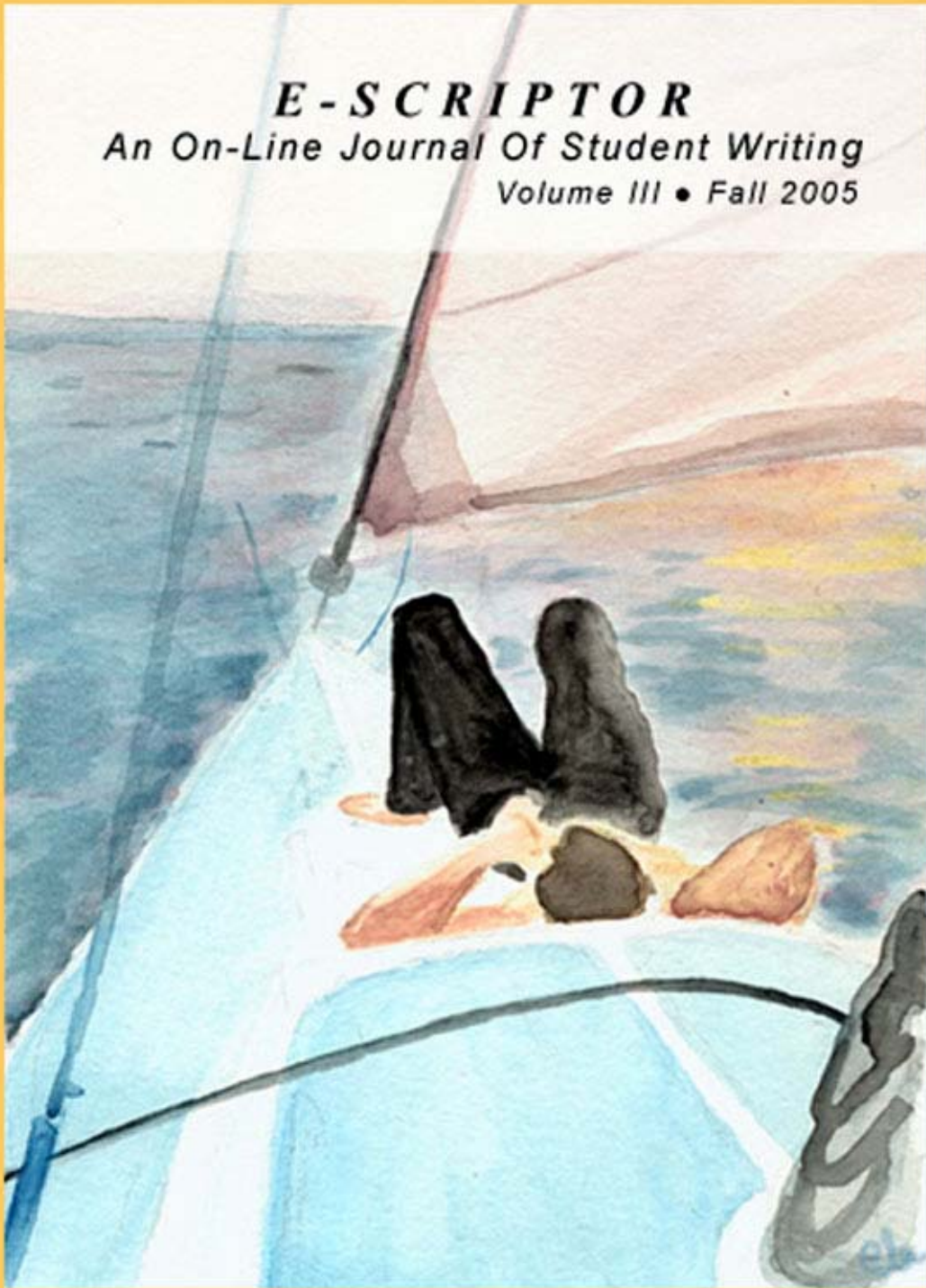


***E - S C R I P T O R***  
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A watercolor illustration of a sailboat on the water. The sailboat is white with a blue sail and a dark mast. The water is light blue and yellow, and the sky is a mix of light blue and yellow. The entire illustration is framed by a thick orange border.

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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 2004-2005 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 2004**

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Claire Semder, now a sophomore at Marist College, comes from Valley Stream, New York, a small town on Long Island. She graduated as valedictorian of her class from Holy Trinity High School. Majoring in Communications, she has a double concentration in Radio, TV, and Film and Journalism. Adding another major or minor is a possibility in Claire's future, but she is still unsure of the path she wishes to take. She participates in a wide variety of organizations on campus from MCTV to Habitat for Humanity to RSC. Claire's essay "A Virus of Violence," won second place for the Fall 2004 semester, and was composed for Professor Philip Pardi's College Writing II class.

Dan Shea, is originally from Northampton, Massachusetts, and is currently a sophomore at Marist where he majors in Computer Science Dan is also the Treasurer of the Class of 2008. His essay "Mario's Stranglehold on the World" won third place, and was prepared for Professor Lynn Koch's College Writing II class.

Jill Clement is currently a senior at Marist, majoring in Integrative Studies, and plans to attend law school after graduation. Her essay, "Same-Sex Marriage," was written for Professor Mary Carol Frier and received fourth-place honors for the Fall 2004 semester.

## **Spring 2005**

Katie O'Rear is currently a senior at Marist. She is majoring in Business Administration with an emphasis in Human Resource Management. Katie is from Olympia, WA and transferred to Marist after two years at the University of Puget Sound. She enjoys running, swimming, skiing, and traveling. Her essay, "Strengthening United States Regulations on Genetically Modified Organisms." Won first place and was prepared for Jennifer Driscoll's College Writing II class.

Jackie LeBlanc is currently a sophomore at Marist College and graduated from Penfield High School in Rochester, New York. She is double majoring in business marketing and Spanish and aspires to study abroad in Madrid, Spain during the spring semester of her junior year. Her essay, Grab your Coats and Bags, But Don't Forget your RFID Tags; is the second place winner for Fall 2005, and was prepared for Professor Lynne Koch's College Writing II class.

Michael Rolek is currently in his sophomore year, majoring in Communications and minoring in Business. The son of James and Eileen Rolek, Mike is from Maplewood,

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Geoff Watkinson is currently a sophomore from Readington, New Jersey. He is currently undecided, but leaning towards a major in history or political science. In his free time he enjoys going to concerts, and is a big sports fan. His essay, "Black Power" was written during the 2005 spring semester and won fourth-place. The essay was prepared for Professor Paul Levinson's College Writing II class.

Editor's Note: While the default documentation method for College Writing II is MLA, Geoff Watkinson's essay is documented in a modified Chicago Manual style as per the request of his teacher.

## Contents

Brian Carle

[\*Bob Dylan: The 20th Century's Most Influential Songwriter\*](#)

Claire Semder

[\*A Virus of Violence\*](#)

Dan Shea

[\*Mario's Stranglehold on the World\*](#)

Jill Clement

[\*Same Sex Marriage\*](#)

Katie O'Rear

[\*Strengthening United States Regulations On Genetically Modified Organisms\*](#)

Jackie LeBlanc

[\*Grab Your Coats and Bags But Don't Forget Your RFID Tags\*](#)

Michael Rolek

[\*The Tamed Press\*](#)

Geoff Watkinson

[\*Black Power\*](#)

# **Bob Dylan: The 20th Century's Most Influential Songwriter**

**By Brian Carle**

Music is one of the most important parts of modern society. The songs we sing tell of the lives we lead, those we love, those we've lost, those we fight for, and those we fight against. Few songwriters have been able to convey all of these tales with the virtual flawlessness found in the songs of Bob Dylan. Dylan's musical career has already spanned five decades and shows no signs of slowing down even today. The tremendous and deep footprint he has left on both the history of songwriting and the history of political activism is still visible from far across the radio waves and newspaper pages of America. While many would seek to pigeonhole Dylan as a protest singer or folk artist, closer study shows how his art transcends genre and goes beyond simple entertainment to become part of the history of human reactions.

Popular music is, more or less, a concentration of styles of music being played at the time and the thoughts and feelings being expressed in those styles. As such a large conglomeration, it is difficult to move popular music in one direction or another. Artists who can lay claim to having done so are truly influential. Bob Dylan had significant importance in shifting popular music into one of its golden ages; namely, the late 60s and early 70s.

Dylan's outlook on songwriting is what begins to push popular music away from the 50s era of simple song-and-dance numbers towards songs of emotional substance. Biographer Howard Sounes once called Dylan "the first young singer who wrote serious songs about his life and made them hits." He continued, "That's what liberated the Beatles and everyone else since" (Greatest Songwriter). Dylan himself arrogantly expressed the freshness of his own songwriting when, in March of 1966, he said "I mean nobody's really written songs before. Really, I mean people have in older days, but those were sonnets and soft troubadour-type things" (Hinchey 5).

The overwhelming quality of the music of Bob Dylan is its introspection. Even during his early period, during which he wrote mainly political songs, his songs were more focused on his feelings about the issues, rather than the issues themselves. This is where Dylan's most prominent influence lies. For example, the Beatles experienced a noticeable shift in songwriting style toward introspection in the mid-60s. This is, not coincidentally, the period during which the Beatles first came into contact with Dylan's music. (Erlewine). It is also widely rumored that Dylan first introduced the Fab Four to marijuana, a less laudable influence on their songwriting style.

In discussing popular rock n' roll in the 1960s, it is impossible to dismiss the Rolling Stones. While Dylan's #2 hit "Like A Rolling Stone" has nothing to do with the band's name, Dylan did indeed have a sizeable influence on some of the band's work. From 1965 to 1966, the Rolling Stones shifted to a mid-tempo and used more "jangling" guitar work than in past years, both probably due to Mick Jagger's admiration of Dylan during this time. This is quite evident in songs like "I'm Free" and "Gotta Get Away."

Jagger's lyrics also became increasingly wordy during this time period and often sounded very similar to those of Dylan (McPherson).

Bob Dylan's made numerous other contributions to popular songwriting in general. Dylan's 1967 album "John Wesley Harding" pioneered a back-to-basics approach imitated by many other popular artists that year, as they retreated from the psychedelic revolution (McPherson). He pioneered many aspects of pop songwriting, including confessional songwriting and hallucinatory, stream-of-consciousness narratives. His lack of conventional singing ability helped to redefine the role of vocalists in pop music (Erweline). He played a large role in making social commentary in mainstream music more acceptable. Songs like "Blowin' In The Wind" became mainstream successes thanks to covers by established artists and helped to spread Dylan's message of dissent. Dylan is credited by the *All Music Guide* for having directly influenced several artists, including Eric Clapton, Neil Young, and Buffalo Springfield.

Bob Dylan's rise to rock stardom grew out of his status as a champion of the folk revival of the 1960s. But he did not leave folk music unchanged. As he did with popular music, he brought a sense of introspection and personality to folk songs. Traditionally, folk artists delivered their own renditions of timeless songs, or, if they considered themselves important enough, they would write songs of unfeeling protest to political issues. Dylan's departure from this idea begins on his second album, "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan." The opening political anthem, "Blowin' In The Wind", hardly has universal concern. In the song's refrain, Dylan sings "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind." Author John Hinchey said that addressing the song to his friend "seems to open the lyric up to intense spiritual yearnings and override any imaginable political objectives and even confound the very idea of political progress." He goes on to discuss how much of the song's imagery has been wrongly interpreted as political in nature and is, rather, written out of a desire to escape mortality (Hinchey 39). Hardly traditional folk, it is only one of many examples of Dylan writing an emotional response to a political issue, rather than a political response to a political issue. Several other songs on "Freewheelin'" are original songs wholly unrelated to politics, also at odds with traditional folk practice.

Despite all his early departures from typical folk, the folk community still embraced Bob Dylan and his rejuvenating spirit. It was not until 1965 that he truly offended a large portion of the fold with his originality. He appeared on stage at the Newport Folk Festival with an electric guitar, a tremendous taboo in folk at the time, especially for someone with such a large library of beautiful acoustic work as he. As political author Mike Marqusee writes,

It was the fulcrum of the American sixties, as the early unity and idealism of the civil rights movement gave way to division and pessimism, the war in Vietnam intensified, and the opposition began to grow. The first glimmers of the counterculture were visible and the media was discovering that revolution could sell. These interlinked trends infused Newport that July; they lie behind both Dylan's aggressively boundary-blurring sound and the divided response to it. (Marqusee 141)

Dylan single-handedly spawned a new genre called folk-rock on that day, a genre whose implications were so great that it continues to influence more modern genres, such as punk rock, to this day.

For all of Bob Dylan's accomplishments within music as an art, there can be little argument that his true legacy is his use of music as a medium for his political concerns. Dylan himself will never admit that much of his early work was intended as political protest, but he had never been one to give real answers to any sort of questions from the media. Once asked by an interviewer if he considered himself a poet, he responded "I don't call myself a poet because I don't like the word. I'm a trapeze artist" (Marqusee 147). Even from his beginnings in a genre that celebrated political songwriting, Dylan was revolutionary. In "Masters of War," featured on "Freewheelin'" Dylan's contempt for his political, social, and moral enemies far exceeds that of any other folk singer as he takes on the military-industrial complex of the sixties. In a verse that even fellow folk singer and activist Joan Baez refused to sing, Dylan flatly states, "And I hope that you'll die/ and your death'll come soon/ I will follow your casket/ In the pale afternoon/ And I'll watch while you're lowered/ Down to your deathbed/ And I'll stand o'er your grave/ 'Til I'm sure that you're dead." Coupled with a proclamation made earlier in the song that "Even Jesus would never forgive what you do", "Masters of War" shows that Dylan is willing to express an unashamed and deep hatred for his political foes unmatched by any artist of his day (Marqusee 70).

Dylan's true abilities as a protest writer come to fruition on his third album, "The Times, They Are A-Changin." Political artists were (and still are) expected to be somewhat in line with liberal politics, but Dylan's refusal to sacrifice his ideals in this area is evident in one of this album's most epic tracks, "With God On Our Side." Dylan discusses contradictions of nationalism, which all seem to gel with liberal politics, until Dylan's final indictment of social patriotism, where he implies that the Cold War is unjust and the hatred of the Soviets is unfounded and evil, going against the popular liberal idea that the USSR was a real threat (Marqusee 71).

