material after two weeks to five months, they hatch out. When they hatch, several worms successfully emerge from each cocoon, and they grow to full maturity in about one year. Earthworms can live up to eight years, depending on their environment ("Earthworms").

In order to survive severe weather conditions, earthworms either burrow down in the ground or undergo estivation, which means that the worm curls itself up into a tight ball in the soil to slow down its metabolism. Worm cocoons can survive throughout the winter underground, and then they hatch out in the spring when they can survive without being frozen. Worms are most active in the fall and spring; they aren't active at all when it is cold or dry because they cannot survive freezing conditions and they thrive on moisture ("Earthworms"). Harsh weather is not the only threat to the earthworm, however; many creatures in the environment attack and prey on them. Some common enemies of the earthworm are snakes, birds, moles, shrews, toads, and even foxes ("Earthworms"; "Worm World").

Because the earthworm breaks down decaying matter all over the planet, Aristotle called them the "intestines of the earth." When plants and animals die, earthworms begin the decomposition process by eating away at the materials. As aforementioned, "Men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them." (Shakespeare quoted in Bartlett). Worms also feast on the dirt and debris, burrowing into the soil and its content of nutrient-rich microorganisms, ingesting them along with the decaying matter. Earthworms do not have teeth, so they use the powerful muscles in their mouths to eat and swallow the soil as they burrow ("Earthworms"). Gwen Head describes this mannerism in her poem about the earthworm, saying, "[i]n his leisured digestion of distances / peristalsis becomes dance." Although it seems simple enough, the process of eating for earthworms is actually quite complex. First, the pharynx, or throat, is pushed out of the mouth to take hold of leaves and retract them into the opening ("Worm World"). The food is then coated in a sufficient amount of saliva and it is swallowed down the esophagus and into the crop, which serves as the stomach. From the crop, the food enters the gizzard, where the actual digestion of food occurs. At this point, any small stones that the earthworm has consumed are put to use in conjunction with the powerful muscles in the gizzard to grind up the leaves and other materials; this action replaces the need for teeth. After the materials are compacted, they move through the intestines, where bodily juices further aid in the breakdown. When the food is finally digested, the bloodstream will pick up a portion of it to nurture the worm, but most of it is excreted in the form of castings through the anus. Amazingly, these small creatures can consume and

discard their own body weight in food and soil each day ("Worm World"). Shortly after the castings are released, the waste dries out to form aggregates, or clumps of soil held together by organic material ("Earthworms"; "Worm World"). These aggregates improve the structure of the soil by reducing erosion and keeping in nutrients that might otherwise be leached out.

Although earthworms are found in virtually all soils of the world where there is enough moisture and organic content to support them, they have not always been a part of the North American ecosystem (Savage). They have been in existence for nearly one hundred twenty million years dating back to the age of Egyptian pharaohs, when Cleopatra herself referred to the earthworm as a "sacred" creature ("Worm World"). Noticing how earthworms fertilized the Nile Valley croplands after annual floods, Cleopatra forbade her people from taking them out of the soil ("Vermicomposting"). However, during the last Ice Age, glaciers and moving ice masses wiped out the nearly the entire earthworm population in North America ("Introduction to MNWW"; Slater; "The Worm Turns"). There were over one hundred species of native earthworms in areas on North America that escaped the glaciers (Slater). Nevertheless, forests in the northern region adapted to the absence of earthworms from the soil over the years ("The Worm Turns"). In Minnesota, for instance, there are still no "native" earthworms because they do not resettle very quickly ("Introduction to MNWW"). Earthworms were re-introduced to North American soils on the east coast by early European settlers. They brought soil ballasts as well as plants and animals that contained hidden earthworms. Once in North America, the ballasts were released, along with the earthworms ("Introduction to MNWW; Slater). At first, the worms were only brought to North America accidentally, buried in the soils from other countries, but it became ordinary to find them in forests on the outskirts of cities where humans began to distribute them ("The Worm Turns"). Surprisingly, the majority of earthworms were carried to the forests by fishermen, and are now appearing in more remote locations as a result of those fishermen who let their bait loose ("The Worm Turns").

Despite their helpfulness to the environment, earthworms are not always as beneficial as they seem. After the Ice Age, forests adapted to a slow production of nutrients within the soil, since there were no fast-working earthworms to eat, cast and make nutrients (Slater). Hence, earthworms are harmful to certain forest soils ("The Worm Turns"). In performing their natural duties as decomposers, earthworms gobble up all of the leaves on the forest floor, changing the mineral content of the soil in doing so (Kelly). They also change the acidity levels of the soil, enabling weeds to grow and choking out important vegetation ("The Worm Turns"). In the 1960s, oligochaetologist Gordon Gates was the first to point out that nonnative earthworms might be invading and damaging forests (Slater). Cornell University researchers found an abundance of invasive plants in forests that were heavily inhabited by earthworms ("The Worm Turns"). John Maerz, one of the researchers, commented, "Exotic worms have this food layer that has been untouched for thousands of years. With all of this food, the worm populations just explode" (Slater). Cornell researchers discovered that when earthworms eat the leaves covering the forest floor, they destroy the habitat for little forest animals that reside at the bottom of the food chain ("The Worm Turns"). Without a protective cover, they get

eaten. Salamander populations, for example, are deficient where earthworms infest the dirt ("The Worm Turns"). With a different mineral content that is unnatural to forest soil, trees get deprived of nutrients they need in order to grow (Kelly). Although the problem of earthworms invading uninhabited forests is still not a major one, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is carefully watching the importation of earthworms (Slater). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is posting fliers in all bait shops, imploring that fishermen keep their extra bait instead of dumping it into the soil.

Either directly or indirectly, earthworms have always been in contact with humans in some way. Indirectly, they provide food for humans by aerating the soil, promoting drainage, and decomposing organic materials inside of their burrows (Savage). Their unique behaviors make the soil nutritive, better suited for humans to grow plants to be used as food (Savage). More directly, earthworms were the earliest form of fish bait, and they still serve that purpose today (Introduction to MNWW). While earthworms are generally helpful to humans, humans are not helpful to earthworms especially by the practices of cultivation and deep-tillage. Cultivation can kill the worms, taking away the moisture of the soil as it destroys their burrows, and it reduces the amount of surface materials for the worms to feed on (Werner). Agricultural soils usually contain earthworms that have adapted to such disturbances (Werner). On the other hand, shallow-tillage and surface control of crop residue can actually increase worm activity, because residue left by humans as surface mulch is very useful to earthworms (Werner).

Earthworms are beneficial in the way that they lock nutrients into the soil, making pesticides and artificial fertilizers almost unnecessary (Savage). They reduce erosion and rain runoff, and their usefulness in agriculture is rewarding for farmers as well as consumers (Savage). Presently, Canada is the largest exporter of earthworms, a trade that has turned into a multi-million-dollar business. Most earthworms are sent to the United States, where people purchase them to aid in gardening and composting (Slater).

The helpfulness of earthworms goes even further. As they tunnel into the soil, they loosen it to allow for aeration. Earthworms are a welcome addition to any garden; as they aerate the soil, they make excellent fertilizer from their casts, lessening the gardener's workload (Kelly). Their castings enrich the soil and produce nutrients for plant life. Finding castings in the dirt signifies a healthy lawn ("Earthworms"). According to Charles Darwin, his most important work and research was centered on the earthworm, which was the subject of his famous book entitled The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms (Savage). He published the work because he believed the earthworm to be a very unique and important creature (Savage). Throughout the book, Darwin examined the earthworm's ability to make rich soil, which explains the phrase "vegetable mould" (or "top soil", in modern terms) contained in the title (Savage). Darwin conducted an extensive study on worm intelligence as demonstrated in the way that they plug up their burrows (Savage). To test their intelligence, Darwin performed experiments and observed the earthworms. Gwen Head's description of the earthworm with "his smug unthwartable / snout persistent" is supported by Darwin's conclusion that earthworms have determination to succeed, proving that they must have at least some

degree of intelligence. He commented, "Few creatures have played such a significant role in the history of the world as these lowly, organized creatures" (Savage; "Worm World").

Whether or not they possess true intelligence, it is clear that earthworms do in fact play a crucial role in the environment. Without them, the earth would be covered over with dead plants and animals; mankind would be buried beneath every bit of organic matter ever created. The expression "out with the old, in with the new" is one that earthworms can live by: they recycle dead matter so that new growth can be produced in its place ("Worm World"). The earthworm unquestioningly "goes on and on, confiding, tireless / endlessly extruding himself into the future" (Head 81). Although the contributions of the inconspicuous earthworm are not always obvious to the human eye, the apparently destructive nature of the earthworm proves to be a truly creative force.

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Adolescent Homicide

By Jackie Toplitz

One of the most serious growing problems in the United States is adolescent homicide. Katherine M. Heide, author of Young Killers: The Challenge of Juvenile Homicide, explains "in 1993, the number of juveniles arrested for murder - 3,284 - was three times higher than the number arrested in 1984 and [has] reached an all-time high" (6). Juvenile homicide is on the rise and there seems to be no stopping it. A difficulty concerning this issue is that there is no set description of a homicidal adolescent. These young killers come from all different backgrounds, living anywhere from cities to suburbs to rural areas. Some are wealthy and some are poor, some attend schools and have jobs while others have dropped out and are unemployed (Heide 7-8). To attempt to identify these troubled teens is challenging but by focusing on specific situations and experiences it can be easier. The first step to stopping this epidemic is recognizing a young killer and preventing the crime by distinguishing the causes. The main causes of the recent rise in adolescent homicide are a result of several aspects of familial situations and society.

The most common cause of adolescent homicide is initiated through familial situations. This is because "the family [...] is arguably our most single important institution, biologically perpetuating society and nurturing the individual" (Mones 26). The family is the most influential element in most people's lives, whether family is present or absent. In one study with 30 homicidal adolescents all "were seen as coming from homes marked by family disorganization, marital conflict, economic insecurity, and parental brutality" (Crespi 3). Additionally, most recent research has proven that the majority of homicidal adolescents were raised in broken home (Heide 32).

Abuse is the most prominent problem among families and its effects are lasting whether the abuse is directed towards the children themselves or towards one parent from the other. "The [second] most consistent finding in the research on juvenile homicide to date is that children or adolescents who kill [...] have generally witnessed and/or been directly victimized by domestic violence" (22), states author Charles Ewing. Many studies support this information including a study conducted in 1988 at the New York University Medical Center which reported: "of fourteen juveniles on death row, [...] twelve of the [teenagers] had been brutally physically and sexually abused, and five had been sodomized by older male relatives" (Mones 40). Abuse can take on many different forms such as physical, sexual, verbal, and psychological (Heide 39). Physical abuse directed towards children is the most common abuse found in the history of homicidal juveniles (Ewing 22). It has been concluded that "a typical profile involved [a child] who had experienced years of physical abuse or observance of abuse" (Crespi 5). Coinciding with the rise of homicidal juveniles "reports of child abuse have increased greatly in recent years" (Heide 37), which supports the strong impact of the relationship between children and their parents. The result of abusive parents often lasts throughout the child's lifetime. Most youths are unable to handle the trauma brought on by abuse and ".rather than being passively indifferent toward the lives of others, some abused youths are angry and in pain

and vent their rage through destruction and violence" (Heide 40). Another serious consequence of abuse also explained by author Katherine Heide is: Living in households [in abusive situations], many abused youths fail to bond with others. These adolescents often lack attachments to teachers and conventional peers as well as to parents. Consequently, they do not develop the values, empathy, and self-concept that fosters self-control and could inhibit them from killing others. (40)

Because of the reliance children have on their parents, "torture and deprivation under conditions of complete dependency have elicited a terrible and terrifying combination of helplessness and rage - unbearable feelings that must be suppressed for the victim to survive" (Mones 38-39). Through abusive situations, as cited above, adolescents can become homicidal.

Along with child abuse, being exposed to abusive relationships of parents can be just as traumatizing. Evidence of this conclusion is found in "young killers as a group, and youths who kill parents in particular, [who] frequently have witnessed one parent, typically the mother, being abused by the other parental figure" (Heide 32). In the home life of "nine homicidal youngsters [. it was] reported that 'Family situations were full of turmoil. Usually there were brutal fights between the parents'" (Ewing 22). Another study comprised of fourteen juvenile murderers found that nine of the fourteen youths were exposed to violence between their parents (Crespi 3). Witnessing the abuse of one of your parents can bring strong feelings of hate and anger which may lead to violence such as murder.

In addition to abuse, change within the familial structure has a great impact on the life of a child, especially those who commit murder. Over the past 25 years, several changes have been found within the family which could account for lack of supervision and the greater risk of the adolescents getting into serious trouble (Heide 40). The biggest problem is the absence of one or both parents. A contributor to the lack of parental figures is divorce. The divorce rate has increased significantly over the past several years and "today, more than 50% of all marriages end in divorce" (Heide 41). Without the strong bond of a mother and father, divorce can drive children to violence. After a divorce, most likely, there is only one parent regularly present and without two adults looking after a child, it becomes much easier to lose control of the juvenile's actions. "The number of children born to unmarried mothers [that] has nearly tripled, from 398,700 in 1970 to 1,165,384 in 1990" (Heide 40) also increases the likely hood of children causing problems. Also contributing is the number of working mothers which has risen significantly over the last several years (Heide 41). Because of these two factors if the woman is a single parent she will most likely have to work to support her family and would probably not be able to supply her child or children with the proper supervision needed. With the lack of parental guidance and observation, problems can occur. Children can either get in trouble themselves or fall into a bad crowd of kids that lead them to violence and crimes. An alternative change in the family can be influenced by the community that they live in. The book *Children Who Murder: A Psychological Perspective* provides another possibility stating: "perhaps most significant, the family has been affected by a decline in the sense of community, where once the community

operated as part of an extended family, supporting parents in their supervision and regulation of the behavior of the neighborhood children" (Heckel 84).

The next central factor leading to homicidal adolescents deals with problems within society. In today's world there is violence everywhere, whether it is on television, in video games or in person. One of the most common arguments about children becoming violent is a result of their exposure to television and video games. It is true that over the years movies, television shows and video games have become increasingly violent. This known fact corresponds with the increase of homicidal adolescents. Along with this rise in violence more and more of the general community have become aware and concerned. The American Psychological Association (APA) conducted a study which "confirmed that children who view 2 to 4 hours of television violence daily will witness 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence before finishing elementary school" (Heide 42). In addition to these statistics it is predicted that "if the viewing period is extended to the late teens, these youths will have observed about 200,000 violent acts" (Heide 42). Such exposure is easily able to help mold the minds of adolescents of what they think is "cool" and distorting the difference between what is acceptable and what is not.

Much worse than watching violence and murder on television or video games is witnessing the crimes in person. In a survey conducted in 1992 it was found that of "203 African American students, in a public high school in an inner-city Chicago community, [...] 43% reported that they had seen a killing and 53% reported that someone close to them had been killed" (Heide 42). In another study "61% [of children] had seen a shooting, 66% knew someone who was close to them had been shot, and 48% had been shot at themselves" (Heide 42-43). Through this statistical information it is clear that knowledge and observation of violence and murder is not uncommon. By being exposed to so many teenagers, murder can easily be imitated through the influence of sight and familiarity of homicide.

An important issue regarding murder is the availability of resources to kill. It has recently been "demonstrated [through research] that youth involvement in violence has been associated with the frequency of carrying a weapon" (Heide 44) and to emphasize the effect of juveniles carrying weapons, an investigation conducted by the FBI reveals shocking statistics: "gun homicides by juveniles nearly tripled from 1983 to 1993" (Heide 44). In a study through the Ohio State Bureau of Juvenile Research, C.H. Growden conducted a survey which concluded that "33 of the 54 juvenile homicide offenders [in his study] had used firearms" (95). Today's availability of guns is shockingly high. According to a Justice Department study, only 35% of American high school students said that it would be difficult to obtain a gun (Schiraldi 2). As a result, "National data regarding all arrests for murder and non-negligent manslaughter consistently indicate that firearms are used to perpetrate the majority of homicides" (Ewing 11). After research and interviews, author Katherine Heide had no difficulty finding teenagers that were able to give her information on how to obtain a stolen gun and specific prices on different types she could buy (Heide 45). She concludes that the problem with this is that "when guns are easily accessible, youths who often are impulsive and unskilled in conflict resolution

might use them as a means of retaliation" (Heide 44), thus creating a higher rate of homicides committed by adolescents.

Another critical element of society that has an impact on adolescent homicide is substance abuse. "A growing number of studies [which suggest a] substantial relationship between adolescent violence and substance abuse" (Heide 45) have recently been revealed. Substance abuse includes both the use of alcohol and drugs. Heide illustrates the impact of this abuse through statistical information from studies:

In a study of 18 juvenile murderers, [it was] found that 50% were substance dependent. Psychiatrist Susan Bailey reported in 1996 that, of the 20 juvenile murderers in the United Kingdom whom she treated, 75% abused alcohol and 35% abused drugs. Researchers in Finland reported in 1997 that 10 of the 13 young homicide offenders in their study were dependent on alcohol. (32)

Through other studies she also discovered that "both percentages of juvenile homicide offenders who reported abusing substances and the percentage of those who indicated that they were 'high' at the time of the murder have increased over the past 20 to 30 years" (Heide 32). Additionally, an increase in the use of drugs starting in the 1990s has grown substantially from just a decade ago (Heide 45). While the use of alcohol and drugs may not necessarily cause the offender to murder, "it is likely that chemical abuse affected their judgment about engaging in criminal activity and their perceptions during the homicidal event" (Heide 45). In further studies "of 16 juvenile homicide offenders, 8 indicated that they were 'substance affected' (intoxicated, crashing or sick or in need of a substance) at the time of the murder" (Heide 33).

Adolescent homicide is increasingly growing and becoming a large problem in today's society. Many teens involved have been exposed to a number of different factors that drove them to commit their crimes; "some of these factors are more global and difficult to measure in the individual case, yet their effects on society and on a generation of children growing up today are visible" (Heide 37). Through much research and case studies the two most significant contributors to homicidal teenagers are familial situations and society. Through familial situations, abuse is a considerable ingredient to initiate homicidal behavior along with change in the familial structure such as divorce and the absence of adult figures. Factors within society also have a significant impact through witnessing violence, the availability of guns, and substance abuse. All of these components work separately and together in causing homicidal behavior among adolescents.

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The U.S.A. P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act: Answer to Terrorism, or Constitution Shredder?

By Anthony Florio

America is in a time of crisis. A battle is being fought not only on the grounds of terrorism, but also in the name of our civil liberties. The U.S.A. P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act (hence forth to be referred to as the Patriot Act or the act) is now a substantial threat to the civil liberties of Americans. The events of September 11th, 2001 have had a considerable impact on the United States, and the Bush Administration has used the general feeling of fear and anger to push through a very controversial piece of legislation. The Patriot Act was passed by Congress, because there was, and still is, a general feeling of fear. Unfortunately, the terrorists that plotted the September 11th attacks were successful in the pure sense of terrorism, because the idea behind terrorism is fear. When there is a feeling of fear, precautions are taken for simply the threat of danger. This mass hysteria has prompted the Bush Administration to take advantage of these emotions and pass an act in which the American people unknowingly (on a mass scale) give up many of their civil liberties.

The Patriot Act is an acronym for "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism" (United States Government). While this acronym is very clever, the act holds our future in the balance. Never before has such a powerful piece of legislation been passed so quickly in the history of the United States. In the Senate, the act was passed nearly unopposed, 98 to 1, and in the House of Representatives, the act was passed 357 to 66 (Olsen). The act received little to no opposition from politicians, the media, or the American people. In a time where 24/7/365 news stations cover every aspect of the world, it is very surprising and disturbing to know that this act was able to "pass under the radar." On October 26, 2001, the United States government took advantage of the American people. In essence, the Patriot Act should be revoked because its structure has no limits. Thus there are no definite parameters to the legal issues involved and the act plays upon emotions rather than the rationality of the American people.