Later on the record, Dylan provides a radical insight into the roots of racism during "Only A Pawn In Their Game." Opposing the traditional view that it grows out of the fear of that which is different, Dylan suggests that it is something that lower class whites are indoctrinated into by the upper class, singing, "the Negro's name/ is used, it is plain/ for the politician's gain/ he's only a pawn in their game" (Marqusee 77).

Dylan continues his pioneering songwriting efforts with "North Country Blues," the first song ever written in protest of globalization. An overall indictment of the economic system, it tells the story of a man who abandons his family after the mine he had been working in closes. The message of the song is summed up in what seems like a passing thought on the part of Dylan, as he narrates, "It's much cheaper down/ In the South American towns/ Where the miners work almost for nothin'" (Marqusee 79). The foresight expressed in this tale of the economic peril globalization poses for the American working class continues to ring loudly to this day and proves the true political genius of Bob Dylan.

On May 23, 2001, the BBC reported that their poll asking who the greatest lyricist of all time was showed that Bob Dylan was considered the best songwriter ever by nearly 33% of BBC Online users, beating out John Lennon by nearly 14%. When asked what Dylan still had to offer today, British singer-songwriter Donovan replied, "An edge to disturb complacent hearts" (Donovan). Dylan's idea of songwriting has always been to cause dramatic emotional change throughout the song, so much so that he writes later verses specifically for the person he believes the earlier verses have turned the listener into (Hinchey 14). Still, the most accurate appraisal of Dylan's art comes from Dylan himself, as he struggled to describe his method of songwriting in November of 1968:

It's like this painter who lives around here . he paints the area in a radius of twenty miles, he paints bright, strong pictures. He might take a barn from twenty miles away and hook it up with a brook right next door, then with a car ten miles away, and the sky on some certain day. A person passing by will be painted alongside someone ten miles away. And in the end he'll have this composite picture which you can't say really exists in his mind. It's not that he started off willfully painting this picture from all his experiences... That's more or less what I do (Dylan 69).

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# **A Virus of Violence**

**By Claire Semder**

When did teaching kids to kill become associated with a person's first amendment rights? In the wake of school shootings and concealed weapons being carried by students, many government agencies have begun to study the effects of violence on television as a prominent variable in childhood and adolescent aggressiveness. The prevalence of violence in television is rampant. It is as addictive as a drug to the children and adolescents, and is accomplishing two extreme reactions: a desensitization towards pain and suffering in the world, and instilling fear of the world as a dark, cold place.

Although violence in all media has become a prominent issue, the focus has mainly been on television because it has had the most influence on the youth of the nation over the past 50 years. Abusive lyrics and overly violent films have taken some heat in more recent years, but not nearly as much as that of television. In the future, the medium of video games has been predicted to be more harmful than that of any other media influence, but there are not enough facts to support this hypothesis. The truth is that without the technology provided by the invention of the television video games would never have become a household commodity. The study of violence on the small screen has been ongoing since the 1950s (Committee on Public Education 1222). Even though the public lost sight of this debate, it gained momentum again in the late 1980s and 90s.

Today, television has become a key socialization factor and dominates the life of children in urban and rural areas (Groebel 217). The period of socialization is a time in which children learn of their culture and how to interact with the world. Where this lesson was once taught by parents and schools, television has taken point. Violence is no longer restricted to R - rated movies that children have little chance of seeing, as their cartoons are brimming with violent acts. A study done on the choices of entertainment that parents and children make, depending on restrictive labels, proves that television programs carrying advisories of violence and objectionable behavior have bigger audiences than those that did not, and while parents made negative comments about programs that contained restrictions, the children were more likely to make positive comments (Cantor and Krmar 393-395). An example from the National Television Violence Study (1996) was that boys, especially between the ages of 10-14, "were actually more attracted to programs that contained the advisory 'Parental discretion advised'" (Cantor and Krmar 395).

Since the deregulation of television in the 1980s, there has been a rapid increase in violence because violence sells. Studies of both social and psychological nature have found a conclusive link between exposure to television violence and aggressiveness. Faith McLellan investigated if violence on television makes violent children as explained by the studies performed by Robert DuRant. He concluded that deviant behavior was linked to watching WWF, the World Wrestling Federation. The effects found, more in girls than boys, were of "increased use of cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs; date-fight perpetration and victimization; and weapons carrying" (DuRant). Those who watched

WWF were also found to be more violent in school as DuRant observed violence being practiced on the playground and generally high levels of emotional distress.

Studies have also determined that not all forms of violence are equally permeable into children's daily repertoire. Surprisingly, the violence that contributes most to aggressive behavior is that which involves an "attractive perpetrator" (McLellan). The actions of a hero are more influential on the minds of young people because they see acts of violence as being encouraged, praised, and unpunished. Those violent acts seen on television, fantasy or not, that appear realistic and extensive to children also have a profound affect on their behavior (McLellan).

There is conclusive evidence that violence on television affects children and adolescents, not only in their aggressive and destructive behavior, but also in their psychological development. In 1994, the British Medical Journal published a case in which two 10-year-old boys were diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder after watching a frightening program on Halloween (Eth 301). Additionally, the fear of the world, which is created by the view of violence on television as the ultimate reality, can manifest itself later as depression (McLellan). Sadly, children develop an overoptimistic view of the body's ability to withstand violence (McLellan). From seeing too many violent acts with characters, mostly their heroes, walking away from them unscathed, both children and adolescents begin to believe that their bodies function in the same way as the fictional characters. For example, they develop a psychological understanding that they will be able to walk away from a fistfight with someone twice their size, or even a gunshot wound.

Fantasy is not the only violence children and adolescents view when they turn on the television. The news is a strong force in both the acquisition of knowledge and entertainment of these young viewers. Juliette H. Walma van der Molen, in an analysis of the major network news broadcasts, found that crime and violent world events are the most frequent stories on news programs (1771). This can clearly be seen in more recent broadcasts involving the September 11th attacks and the Iraqi war. What is important to look at is how these stories affect children due to the similarities shared with the subjects portrayed. Children being killed, assaulted, or kidnapped paints a disturbing picture of the world for the youth watching the broadcast. Are there not enough models of wrong behavior in the media that the news has to become another one? They have transformed "schoolyard killers into media celebrities" (Grossman 13). By giving these perpetrators their 15 minutes of fame, they inadvertently give others desperate for attention a new avenue to consider. It was proven in the 1970's that the reporting of teen suicides resulted in a number of copycat suicides by other teenagers called 'cluster suicides.' One of the few things about news broadcasts that have changed for the better is that many news programs will not air stories of teen suicide (Grossman 13). Other democratic countries, such as Japan and Canada, have learned this lesson and have thus made it "a punishable criminal act to place the names and images of juvenile criminals in the media" (13).

With all of the television the average youth watches, it should not be surprising that they watch more news broadcasts than many parents. The children and adolescents of

the past few decades have also been exposed to more sensationalized and graphic broadcasts than that which their parents were exposed to when they were younger. Walma van der Molen pronounces that studies have shown heightened involvement in violent and aggressive behavior stems from observing more realistic portrayals of violence, such as those shown on the news (1772). Elementary schoolchildren experience fear in reaction to news broadcasts (1772). Long-term problems are arising from children's viewing of crime, war, and terror, as they are forming violent schemata, mental guidelines that help them to identify and organize incoming information, and scripts, ways of interacting in situations that repeatedly occur.

So far, the news has not had to deal with any repercussions for its behavior in socializing children in a world of violence. Within the huge scope of public concern about violence in the media, studies have seemed to leave out the realistic violence found on the news (Walma van der Molen 1771). For example, the news was left out of the 1996 Telecommunications Act and does not contain any warnings or parental guidelines, as all other shows must include, under the V-Chip, Violence Chip, ratings (Walma van der Molen 1771). The V.Chip is a programmable chip that parents can use to limit the amount of violence and objectionable material their children can see by programming the television set to "block" these shows. Another example is that news programs were "purposely excluded from the content analysis in the National Television Violence Studies," because the rest of the television industry would only agree to participate if the news was exempted (Walma van der Molen 1773). The news has also been known to downplay and "underreport the significance of the linkage between mass media violence and human aggression" (Bloom 447). When the public views these reports, most believe it as fact, but it is actually selective journalism and protecting its own livelihood. Even in the wake of exclusions from the predominant studies, there have been deductions made that violence in the news has as much of an effect on children as the fictional shows they watch.

Television shows geared towards children today have become more violence oriented. This fact is not surprising to anyone who turns the television on Saturday mornings or after 2:30 on a weekday afternoon. When these children, these unscathed minds, view their heroes using violence, they imitate them whenever possible. They even do so when it goes against their own beliefs and ethics (Hartnagel, Teevan, and McIntyre 342). This notion proves, once again, that television has become a competing factor with traditional sources of values, especially the parents.

Some researchers believe that there is a lack of concern by the caregivers, the parents, and that is who to blame for the increase in violent acts among adolescents, but there are others who say it goes above these singular instances. As Diana West states, "Even if we stop these abhorrent influences from coming into] our houses, we still have to leave home to interact with a population all uniformly influenced, mentored even, by this toxic pop culture" (131). How much of this can be blamed on the parents? An unwritten law of nature states that a child, and especially a teenager, will do the opposite of what they are told. What can, and should, be stopped by parents is the number of televisions in the house. It is absurd that one in four children under the age of two have a

television in their room (Odland 206-B). By parents making these influences so paramount in their children's lives from such a young age, it is no wonder that the children look to the "idiot box" as a socialization tool. It is up to the parents to reinforce the values and ethics of the real world and to counteract the norms displayed by television.

Parents are not alone in the fight against violent content reaching children and adolescents. The 1996 Telecommunications Act introduced ratings for all television broadcasts, with the exemption of news programs and sports. These ratings were intended to be enforced by the V-Chip, which was supposed to be made standard on all televisions over a certain size. There has been interest in moving violent and objectionable shows to later hours, where they will not be easily assessable to youths. In addition, there have been other movements to censor fantasy shows, especially those broadcast for the sole purpose of gaining a youthful audience. Lastly, there have been programs to limit television hours and begin reading, such as "TV-Turnoff Week" and the "More Reading, Less TV" program (Odland 206-C). These types of programs have been integrated into some school systems due to proof that "school performance improves when television viewing is limited" (206-B).

Most people believe that the problem of violence in the media is only related to the United States. Those who believe this must not be aware of the massive influence American culture has on the rest of the world. Assaults and murders by younger offenders have not only increased in the United States but also in a number of countries including Norway, Greece, the Netherlands, Australia, France, and India. There are many more mentioned by Grossman, as well as various statistics, but the one common denominator is that a new variable has been introduced into these countries, and it is "violence being presented as 'entertainment' to children" (10-11).

A study presented by J. Groebel represented the largest amount of countries ever brought together to conclude if violence in television has an effect on children. It encompassed 23 countries and over 5,000 pupils (216). These countries represented the entire human continuum, in both the categories of human and technological maturity. The sample organized also covers the world's major cultures and was the first time this type of study included those in war zones and refugee camps. With the variety of this study, it is surprising to find that 93% of the children in the study still had access to a television (216). These school-aged children said that television was the most powerful source of information and entertainment (216). One third of those categorized in the high aggression-environment group thought that people in the world are evil, and of those categorized in a low aggression-environment still one fifth answered the same (217). About 44% of all the children studied had a "strong overlap in what they perceive as reality and what they see on the screen" (217). It seems to be universal that violence is viewed as a natural event among children and that they see aggressive behavior as worthy of a reward. What is remarkable is that even with cultural differences, "the basic patterns of the media violence implications are similar around the world" (217).

Repeated exposure to violence tends to desensitize viewers to the violence in real life. In an article in *Health and Science*, Stephanie Stapleton estimates that the "combined tally of hours [using the media] far exceed the time a child spends in school during his or her developmental years" (33). Children between the ages of two and 18 watch an average of six hours and 32 minutes of television each day (Committee 1222). Today it seems as if one cannot escape violent acts on television. A study performed found that violence occurs in 80% of all primetime plays, which are programs that are neither cartoon nor movie, and that violent acts happen about five times per play or eight times an hour (Hartnagel, Teevan, and McIntyre 341). A frightening statistic that comes up often in the argument to gain legislation on regulating violence on television is that before a child reaches the age of 18, he or she "will witness more than 200,000 acts of violence on television, including 16,000 murders" (Stapleton 33).

In his article "Teaching Kids to Kill," Dave Grossman discusses how violence is being introduced to the youth of the nation in the same way that soldiers in the army are trained to kill. The values of the military are instilled, to put it lightly, on soldiers in boot camp, as they are stripped of their individuality and taught to "embrace violence and discipline and accept it as a normal and essential survival skill in your brutal new world" (11). This is done to break down the walls that are naturally built against the killing and destruction of one's own kind. This type of behavior is similar to what is happening to children as they become aware of the outside world through television. At 18 months, a child begins to understand and mimic what they observe on television, but it is not until they are six or seven that they should be able to differentiate between fantasy and reality (Grossman 11).

In June of 1992, the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* published a conclusive study stating that there is a clear connection between violence on television and in the streets (Grossman 11). Wherever television is introduced, across the globe, into the lives of children there was an explosion of playground violence. The violent television influences are brutalizing and desensitizing children from when they are toddlers, and that is why it can be seen in these places that the murder rates double within 15 years because 15 years is the amount of time "it takes for a brutalized toddler to reach the 'prime crime' age" (11). JAMA has also found that since the television was introduced into the home in the 1950's the homicide rate has doubled. Thus, they drew the conclusion that if the violence on television had not been around to cause such behavior, half of the homicides, 10,000 a year, would not have occurred, as well as 70,000 rapes and 700,000 assaults where injury was caused (11-12). The children of today are learning to associate death and suffering with laughter and cheering. After the Jonesboro shootings, a teacher was surprised by the reactions from her students when she told them that some of their brothers and sisters had been shot at the middle school; she was surprised because they laughed (12).

The data found in the most recent studies is irrefutable. It is as easy to make the connection between the increase of violent television viewing and violent acts as it is to draw conclusions between smoking tobacco and lung cancer (Grossman 12). What has television turned the youth of this nation into? It is time to initiate legislation dealing with

the regulation of the industry of violence. It is an industry because it sells violent images to children and does not look at the future consequences as long as it makes its almighty dollar. Censorship is a very fragile subject in this day and age, and there is no reason to be hasty at this point in the game. What is needed is regulation of violence for children and allowing free access to be given exclusively to adults. This concept may sound familiar, as it is what is done with the sale of guns, pornography, alcohol, tobacco, and other things that affect one's behavior. It took time to protect the youth of the nation against these influences. How long will it take to see the harm of violence on television and to restrict that as well?

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# Mario's Stranglehold on the World

By Dan Shea

On November 9, 2004, the Microsoft produced video game *Halo 2* brought in over 125 million dollars through sales of over 2.38 million copies in America and Canada alone (Thorsen). Keep in mind that the aforementioned figures only represent the *first day sales* of this title. In comparison, these numbers have only been surpassed by 189 movies during their entire lifespan at the domestic box office. The video gaming world has greatly evolved from what it once was. Initially depending on arcades and quarters for its revenue, this industry's impact is now more widespread as gamers are capable of bringing home a tangible product for a substantial price. The video game industry was expected to come and go as a quick fad in the 1980's; however, this emerging business opportunity is continually growing, as consumers are willing to pay top dollar for new games and technology to support this software. The continuous turnover in technology is what constantly revitalizes profitability of this business. Every two to four years dedicated gamers invest hundreds upon hundreds of dollars in updating their gaming setups to include the latest technological advances.

As many large electronics companies began to realize the seemingly perpetual profitability of this multi-billion dollar business, the market was overwhelmed by the numerous competitors that also tried to break into the industry. Increased competition has not led to a decrease in sales for individual companies. It has, instead, led many gamers to own multiple consoles, such as Xbox, Gamecube, and Playstation 2, thereby expending even more money on this hobby. This competition has promoted a wider variety of products within the gaming industry, leaving consumers with more options and more items to purchase. These options, as well as the interconnectivity of online technology, have greatly expanded the accessibility of the video game world. Despite the high price tags that come with video games, you can find people from every socioeconomic background partaking in this activity. The intra-console competition has managed to keep prices relatively under control compared to the inflated prices of equipment that occurred when Nintendo dominated the market.

Online technology has also greatly expanded the accessibility of the video gaming world. Anyone connected to the Internet can connect to online servers and play against other *real people* anytime they wish. With video game usage as widespread as it is today, they have undoubtedly left an impact on society. The same can be said about the arcade phenomenon of the 1980's. As technology has advanced in this field, society has evolved with it. The world of video game technology is inherently intertwined with that of computers, which has provided it with a venue to reach people worldwide and thereby affect the development of current social behavior, ethics, and leisure activities. In order to study the true effects that video games have had on the world one must first look at the history of video game culture, the current state of the industry, technological advances and their results, and the world reaction to this growing phenomenon.

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The first interactive computer game was programmed by Steve Russell, a student of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in 1962. The game was *Spacewar!*. It featured two crudely drawn spaceships that would battle each other in space, and featured an accurate representation of outer space physics. Russell did not copyright this game due to the fact the computer required to operate it, the PDP-1, was the size of an automobile and cost upwards of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, leaving no realistic target audience which to market and sell this game (Kent 36). Just a few years after the invention of *Spacewar!*, Nolan Bushnell, a former University of Utah student who experienced Russell's invention first-hand, began developing an arcade version of the game. Bushnell renamed the game *Computer Space* and in 1971 he and Nutting Manufacturers produced 1,500 arcade versions of this game, however, the game was not very successful. At the same time, Ralph Baer was developing the first home gaming console with Magnavox. The console, named the *Odyssey*, premiered in 1972 and only managed to sell 100,000 units (Herman et al. sec. 4). Another critical event, in 1972, was the creation of the still influential company, Atari. Nolan Bushnell was actually the co-founder of this computer company. The first game he distributed under Atari's name was the very successful *Pong*, programmed by Alan Alcorn. Atari did not produce its own home gaming console until 1977, one year after Bushnell sold the company for twenty-eight million dollars (Kuittinen). It was over the next few years that the video gaming world would explode with the record-breaking success of the arcade era.

The Atari produced game *Pong* was revolutionary because it demonstrated to companies that there was a market for coin operated video games. *Pong* was first tested in a small town bar. Two weeks after being dropped off the machine broke down because the quarter slot was jammed with the quarters of bar patrons (Herman et al. sec. 2). The arcade era was born. It was during the late 1970's that the true classics of video gaming were created. This era gave rise to games such as *Space Invaders*, *Donkey Kong*, *Dig Dug*, *Pac-Man*, *Frogger*, *Centipede*, *Defender*, *Galaga*, *Asteroids*, and many other classics. All these games were released between 1978 and 1983, during a recession. Even in these times, games still managed to bring in billions of dollars per year, entirely in quarters. "The first time around, Japanese fans jammed so many coins into the machines that they provoked a currency crisis in the yen" (Thompson Blasts from the Past).

One unique feature of the arcade era was that it had its own culture. The majority of games in this period were played at the arcades, making these businesses the social hot spots for the youth of the late 1970's and 1980's. This craze did not only apply to children as noted by a 1982 study. "According to one survey, about half the game players (in arcades and elsewhere) are over the age of twenty-six" (G. & E Loftus 3). The key to success for these early games were that they were simple enough that anyone could play and enjoy. The popularity of games and diversity of their audience in this era ultimately led to a quick and effective transition to console games which had not been very profitable up until this point.

Throughout the arcade era Coleco, Atari, and other smaller companies tried to create a strong home based gaming market with moderate success. There was great competition among developers to attain licensing for popular arcade games and new

franchises; however, it was too much effort for too little profit. Coleco eventually filed for bankruptcy. Atari eventually focused on developing games for other companies and out of all the turmoil came Nintendo.

Nintendo released its first console in 1986. The NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) made its debut with the game *Super Mario Brothers*, the current best selling game in video game history. Nintendo went unrivaled in the console department for many years, and was even accused of cornering the market. America's Antitrust division of the Justice Department actually investigated the company in 1989 (Provenzo 23-24). Nintendo continued to control the market by updating their consoles, creating the Super NES, followed by the Nintendo 64, and now the Gamecube while also managing to dominate the handheld market with its variations of the Gameboy. Another Japanese based company, Sega, had considerable success with its Genesis gaming system, however, their future consoles failed due to poor business decisions. Sega eventually dropped out of the console market and recently filed for bankruptcy. Nintendo was truly challenged when Sony entered the gaming industry with their extremely successful console, the Playstation. Currently, Nintendo and Sony are in a three way competition with Microsoft for top billing of their modern day consoles, the Gamecube, Playstation 2, and Xbox, with Nintendo losing ground in this industry.

For the first time in video gaming history there are three legitimate competitors in the console market, with all three companies obtaining genuine success. This is because the video game industry has reached record high sales, earning more annually than the movie industry as Marist Professor Ron Coleman mentioned in his lecture on Game Design and Programming (Coleman). Video games have been continually successful for many years, still turning a profit in spite of inflation or recession. Not only have video games increasingly been bringing in more money than the movie industry, video games cost significantly less to produce. A game that costs a few million to develop can earn hundreds of millions. For example, two N64 titles *The Legend of Zelda* and *Goldeneye* cost approximately six million each to produce and individually brought in over two-hundred million in revenue (Vogel sec. 3). *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* sold approximately 7.6 million copies. Had Nintendo charged a single dollar per copy they still would have made a 1.6 million dollar profit. Luckily for Nintendo, they charged sixty.

It will be a long time before any video game can compete with the original *Super Mario Brothers* record of selling over forty million copies, yet video game developers are still producing games that are also capable of selling substantial quantities. Developers are continuing to release more games breaking the million-selling mark, with games such as *Halo 2* selling over five million copies in its first month (Houlihan). When these games debut with a fifty-dollar or more price tag, revenues pile up fairly quickly. The best selling game in history is still *Super Mario 64*, which made a grand total of 308 million dollars (Associated Press), a figure only surpassed by one-hundred twenty-nine movies worldwide in history. As a final comparison of the video game and movie industries, the total video game sales income for 2003 was 11.2 billion dollars in the United States (Morris). Even though 2003 was considered a weak year for the video

game industry, it still surpassed the movie industry's domestic total of 9.1 billion dollars (Box Office Mojo). It is expected to be another successful year for the video game industry with the sales of many highly anticipated sequels to games such as *Halo 2*, *Half Life 2*, *Metroid Prime 2*, and *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*.

It is due to the video game industry's success that companies are willing to make the initial investment of developing new technology for each generation of video gaming system. It is a little known fact that companies actually lose money on the initial sales of new consoles. The high production costs of the new technology are exorbitant, although as time goes on companies begin to turn a profit on the actual hardware as manufacturing costs go down. Every new generation of systems has vastly improved upon the capabilities of the last. As technology progressed from various types of cartridges to various types of discs, storage has improved. This has allowed for more realistic graphics, better audio, and much larger games. In the book *Mind at Play*, written in 1983, co-authors Geoffrey and Elizabeth Loftus predicted future possibilities that could come with advances in technology. "The hypothetical invention, 'Ground-level Pac-Man,' might become a reality; someone will take the concept and program it because, technically, such three-dimensionality is entirely feasible" (G. & E Loftus 82). Today, we would find humor in such a statement because three-dimensional games have made up the vast majority of the market for quite a few years. The advances made in video gaming technology over the past few decades have been ultimately spurred on by profit. If you compare the difference in graphics from *Spacewar!* with many games from the arcade era that came twenty years later, you will see little difference in the sophistication of the graphics with the exception of added color. You will, however, notice a significant difference in the progression of graphics in the past eighteen years, using Mario as an example of the change in quality of graphics for each generation of console.





Mario throughout the generations. NES (1986)-Top Left. SNES (1991)-Top Right  
 Nintendo 64 (1996)-Bottom Left. Gamecube(2002)-Bottom Right.

There were very few improvements in quality of graphics over the first two decades after the creation of *Spacewar!* as there was no real market in which to sell the games, therefore there was very little work done to improve upon these qualities. Once the video game industry became profitable, companies put the effort into refining the aesthetic qualities of games to entice gamers to buy something new. Although it is expected that graphics will continue to be improved, New York Times journalist and avid gamer Clive Thompson is careful to note, "For the last decade, most game companies have been governed by one obsessive idea: that making games more lifelike-more three-dimensional and hyperreal-will make them more fun. But this hasn't worked" (Thompson Blasts from the Past).

Besides the improvement of aesthetic qualities in video games, improvements in technology have also allowed for video games to be utilized in new ways. As soon as it was feasible, Mario himself was teaching children how to type. Educational video games, while not the largest part of the video gaming market, are still produced for schools and parents who wish to teach children computer literacy and basic math or English skills. Another large advancement in technology that has led to a new application for video games is the development and sophistication of artificial intelligence. A.I. (artificial intelligence) has vastly improved video game play. Before this development, you would encounter enemies that would attack in a set pattern. A.I. allowed gamers to experience their enemies reacting to their actions and fighting back appropriately. One such instance of video games being used for purposes other than entertainment is its utilization by the American government to train its troops. Clive Thompson wrote another article about this phenomenon when he experienced a training session with the Xbox title, *Full Spectrum Warrior*. Thompson noticed the realism of the game and the inherent difficulty that came with it. He and his entire team "died" in less than three minutes (Thompson Making of an Xbox Warrior). There are a multitude of other technological advances that show promise to revolutionize how consumers utilize their video games. For example, in the immediate future, gamers can look forward to touch screens, voice recognition, wireless networking, and of course, better graphics.

With the video game industry as expansive as it has become, it has no doubt left an impact on the world. A recent occurrence of the video game's influence has come with the release of the highly anticipated *Halo 2*. As noted in the introduction, this title has reached record-breaking sales figures, but it is not its profitability that is significant. Many gamers recognize that *Halo 2* will be solely responsible for a decline in their grades and/or work hours. Games are becoming increasingly addicting and engrossing as storylines are drawn out and games take longer to complete. There was even that instance a few years ago of a man who took his own life when his gaming friends told him he was spending too much time playing the game *EverQuest*. "He sacrificed everything so he could play for hours, ignoring his family, quitting his job and losing himself in a 3-D virtual world where more than 400,000 people worldwide adventure in a never-ending fantasy" (Miller II). A singular video game can take upwards of 70-100 hours to just complete once through, and games like *EverQuest* allow for unlimited hours of play as characters create new pseudo-lives in a virtual setting. Gamers feel compelled to finish these games in which they have invested so much money, and sometimes even go as far as skipping work or school to get playtime into their schedule. Video games are and always have been very addicting, however, the home console market allowed gamers to sit down and play their games at any point in the day, any day. This convenience has given game enthusiasts the capability to play games whenever they desire, the concern for many is that this freedom coupled with the addictive nature of today's video games are leaving many gamers spending inordinate amounts of time on this form of entertainment.

Another important issue regarding the effect of video games on society's ethics is the concern over video game violence. The first game in history to raise this apprehension was *Death Race 2000* released in 1976 by Exidy Games. The game rewarded players for running over stick figures. This game was taken out of circulation due to public protest (Herman et al. sec. 3), however, violence in video games is much more widespread and generally accepted today. The latest installment of the *Grand Theft Auto* series sold over three million copies worldwide in its first weekend on store shelves, bringing the total sales of this franchise well over 32 million units. For those unfamiliar with this franchise, the *Grand Theft Auto* series is comprised of many games allowing players to immerse themselves into a world of crime, drugs, and excessive violence. Although violence in video games is becoming continually more graphic, the concern over the effect of these depictions of violence on our society is certainly not new. Even in the early 1980's when violence in video games was limited to games such as *Space Invaders* and *Pac-Man*, many prominent figures were voicing their opinions on violence in video games. Even former Surgeon General Everett Koop made his opinion in this regard noted, "Dr. Koop has argued that there is nothing constructive about the games and that in fact they may be teaching children to kill and destroy since that's what most games are about" (G. & E Loftus 8).

There has been concern over the negative impact of video games since their initial installation in our society, although now video games are more influential and violent than they ever have been in history. Dr. Robert Sheppard (psychologist) comments on this phenomenon in an interview with a worried parent, "There is some concern that kids

who grow up around a lot of violence portrayed on television and on video games become less sensitive to violence. Pre-teen boys also tend to pick hyper-masculine (and often aggressive) role models to establish their identity" (Sheppard). The primary cause for concern is that children are being exposed to video game violence more often and at much younger ages. Parents, psychologists, and sociologists were worried over the effects of violence in video games during the arcade era, when violence was modest by today's standards and children had to visit arcades to be exposed. Now children are exposed to these games in their own households at much earlier ages, whether it be through first hand experience or merely observing a sibling or parent partaking in this activity. Violence depicted on television has been proven to increase aggressive tendencies in adolescents and social scientists believe video games have an amplified influence because the viewer actually participates in an active role (Walsh).