The Patriot Act was designed to combat terrorism in the new age that we all live in. The act gives the attorney general (currently John Ashcroft) broad, and in some cases, undefined power to detain foreigners. The act also allows the United States to deny entry to individuals that publicly endorse terrorism. Perhaps one of the most shocking and beneficial pieces of the act explains that if an individual provides any financial assistance to a terrorist organization the assistance will be considered an act of terrorism. "The act broadens the notion of who is to be considered a terrorist suspect and provides the attorney general with sweeping personal authority to detain Arabs and Muslims, as well as other foreigners" (Magstadt 460). The Patriot Act also "allows the government to detain any foreigner the attorney general considers a menace" (Magstadt 460). These provisions do not fully explain why the Patriot Act should be revoked and aside from the

".detain[ing] of Arabs and Muslims.," the act sounds fair and good for the United States (Magstadt 460). The flaws of the Patriot Act are completely shocking if they are considered in a cynical or even realistic manner. Jennifer Van Bergen, editor of *truthout*, believes that the Patriot Act should be called "the Constitution Shredding Act" (Van Bergen).

The big problem with the Patriot Act is that it has the possibility to be used in cases that are totally unrelated to terrorism. The act has no official guidelines that hold the government to use the act in any specific way. Very recently, this massive loophole in the act has allowed the FBI. to use the "new weapon in its arsenal" to catch a suspect that is completely unrelated to terrorism (Isikoff 36). The Patriot Act gives federal law enforcement agencies "wide ranging powers to track and eavesdrop on suspected terrorists" (Isikoff 36). This wide range of power was used in a case nicknamed "Operation G-String" in an attempt to catch "Michael Galardi, the city's [Las Vegas] biggest strip-club baron" (Isikoff 36). The FBI used a provision of the Patriot Act that allows them to "quickly obtain financial records of money launderers" (Isikoff 36). The provision that was used in that case allows the FBI to search "every financial institution in the country for the records of [anyone] they have suspicions about" (Isikoff 36). According to Newsweek magazine, the FBI has "used the Patriot Act to conduct searches on 962 suspects, yielding 'hits' on 6,397 financial records. Of those, two thirds (4,261) were in money-laundering cases with no apparent terror connection" (Isikoff 36). This fact alone demonstrates that little is being done to keep the government from staying within the spirit of the act. "Operation G-String" was a success, and some illegal activities were stopped, but the Patriot Act was not used in a way that it was meant to (Isikoff 36). By having "no tie to terror," the United States government is essentially fooling its citizens by using the Patriot Act for reasons other than terrorism (Isikoff 36).

For sometime now, Americans have said little concerning the Patriot Act. Even the 24/7/365 news stations have had little coverage of the act. When the act is brought up, most people have little knowledge of the act, and they are simply happy to hear that the government has done something to combat terrorism. That "something" however, is not in the best interests of the future of the American public. The questions that are raised are: What will be the cry from the public when "wartime" tensions and terrorist threats calm down? Where will we draw the line on how far the government can go? Americans have been known to fight for their rights, and one must think that eventually someone will stand up and fight the act. It is believed that our elected officials did little to prevent the act from passing because of pressure from the Bush administration. "Supporters of the [act] decided to call it the "PATRIOT Act" to intimidate any of the people who were raising any questions of concerns about it" (Lynch 506). One could easily play the cynic, and see the smear campaign on the person who voted against the "Patriot" Act. In a panel discussion, Congressman Barney Frank said, "I'm a great believer in free speech but I would not mind amending the Constitution to ban the use of acronyms, particularly offensive ones like this one. I do not believe that we should call laws things like USA PATRIOT" (Toobin 1505). It is also believed that Congress requested additional time to pass the act and for the act to be broken down into smaller pieces of legislation. The act was not broken down and John Ashcroft was believed to have said "Ok, let's pass [the

act] in two weeks" instead of the "three days" requested by Ashcroft originally (Lynch 506).

The quick turn of events really caught many government officials off balance. Ashcroft asked for the Patriot Act to be passed very quickly, and it seems that many officials were uncomfortable with the short deadline and some politicians suggested "sunset provisions" to be incorporated into the act (Lynch 506). A sunset provision allows something to be passed with a safety net. It allows a law to be put into place for a limited time. When the predetermined time is up, the law can be voted on again, or the law can expire and cease to exist. Very few sunset provisions were placed into the Patriot Act, and "sunset proposals were resisted very fiercely by the administration" (Lynch 506). Attorney General John Ashcroft basically intimidated Congress, and ultimately fooled Congress into passing one of the worst pieces of legislation ever written in history.

The Patriot Act is an opening for the United States to expand its surveillance capabilities, and to narrow the *implied* right to privacy. The all-knowing force, "Big Brother," which was created by George Orwell in the novel *1984*, is becoming a scary reality. The parallels between the novel and today's world are to the point of being creepy. One of the new measures being taken under the act is to create agencies that can monitor different aspects and areas of the world. With the creation of the Total Information Agency (TIA), the United States government has created a huge database that is filled with information on nearly every person in the United States, and many people outside the country. It is believed that if you have had any contact with a computer, that there is a possibility that you are in the database. Just simply receiving your daily mail from the U.S. Postal Service means that your name and basic information is in a computer database somewhere. The TIA is being run by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). DARPA works on military research, and it is a branch of the Department of Defense. John Poindexter currently heads the agency. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the TIA can incorporate government records of individuals, "medical and financial records, political beliefs, travel history, prescriptions, buying habits, communications (phone calls, e-mails, and Web surfing), school records, personal and family associations, and so on" into your profile in the database (ACLU). This database is to the point where "all-knowing" is not far fetched (Orwell). The Patriot Act has seriously changed the face of our government intelligence agencies and our implied right to privacy.

On September 11th, 2001, the day of the attacks, many Americans were standing in the streets calling for war. Emotions took over, and one must think, and hope that the Patriot Act was passed in haste, and in the near future, the act will be revoked. Historians are currently placing the Patriot Act along with "the Alien and Sedition Acts of the 1790's, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, and the Abrams decision suppressing free speech" during World War I (Mirtano). With company like that, one must think that something will be done to turn around the Patriot Act. Hopefully, little damage will be done with the act, and the mistakes that were made will never be made again in the future.

Of course the Patriot Act was most influenced by the events that took place on September 11th; however one must think that past events have also played a role in the passage of the act. America has seen terrorism since 1983 and there has been a steady number of terrorist acts since 1993. The first event to have a real impact the United States occurred in February of 1993. In 1993, there was an attempt to take down the World Trade Center. This tragic event was the first time America saw a real threat of terrorism. Terrorism in a sense fell off the radar with the American public until April of 1995. In 1995, a terrorist attack occurred in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The attack resulted in 168 dead, and over 600 wounded. This event however was linked to domestic terrorism, and much of the fears of terrorism immediately died down. Today little is said about the Oklahoma City bombing, but it was undoubtedly an important moment in United States history. The Olympic Park bombing in Atlanta, Georgia, July 1996 was also an event that drew worldwide attention to terrorism. The attack was more highly publicized because it took place in a sense on an international platform, the Olympics. The Patriot Act may or may not have been on the horizon without the events of September 11th, 2001, but undoubtedly the most recent attacks, were the straws that broke the camel's back.

The Patriot Act not only touches the personal lives of people, it also touches our legal system. According to the article, "And The Walls Came Tumbling Down: Sharing Grand Jury Information With The Intelligence Community Under The USA PATRIOT Act," by Jennifer M. Collins, the author gives insight to "the dramatic new exception to the long-standing tradition of grand jury secrecy" as stated in the Patriot Act. The Patriot Act, section 203, amends Rule 6(e) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. Rule 6(e) describes preserving the secrecy of grand jury proceedings. The nullification of this rule drastically changes an important part of America's judicial system. The tradition of "secrecy," in regard to a grand jury, has been standing since at least the seventeenth century, and it has become a cornerstone of American law. Rule 6(e) was a very important provision; it prevented grand jurors and prosecutors from revealing information related to a grand jury investigation. The Patriot Act changes all of that and now allows a flow of information in areas and situations where it is deemed "necessary." The arguments provided by Collins are supported in many areas and raise additional questions. The author states that it is difficult for the courts to define when and when not to allow a free flow of information. This fuzzy border has been the source of many questions in regards to the Patriot Act, and is yet another argument for revoking the act.

There are additional problems enclosed in the Patriot Act, specifically the nullification of Rule 6(e). By disclosing the information of a grand jury, some witnesses may be reluctant to testify, if the information provided can be used by an intelligence agency. Also, by disclosing this information, there is an increase in the number of people who have the information. This increases the risk that someone will notify the target of the sensitive information. This in-turn defeats the purpose of the entire process. The secrecy of a grand jury is essential in two areas. The investigation is to be kept secret from the defendant so that the defendant cannot interfere. It is also kept secret to keep the investigation from the media, and the public. If information is leaked to outside sources, a case or investigation could be ruined.

It is important to see the impact of the changes of Rule 6(e). The new legislation turns a great deal of information over to the intelligence community. The act gives agencies, such as the CIA, full access to databases which contain the testimony of individual witnesses. An intelligence agency can get information on any number of people involved or related to an event in question. "For example, a prosecutor..could issue a grand jury subpoena for the hotel records of every person who stayed in the same hotel as the one of the September 11th hijackers during the same week" (Collins 1274-1275). This broad range of power opens up a whole new area for investigative work and criminal cases. It also raises many more questions regarding our civil liberties. The disclosure of grand jury information has changed the very face of our legal system. Intelligence agencies can now access data that was previously inaccessible to them. This not only provides more evidence to use in cases, but in theory, it allows the United States to be safer. The question is however how far are we willing to let the government go in the name of "safety?" The information that can now be accessed is said to be used to prevent terrorism, yet it is evident that some information can be used in many other ways.