While there has been an emphasis on the negative impact of video games for many years, there has never been a legitimate solution to this problem. There have many attempts to resolve this problem, such as a ratings system for games, however, this system is poorly enforced. As video game technology continues to improve games will continue to become more open ended and allow players to do almost anything they wish. One instance of this was in the Xbox game, *Fable*. The premise of *Fable* was to allow players to do just about anything they wanted while completing the main story and to choose between the path of good or evil. When the game was tested, developers were appalled to find their testers rampantly killing children while playing this game, including the offspring of their own characters. This ability was quickly removed from the final version (Final Exam: *Fable*).

In summary, the video game industry has exploded on the scene in the last two decades with gamers fueling the industry's momentum to produce new and technically more intricate products at an amazing rate. Consumer demand coupled with the profitability to the manufacturers has kept this momentum going without any real concern for its effect on society. These games are accessible in one form or another to people of all ages from preschool on up. With language not being a barrier to playing these games, and computers making them accessible worldwide, the true impact of this phenomenon is global. It is impossible to tell how future games will affect society and culture or how society and culture will likewise affect the future of the video game industry. Only time will tell how the struggle between profitability and moral values will be decided.

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# Same Sex Marriage

By Jill Clement

Every little girl dreams of her wedding day, and many can even be seen dressing up, putting pillow cases on their heads and pretending that they are actually walking down that long aisle towards the one they love. As these little girls grow up, some of them, as well as some little boys . who may not play dress up, but have equal aspirations of marriage when they grow up . will be faced with the harsh reality that this illustrious day may never come to pass for them. The reason is not that they will be unable to find someone with whom they want to spend their lives, but that whom they have chosen is unacceptable to society because they happen to be of the same sex. Evidence today shows that homosexuality is not a choice, but is predetermined before birth (McClory 3). Therefore, these boys and girls will not choose a difficult path but will have no other choice, in adulthood, but to seek marriage to someone of the same sex, if they wish to be married at all. Homosexual couples should have the same rights and freedoms as heterosexual couples and, therefore, same-sex marriage should be legalized in the United States of America.

The U.S. Constitution guarantees its citizens the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." All U.S. citizens have the civil right to marry . all except homosexuals. The government only has three criteria that dictate those who may not marry. These criteria specify that one may not marry another family member, may only marry one person, and may not marry someone of the same sex. By denying same-sex marriages, the government is denying homosexuals equal civil rights. Several state court decisions have come to this conclusion, including Hawaii, Massachusetts, Vermont and Alaska (Sullivan 86). These states have interpreted their state constitutions, and subsequently granted various rights to same-sex couples, ranging from civil unions to marriage (Sullivan 86-87). When states truly examine their constitutions, they are forced to realize that the denial of marriage, or a similar institution, is unconstitutional. The U.S. government would be forced to come to the same conclusion, if they impartially reviewed the U.S. Constitution.

The denial of marriage rights to same-sex couples can be compared to the denial of interracial marriages in past decades. Until 1968, interracial marriage was illegal in the United States (Sullivan XXV). Looking back, this fact seems unbelievable and ridiculous, but in the past interracial marriage was as controversial as same-sex marriage is today. For example, in 1968, when the law was passed, 72% of the population in the United States disapproved of interracial marriage (Sullivan XXV). In fact, "hostility to same-sex marriage in 2004 is markedly less profound than hostility to interracial marriage was in 1968." Only about 60% of Americans are presently against legalizing same-sex unions, according to most polls (Sullivan XXVI). Hopefully, the U.S. government will realize that denying marriage to homosexuals is just as discriminatory as denying marriage to interracial couples in the past.

In addition to the denial of civil rights, the illegality of same-sex marriage also denies a multitude of more tangible benefits to homosexual couples. According to Nancy Wilson, vice-moderator of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, there are at least 200 "legal rights" that heterosexual married couples receive, which are not given to homosexual couples (Clash Over Gay Marriage 1996 para 5). The estimate of the U.S. General Accounting office is more generous, stating that, "more than 1,000 special benefits are automatically provided to heterosexual married couples simply because they are married. One example is that same-sex partners do not get to share in the benefits that married couples receive through the ability to file jointly on their income taxes. Another benefit that same-sex couples do not receive is family coverage from their partner's health insurance plan, as married spouses do. There are some companies that include a special provision in their health insurance policy that gives same-sex partners the same rights as spouses in regard to health insurance benefits, but this is quite rare. The large majority of homosexual couples do not receive this benefit. Also, if one member of a same-sex couple dies, his or her partner cannot receive social security benefits that his or her deceased partner earned, as heterosexual spouses can. Another area that does not give equal benefits to same-sex couples is adoption. Roughly half of the states in the U.S. have legalized co-adoption, which allows two people to equally adopt one child, together. In the other states, if one member of a same-sex couple adopts a child (only one person can adopt a single child) and then dies, the surviving partner has no legal rights to the adopted child. In actuality, this partner is seen, in the eyes of the law, as no more than a stranger to the child, regardless of how long he or she has raised this child as a parent (McClory 2). This can lead to messy custody battles between surviving partners and the families of the deceased partner, which can only negatively impact the children involved (Graff 137-138). In addition, families of one member of a same-sex couple can prevent the other member from visiting their partner in the hospital, unless this partner has power of attorney for their partner, due to the fact that there is no legal relation between the two partners (McClory 2). In addition, benefits related to property are also denied such as automatic inheritance of property as a heterosexual spouse would, and the ability to utilize tenancy by entirety, which is reserved for married couples (Day-O'Connor 95-96). These benefits, and many others, are not given to members of same-sex couples, no matter how committed and long-term their relationships are. This practice is unjust and discriminatory.

Opponents to same-sex marriage often support their opinion with statements that the main purpose of marriage is procreation. There are both religious practitioners and politicians who hold this position. First, this is one of the main arguments of the religious opposition to homosexual marriage. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish a partnership of the whole life, is ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring." The Catholic Church feels that same-sex unions cannot be considered marriages, since it is impossible for these unions to result in the procreation of children. Similarly, while the U.S. government has not "formally" held a connection between marriage and procreation since the Supreme Court declared the legality of the sale of birth control to married couples in 1965, the opinion is still alive and well in the minds of many politicians (Graff 137). For example, Senator Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania has

presented the equivalent political position to the religious view previously stated, when he said, "It's common sense [that] marriage is between a man and a woman, why? Because of children. It is the reason for marriage. It's not to affirm the love of two people. That's not what marriage is about. It's about uniting together to be open to children" (McClory 1). The quote may certainly be of interest to married couples without children. According to Senator Santorum, they have no reason to be married, since they have either chosen not to have children or are unable to have children. According to these definitions of marriage solely as a means of procreation, infertile couples, older couples past the age where conception is possible, and those who use contraceptives to avoid pregnancy as a free choice should, along with homosexual couples, not be allowed to marry. However, this is not the case. Both the law and the different religions include all of these couples, except for same-sex couples. Just as a sterile couple may wish to have children, and, through no fault of their own, cannot fulfill this wish, a same-sex couple may have dreams of having children while it is as biologically impossible as it is for a sterile couple (Sullivan 82). The fact that the Catholic Church, the Jewish faith and the law all fully support the marriage of elderly couples, where the wife is post-menopause, and infertile couples undermines their position that same-sex unions cannot be considered marriages due to the fact that they cannot produce children.

In addition to the Church's view that marriage must be for the purpose of procreation, there are also several religious arguments, by both the Catholic Church and the Jewish faith, predominantly, which quote scripture in the Old Testament of the Bible as support of views against same-sex marriage. These religious views often quote various parts of the Old Testament, such as Genesis 2: 18-24, which describes how God took a rib from Adam and made a woman from it, in order to make a perfect partner for Adam. The story concludes by saying, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Sullivan 46-48). This scripture only describes one story, and makes no reference to homosexuality. Therefore, the connection to the opposition of same-sex marriage is tenuous, at best. Another common reference is Leviticus 20: 7-16; 22-27, which says, "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them." However, this same passage also states that anyone who commits adultery shall be put to death, as well as anyone that curses at his mother or father (Sullivan 49). We, as a society, do not put every adulterer to death, and we also do not put to death those who curse at their parents. If that were the case, practically every teenager in America would not make it to his or her twentieth birthday. Therefore, why should the verse pertaining to homosexuality be taken so literally and seriously? Beyond this religious debate is an even deeper issue. The United States was founded on a basic tenet that religious views are kept out of political affairs, via the separation of church and state. Therefore, the entire debate over religious scripture, whether valid or not, is moot. The decision as to whether same-sex marriage should be legalized or not, must be based solely on legal sources such as the Constitution and laws of the United States.

Another common argument of those in opposition to same-sex marriage, including President Bush, is that its legalization will corrupt the sanctity of the institution of

marriage. These views have sent our President, and others with the same opinion to go so far as to seek a Constitutional Amendment that will declare marriage as the union of a man and a woman, and will make it impossible to legalize same-sex marriage in the future. Luckily, as of yet, this plan has not come to fruition. However, the views behind it are still prevalent. Notably, marriage has overcome many circumstances, some far more subversive than same-sex unions, such as the increase in the divorce rate to its present level of about 50% of all marriages. In present society, infidelity has also increased astronomically, which demeans the sanctity of marriage as well. In addition, the vast acceptance of cohabitation as a valid lifestyle has led to the feeling, by many couples, that legal marriage is unnecessary (Nagourney para 6,12).

Marriage is a reflection of societal norms. As society changes, marriage must change also in order to keep up with the changing norms of society. At one time marriage was for life, but now people may have several spouses in one lifetime, without any of them dying. All marriages used to be primarily for the procreation of children, but now many couples choose not to have children at all (Sullivan XXIII . XXIV). At one time most marriages were political and/or economic agreements, which were negotiated by the families of those who would be married, but arranged marriages are now rare, at least in American society. All of these changes in American society have changed the face of the institution of marriage, but marriage has still survived. Couples still get married every day. Marriage has survived thus far, and will continue, with the legalization of same-sex unions, to evolve and to reflect society.

The U.S. government encourages marriage, since it promotes stability. In fact, the government does everything it can to encourage marriage among single people, and keep married couples together. This is why a couple that fails to obtain a marriage license prior to their marriage is still legally married. It is also why the government does not wish to make it easier to obtain a divorce. In addition, the Supreme Court has even defended the rights of prisoners, including convicted murders, to marry (Day-O'Connor 95). This being the case, why does the government not wish to increase the stability of homosexual unions by promoting marriage in this group of citizens, who are productive citizens who have broken no laws?

The controversy over same-sex marriage is, "a civil rights matter, a religious matter, a question of politics and a question of culture (Sullivan XXVIII). This alone displays the complexity of the issue. While a decision may not be quick in coming, there is hope that, one day, the government of the United States will catch up to the societal norms of its people and realize that same-sex couples are becoming more widely accepted and prevalent. The government must analyze the reasoning behind keeping same-sex marriage illegal. Religious concerns must be ignored, due to the separation of church and state in the United States. The discrimination against homosexuals, which keeps same-sex unions illegal and prevents homosexuals from receiving many of the benefits associated with heterosexual marriage, must stop. Hopefully, one day we, as a nation, will be able to look back with disbelief at a time when same-sex marriage was illegal, in the same way that we now look back at the previous legality of slavery with horror and disbelief.

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# **Strengthening United States Regulations on Genetically Modified Organisms**

**By Katie ORear**

Everyday, Americans unknowingly consume foods in which genes have been altered. Genes from various organisms have been added and subtracted to produce what is commonly seen on grocery store shelves. These foods, referred to as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), have become extremely abundant in the United States over the past decade. Their main purpose is to make crops resistant to natural threats, such as pests and drought. However, although positive results may be seen on the surface level, a deeper look into the development and use of GMOs reveals that their potentially negative effects far outweigh their current benefits. The risks associated with GMO usage predominantly include health concerns, but they extend much further to include cultural, ethical, and economic consequences. The lack of information about the potential detrimental effects of these products suggests that more research and meticulous experimentation must be done, and stronger regulations must be imposed in the U.S., before these products can be declared safe to consume. GMOs undeniably have the potential to become a valuable resource throughout the world, but the pros, cons, and other issues implied by their use must be considered before these foods can be safely developed for human consumption.

Genetically modified organisms, which are also commonly known as genetically engineered organisms, genetically altered organisms, or transgenic organisms, are organisms that have undergone a process through which the pattern of proteins has been manipulated by altering genes and DNA. Dr. Martha Crouch, associate professor of biology at Indiana University explains that "[e]ither new genes are added, or existing genes are changed.[and] because the genetic code is similar in all species, genes taken from a mouse can function in a corn plant" (Anderson 216). Although a similar form of genetic modification is used to produce pharmaceuticals, this discussion will concentrate on its application to food. When applied to plant genes, the purpose of genetic modification is to create, improve, and modify plants so that they produce more desirable traits and become more conducive to year-round, hassle-free farming (Hegarty 25). The question is whether or not this ease of cultivation is coming with a deadly cost to consumers. A look at the background and speed with which GMOs have been developed will reveal that the answer to this question is, unfortunately, yes.

The basic principle behind GMOs has been in use for centuries, as farmers have always selectively bred animals and plants to produce gene combinations that increase yields and resistance to disease. The earliest experiments, such as those done by Gregor Mendel in the mid-1800's, and those done in the development of crossbred corn in the 1900's, involved the exchange and mixture of genes in the same, or similar, organisms. However, James Watson, Francis Crick, and Maurice Wilkins' discovery of the molecular structure of DNA, in 1953, made genetic modification possible ("James Watson"). With the ability to transfer genes from one plant to another, it was determined that organisms could be altered to display characteristics not inborn within the original gene structure.

Dr. Dan R. Anderson, professor of risk management at the University of Wisconsin, states that this type of modification can make crops "resistant to pests, drought, and even herbicides to increase their yields" (216). Upon such discoveries, once lab experimentation had taken place, seed companies began marketing GMOs with force, and plants claiming to be edible were on the shelves by 1994 (Bren 2).