The controversy over the Patriot Act has been taken further than simple editorial comments or newspaper articles. "The American Civil Liberties Union has sued on behalf of six mosques and social service agencies, challenging a section of the USA Patriot Act that allows the FBI to get records from a library, business or person by securing a court order from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court" (Shepardson 01). This legal action will send shockwaves throughout the country. A controversial ruling could prompt further legal action. At the very least, this case should get some attention from the media, and hopefully the American public. "Section 215 of the Patriot Act doesn't require the FBI to show that there is probable cause to believe a crime might have been committed to get the records. The law also bars those who get the requests for the records from telling anyone about them" (Shepardson 01). There is much confusion over many small things in this case and both sides will undoubtedly fight for every inch. As much confusion as there is in this case, there will be even more confusion in the coming months, with the cases of the detainees from Guantanamo Bay. Slowly there are details coming out about this case in which the United States Supreme Court will rule on the circumstances surrounding the detainees. The Patriot Act may take a very big hit after the ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. It looks as if there might be a light at the end of the tunnel. There is no doubt that Attorney John Ashcroft will attempt to intercept any attempts derail the Patriot Act, but organizations like the ACLU will last beyond the four (or eight) years that the Bush Administration and John Ashcroft are in power.

The world is now a different place. It is mind-boggling to consider that President George W. Bush has declared war not on a country, but a concept; that concept being terrorism. There is no defining trait for our new enemies, there is no flag that is being waved, terrorists are organized people with one purpose in mind; to strike fear in other people. Unfortunately fear is rampant throughout the world and although it has been suppressed by many Americans, it is still there. We cannot ignore what is going on in the world, and we cannot separate ourselves from that circumstances that are now seen throughout the world. Terrorism is no longer something that is seen in the movies or on the five o'clock news; it is taking place in our own backyards. The President of the United

States, George W. Bush has told the American people to go on with their lives yet everyday young Americans are being killed in the name of our "War on Terrorism." It is a very hard pill to swallow when Americans are dying and the government puts in place an act that attempts to play on our emotions - "PATRIOT" Act. Where does the compassion stop and the propaganda start? America is in a time of crisis and a time of war yet we continue on with our daily lives. One must question the tactics of the government in a ploy to win support of its people. All the flag waving, use of the word "patriot," or "American," and the war on terrorism may all be for nothing if we let our emotions take hold and allow this Patriot Act to continue without limits. Fear, paranoia, and anger cannot cloud our vision. We must stand united behind our country and our troops to stand strong against terrorism, but we cannot let the Patriot Act be our answer to terrorism.

What the terrorists did on September 11th was very bold. Not only were the terrorists successful in knocking down a building complex in New York City, they also attacked the command center of the "superpower (?)" of the world, the Pentagon. Although the attack on the Pentagon is thought to have been a backup target, it attests to the boldness of the attack. *The most powerful country in the world was attacked at the center of its defense!* Terrorism is not going away and it is not to be taken lightly, however the Patriot Act cannot be our answer to terrorism. The question of how far to take certain measures in order to catch terrorists is very difficult to answer, but one thing is for sure: the Patriot Act is not the answer.

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Against Capital Punishment

By Ashley Herrott

"Capital punishment is the lawful infliction of death as a punishment and since ancient times it has been used for a wide variety of offenses" (Clark). Elementary justice requires that the judicial functions of trial and sentencing must be conducted with fairness, especially in cases concerning the death penalty, which is irrevocable. Court evidence shows that courts have been arbitrary, racially biased, and unfair in the way that some convicts are sentenced to death, while others get prison for similar offenses. This does not guarantee the equal protection of the laws. Capital punishment is extremely random, and often imposed upon those whose victims are white, whose offenders are people of color, and on the offenders who are poor and uneducated (Bedau). However, it is in our power to insure that there be life imprisonment without parole. So why risk lives when capital punishment has not even proven to act as an effective deterrent of crime? (Archbishop of Boston)

By 1500 in Europe, major felonies, such as treason, murder, larceny, burglary, rape, and arson, were considered worthy of the death penalty. By 1700, hundreds of people in Europe were being put to death each year because Parliament had enacted many new capital offenses. Reform of capital punishment began in the 1750s in Europe. Among those that argued that it was unusually cruel, occasionally prone to fatal error, and not an effective deterrent, were Italian jurist Cesare Beccaria, French philosopher Voltaire, and English law reformers Jeremy Bentham and Samuel Romilly (Clark).

These reforms eventually caught on in other places. Michigan was the first state to abolish capital punishment for murder in 1847. However, America, along with Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, for the most part still used capital punishment for certain crimes (Clark). However, in 1972, the Supreme Court declared, "the imposition and carrying out of the death penalty constitutes cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the 8th and 14th Amendments" (Bedau). They found the results of the death penalty to be "harsh, freakish, and arbitrary" and constitutionally unacceptable (Bedau). Capital punishment laws were repealed from 1968 to 1976. No executions were carried out in the country because many believed capital punishment to be cruel and unusual punishment, and denied due process of the law. Justice Thurgood Marshall stated, "I cannot believe that at this stage in our history, the American people would ever knowingly support purposeless vengeance" (Grant).

However, in response to the decision in *Furman v. Georgia*, where the Court ruled that the way in which capital punishment statutes were utilized were unconstitutional, the state of Georgia amended its law in order to provide for capital punishment of certain crimes, which allowed the Court to eliminate excessive penalties. This amended law then was used to convict Troy Gregg and sentence him to die for the 1973 murder of two men when Gregg was stealing their car. In 1976, *Gregg v. Georgia* was appealed to the Supreme Court, and was determined that the defendants had been accorded due process of law and that the death penalty was not cruel and unusual punishment in this case.

Therefore, the Court reinstated capital punishment on the ground that it was not unconstitutional per se (Grant). By the early 1990s, almost 3,000 people were sentenced to death; over 180 had already been executed (Bedau).

"Capital punishment is a barbarous survival from a less enlightened and refined age; it is incongruous and incompatible with our present standard of civilization and humanity" (Against Capital Punishment). How can our advanced civilization justify the singling out of individuals to receive the harshest treatment? It seems as if the purpose of criminal justice is to exact revenge, but since ancient times, great civilizations have explained the main purpose of justice to be to restore the good as much as possible. Does executing criminals restore the good (Daoust)? Murder shows a lack of respect for any human's life. This makes state authorized killing immoral. As a capital punishment state, we are placed among nations known for their disregard for human rights of citizens: China, Iran, Iraq, and South Africa. Americans should feel embarrassed to be linked with the governments of such uncaring nations (Bedau).

Executions give society the message that human life does not deserve respect or the right to live. An execution is a very dramatic public spectacle, which only promotes the ideas that killing people solves social problems. This is the worst example to set for society. This is real bloodshed; it lowers the common decency of the people. The death penalty obscures the crime and distracts attention from social measures that can contribute to its control. Those who preach that executions are a weapon for crime control only are deceiving the people by masking their own failure to support a working anti-crime measure (Bedau). "We must not allow ourselves to be caught up in the spiral of violence. Violence begets violence. Capital punishment is really no answer" (Archbishop of Boston).

The traditional mode of execution was hanging. However, if the drop is too short, the death will be agonizing strangulation; if the drop is too long, the head will be torn off. Another form still utilized by Idaho and Utah is the firing squad, where the prisoner is strapped into a chair, and hooded. A target is then pinned on his chest, and five marksmen, one with blanks, take aim and fire (Bedau).

"Electrocution has been the most widely used form of execution in this country in this century" (Bedau). The convicted person is strapped into the chair with electrodes fastened to the head and legs. The body strains when the switch is thrown, and jolts as the voltage is raised and lowered, smoke often rises from the head, and the odor of burning flesh is nauseating. It is unknown how long an individual can retain consciousness (Bedau).

The barbaric electrocution of John Evans in Alabama was described by an eyewitness:

At 8:30, the first jolt of 1900 volts of electricity passed through Mr. Evans's body. Sparks and flames erupted from the electrode tied to Mr. Evans's leg. His body slammed against the straps holding him in the electric chair and his fist clenched permanently. A large puff of grayish smoke and sparks poured out from

under the hood that covered Mr. Evans's face. An overpowering stench of burnt flesh and clothing began pervading the witness room. Mr. Evans was administered a second 30 second jolt of electricity. More smoke emanated from his leg and head. [They] reported his heart was still beating, and that he was still alive. At that time, I asked the prison commissioner, who was communicating on an open telephone line to Governor George Wallace, to grant clemency on the ground that Mr. Evans was being subjected to cruel and unusual punishment...The request was denied. (Bedau)

An attempt at an improvement on electrocution was the gas chamber, where the prisoner is strapped into a chair with a container holding sulfuric acid underneath. Cyanide is dropped into this acid in order to form lethal gas. John Paul Stevens reported in the dissent by U.S. Supreme Court of the 1992 execution of Don Harding in Arizona: "At this point Don's body started convulsing violently. His face and body fumed a deep red and the veins in his temple and neck began to bulge until I thought they might explode" (Bedau).

Yet the latest form used for inflicting the death penalty is lethal injection. It is too easy to overstate the humanness of this method because there is no way of truly knowing if it is painless. Observed by the U.S. Supreme Court of Appeals: "Even a slight error in dosage or administration can leave a prisoner conscious but paralyzed while dying, a sentient witness of his or her own asphyxiation" (Bedau). It seems as if death by lethal injection makes killing as punishment more accepted by the public. However, "it is no different from hanging or shooting as an expression of the absolute power of the state over the helpless individual" (Bedau).

Witnesses of executions are horrified. Richard Moran observed an execution in Texas: "I was an intruder, the only member of the public who had trespassed on [the condemned man's] private moment of anguish. In my face he could see the horror of his own death" (Bedau).

Of course some say they found satisfaction and closure by seeing the killer of their loved one die. However, many others are left dissatisfied and feel that it is not enough to heal the hurt that they feel inside (Bedau; Daoust).