The first genetically engineered product to go on the market in 1994 was a tomato. This tomato was modified to age slowly and be resistant to rotting during shipment. It was approved by the FDA, who viewed it as the same as any other tomato. Since the release of this tomato, over fifty other GMOs have been developed, and The Grocery Manufacturers of America approximate that between 70 and 75 percent of processed foods in U.S. grocery stores currently contain GMO ingredients (Bren 2). Some of these everyday foods include canola oil, corn, potatoes, soybeans, squash, tomatoes, papaya, and sugar beets (Bren 2). By 1996, the total area of genetically modified crops had reached 1.7 million hectares, and this number grew to 81 million by 2004 (Davidson 34). The majority of these crops are soybean, corn, and cotton, of which 68 percent, 26 percent, and 70 percent (respectively) of their total crops are now genetically modified (Coleman 16). Also, by 2004, the United States was producing 59 percent of the world's GMOs, while Argentina produced 20 percent, and Canada and Brazil both produced 6 percent ("Agrifood Awareness"). The rapid implementation of GMO use implies that consumers have been swayed by advocates of GMOs, and perhaps naively trust what their grocery stores put on the shelves.

There are unquestionably benefits of GMOs, but consumers should also be aware of the potential risks associated with the foods that they eat. The main advantages of GMOs vary depending on whether or not the issue in discussion is their use in developed countries or undeveloped countries. In discussing GMO use in developed countries, the main focus of supporters' argument is the superior characteristics of GM crops. For farmers, these characteristics translate into lower costs, less use of chemicals, higher yields, and better pest resistance. According to the National Center for Food and Agriculture, they can also equate to a \$22 billion increase in income, which is what was realized by 2005 when farmers had invested in 5.3 billion pounds of genetically modified crops in addition to their normal operations (Coleman 16).

Two of the most prominent illustrations of the previously mentioned characteristics are Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) Corn and Roundup Ready Soybeans. Bt Corn is developed by inserting the Bt gene into a normal corn gene strand. The main advantage of Bt Corn is that it is resistant to pests, which reduces the necessity for farmers to use pesticides on their crops. Roundup Ready Soybeans, on the other hand, are produced by Monsanto, one of the leading seed companies, to create crops that are resistant to the commonly used weed-killer, Roundup. This genetic modification allows farmers to spray their crops with herbicides without damaging the food plant. Another example of a GMO is the Flavr-Savr tomato, which has genes that have been altered to "slow the aging process and extend shelf life. Another GM tomato involved inserting an antifreeze gene from a fish (flounder) into tomatoes to make them frost resistant" (Anderson 218). The benefits that are inserted into these plants obviously make many of the difficult aspects of

farming disappear. From a surface level perspective, it may seem that the possibilities for even more benefits are almost endless, especially when the possibility of saving millions of lives is factored into the equation.

Because of the low costs and high resistance to failure of GM crops, the possibility of using these crops to feed undeveloped or developing countries is very enticing. The World Health Association reported in 2005 that more than 3.7 billion people worldwide were malnourished, which set the historic record number (Coleman 16). Not only do GMOs have the potential to solve hunger problems, but they could also be adapted to have other benefits that are needed in undeveloped countries. For example, vaccines or nutritional and vitamin supplements could be inserted into the genes. One such plant that has been tested is golden rice, which has vitamin supplements that attempt to fight blindness. Dr. Dan Anderson explains that golden rice "includes bacterial and daffodil genes that allows it to make beta-carotene that the body converts to vitamin A" (Anderson 218). Despite these potential benefits, developing countries must not be used as guinea pigs for the United States' experiments.

One of the concerns about GMO use stems from their potential use in developing countries. Advocates for GMOs claim that, by introducing these products into developing countries, many lives will be saved. However, in 2001, the world was producing enough food for each person to have 4.3 pounds of food per day (Anderson 218). With this in consideration, it must be argued that starvation is not arising because of lack of food production, but rather it is a result of poor distribution and insufficient resources for purchasing. In addition, the lifetime patents that biotech companies hold on genes, along with the high costs of research and development for GM products, may often result in prices that are too high for poor farmers to pay. Many believe that the introduction of these crops into developing countries could actually irreversibly damage the current state of their agricultural systems. Peter Rosset explains "the diverse, integrated farming systems found on smaller farms can be far more productive than the uniform monocultures that genetically engineered seeds are designed for" (22). Because of this, the Mexican government put a ban on GMOs in 1999, fearing that their 25,000 native crops would be destroyed by contamination from GM pollen. Similarly, the Thai government temporarily banned GMOs, contending that biodiversity and food safety would be impaired by GM crops (Rosset 22). Furthermore, if GMOs are embraced by developing countries, these countries will become dependent on the U.S. (or one of the few other GMO producers) for the supply and/or technology to produce genetically modified seeds. Basing a country's entire agricultural system on the reliance of one ally puts the country at risk of either having its food supply wiped out by contamination or potentially by political turmoil. These risks alone are enough to reconsider the benefits of GMOs.

The potential risks of GMOs, while still not fully documented, extend far beyond harming developing countries. Bettie Sue Masters, the committee chair for a report on GMO safety, explains that "[a]ll evidence to date indicates that any breeding technique that alters a plant or animal . whether by genetic engineering or other methods . has the potential to create unintended changes in the quality or amounts of food components that

could harm health" (Panasevich 25). This type of uncertainty, with unknown consequences, poses extreme risk. The specific risks involved with GMO use include issues of human and environmental health, ethics, and business/economics. From a human health standpoint, the uncertainty of GMOs may cause unknown allergic reactions or sickness. For instance, many people are violently allergic to peanuts and/or soybeans. Therefore, crops that are modified to contain some component of one of either of these allergy-triggers may be deadly to unknowing consumers. For example, in one extreme case, in 1989, a dietary supplement known as tryptophan was inserted into GM foods. Although this supplement was thought to be harmless, "37 deaths and thousands of cases of debilitation and/or partial paralysis were associated with taking this type of tryptophan" (Anderson 219). Although potential advantages may have been elicited from the use of tryptophan, it is evident that more research should have been done before releasing the food for human consumption, as is the case with all other genetically modified foods.

Risk assessment must also be conducted with relation to environmental ramifications. One of the main environmental concerns is the possibility that GMO crops could harm non-GMO crops by cross-pollination. If an organic crop is planted near a GM crop, cross-pollination could contaminate the organic crop. Further, researchers fear that insects will eventually become immune to the Bt crops. Again, this would eliminate the possibility for organic farmers to continue using Bt as a natural pesticide if Bt becomes ineffective against pests (Blackwood 169). Bt may also harm non-pests, as was indicated through a study on the Monarch Butterfly in 1999, which revealed that Bt pollen was lethal to this species (S.M. 184). On a similar note, as Roundup Ready crops become more prevalent, weeds may evolve that these crops are not able to resist. Also, an article by Alisa Blackwood entitled "GMOs 101" explains that genetically modified Atlantic salmon, which grow twice as fast as wild salmon, may destroy the population of native salmon. This could occur if these salmon escape from ocean pens, which could be avoided if the salmon were raised on farms (169). Clearly, environmental precautions must be taken into consideration if GMOs are to be safely administered.

Not only are there physical effects associated with GMO use, but ethical issues are also among the greatest arguments regarding this topic. As has been the concern in many other genetic issues, such as whether or not cloning should be permitted, the ethical issue surrounding GMO use deals with whether or not nature should be tampered with. Because GM crops can only be developed in the laboratory, it is questioned if they can and should be able to fit into nature. While many natural crops have developed on their own, fish genes would never naturally cross with tomato genes; the necessity of creating such genetically modified foods is questionable. Further fueling this argument are religious beliefs and debates. Dan Anderson explains "many religions hold to the sanctity of the natural world . that humans are a part of the natural world and should fit harmoniously into the natural world and should not artificially alter it" (220). It could be asserted that those who hold such beliefs should simply not consume genetically modified foods. However, a study by the Union of Concerned Scientists found that seeds that are not genetically modified may still be unintentionally contaminated, making it virtually impossible, at least for people in the U.S., to live GMO free (Blackwood 170).

Although people living in the United States may not be able to live GMO free, many other countries have strictly regulated the use of GMOs, which poses both economic and cultural risks for the U.S. Participating in GMO production has basically become market-driven. In 2004, the U.S. and Argentina accounted for 79 percent of all GMO production, and over 25 percent of all soybeans, corn, and cotton, as well as over 50 percent of all wheat and rice that was being exported (Paarlberg 30). Because of varying restrictions in foreign countries, the manner in which American farmers produce GMO crops may determine whether or not they are able to export. For example, since the 1996 mad cow disease scare, and fueled anxiety from Greenpeace and other European activist organizations, the European Union has avoided GMO consumption. The French, on the other hand, who see food and culinary preparation as a way of life, refuse to accept food that has been grown unnaturally. Robert Paarlberg explains that these consumer phobias led to the EU enacting a "GM food labeling provision in 1998, requiring its 15 member states to begin marking all packaged foods that contain GM corn and soy. The United Kingdom went even further, requiring that restaurants, caterers, and bakers either list all GM ingredients or face fines of up to \$8,400" (Paarlberg 28). Even fast food chains in the EU, such as Burger King and McDonald's, vowed not to use genetically modified foods, when possible, to avoid boycotts and/or lawsuits (Paarlberg 28). Opposition to importation has spread to Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, and Australia, where GMO labeling is now mandatory. Such regulations are forcing the U.S. to conform to policies imposed by foreign countries, and they are making the U.S. face the business risk that customers will (and have) refuse to buy GM foods.

GMO regulations are not completely nonexistent in the U.S., but U.S. policies are considerably less strict than those around the world. When GMOs were originally rapidly implemented, government agencies were delegated certain duties pertaining to these new foods. The Food and Drug Administration was placed in charge of making sure that these foods were safe for human and animal consumption; the Environmental Protection agency was to watch over the safety of the pesticides introduced into the plants, and the USDA was made responsible for making sure the plants were safe to grow (Bren 2). Despite the delegation of these duties, very few strict regulations were put into place to ensure that these tasks were being accomplished. Initially, testing of new GMOs was voluntary, but protests pushed the FDA to develop a "consultation process to assist developers in meeting the safety standards set forth in its [new testing] guidelines" (Bren 2). This may have seemed like a step in the right direction, but going through the consultation process was, and still is, voluntary. Similarly, labeling products to notify consumers that they have been genetically modified is also voluntary (Bren 3). With only these loose regulations in place, consumer apprehension will only continue to grow, as will business losses.

If the U.S. were to follow the EU's initiatives, and do more extensive risk assessment before releasing products for consumption, GMOs could be safely implemented and reach their full potential to benefit the world. In 2001 the Parliament of the European Union established a strict set of rules about GMOs so that these foods could be accessed and consumed safely. The rules "govern the testing, planting, and sale of crops and food for humans and animals [...] Under the rules, companies have to apply for

licenses that will last 10 years and to pass approval processes. All genetically altered products [are] tracked in a central database [.] Tough food labeling and tracing requirements [are also in place]" (Anderson 223). Regulations such as these ensure consumers that their food producers and suppliers are looking out for their health. Establishing similar guidelines in the United States, which require strict testing and labeling, will assure that GM foods are safe for consumption. Assessing the situation in Europe suggests that business may then have to be reestablished and consumer confidence regained. Although some GM products are now imported, Europe still grows only 58 hectares of one GM crop: insect-protected maize in Spain (out of 81 million hectares of GM crops globally) ("Combining Multiple Viewpoints"). However, with extensive research, testing, and convincing evidence, the US should be able to maximize its business motives while also maximizing the benefits of genetically modified organisms.

Although most Americans may not be aware of it, genetically modified foods have become everyday foods in the United States. When it was first discovered that plant and animal genes could be altered to manipulate organisms to have more attractive traits, scientists quickly embraced the idea, and GMOs became widespread. The problem with this rushed implementation was that producers were not taking the time to do lengthy tests on the potential effects (both short and long-term) of the unnatural foods that they were creating. Once it was almost too late, and millions of hectares of GM crops were flourishing, health, cultural, and business considerations then arose. GMO producers had only considered the potential benefits, such as the possibility of curing starvation in developing countries. However, researchers considered the potential risks, such as allergic reactions, the evolution of super pests and super weeds, and the loss of business to countries that had already dealt with these risks. The regulations that foreign countries (such as those in the EU) have put into place should serve as a guideline for the next steps that the U.S. should take with regards to GMOs. Not only will strengthening regulations put the United States at a better position for trade, but it will also ensure that U.S. consumers will be confident in their food choices. Only after the United States tightens its regulations on testing, researching, labeling, and producing GMOs will the full benefits of these foods be realized.

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## **Grab your Coats and Bags, But Don't Forget your RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) Tags: What does the future hold in store?**

**By Jackie LeBlanc**

New technology is proliferating throughout the nation; however, it could be creating a sequel to George Orwell's well-known novel, 1984. With the invention of VeriChips and RFID tags, the United States government might be able to decrease the amount of terrorism, illegal aliens, and criminal conduct. VeriChips are "devices cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as the first implantable electronic identification tag linked to a person's medical profile" (Langberg 1). RFID Tags or transponders have silicon microchips that can hold a serial number or other information (The World's RFID Authority). This increase in security by the use of radio waves to identify people or objects seems to be a positive advancement. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) has been around since the 1970s, however, has been too expensive for the practical use in today's society. In Hitachi Japan, the development of the mu-chip, (a microchip with an antenna) helps the government prevent counterfeiting of passports and other securities by embedding the chips into banknotes and valuable paper documents (What is RFID). With this type of technology, the security of the nation could be well under watch. Technology has increased societal standards of living and can greatly enhance security and protection around the world; however, the need for privacy and freedom may be at stake with the new use of radio frequency technology, the "Big Brother" system.

"I'm rolling up my sleeve, ready to get injected with the VeriChip" (Langberg 1). This could be the future of the world today. It has worked in tracking and identifying pets for a number of years since its invention, however, humans may have the world's new technology implanted in their skin. The television, telephone, and computer are inventions that have greatly stimulated the development of society nationwide. With the creation of RFID, the identity of an object of an individual can be transmitted wirelessly, using radio waves ("Radio Frequency Identification Technologies: A Workshop Summary"). This could lead to a new way of living and a new form of protection. Many people around the world are numb to this technology that has been around for several years.

Ever since World War II, the Germans, Japanese, Americans, and British have been using radar (invented by Sir Robert Alexander Watson), to warn of planes that were approaching from miles away. "The evolution of radio carried with it the ingredients necessary for radar" (Buderer 59-61). The Germans discovered that if "pilots rolled their planes as they returned to base, it would change the radio signal reflected back" (The History of RFID). This allowed for the crew on the ground to identify the German planes. This had been reported as the first form of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). The brother to RFID was the IFF (Identity Friend or Foe) system. The British developed this system by putting a transmitter on their planes, which received signals from radar stations on the ground. This relay system would go back and forth and show if the plane was a friend or a foe (enemy or ally) (The History of RFID). Scientists continued to work on

this newly discovered technology for years to make it more efficient and reasonable in everyday society. Electronic article surveillance tags were soon developed with 1-bit devices in them to decrease theft in stores. When people purchased an item with a tag, it would deactivate, however, if they stole the item, the alarm would sound when the tag crossed a certain point in the store. A man by the name of Mark W. Cardullo was the first man to patent the RFID tag with rewritable memory (The Basics of RFID). This tag was reworked until it was put into use in the 1970's.

During this time, the government created a transponder that was placed on a truck. Whenever the truck crossed a gate with an antenna, information such as its ID number would be scanned. What is now called the "EZ-pass," this RFID device allows automobiles to pass through tolls without having human payment interaction (What is RFID). This increases the speed of traffic lines and decreases the waiting time, while billing the individual at home. Another RFID device is the "Mobile Gas Station Speed Pass." A small bar keychain has a microchip in it so when an individual wants to fill up their gas tank, they wave the bar across a scanner and the Pegasus symbol for Mobile lights up. This indicates that the person's ID was read and the amount of gas they use will be priced and added to their bill that they pay monthly. This allows for less human interaction, less use of the dollar, and quicker fill up time. A 13.56-megahertz RFID system is used in both of these devices. It has also appeared as an "anti-theft device in cars. A reader in the steering column reads the passive RFID tag. If it doesn't get the ID number it is programmed to look for, the car won't start" (The History of RFID). This could possibly solve the nation's theft problem.

RFID tags come in a large assortment of shapes and sizes. There are very noticeable ones, such as "hard plastic anti-theft tags attached to merchandise in stores" and animal tracking tags implanted beneath the skin of endangered species and pets (Electronic Privacy Information Center "RFID"). RFID chips and VeriChips have been used in livestock and pets for a number of years. Los Alamos National Laboratory developed a passive RFID tag to track cows with 125 kHz of radio waves (The History of RFID). The glass transponder was placed under the cow's skin, which draws energy from the reader and reflects back a signal to relay the cow's location (The History of RFID). With this method, livestock was kept track of and lost animals were always found.

Today there is a newly updated and higher frequency tag that is being sold to the world's biggest retailers. Albertson, Metro, Target, Wal-Mart, and the defense department of the United States government said they soon will use this technology in keeping track of their military supplies. This wireless reading device for an RFID tag can automatically read hundreds of tags a second (Mayfield). This could greatly improve supply chain efficiency. Also it can allow for products to be tracked and organized in a warehouse. The drawback to these high frequency tags that can transmit data faster and farther, is that they consume more power and are much more expensive. "Cost is limiting growth. RFID tags are made of silicon. With prices as high as 50 cents, silicon RFID tags are too costly to track inexpensive merchandise" (Beebe 1). The convenience should be worth the expense. Dan Wagner, Vice President of Operations at TLF Graphics Incorporated in Rochester, New York said, "As of now, it is more sensible to insert RFID tags on pallets

and skids instead of on the actual product because the prices are so astronomical." Moderation and economy seem to be the deciding factor behind this technology.

The RFID technology can be implemented into the everyday life of the average individual. A newly developed smart shelf can warn the owner or manager of a store when a carton of milk or vial of medicine has expired. This process could reduce the amount of out-of-date products in supermarkets (Mayfield). This may be one simple and non-threatening RFID implementation; however, there are several others that are causing more controversy that must be addressed, like RFID tags in passports and VeriChips in humans. There needs to be certain protections and cautions made before any new form of radio frequency identification is put into action. There already are protections for home phone lines and financial records; therefore there must be protection for RFID information.

Although pets and livestock have been given an RFID chip for tracking purposes, humans need to have the option. Getting an implanted ID chip, the VeriChip should always be voluntary and never forced upon any individual. The government, businesses, and schools should also be restrained from pressuring people with the chips (Langberg 2). There should not be any bargains or bribes made in inserting the devices. There needs to be some form of an "off" switch. Implanted chips should be able to be turned off or removed and this removal practice should be offered to everyone.

In order to avoid "Big Brother," being unaware of when one is being watched, there should be signs in places that have scanners to read the chips (Langberg 3). Since the insertion of chips with medical records is being planned in hospitals, individuals need to be in control of information the tag contains and who can see the information. As Donna-Bea Tillman, Director, Office of Device Evaluation and radiological Health has stated, ".by agreeing to have a chip implanted, the understanding would be that a patient has tacitly agreed to make information [stored in the VeriChip] available to someone with a reader (Electronic Privacy Information Center "VeriChips"). The VeriChip can be marketed as a universal means of identification in the financial and transportation security areas, along with residential and commercial building access and military and government security (Electronic Privacy Information Center "VeriChips"). Interestingly, there is a fee for having the chip implanted in one's arm. It will contain a unique verification number that appears in the Global VeriChip Subscriber Registry when activated by a VeriChip scanner. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been continuously testing this chip to insure reliability. With the FDA's approval, the VeriChip can confirm identity; check one's blood type, allergies, and medical history (Electronic Privacy Information Center "VeriChips").

Along with the positives of being able to identify the records of an unconscious patient, come the negative side effects. There are potential risks in inserting the VeriChip into the skin. Some forms include "adverse tissue reaction, electromagnetic interference, and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) incompatibility" (Electronic Privacy Information Center "VeriChips"). The MRI incompatibility is a very serious issue because that machine uses powerful magnetic frequencies that can interfere with the

VeriChip and the patient could suffer from severe burns ("Groups Says VeriChips May be a Risk to Heal Safety and Data Security"). Although the VeriChip is about the size of a grain of rice, there is risk that the radio waves could be intercepted and duplicated by others to expose medical and financial account information ("Groups Says VeriChips May be a Risk to Heal Safety and Data Security"). There is always the fear of tracking an individual's movement and location instead of reading medical records. The controller of the scanner should be licensed and screened as well. Despite the possible risks, VeriChips are already being used on a daily basis across the world.

Recently, the Mexican Attorney General said that he and 160 other government officials had been "chipped" (given the VeriChip implant) as a means to enter and exit government facilities in Mexico City (Murray 4). He said that the chip holds about 128 characters of identification information and is 11 x 2 mm (4). It was injected through a syringe and implanted into his body. The chip is activated in the human body by moving a scanner a close distance from the chip; which in turn excites the coil and "wakes up" the chip to transmit data (4). The amazing part about this little cylindrical technology is that there are already biometric sensors that have been developed to read temperature and glucose levels inside the body.

Biometrics is a technology that measures physiological characteristics of a person to distinguish one person from another and to authenticate that an individual is who he says he is. The physiological characteristics can be facial or hand prints, finger prints, irises or voice patterns. (Zetter)

"The tiny glucose monitor would employ enzymes that react by producing a voltage proportional to glucose levels" (Murray 4). There are also chips that are being created to be put in handguns for law enforcement agencies. A modified scanner in the gun handle would only work if it is identified with the chip in the police officer or gun holder's hand (4). If there were no positive identification, the gun would not fire. This could reduce the amount of stolen guns and misfires that kill so many people around the world. This use of RFID's in relation to firearms could reduce violence, which could lead to reforming the prison and legal system which deals with violent criminals.

The inmate population in the United States as of July 1, 2002 was approximately 1.4 million (RFID Reforms Prison Management). It seems almost impossible for prison guards to be able to keep track of the overcrowded jail cells and control fights and escapes of convicts. They continue to follow the old fashioned method of head counting about eight times daily. If a criminal happens to escape, this method gives extra time to get away. In Scottsdale Arizona, Technology Systems International (TSI) wants to use radio frequency identification to track inmates in real time (RFID Reforms Prison Management). This will allow for an early warning when a criminal attempts to break out. A maximum-security prison in California has been testing RFID tags, and caught one escaping prisoner and stopped riots (RFID Reforms Prison Management). A transmitter in the shape of a large wristwatch is strapped to the wrist of an inmate. This particular device holds a 900 megahertz RFID transmitter with a battery that sends out signals every other second (RFID Reforms Prison Management). It is in a "tamperproof" casing and

strapped with screws, so if the band is cut or taken off, an alarm will automatically sound triggering a monitoring station (RFID Reforms Prison Management). There would be readers with antennas placed all around the prison and in the interior of the building to read these tags. The officers can better watch the inmates, and detect escapes within one minute. The TSI system grew out of military research for tracking soldiers (RFID Reforms Prison Management).

This use leads us to the issue of security. Protection and avoiding terrorism is an important issue in society today and is trying to be dealt with in several ways. The Association of Corporate Travel Executives opposed a State Department proposal of implanting RFID tags in passports ("RFID's"). In passports, there would be no batteries, only a scanning antenna that puts out the radio frequency. The information stored on the chip in the passport could last from 10 years up to many decades ("RFID's"). The controversy behind the RFID tags is that they were originally designed for inventory management and not security applications. Any individual around the world can obtain a scanner, get near the chip in the passport and "wake it up" and read the person information ("RFID's"). The problem with terrorism could soon increase.

Someone, such as a foreign intelligence organization or criminal group, could easily setup an antenna and would be alerted to any passport they "see". Even if they could not read the data from the chip, they would be able to detect the passport and its unique signal structure (referred to as signature) that would likely identify the issuing country of the passport. ("RFID's")

These passports with the RFID tags inside of them would contain the individual's name, date of birth, "biometric" identifier, and country of origin (Ludden). There are prospective solutions to preventing the information on the chips from circulating around the world.

- "First, the data should be encrypted when it is transmitted" ("RFID's"). The person that was scanning the device would have to have the 'key' to unlocking the information.
- "Second, the chip should authenticate the reader to only respond to readers it is programmed to know in advance" ("RFID's").

The passport system that the government is trying to issue does not implement any of these controls. The Electronic Privacy Information Center has developed a "Personal RFID Shield" to cover the passport (Personal RFID Shield Advertisement). The aluminum sheet that would encapsulate the passport would not allow anyone to scan the information. Only when the passport is opened can it be read.

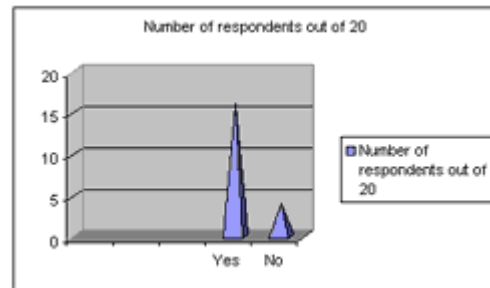
There is also a problem deemed "tag collision" ("RFID's"). When several passports or products with RFID tags are held together in a small area there can be mixed radio signals and confusion with the waves. As stated by several researchers, "The best way to reduce fraud is to increase the use of biometric identifiers, but this will require additional resources at entry points into the country" (Daalder et al. 30). This is a long way off from

where the RFID tag is now. It could take several years to enforce all of the protection capabilities. The technology needs to prevent vulnerability of a passport holder's information, identity theft, and terrorists. Although the ideas and technological advancement exists, it should not be applied in security uses until the privacy and security concerns are addressed.

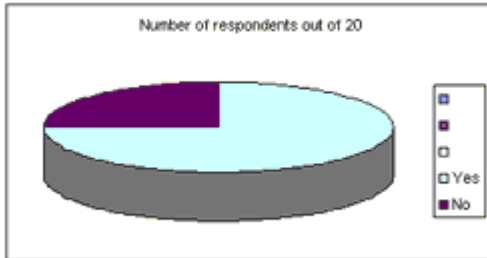
"Think of an RFID chip as an electronic version of the children's game Marco Polo. When the RFID reader broadcasts 'Marco', the RFID chip replies 'Polo'" (RFID Kills). This new device can change the way people live their lives. In medicine, payment plans, government, war, supermarkets, homes, and several other categories; RFID is altering their methods and trying to make the processes more efficient. The problem with technology is that sometimes, what one invention is meant to fix, affects other areas, and boundaries are crossed. In the end, it is up to the individual to make the decision to buy products with RFID tags or implant a VeriChip into their skin. If they are willing to accept the consequences that can result with the use of any such technological advancement, then they should be allowed to legally do what they wish. It seems that the Internet, EZ pass, mobile speed pass, and GPS systems have fit into society smoothly. What many individuals do not realize is that these can be human tracking devices. In the future one can only hope that the uniqueness of every individual and the privacy they desire can remain intact through the continuation of this information age.



When I surveyed 20 random college students and asked them whether or not they thought RFID's should be implanted in passports, 15 answered yes, and 5 said no.



When I surveyed the same 20 people and asked them whether or not they thought RFID's should be implanted in humans, 16 said yes, and 4 answered no.



When I surveyed the same 20 people again, I asked them whether or not they thought that RFID's should be implanted in products and 15 answered yes, while 5 answered no.

[click postcard to view back]

RFID "Foiling" Kit

# PROTECT your privacy

**Instructions for use:**

1. Remove aluminum foil from plastic bag.
2. Fold foil around RFID-encoded document.
3. Drop document in your purse or wallet and go!



**PERSONAL RFID SHIELD**

Sponsored by

**epic.org**

ELECTRONIC PRIVACY INFORMATION CENTER

An advertisement for an RFID aluminum shield to protect passport from transmitting radio waves



Pictured above: VeriChip



Pictured above: RFID Tag

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## **The Tamed Press**

**By Michael Rolek**

Come one, come all. How would you like to become a member of an unselective group that deals with the leader of the free world? The prerequisites are very minimal. You must be as malleable as metal in a hot fire, as submissive as a serf in the middle ages, and as nosy as Joan and Melissa Rivers on the Red Carpet at the Oscars. Oh, I almost forgot! While on assignment, you must look very professional, always wearing a suit and carrying a note pad - other than that, you are set. See ladies and gentlemen, it is as easy as that, and you too can become a member of the White House Press Corps.