As one whose husband and mother-in-law have died the victims of murder assassinations, I stand firmly and unequivocally opposed to the death penalty for those convicted of capital offenses. An evil deed is not redeemed by an evil deed of retaliation. Justice is never advanced in the taking of a human life. Morality is never upheld by legalized murder. (Bedau qtd. Coretta Scott King)

Kerry Kennedy, daughter of Senator Robert Kennedy, experienced similar feelings: "I didn't want the killer, in turn, to be killed. I remember lying in bed and praying, 'Please, God. Please don't take his life too.' I saw nothing that could be accomplished in the loss of one life being answered with the loss of another" (Bedau).

A group called the Cherish Life Circle is completely opposed to the death penalty. They express their views by accepting invitations to speak at public forums and arranging for special gatherings. David Hammer, on death row in 2000, was received into the Catholic Church by Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, who gave Hammer Communion and confirmation. Sister D'Arienzo stated: "Seeing the incredible joy in the eyes of David is something I'll never forget" (Anderson). She encouraged Hammer to create a set of greeting cards, with the proceeds going toward programs supporting at-risk youth. He has even written two books, one of them about Timothy McVeigh, who shared the cell next to him. "Although David had prepared his appeal for life without parole, he asked for an execution date. We who counsel him are heartbroken, although a desire for freedom from endless incarceration and all its attendant indignities is understandable" (Anderson qtd. Sister D'Arienzo).

"As to the reformatory character of punishment, it is scarcely necessary to point out that capital punishment effectually removes all possibility of [murders] by cutting short the life of the wrongdoer" (Against Capital Punishment), which takes away his chance of reforming, and our opportunity as a society to reform him. One can only "destroy a criminal" by reforming him; destroying his body has nothing to do with it. It is society's duty to assist the "fallen brother to his feet" (Against Capital Punishment). These criminals must be treated for their unstableness by being isolated in institutions where they can be treated humanely as patients who may be of unsound mind. They have little or no respect for themselves because it has been stripped of them by the constant assurance that they are wicked and hopeless people. They have been preached sinfulness. It serves as an insult to our intelligence if our society makes criminals, and then kills them; if criminals are made, then they should be reformed (Against Capital Punishment).

The threat of punishment itself does not necessarily deter criminals. Those who commit murder sometimes premeditate them, where the criminal tries to escape detection, so therefore any punishment will not stop them. If it is not premeditated, then how could the threat of any punishment deter the criminals? These crimes are committed during a time of emotional stress or while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Logical thinking is not being utilized (Bedau; Daoust). Many murders have been found to be done in sudden bursts of insanity, a time when the individual is not thinking of the consequences (Archbishop of Boston). Even if severe punishment was enough to deter crime, then long-term imprisonment would be considered enough of a cause for any rational-thinking person to not commit a violent crime (Bedau).

If one is for the death penalty, he would argue that money should be spent on resources instead of life imprisonment for criminals (Clark). The death penalty is not now, nor has it ever been, a more economical alternative to life imprisonment" (Bedau qtd. Blumstein, Cohen, and Nagin). It wastes our resources. It uses up the time and energy of the courts, burdens the system of criminal justice only making it less productive for society's control of violent crime, and it unfortunately epitomizes the brutality of violence instead of the reason for the solution. There is a large delay in carrying out the death sentence with the procedural safeguard. Murder trials take far

longer when the death penalty is an option. Post-conviction appeals are increasingly frequent also. This all adds to the time and cost of valuable resources (Bedau).

In Maryland, a study was done by the U.S. Government Accounting Office, which revealed that a death penalty case costs "approximately 42% more than a case resulting in a non-death sentence" (Bedau). A study done in 1982 by New York State Defenders Associates showed that if the death penalty were to be reintroduced in New York, the cost of capital trials alone would be more than double the cost of life imprisonment. Also, in the state of Florida, the Miami Herald found that the true cost of each execution is about \$3.2 million-six times the cost of life imprisonment (Bedau). These are absurd costs to pay for an ineffective deterrent of crime.

Capital punishment is also completely disproportional. "Only a small proportion of first-degree murderers are sentenced to death, and even fewer are executed" (Bedau). Of all those who are convicted on a charge of criminal homicide, about one in fifty are sentenced to death, representing just how arbitrary this practice is (Bedau). If our society is truly serious about reducing crime through punishments like the death penalty, then we must be prepared to execute every criminal who commits a capital crime, regardless of sex, age (above the minimum), mental state, or background. Appeals must be limited, and there can be no reprieves. Executions cannot be delayed, and must be given sufficient publicity in order to get the message across to those who are similarly minded people. It is unfair to make executions arbitrary (Clark).

Moreover, people for the death penalty argue that the criminal is made to suffer in proportion to the offense he has committed (Clark). Many believe the death penalty is the only suitable retribution for criminal homicide. However, punishment is retributive by nature, not only the death penalty. "Execution is more than a punishment exacted in retribution for the taking of a life" (Bedau). As author Camus wrote:

For there to be equivalence, the death penalty would have to punish a criminal who had warned his victim of the date at which he would inflict a horrible death on him and who, from that moment onward, had confined him at his mercy for months. Such a monster is not encountered in private life. (Bedau qtd. Camus)

Of course criminals need to be punished, but the severity of punishment does have its limits. One cannot forget that criminals are real people too-they have a life, they feel pain, fear, and all other emotions that humans are capable of feeling. Imagine the mental torture that the criminal must suffer in the time leading to the execution. "How would you feel knowing that you were going to die tomorrow at 8:00 a.m.?" (Clark)

Capital punishment denies due process of law, not to mention it is extremely arbitrary and irrevocable. It will forever compromise a person's benefits of new evidence or possibly a new law that could reverse the conviction showing innocence (Bedau). Often the only people who truly know the real circumstances of the crime and the people involved are usually the accused and the deceased. However, the decision comes down to the defense lawyers and the prosecution of whether the conviction will be for murder or

for manslaughter. Thus, it is quite probable that people are wrongly convicted of murder when it should have been manslaughter (Clark). To the French Chamber of Deputies in 1830, Marquis de Lafayette said, "I shall ask for the abolition of the punishment of death until I have the infallibility of human judgment demonstrated to me" (Bedau).

Even though the likelihood of an innocent man being executed is perhaps slim, it should in no way be ruled out. There is evidence that shows that innocent people are often convicted of crimes, such as capital punishment, and have been executed for it. There has been an average of more than four cases per year in which an innocent person was convicted of murder since 1900, where some of the innocent went to their death. In many cases, a commutation or reprieve has arrived just in time-hours or even minutes before the scheduled execution (Bedau).

Only a year before the Supreme Court confirmed that capital punishment is constitutionally acceptable, two African Americans, Freddie Pitt and Wilbert Lee were released from prison after 12 years awaiting execution for the murder of two whites. Their convictions were based on forced confessions, an erroneous testimony, and an inept defense counsel. Even though a white man admitted his guilt, a nine-year legal battle was required before the governor would grant Pitts and Lee a pardon. These two men would most likely not be alive today if the death penalty had not been under examination for its constitutionality (Bedau).

A case in Texas in the 1980s involved a black high school janitor, Brandley, who was interrogated by the police because his coworker found the body of a missing 15-year-old white schoolgirl in a closet. The police officer told the janitors, "One of you two is going to hang for this," and while looking at Brandley, "Since you're the nigger, you're elected" (Bedau). He was then tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. "The courtroom atmosphere reeked of racism" (Bedau). In 1986, evidence emerged that another man committed the murder, but Brandley was not released until 1990. Imagine the horrifying effects this had on his life (Bedau).

The innocent prisoners mentioned above were lucky enough to be released in time, but when prisoners are executed, no legal forum exists in which unanswered questions of guilt can be resolved. Roger Keith Coleman was executed in May 1992 even though there were widely publicized doubts surrounding his guilt, and evidence that even pointed to another person as murderer. However, Coleman was executed regardless. If Coleman were still in prison, many investigators would further break apart the case to find if he could possibly be innocent; but with Coleman dead, further questioning about the facts is very unlikely because the man has already died. "Overzealous prosecution, mistaken or perjured testimony, faulty police work, coerced confessions, the defendant's previous criminal record, inept defense counsel, seemingly conclusive circumstantial evidence, community pressure for an conviction. such factors help explain why the judicial system cannot guarantee that justice will never miscarry" (Bedau).

"The evidence that the death penalty is unfairly applied is overwhelming" (Daoust). Between the years of 1930 and 1990, 4,016 people were executed in the United

States; of these, 53% were black. This may seem proportional, but during these years African-Americans made up about 12% of the nation's population. Within the past century, black offenders were often executed for crimes that are less deserving of the death penalty. A higher percent of the blacks who were executed were juveniles, who were more often executed than whites without even having their conviction looked over by a higher court system (Bedau).

A study of the racial discrimination in these cases in Georgia showed that unfortunately "the average odds of receiving a death sentence among all indicted cases were 4.3 times higher in cases with white victims. This data was actually presented to the Supreme Court in 1987 in *McCleskey v. Kemp*, and the Court did not refuse the evidence" (Bedau). The U.S. General Accounting Office concluded in 1990: "Our synthesis of the 28 studies shows a pattern of evidence indicating racial disparities in the charging, sentencing, and imposition of the death penalty after the Furman decision, and that race of the victim influence was found at all stages of the criminal justice system process" (Bedau). These results add up to the unfortunate conclusion that "the killing of a white is treated much more severely than the killing of a black" (Bedau). In other words, it seems as if our criminal justice system reserves the death penalty for murderers who kill white victims (Bedau).

Sex and socioeconomic class can also factor into determining who receives the death sentence and who is actually killed for it. Only one percent of all those on death row were women in the 1980s to early 1990s, which is odd because women commit about 15% of homicides. Since 1990, only 33 women have been executed in the United States (Bedau).