In a time when former male escorts and partisan reporters are infiltrating the White House Press Corps, many critics across the country are speculating about the impartiality of those that are part of this "elite" press group. Reporting is a business that must be made up of people who treat all equally and have an unbiased opinion when they are on the job. Unfortunately, with people like Jeffrey Gannon, a former White House Press Corps member who possessed zero credentials and was linked to a Republican news organization, impartiality is far from being achieved. In what was once a truly elite group, the White House Press Corps has been permeated with unqualified, partisan reporters, and many are pointing fingers at the Bush administration as the center of this problem. Since the advent of the Gannon Scandal, critics challenge the credentials and impartiality of the White House Press Corps.

People do not want to be lied to. They want knowledge and facts. The job of the White House Press Corps, and any media group, is to provide people with facts. However, unlike any other media group, this press corps is reporting from the most important venue in the country on the most important person in the country. Every day, this group follows one man and his actions. Although at times mundane, these people have the power to paint the President and his administration in whatever light they choose. A president's best friend or worst enemy, Neal Conan, host of "Talk of the Nation" on National Public Radio, appropriately described the press corps as those who are "Sometimes defenders of democracy, [and] sometimes lackeys of the powerful" (Conan).

So when and where did these reporters begin their stalking of the President? According to Donald Ritchie, the author of Reporting from Washington: the History of the Washington Press Corps, the White House Press Corps took shape during the Bonus March of 1932. Before that time, there was just a conglomerate of reporters in Washington who would periodically cover press conferences and collect press releases. Other reporters would only be present in Washington when Congress was in session, since that was the only time that anything actually got done (Conan). Yet, when an army of unemployed veterans marched on Washington in 1932 and started the Bonus March, reporters in Washington suddenly had a major story to report on. The unemployed veterans were camped in front of the White House every day, protesting the lack of jobs available for veterans. Then, finally, one day, General Douglas MacArthur and the United

States army attacked the camp full of veterans. Although he was not the one who ordered the attack, President Herbert Hoover took the blame, and the press in Washington followed with a relentless pounding of media coverage, which some say led to his not being re-elected for a second term in office (Conan).

Although the Bonus March lit a spark in news surrounding the White House, that spark eventually died down. After the buzz surrounding the Bonus March had passed, both the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune had trouble finding reporters who wanted to go to Washington because "Washington was seen as a sort of sleepy town" (Conan). Yet, that attitude changed once Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected President and began his 100 Days in 1933. With his 100 Days, Roosevelt jump-started his New Deal, which buoyed the country up from economic depression, and at the same time generated enough news to make reporters cover the White House around-the-clock, throughout the year. "It [the New Deal] was the event that began to shift the center of the news industry from New York to Washington, DC" (Conan). With the advent of World War II followed closely by the Cold War, news organizations around the country, from newspapers to television networks, had people stationed in the Washington specifically to cover the actions of the White House.

Throughout the fifties and sixties, the White House Press Corps was more inclined to protect the President than attack him. Throughout this time period, and through the Presidencies of such men as Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy, the press put each President on a pedestal, making him untouchable. This all changed with the Vietnam War and the Watergate Scandal. In both these cases, the American people, the press included, had been lied to by their leader, a man whom they trusted. After these occurrences, the floodgates were opened, and the White House suddenly became free game for the media. In the late 1970s, Richard Pious, a professor of political science at Barnard College, wrote, "the legacy of Watergate is wolf pack [wolf pack] journalism" (Rozell 168). Suddenly, the White House Press Corps changed from being lapdogs to watchdogs. The press corps possessed a post-Watergate cynicism towards the White House, which made them question everything they heard. Thomas Patterson, a teacher at the Harvard University School of Government, stated: "The poisonous effect of Vietnam and Watergate on the relationship between journalists and politicians has not dissipated. The antipolitics bias of the press that came out of the closet two decades ago has stayed out" (Rozell 168-169). Ever since those two events shook our country, Presidents have been watched under a microscope, as the press corps watches and records everything said and done.

Watched under a heavy eye since, the White House Press Corps has always had a high, unrealistic standard of Presidents. A Washington Post reporter once wrote, "it is only against the accomplishments of the few giants who have held the office that we can measure the deeds of others" (Rozell 174). Yet, how can one compare one President to the next? In each term, there are different economic circumstances, different national issues, and different international issues to deal with. Comparing John Kennedy to George W. Bush is unfair, but alas, it does occur. Since the inception of these high standards after the Watergate Scandal, the press corps has published and released stories

regardless of the light it would shine on the current administration. Currently, the White House has been attacked from left to right on everything from the economy to national health care to the War in Iraq. The Bush administration needed someone or something to turn to in the wake of these media attacks. Like a bookie buying out a player to purposely lose a game, the White House put partisan reporters in the White House Press Corps and let them work their magic.

When I first heard this story I was watching The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. A show that mocks both network news and the news they deliver, I thought this story was just another joke created by the comic writers from the popular Comedy Central show. I mean, come on, a former gay escort was a member of the White House Press Corps. Along with millions around the country, that was my reaction to the exposure of Jeffrey Gannon. Born James D. Guckert, and using James Gannon as an alias in the press room, Gannon has a storied past. Before becoming a "reporter" Gannon worked in the United States Military and in an auto repair store before he worked as gay male escort, where he would offer himself for service for two hundred dollars an hour, and of course provocative pictures of the then-Guckert were provided online for the pleasure of the viewer. Then, Gannon decided to try out another career: reporting (Polman). Having never worked in the media, Gannon decided to attend the Leadership Institute, an institution headed by conservative leader Morton Blackwell, whose mission it is to make conservative reporters and place them in the political, government, and media arenas. Shortly after, Gannon began his reporting career working for GOPUSA.com, a site run by wealthy Texas Republican delegate Bobby Eberle, which was dedicated "to spreading the conservative message throughout America" (Polman). Gannon's fellow coworkers had about the same background in reporting as he did, as board members Bill Fairbrother and Steve Findley have a history in Republican politics, but coincidentally no history in a media outlet (Foser). It was in this organization that Gannon first entered the White House Press Room on February 28, 2003.

So how was an unknown conservative reporter like Gannon able to enter the Press Room every day, for two years? Well, every single day Gannon would show his GOPUSA.com credentials to security, and with no detailed security check would receive a day pass. Keep in mind that Gannon applied for his day pass each day with his real name, Guckert, yet his pass had his alias, Gannon, on it every day (Polman). Even when Gannon tried and failed to get a press pass into Congress, he was continually being let into the White House (Polman). Two months after joining GOPUSA.com, Gannon joined Talon News, which was also created by Bobby Eberle. Virtually indistinguishable from GOPUSA.com, Talon News which "appears to be more of a political organization than a media outlet" is made up of volunteer reporters, all of whom possess a past that can be traced to conservative and Republican organizations (Foser). Working for this "news outlet," Gannon continued attending White House press conferences and writing articles about the Bush Administration, which consisted of nothing more than copying the press briefings and citing them as his own. He never criticized the White House, and never painted the Bush or his administration in a negative light. He continued this until online bloggers finally revealed the truth of "Jeffrey Gannon," roughly two years after his initial entrance into the press room.

So how did the bloggers uncover one of their own? Since entering the Briefing Room, Gannon continually asked Press Secretary Scott McClellan loaded questions, which would get the Press Secretary out of jams. One question that Gannon asked McClellan on May 14, 2004 epitomizes Gannon's reign as a reporter. Being hammered around the room with questions about the torture of Iraqis at the Abu Ghraib prison, McClellan turned to Gannon to provide him with a fluff question which would ease the pressure, and Gannon delivered with this "softball": "In your denunciations of the Abu Ghraib photos, you've used words like 'sickening,' 'disgusting,' and 'reprehensible.' Will you have any adjectives left to adequately describe the pictures from Saddam's rape rooms and torture chambers? And will Americans ever see those images?" McClellan's response: "I'm glad you brought that up, Jeff, because the President talks about that often" (Froomkin). Gannon asked questions like the previous one at many press conferences, yet it was his question during a January 2005 Presidential Press Conference that truly exposed "Gannongate." Seen as a major accomplishment to be asked by the President for a question during a press conference, many White House Press Corps members with extensive credentials go four years without ever directly asking the President a question. The question asked by Gannon: "Senate Democratic leaders have painted a very bleak picture of the U.S. economy. Harry Reid was talking about soup lines. How are you going to work with people who have seemed divorced from reality [Democrats]?" (Jurkowitz). Soon, people in press circles and citizens around the country were asking themselves who this "reporter" was, and why he was asking such biased questions to the President. Through the Internet, bloggers explored Gannon's past and revealed the truth about James D. Guckert.

With Gannon exposed, respected media outlets and political scientists took aim at the Bush Administration, trying to uncover the way this administration handles the media. From White House Press Briefings to White House Press Conferences, a reporter is always thoroughly checked when entering the White House. In this day and age, where terrorism is always a possibility, such security briefings are a must. To get a permanent White House press pass, one must confirm they work for a recognized news organization with job responsibilities covering the White House, go through a lengthy FBI background check, and verify for the White House that they already have been accepted to cover Capitol Hill (Boehlert, "Incredible Access"). Knowing that he did not qualify for a permanent press pass, Gannon requested a day pass, which required just a minimal background check, as a day pass is meant for reporters who are covering the White House on a temporary basis (Boehlert, "Incredible Access"). Either the White House decided to seriously slack off on security for this one man every day for two years, or the White House knew something that the general public did not.

The Gannon scandal has not been the first case in which the Bush Administration has been caught trying to manipulate the news and the media, as "the White House is not simply aggressively managing the news, but is out to sabotage the press corps from within" (Boehlert, "Tearing"). Two Syndicated columnists, Mike McManus and Maggie Gallagher, received money from federal agencies for plugging the White House's view on issues ranging from the War in Iraq to the No Child Left Behind Act (Jurkowitz). The most famous example of the White House "buying reporters" is seen in the Armstrong

Williams case. A radio talk show host and a conservative columnist, Williams was a noticeable figure in the media. Appearing on national radio and television shows, many wanted to hear Williams's opinions on issues, as he represented not only the conservative, but the African American point of view, as well. Realizing Williams' influence, the government paid him \$240,000 to push the White House's agenda on certain issues, such as the No Child Left Behind Act (Polman). After this scandal was leaked, and the Gannon Scandal came right on its heels, critics began to question the impartiality of the press corps and asked if the reporters were there to report the facts or to protect the President. According to former Republican strategist Jim Pinkerton, who also worked in the senior George Bush's administration, "It's quite clear this White House is exploring radical alternative ways to getting its message out \_ [-] through the aggressive hiring of flacks like Williams, and the presence, or even planting, of friendly so-called journalists like Gannon" (Polman).

Before the change of attitude towards the Presidency after the Watergate scandal, the press corps protected the President. For the majority of Franklin D. Roosevelt's White House tenure, he could not walk without assistance. The leader of the free world was confined to a wheelchair. Yet, the White House Press Corps never made a big deal out of this. Rarely was a picture taken of him when he was in a wheelchair, and no one took a picture of him when he was being helped. There was even one incident in 1936, in which Roosevelt fell on his way to the podium to give an acceptance speech. Yet, the press kept their mouths shut, as the majority of the country did not even know the President was unable to walk (Conan). In the post-Watergate era this is not the case, as some media outlets choose to reports facts rather than always protect the President. Because of this, the White House and other government organizations have tried to put a "twist" on stories. Since the 1970s, Bush has not been the only President caught trying to manipulate the media. During the Reagan Administration, Helen Thomas, a reporter for United Press International, now of Hearst, asked the President numerous questions which could be deemed as "Gannon-like" (Neuman). Thus, Presidents, like Reagan and Bush, have felt that they need to protect themselves by planting people in the press to get their message across. This is not only unprofessional, but also extremely unethical and immoral. Just because one does not get along with the press corps does not mean that one must infiltrate the press corps. Larry Gross, director of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California, stated: "Richard Nixon hated the press, Bill Clinton hated the press \_ [-] but they accepted the basic rules of the game. Bush has a strategy of discrediting, end-running, and even faking the news" (Polman).

No Shakespeare, and certainly no Reagan, it is no secret that President George W. Bush is not one of the world's greatest communicators. In order to somewhat mask this, the White House has had to "even out the scale," in order to make everything fair. According to Jim Pinkerton, "The [George W.] Bush people are challenging all the old assumptions about how to work the press. They are ambitious [-] visionary, if you will [-] in ways that Washington has yet to fathom" (Polman). Along the same lines with the "impartial" press corps, the Bush administration regularly scripts White House press conferences in which Bush is in attendance, such as the lone White House press conference before the invasion of Iraq (Powers 189). Through answering biased questions

that he knows beforehand at press conferences, President Bush knows that no one will challenge his authority, and that ultimately his message will get out. That is not a press conference; it is propaganda. Another example of this would be the town-hall style meetings, which were held during the 2004 election, where citizens could ask President Bush "any question" they would want. The reality of it was Bush knew what each question was going to be about, and when each question was going to be asked (Rich).

Another approach the Bush administration has taken in is simply not addressing the press. Compared to other presidents such as George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, George W. Bush's press conference numbers are minimal. As of December 20, 2004, Bush has held only 17 solo press conferences, far fewer than Clinton's 44 and George H.W. Bush's 84 press conferences (Robertson). The White House has controlled the media in the pressroom in other ways, as well, such as limiting certain news networks to be in pressroom at certain times. They banned all New York Times reporters from Vice President Dick Cheney's campaign plane during the 2004 election (Robertson). According to Howard Fineman, Newsweek's chief political correspondent for twenty years, "The trend line is to fewer press conferences, smaller press pools, [and] fewer opportunities for the reporters to eyeball the President" (Robertson).

The White House might as well be selling us their news from an infomercial. What is the difference? They have the nice, perfect backdrop. They have a pre-arranged "studio audience," which will only say great things about them and their products. They even have a great speaker, Press Secretary Scott McClellan, to tell the people everything they need to know about their items and future projects. Truly, the press conference has become a glorified production.