There is even discrimination against the poor. "A defendant's poverty, lack of firm social roots in the community, inadequate legal representation at trial or on appeal—all of these have been common factors among death-row populations" (Bedau). Ninety-five percent of death row inmates cannot even afford an attorney to plead their case (Daoust).

It is nearly impossible to avoid discretion in the criminal justice system. The history of capital punishment shows the desire to lessen the harshness by narrowing its scope, and discretion has been what is used for this purpose. "But when discretion is used, as it always has been, to mark for death the poor, the friendless, the uneducated, the members of racial minorities, and the despised, then discretion becomes injustice" (Bedau).

Punishment is supposed to reform the wrongdoer and prevent him from repeating crimes, like that of a deterrent (Against Capital Punishment). "The argument most often cited in support of capital punishment is that the threat of executions deters capital crimes more effectively than imprisonment" (Bedau). However, the facts do not support this theory. For example, Canada's homicide rate is actually 27% lower now than when it had capital punishment. "It's not surprising that violent crime would be higher in death penalty states; when society resorts to violence to solve its problems, it legitimates the use of violence in general" (Daoust).

When comparing a state with the death penalty and one without, the one with the law shows no consistent lower rate of homicide. An example was between the years of 1972 and 1990, when the homicide rate in Michigan (without the death penalty), was as low as or lower than the state of Indiana (with the death penalty). Also, statistics have shown that there is no higher rate of criminal assault or homicide for police officers in states that do not administer capital punishment compared to the states that do. Between the years of 1973 and 1984, lethal assaults against police officers were no more or less often in the different states. There is "no support for the view that the death penalty provides a more effective deterrent to police homicides than alternative sanctions" (Bedau). Along with that, prisoners and personnel do not suffer a higher rate of assault and homicide from life-term prisoners in states without the death penalty than those with it. Seventeen people on the prison staff were murdered by prisoners in ten states. Eighty-eight percent of these murders occurred in death penalty jurisdictions. Therefore, the threat of the death penalty "does not even exert an incremental deterrent effect over the threat of a lesser punishment in the abolitionist state" (Bedau). "Furthermore, cases have been clinically documented where the death penalty actually incited the capital crimes it was supposed to deter" (Bedau). These instances include "so-called suicide-by-execution syndrome," which consists of people who wanted to take their own life, but feared doing so, so instead committed a capital crime so that society could kill them in return (Bedau).

Many who are for capital punishment will argue that it permanently removes the worst criminals from society because it is self-evident that dead criminals cannot commit further crimes (Clark). The fact that the death penalty insures that the convicted person will commit no further crimes is not a deterrent for other executions; it only prevents that one person to be unable to commit other crimes. This is too high of a price to pay, however, when studies indicate that very few convicted murderers commit second crimes. A recent study looked at the prison and post-release records of 533 prisoners on death row in 1972; six had committed another murder. It is nearly impossible to predict which murderers will kill again. These repeat murders could only be avoided by executing all of the convicted criminals. This policy would be far too inhumane and brutal. However, a policy of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole would be much more humane, in the sense that the innocent would at least not lose their lives. Therefore, capital punishment can only serve as a deterrent if it is consistent and promptly employed; capital punishment does not meet these conditions (Bedau).

However strongly one may support capital punishment, two wrongs do not make a right (Clark). It is evident that capital punishment is completely irrevocable, court cases have shown it to be too arbitrary and racially biased with decisions of those who go to death and those who receive life imprisonment, and most importantly, there is no evidence showing that capital punishment actually deters crime. Even if the death penalty were a useful deterrent, it would still be an example of barbarity. These methods are downright cruel in practice and serve as a cloak to justice. "Whatever else might be said for the use of death as a punishment, one lesson is clear from experience: this is a power that we cannot exercise fairly and without discrimination" (Bedau qtd. Gross and Mauro). "Capital punishment is no answer to the major challenges we face as a society" (Archbishop of Boston).

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Slaves at Cedar Grove Their Life: Their Treatment

By Brian Belfiore

In her narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs takes her audience straight into the heart of life as a slave. Her words paint a vivid image of her experiences and that of the slaves surrounding her. Using Harriet's own words and several supporting documents, it is possible to re-create an idea of what slavery was like on the Flint plantation - which we will call "Cedar Grove" for the purposes of this essay. While reading this essay, try not to let your preconceived notions about slavery enter into the scenario; Harriet's experiences are specific to only a single plantation in the South. In other words, this essay is not meant to be a generalization of the life of slaves across the nation.

After reading Harriet's account of her life at Cedar Grove, the most appropriate term that seems to describe the slaves' conditions is this sort of "quasi-human" state of existence. Dr. Flint made sure he had control of every aspect of his slaves' lives, from their meals to their holidays . right down to the clothing on their back. Each slave was given restricted freedoms at Cedar Grove and monitored under strict behavioral and task guidelines. For instance, Dr. Flint wrote that "all are privileged and encouraged to go to church on Sundays, but no religious meeting is allowed on the plantation beyond singing and praying, and at such times as will not conflict with the plantation hours . . ." (Private Papers). In other words, only such liberties that would not hinder the steady flow of operations at Cedar Grove were allowed. Anything that infringed upon that balance was forbidden. Slaves at Cedar Grove were even allowed to marry so long as it was to another slave on the plantation. Why? Because marriages were simply another means by which masters could obtain future slaves. In addition to providing Dr. Flint with future slaves, the purpose of allowing his slaves to marry was to provide them with a feeling of added comfort . having a significant other. But Dr. Flint was not doing this to be kind-hearted. In truth, he wanted his slaves in good spirits to keep them in line and on task. "Marriage is to be encouraged as it adds to the comfort, happiness & health of those who enter upon it, besides insuring a greater increase" (Private Papers). Just reading such a deceitful and cold comment brings upon a feeling of deep contempt to any decent person. Dr. Flint, no matter how seemingly thoughtful he appeared on the outside, was nothing more than a cold-hearted businessman. And that is what slavery was to Dr. Flint - a business - a source of profit and income. According to Dr. Flint's slave inventory (which will be discussed in greater detail further in this essay), he valued their total worth at upwards of \$50,000 (Inventory).

When Harriet had her first child, she explained that Dr. Flint never failed "to remind me that my child was an addition to his stock of slaves" (Jacobs 463). Any child of a slave became a slave. The fact that her baby would grow to live his life as a slave was enough to make Harriet wish that he died as an infant. According to Harriet, "death is better than slavery" (Jacobs 464). How sad to know that such thoughts ran through the minds of slave mothers. Harriet would rather see her own flesh and blood die than have

that child be raised as a slave. Yet it is interesting to note that children usually spent their youthful years entirely oblivious to the fact that they were actually slaves and property. Harriet explains that she, herself, was unaware of her unfortunate circumstance until quite some time had gone by. "I was born a slave; but I never knew it till six years of happy childhood had passed away" (Jacobs 430). Slave children on Dr. Flint's plantation were given blankets for comfort, and they were even taken to a separate building on the plantation to be raised under the watchful eye of a "trustworthy nurse" (Private Papers). They were raised under a blanket of falsehoods until their fragile minds were old enough to comprehend the truth.

In addition to having each and every aspect of their lives under the control of their master, slaves at Cedar Grove were monitored under a very detailed inventory. This further supports the idea that slaves lived in a "quasi-human" form. They were itemized in a manner similar to which a farmer would organize his or her livestock. The slaves were all listed in a chart. They were named, aged, priced, and their positive and negative attributes were summarized in a brief comment or two (Inventory). Upon further reading though Dr. Flint's memoirs, it is interesting to explore how he categorized his slaves based on a sort of value system. For instance, a slave would probably be considered lucky if he were the head driver. Dr. Flint wrote that the head driver "is to be treated with more respect than any other negro by both master and overseer" (Private Papers). The head driver is not required to work alongside the other slaves. He is given a significantly greater amount of liberties as compared to the remaining slaves on the plantation.

Slave life at Cedar Grove was far from enjoyable - far from pleasant. While Dr. Flint appeared to keep violence against his slaves to a minimum - that is not to say life was good or fair. From the time they were children and through most of their life, slaves were practically forced to base their happiness on mere falsehoods. Dr. Flint allowed his slaves enough liberty to ensure they would be content enough to get their share of work fulfilled and not hinder the flow of overall plantation operations. Harriet Jacobs was truly unique for her time. Unlike most slaves, let alone the female slaves, Harriet was fortunate enough to be able to both read and write. She used this gift to write her autobiography and share with others her experiences as a slave. Her story serves as a genuine reminder of the cruelties of slavery. Therefore, it is appropriate to end this essay using Harriet's own words to reiterate what has been explained all along. "O, the serpent of Slavery has many and poisonous fangs!" (Jacobs 464).

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Images in Literature

Julie Honeycutt

When one initially thinks of a piece of literature, it is likely that the first thought that comes to mind is that of pages upon pages of text compiled into one large book. In the case of the short essays, "States" by Edward Said and "Hunger as Ideology" by Susan Bordo, the authors go further by strategically utilizing photographs in addition to their words. Said's "States" portrays Palestinians as homeless, lost victims who have been persecuted, shunned and kicked off of their own land. In Bordo's essay, "Hunger as Ideology," emphasis is placed on how the media negatively impacts society as it sets a number of unrealistic standards surrounding beauty, hunger and the ideal woman. Although the subjects of "States" and "Hunger as Ideology" differ, the two authors appear to have a similar frame of mind when writing their essays. On this note, both Said and Bordo use pictures to illustrate their essays as mechanisms to further convey and enhance their ideas, to show solid evidence of their theses and to allow readers to understand their overall essays on a more relatable and realistic level.

In "States," Said places several photographs of Palestinians throughout his essay to reflect the Palestinian lifestyle, culture and daily struggles. The powerful pictures not only add to the value of Said's words, but they serve as a window into a world unfamiliar to most. For example, on page 679, two pictures can be seen of settled nomads in a village home near Bersheeba who prior to exile, once lived peacefully under the desert sky. In the photographs, however, the individuals are seen as helpless Palestinians in a room that is bare with the exception of a couple of chairs and a carpet, the single reminder of their lives before they were forced to move. Within the text, Said describes this picture and discusses the lines on the walls which seem to be there for decorative purposes. However, after examining the photographs, the lines more closely appear to form some type of box which represents the captivity that the Palestinians have been forced to live in due to exile. The poise and features of those depicted also duplicate the anxiety and powerlessness the Palestinians feel. For instance, the man depicted looks completely out of place and unsettled just as if he knows he could be unexpectedly forced to depart his home once again. Likewise, the woman is also perched on her chair, covered by her robe and unsure how to treat the photographer for fear of him or her forcing them to move out just as intruders had done in the past. Said writes of these gripping photographs:

Exile is a series of portraits without names, without contexts. Images that are largely unexplained, nameless, mute. I look at them without precise anecdotal knowledge, but their realistic exactness nevertheless makes a deeper impression than mere information. (680)

It is as if Said and all of the readers of "States" make a slight connection with the people in the pictures because of the emotions that are so clearly revealed through the expressions and surroundings of the Palestinians.

Further into "States," an image is used depicting a camp in Tyre, South Lebanon, in which two children are playing inside and around an old, abandoned car in the middle of a field overgrown with weeds and flowers. It is obvious that the car is evidence of some type of unknown drama; perhaps it was abandoned years before by a family of refugees on the run. No matter the circumstances, it is unavoidable to us, outsiders to the lives of Palestinians, that a car on the brink of decay is no place for children to play. Describing this, Said writes, "How odd the conjuncture, and yet for Palestinians, how fitting. For where no straight line leads from home to birthplace to school to maturity, all events are accidents, all progress is a digression, all residence is exile" (687). With these words in mind, it is still difficult to imagine how real and how awful daily life is for those Palestinians who have been exiled. Yet once again, the photographs serve as solid proof that there is indeed a world much unlike ours in which such suffering does exist.

Whereas Said utilized photographs to enhance the meaning of his descriptions of Palestinian life and open the readers' eyes to unfamiliar lifestyles, Bordo, the author of "Hunger as Ideology," has slightly different reasons for her integration of images into her essay. Her essay places emphasis on modern day advertisements and the standards they set for the public surrounding sexuality, desire and the ideal image. Through discussing the ideologies created by the media, Bordo gives specific examples of cigarette, cosmetic and food advertisements that seem to have a negative psychological effect on society. One of the first examples of Bordo's use of images can be seen on page 145 as an advertisement for Maybelline eyeliner depicts two beautifully "made-up" women placed below a caption that reads, "PERFECT PEN EYELINER, AN INGENIOUS SOFT FELT TIP GIVES YOU ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF YOUR LINE." This sort of advertisement is an example of what Bordo says advertisers construct their images around in order to psych out the female consumer. The underlying message of this Maybelline advertisement appears to say that if a woman uses the company's precise eyeliner, she will finally be able to gain a sense of control over every aspect of her life. However, from a logical standpoint, such promises are clearly meaningless and empty. Speaking of these promises that advertisers hope will psych out the female consumer, Bordo writes, "It is virtually impossible to glance casually at this ad without reading 'line' and 'life'- which is, of course, the subliminal coding such ads intend" (144). By actually seeing for oneself the advertisement for Maybelline's Perfect Pen Eyeliner, readers of "Hunger as Ideology," can truly understand the manipulative motives advertisers have behind their marketing tactics.

Bordo continues her analysis of advertisements by discussing the gender ideology mentality that many advertisers have. By this, Bordo suggests that when it comes to many marketing concerns, especially surrounding topics of food, sexuality and desire, advertisers often take into account the traditional gender differences and inequalities. Specifically speaking, many of the advertisements Bordo discusses throughout her essay have depictions of slim women eating in a sensuous manner and not feeling guilty about enjoying their food, just as if the food becomes some sort of sexual item of desire. In a particular Diet Jell-O advertisement seen on page 151, a thin, flirtatious looking model is seen enjoying her Jell-O desert with a slogan above her that reads, "I'm a girl who just can't say no. I insist on dessert" (151). Bringing up the ad's true intentions of how the act

of eating can be sexualized, Bordo writes of the model, "She is permitted to 'feel good about saying 'Yes" . but ever so demurely, and to a harmless low-calorie product" (150). Without the essay's integration of the actual desert advertisement, the innocent, yet sexually suggesting motive behind the marketing of Diet Jell-O would likely not be as easily recognized as it can be seen in the image. With all this in mind, such advertisements go far beyond the selling of their product and rather, advertise what they feel is "appropriate" behavior in hopes of earning money off of the individuals that succumb to such tactics.

As one can see, Said and Bordo integrate images into their essays in a manner that does much more than merely take up space on a page. In "States" and "Hunger as Ideology," the authors use various illustrations to convey their main ideas, show solid evidence of their theses and overall, to allow readers to identify with their essays on a highly relatable and realistic level. All in all, Said and Bordo's use of images effectively enhance their essays in numerous ways. In the case of "States," the photographs create a connection between the reader and those in the pictures, who in the text alone, seem completely foreign to what we as Americans, know as familiar. In "Hunger as Ideology," the advertisements serve as undeniable proof of some advertisers true motives and tactics and with that, the negative psychological effects that impact many in society. Overall, by strategically integrating images into their essays, both Said and Bordo increase the readers' awareness of the issues examined on a level that text itself would likely not be able to succeed.

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Slavery And Sweatshops

By Kate Pagliaro

According to the American Heritage English Dictionary, a slave is defined as one bound in servitude as the property of a person or household. This day and age, the idea of slaves and slavery seem to be distant and strange to us. We have all read about slaves brought from Africa to satisfy selfish needs of American "royalty." Awareness of this issue was not brought to the attention of many, and only a select few recognized the fact that slavery was morally wrong and a violation of human rights. Although slavery has been abolished for many years now, we are experiencing a comeback of the same type of issue. The implementation and use of sweatshops is a modern day form of slavery. Hundreds and hundreds of sweatshop workers undergo the same horrible working conditions that slaves once did, along with little or no compensation for the hard work that they do.

When did sweatshops become part of our society? Why is it that laws have been passed to stop slavery, yet slave-like conditions still occur within sweatshops? The garment industry began in the United States in the 1890's due to a high demand for outerwear from miners in Seattle (Wong). Just as soon as these factories opened to supply these miners, workers were obtained that could produce the clothing fast, efficiently and at low wages. Similar to slaves used years before, the typical workers were minorities and immigrants to the country. They could not speak the language and often were not aware of the fact that they were being taken advantage of. This change from the typical domestic type labor to a factory system meant a great loss of independence for the worker. One was also forced to work continuously at the pace set by the machine. Also entire families would often be workers in these factories together in order to make ends meet at home. Children and adults could perform the same jobs, yet children could be hired for less pay ("Labor," Compton's Encyclopedia).

Just as several laws were passed in an effort to stop slavery from occurring, governing bodies and agencies are doing their best to hinder slave-like practices from continuing in sweatshops. While governments have seen fit to legislate in these areas, many of these laws are no more than general guidelines. The specifics are often left to arrangements between employers and employees ("Labor," Compton's Encyclopedia). The real question at hand is whether or not these institutions are really doing all that they can do to ensure that sweatshops are stopped and monitored. Many American based designers and companies deny any involvement with sweatshops and claim that they are not responsible for factories overseas producing their garments or products. If the product has their name and label on it, there should be no excuse for these companies to exonerate themselves from any blame for what is going on behind closed doors. Well respected companies such as Nike, Guess, and even the Gap, along with celebrity designers use sweatshops and slave-like labor to produce their products. Their yearly revenues are exorbitant, which makes it awful to think about how poorly their workers are treated and paid.

Although sweatshops are an awful truth about our society, they do in fact benefit our economy. There is a high demand for products to be made and distributed in our country and all over the world. People are willing to overlook how the products have been made, and purchase them at a quick rate. Consumers purchase these products so quickly because their production costs are low, which creates relatively low prices for the consumers. The more people buy, the more it helps build our economy. Our economy also benefits from good foreign relations that we have with countries that we trade certain goods with and house garment factories in. Sweatshops are a modern day form of slavery that violates human rights, yet ultimately enhances the economy.

Slavery has been an institution of our society for many centuries dating as far back as prehistoric times. The implementation of slavery was not seen as anything morally wrong, yet was seen as necessary for the economy and society as a whole. Slaves were either employed within the homes of their owners or within a larger scaled setting such as a construction or agricultural task. One of the most well known uses for slaves in ancient times was when the Egyptians used slave labor to create the Pyramids. The first account of slavery in the United States was when Africans were brought to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619 ('Slavery' Microsoft Encarta). They were traded among the colonists and served the desired purpose with little or no personal rights. The amount of slaves being used in North America grew tremendously once the system of plantation workers was developed. The amount of slaves needed per household increased significantly, which caused their rights as human beings to be overlooked even more so than before. Each slave that worked on a plantation was just looked at as a number, and another moving and working body-not as a person. They worked long and hard days, and were rewarded with little or nothing.

Slavery was first abolished by Abraham Lincoln when he issued his Emancipation Proclamation during the Civil War on January 1, 1863 ('Slavery' Microsoft Encarta). There was extreme urgency for an improvement of the lives of the slaves because many of them were sacrificing their own lives on the battlefield. Although this was a positive milestone in the lives of those enslaved, many supporters of the anti-slavery movement were fearful to show support due to the overwhelming opposition from many of their fellow citizens.