By limiting what the press can and cannot ask Bush and his administrators, to the White House bringing in individuals to be a part of the press corps, to government departments actually paying individuals in the media to push their agendas, this administration is truly creating a partial press corps. Through implanting individuals like Jeffrey Gannon, the White House will remain the puppeteer and the press corps their puppets. The show will go on, the infomercial will continue, and the press will remain tame.

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# **Black Power**

**By Geoff Watkinson**

The meaning of the phrase *Black Power*, since Stokely Carmichael first coined it in 1966, has been distorted, misunderstood, and misapplied. It is important to first understand what the term means, and to then to understand what it was trying to accomplish. What is Black Power? Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? These two questions will provide the central theme of this paper. Martin Luther King Jr. was the first to use the term before it received its' reputation as militant and violent. In 1967, Stokely Carmichael, a radical Black Power movement leader, and Charles Hamilton, his co-author, began defining Black Power. James H. Cone would follow Carmichael and Hamilton in 1969. Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker's article, published in 1970, uses statistics to show the inconsistency in the Black Power movement. Publications from the latter decades, by authors such as Rhoda Lois Blumberg, William L. Van Deburg, Allan Aubrey Boesak, Clarence Lang, and Bert J. Thomas use primary documents consisting of newspaper articles, interviews, books, and others to determine whether this movement was successful or a failure.

Black Power, in short, is the complete emancipation of black people from white oppression by whatever means black people deem necessary. In other words, the Black Power movement would take matters into its own hands to try and receive political and social equality. Black Power was a call for black people across the United States of America to come together and unite in their heritage to build a sense of community to accomplish integration. Black Power had many goals it wished to reach, but before the movements' goals and achievements are looked upon it is important to break down the differing schools of thought involving Black Power. First, there are those who believe the movement was an absolute success. The scholars in this school of thought, Cone and Carmichael with Hamilton, believe that the Black Power Movement has achieved virtually everything, which it sought out to do. The second are those who believe the movement was a small-scale success, accomplishing some things, but achieving no major goals. This school would include Boesak, Vandeburg, and Blumberg. The final school of thought is made up of those people who believe the movement was an absolute failure. Those who believe that the Black Power movement was an absolute failure are few, but they still exist and would include Lang and Aberbach.

Carmichael and Cone would agree that the overall goal of Black Power was to achieve full participation in the decision making process affecting the lives of black people. Participating, or believing in what Black Power stood for meant black people viewing themselves as energetic, determined, intelligent, beautiful and peace-loving. The idea was that only when black people began to feel this sense of community could racism be combated. Political modernization was an important aspect to the movement. Stokely Carmichael breaks the political modernization aspect into three parts. First is the idea of questioning old values and institutions of society. By institutions, Carmichael meant anything that had historically been oppressive to African-Americans. This could have included local and federal government, employers, and legal policies. It was important to

reject the goal of assimilation into the middle-class. The values of the middle-class were in themselves anti-humanist and thus this class spread racism. A society needs to be created with values based on free people, and not free enterprise. The second concept of political modernization was searching for new and different forms of political structure to solve political and economic problems. Political and economic institutions must be modernized, according to Black Power, just as old values need to be. These institutions include political parties, interest groups, and bureaucratic administrations. Black people have seen these institutions fail to meet their needs, and that needed to change. The board of education and police forces especially needed to be challenged to make them responsive to African-American communities. The institutions need to become less racist and help out the African-American communities. Having black people in these institutions is a good thing, but this is not what modernizing means. It simply means more say in what goes on in these communities. The third concept was broadening the base of political participation to include more people in the decision-making process. Black people needed to choose their own leaders and become more active in politics. Overall, the entire system needed a change, and this is what the Black Power movement called for.

TABLE 1.—BLACK POWER INTERPRETATIONS,  
BY RACE

(Question: What do the words "black power" mean to you?)		
Interpretation	Blacks	Whites
<b>Unfavorable</b>		
Blacks Rule Whites	8.5%	38.6%
Racism	3.9	7.3
Trouble, Rioting, Civil Disorder	4.1	11.9
"Nothing"	22.3	5.3
Negative Imprecise Comments (ridicule, obscenity, abhorrence)	6.5	11.7
Other*	4.3	5.9
	<hr/> 49.6	<hr/> 80.7
<b>Favorable</b>		
Fair Share for Black People	19.6	5.1
Racial (Black) Unity	22.6	5.6
	<hr/> 42.2	<hr/> 10.7
Don't Know, Can't Say	8.2	8.6
	<hr/> 100%	<hr/> 100%
	(N = 461)	(N = 304)

\* "Other" responses were scattered and inconsistent, although generally negative. They include references to black power as communism, radicalism, a return to segregation and a sophisticated failure to define the concept because of a perception that it has contradictory meanings. The latter answer was given by one black and five white respondents.

To decide whether or not Carmichael's political modernization thesis from above was achieved is difficult to do. Following the 1960s and 70s Black Power movement, politics changed. It cannot be proven how much Black Power itself influenced this, as it

was a subcategory of the Civil Rights Movement, but it can be said that Black Power greatly influenced political modernization.

The scholar, Allan Boesak, shows a different side of the Black Power movement, yet still agrees with Carmichael's political modernization thesis. Boesak focuses on the division between King's Civil Rights movement and the much more radical Black Power movement. The essential differences between King's ideals and Carmichael and Malcolm X's ideals were their views on violence. King believed that violence was not a way to accomplish the goals of African-Americans in America, yet he acknowledged that Black Power was generated out of the necessity to do something. King realized that the success of white power had made Black Power desirable and necessary. Even though many in the African-American community disagreed with using violence, Black Power was necessary and successful because it changed the way in which whites viewed blacks. It changed the centuries of belittling. If a white man wanted to hit a Black Power demonstrator, he would have to face the retaliatory consequences.

For a movement to be a success, do a majority of people have to agree with it? This is the question that comes up after reading Joel Aberbach and Jack Walker. Their article gives a lot of data, such as the table to the left, which suggests that most people during the late 1960s could not even give a clear definition as to what Black Power was (Table 1). Whites and blacks were equally polled, and neither race has any idea as to what the term means. Aberbach and Walker also suggest that there was little overall participation from African-Americans. Nearly half of blacks polled saw Black Power as unfavorable, while about forty percent saw it as favorable and ten percent couldn't even say what it was. The African-American community watched television just as much as the white community and many African-Americans thought that the movement was not helping the Civil Rights struggle. Much of the reasoning for the confusion on the movement had to do with media portrayal. The media reflected the people involved with the Black Power movement as militant, which confused a lot of people as the goals and aspirations that the movement wanted to accomplish. The research also suggests that most of the African-Americans contributing to the Black Power movement were relatively young and not affiliated with churches. The research seems to attempt to show the reader that most of the participants in the movement were young, non-religious, rebels. This is not to say that Black Power supporters were only black, because that would not be true. There were whites who supported Black Power as a movement. Aberbach and Walker's research still presents an interesting question as to whether the Black Power movement was successful or if it could have been successful if there was such a minimal amount of participation in the movement with the majority not even having the ability to define what Black Power meant.

There is still some middle ground between the two extremes of an absolute success and an absolute failure. Clarence Lang, along with Aberbach and Walker, believe that the Black Power movement somewhat contributed to changes in the social, economic, and political realms, but is not fully responsible for these changes. These scholars believe that other Civil Rights organizations also contributed to these changes. It is also believed by this school that only some of the goals of the movement were achieved. As another,

William Van Deburg, goes into statistics it becomes tougher to assess whether the movement could have been successful. A survey in 1967 asked that Chicago blacks choose who represented their opinion and 57 percent chose Martin Luther King Jr., while only three percent chose Stokely Carmichael. In 1966, a national survey showed that individuals thought Jackie Robinson had made ten times more contributions than the Black Muslims. Although most people did not identify with the Black Power movement, it was still necessary to break down racial barriers which would have otherwise taken many more years.

The Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (ACTION), played a large part in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. ACTION was active between 1964 and 1984. The organization offered entry into several branches of social history on the black experience. One of their main objectives was to provide more and better paying jobs for black men. ACTION held strikes, and demonstrations to try and increase the number of black employees in large companies. In this form, ACTION worked for the same politics which the Black Power movement did; advancement of blacks in the areas of politics, economics, as well as socially. If nothing else, ACTION forced the country to recognize the extreme racism still involved in the job world. This alone has been viewed as a success.

It seems that every scholar will agree that the Black Power movement had a huge affect on society. Although, since the beginning of the movement, Black Power has almost always been misconceived as to what its' goals are, it still somewhat changed the political spectrum of the United States. It seems that the strongest arguments for the Black Power movement being a failure are statistics that show a lack of participation among the masses. It can be stated that just because not everyone is participating this does not mean that the movement was not a success in a lot of areas; even the smallest group of people can have great accomplishments. Political integration seems to be a strong argument for the Black Power movement being a success. Vast political changes can be seen across America as African-Americans have been integrated into society.

The Black Power movement forced change, and demanded the destruction of racism. The movement may not have died out if these changes were not made. To measure the amount of influence, which the movement had, is not possible, but it changed things or else it would still be around. If there were any one question that a historian should answer on this topic it would be: how did Black Power directly change America? Hypotheses can be made, but there is no proof that shows a direct relationship between Black Power and actual change. There are many other interesting articles and books out there, but there were two articles that I failed to use which seem to sum up much of the research into short articles. The first is entitled "Black Power and the Transformation from Protest to Politics" written by Robert C. Smith. Smith goes into more detail about Aberbach and Walker's research, and further explains his point of view. The second is an article written by Jacqueline S. Mithun and it is titled "Black Power and Community Change An Assessment." The article really goes into the depths of Black Power. Mithun covers the history of Black Power more than the other authors. It doesn't appear that there are a lot of gaps in the research. Research appears to be complete,

without any holes. It is my belief that the political, economic, and social changes which would happen in the 1970s were due to the entire Civil Rights struggle. Black Power was just a piece of a larger pie; the only difference is that Black Power would only accept freedom now.

1. Rhoda Lois Blumberg, *Civil Rights: The 1960s Freedom Struggle* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), 117-137; Allan Aubrey Boesak, *Farewell to Innocence A Socio-Ethical Study on Black Theology and Power* (New York: Orbis Books, 1977), 56-97; James H. Cone, *Black Theology & Black Power* (New York: Seabury Press, 1969), 5-28; Charles V. Hamilton and Stokely Carmichael, *Black Power The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 34-57; William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon The Black Power Movement and American Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 11-62, 112-191; Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "The Meanings of Black Power: A Comparison of White and Black Interpretations of a Political Slogan," *The American Political Science Review* (June 1970): 367-388; Clarence Lang, "Between Civil Rights and Black Power in the Gateway City: The Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes, 1964-1975," *Journal of Social History* (2004): 725-754; Bert J. Thomas, "Caribbean Black Power From Slogan to Practical Politics," *Journal of Black Studies* (1992): 392-410.
2. Cone, 16; Hamilton & Carmichael, 38-43.
3. Boesak, 68-71.
4. Aberbach and Walker, 370-376; Lang 395-396
5. Van Deburg, 18-31, Blumberg 130-135.
6. Lang, 725-755.

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### Books

Blumberg, Rhoda Lois. *Civil Rights: The 1960s Freedom Struggle*. Boston, Massachusetts: Twayne Publishers, 1984.

Was the black power movement a success or a failure? Author proves that the black power movement was a success because it was a primary cause for African Americans integrating into the political spectrum in major cities. The author's sources are mostly primary sources from the mid 1960's through the early 1970's; sources include Carmichael and Hamilton's book, which can be looked at as the most important source for primary Black Power research.

Boesak, Allan Aubrey. *Farewell to Innocence A Socio-Ethical Study on Black Theology and Power*. New York: Orbis Books, 1977.

Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? The movement was a success because it forced the idea of action to achieve justice and liberation for African Americans. The author uses extensive primary artifacts including books and articles. The articles are written from varying perspectives providing viewpoints from the success and failing aspects of the movement.

Cone, James H. *Black Theology & Black Power*. New York: Seabury Press, 1969.

What is Black Power? Black Power is not the direct opposite (antithesis) of Christianity; it is the complete emancipation of black people from white oppression by whatever means black people deem necessary. This could include selective buying, boycotting, marching, or a rebellion. The author uses a large variety of sources both primary and secondary to present the material. Since the book was written in 1969 sources are less primary on Black Power itself and more on the historical context of where it came from. Author argues the movement to be a success because it forced the idea of action to achieve justice and liberation for African Americans.

Hamilton, Charles V, and Stokely Carmichael. *Black Power The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.

What is Black Power? Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? Black Power is a call for black people in the United States to unite and to recognize their heritage as well as to build a sense of community. The movement was a success due to political integration; sides with Blumberg in that respect. Hamilton and Carmichael use sources written during the same time period as well as books containing information on the history of Africans in America.

Van Deburg, William L. *New Day in Babylon The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

What is Black Power? Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? Black Power is an extremely complex term which had been misunderstood while the movement was in existence and even today. Black Power was about self-definition and a revolution of the mind and was suppose to be influential in the areas of economics and politics. The movement was a success on a small scale in politics and economics, but did finish what it set out to do.

## Articles

Aberbach, Joel D., and Jack L. Walker. 1970. The Meanings of Black Power: A Comparison of White and Black Interpretations of a Political Slogan. *The American Political Science Review (June)*: 367-388.

Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? The authors use statistics of people polled during the time of the movement's primary existence and conclude that the movement was a failure on the grounds of not having enough support. The author does not list any sources other than the information on the number of people polled and the area in which the statistics were gathered. The region seemed to have direct correlation with the responses from people on knowledge of Black Power.

Lang, Clarence. "Between Civil Rights and Black Power in the Gateway City: The Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (Action), 1964-75." *Journal of Social History* (2004): 725-754.

Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? The author states the movement was mostly successful creating a larger middle class of blacks. Lang uses primary sources, especially articles written during the movement. He also uses as a handful of interviews which concentrate on the struggle involved during the Black Power movement. Being a recent article, the author had the ability to use a large variety of primary and secondary sources.

Thomas, Bert J. "Caribbean Black Power From Slogan to Practical Politics." *Journal of Black Studies* (1992): 392-410.

Was the Black Power movement a success or a failure? The article focuses primarily on the Caribbean experience with Black Power, but relates it to the United States. The author believes that the movement was a success in social aspects as well as politics. Thomas uses primary documents from organizations which were active in the movement at the time as well as other primary sources advocating the movement during the time of its' existence.