Aside from the fact that Lincoln was able to abolish slavery more than one hundred years ago, a rebirth of slavery occurred in the form of sweatshop labor during the 19th century. According to Leon Stein's book, *Out of the Sweatshop*, "The sweatshop is a state of mind as well as a physical fact. Its workday is of no fixed length; it links pace of work to endurance. It demands the spirit by denying workers any part in determining the conditions of the pay for their work" (3). While all sweatshops violate basic human rights and safety regulations, one sweatshop in particular stands out from them all. On March 25 1911, the Triangle Shirtwaist Company experienced one of the most horrible tragedies in sweatshop history. The factory became engulfed with flames one evening when the young girls working, ages thirteen to twenty-three, were getting ready to go home for the day. One eyewitness, by the name of William G. Shepherd, cited on Greg Yaz's homepage, recalls that day by stating,

I was walking through Washington Square when a puff of smoke issuing from the factory building caught my eye. I reached the building before the alarm was turned in. I saw every feature of the tragedy visible from outside the building. I learned a new sound—a more horrible sound than description can picture. It was the thud of a speeding living body on a stone sidewalk (Stein 188).

This horrific incident was just the beginning of the poor conditions of sweatshops being recognized. 146 young girls lost their lives that day just because of inadequate exits and safety precautions within the sweatshop. Most of the doors were locked, and the water from the fire hoses could only reach seven of the nine stories of the building. The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire was a landmark for the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), which was a major leader in campaigning for better working conditions for women, especially in sweatshops. Aside from the fact that the ILGWU worked hard to promote safer working conditions in sweatshops, a current personal poll of Marist students shows that 65% of them feel that garment factories do still need to have stricter safety regulations implemented.

In the society that we live in today, applying for a job is a long and tedious procedure. Filling out applications and going on interviews takes up a great deal of time and effort, and one is not hired until they have been carefully considered for the position. On the other hand, those who work at sweatshops in America, and all over the world, do not go through the same type of procedure. The typical worker within a sweatshop could be a small child with nimble fingers, an immigrant who is desperate for work, or a woman who needs to support a family of her own. The awful consequences of those who are young and vulnerable working in sweatshops is that they are missing out on an opportunity to obtain their education. Within the scholarly journal, *Business and Society Review*, Linda Golodner states that, "With a shrinking work force and inadequate enforcement of existing laws, employers sought and continue to seek increasingly younger teenagers to work, sometimes illegally. Many young people now value this work more than education" (52). Golodner went on to include a firsthand account of sweatshop conditions by Eleanor Roosevelt by saying,

I was eighteen years old when I first went for the National Consumers League into sweatshops in New York City. For the first time in my life I saw conditions I would not have believed existed—women and children working in dark, crowded, dirty quarters, toiling, I was told, all day long and way into the night, to earn a few pennies carding safety pins or making little things of feathers. These conditions I can never forget (51).

Some of these workers are too young to even understand what is being done to them is wrong, and are too afraid to come forward about how they are being treated. According to Leon Stein's book, *Out of the Sweatshop*, "The sweatshop, whether in a modern factory building or a dark slum cellar, exists where the employer controls the working conditions and the worker cannot protest" (3). This type of brutal and complete control is similar in characteristic to how slaves were treated in homes and on plantations. Similar to the treatment the slaves once endured, sweatshop workers receive little or no

pay, forced overtime, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and firings based upon inaccurate information or judgment. According to 1998 New York Times article, "New York's sweatshops are often small, nonunion operations with fewer than twenty sewing machines and manned almost exclusively with illegal aliens in Chinese enclaves like Sunset Park in Brooklyn or Flushing, Queens. Employers know that the workers can't complain, so they withhold wages, claiming manufacturers were slow to pay. It has become standard practice to withhold six week's pay or more" (Barnes). Another personal account of sweatshop conditions was brought to my attention during a personal interview with my mom, who formally was a women's sportswear buyer for Stern's Department Store. She stated that,

During my many years as a buyer, I unfortunately came across some disturbing manufacturing practices in New York City that I never would believe still existed, had I not seen it with my own eyes. Some of the smaller sportswear firms had deplorable working conditions in their back rooms with illegal immigrants working the sewing machines. This all took place behind the façade of a beautiful showroom where buyers came to see the seasonal sportswear lines. I felt sorry for these young girls and they would never look up at anyone while they were working-I guess out of fear (Pagliaro).

One of the most popular past times of our society is spending money and shopping. As consumers, we spend a lot of money, and most times on items that we don't even need. Within our fast paced society, we also do not take the time to think about where our clothing is being made and under what conditions. Based on the results from a personal 2004 survey, 75% of clothing stores shopped at by Marist students use sweatshop type labor to produce their garments. Popular stores such as the Gap, Banana Republic, Eddie Bauer and Nike all credit their booming sales and prices to sweatshop laborers (Greenhouse). Although some of this clothing production takes place within the United States, a large percentage of it takes place off shore. According to a recent article put out by Global Exchange's website, In Saipan, a US territory replete with sweatshops, Gap does the most business of any company on the island.more than \$200 million a year, contracting in six factories. Whereas these companies import without tariff or quota restrictions and label their clothes 'Made in the USA,' they do not adhere to US labor laws. Although it is no secret that large corporations use sweatshop labor, most companies try to avoid questioning related to the issue or find some loophole to exonerate them from the blame. Nike, for example, does not own the factories in which its shoes are produced, and only contracts the work to factory owners. They also claim that their business is one of 'marketing shoes' and not one of making them (Global Exchange). It is not just the large industry companies that are feeling the heat from sweatshop allegations. Big time designer, Donna Karan, was faced with this type of dilemma several years ago. According to a June 8, 2000 New York Times article,

A class action lawsuit filed yesterday accuses one of New York's best-known fashion houses, Donna Karan, of running sweatshops that cheated workers out of millions of dollars in overtime pay. The lawsuit, filed by the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, contends that Donna Karan and several

factories that make its clothing systematically break the law by not paying time and a half to employees who are forced to work seven days a week, usually putting in nearly 75 hours each week (Greenhouse).

The results of these accusations have several possible outcomes. Consumers can choose to protest shopping at certain stores along with holding demonstrations. On the other hand, consumers may not be swayed by sweatshop allegations, and continue to shop at their favorite stores. According to a personal survey conducted on April 7, 2004, 90% of the students surveyed said that they would not stop shopping at a store based on these facts. It just comes down to personal values and what you consider right and wrong.

Aside from popular stores and famous designers, celebrities have also gotten involved in the awful and unethical practice of utilizing sweatshops. Celebrities choose to tap into the fashion industry in order to make even more money and get their name out to the masses. One of the most highly publicized celebrity sweatshop cases involved Kathie Lee Gifford. In 1995, investigators from the National Labor Committee found teenage women sewing clothing for the TV talk show's apparel line. Roughly ten percent of the workers employed at Gifford's Global Fashion factory were between thirteen and fifteen years old. In addition to the long and grueling hours of labor put in by these young women, bathroom breaks were limited to two a day, and were searched for candy or food upon entering the factory for a day's work (Unite Union).

The success of our country, as well as its economy has several factors that have influenced it. Strong leaders paired with wise decisions have helped our country out of periods of recession and debt. As citizens we look for leaders who will be able to provide for us a stable economy as well as those who can make wise decisions. In actuality, the strength of our economy is not always the product of good leadership. The use of sweatshops in the United States, in fact, does benefit and strengthen our economy. When a product needs to be produced, a company finds it ideal to have produced at a cheap rate, in order to sell it at their desired price. The fastest and easiest way for companies to do this is to use sweatshops. Businesses strive to make money or "increase their bottom line," and are not afraid to cut certain corners to achieve this goal. Unethical practices, such as sweatshop labor, are not foreign to the business world, and in order to keep up with their competitors, many feel it is necessary. Although these companies may be aware of this immorality, they choose to ignore it, and focus on their company and its well being. Some may consider this selfish and be confused as to why companies choose to do this, yet what they need to understand is that without sweatshops our products would not be produced. If sweatshops were not used to produce our products, it would take longer for them to get to the stores and to the consumer. Clothing lines would not be ready for the seasons and many designers would be out of jobs. There are certain harsh realities that we must face in our daily lives and society, and sweatshops are one of them. In a recent personal survey done on Marist college students, 70% felt that sweatshops do in fact help our economy, while 30% felt they did not. As a society, we cannot escape from these truths, but can try to improve the situation if possible. Advocating for better working conditions and workers' rights are some of the first and most important steps that need to be taken in order to change how sweatshops are being run. One of the first

advocates for workers' rights was Jane Addams. As a well educated young woman, Addams fought for peace, labor law reform and child labor laws. She witnessed the grueling lifestyle of these immigrant workers and their families and knew she wanted to do something to help. In 1889 she set up what was called, Hull House; a place where children went to learn and became the first settlement house in the United States ("Jane Addams: American Women of Achievement).

Looking ahead to the future of our country, and the world as a whole, it is hard to say for sure if sweatshops will still be in use. Certain conditions such as supply and demand will affect sweatshop use, as well as the morals and values of the companies. If there is a demand for a certain product, companies will most likely do all that they can to ensure that their customers are satisfied and pleased. In a recent personal survey done on Marist College students, 95% felt that sweatshops would continue to exist years to come. As active members of society as well as prime consumers, college students are aware of the impact sweatshops have upon our economy. Perhaps there will be new and advanced technologies that will enable sweatshop workers to be replaced by machines to perform the same tasks at the same rate. At this present day and age, there is an apparent need for better safety regulations and proper treatment of sweatshop workers. As long as these improvements are made, sweatshops will continue to flourish and benefit our economy as a whole.

As the centuries have progressed, there have been certain aspects of our society that have caused chaos and controversy. The outbreaks of wars and famine, discrimination, political scandal, as well as inhumane practices have all caused us to have concern. The outbreak of slavery preceded the common day slave-like practices of sweatshops. The same type of human rights violations that occurred during times of slavery have continued up until present day. Those of inferior race and lesser economic status have always been the target of human rights violations. They work tedious and long hours and receive little or no rewards for the work they have done. In fear of losing their jobs, slaves and sweatshop laborers, today, keep quiet and do not speak out about how they are treated. Those in power over these workers gain their own personal complex of status and power, and continue to drive the workers. Many popular clothing stores and even celebrities have been known to use sweatshops in order to mass produce their products and get them out to fulfill the consumer's needs and demands. Sweatshops are a modern day form of slavery that violates human rights, yet ultimately enhances the economy.

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