



ARTWORK BY UGNE JANONYTE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

We are very pleased and proud to present the Fall 2006 issue of *Distinctions* as we enter our second year of producing a journal for honors students at Kingsborough Community College. This issue reflects the diversity of our students, not just in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, and religion, but also in terms of intellectual interests and as stakeholders in the community and world in which they live. The range of papers in Volume 2, No. 1, of *Distinctions* is truly extraordinary and we as an academic community can only sit back in awe as our students reveal through their writing the complexity of the world in which they live.

This journal is our collective effort to provide a forum for nonfiction writing and could not be produced without the support of the entire community. First and foremost, I thank our lead student editor who has become both friend and colleague through sharing in the production of the journal from the beginning, Ms. Aline Bernstein. We were joined this year by our new student editor, Ms. Liane Naber, who has raised the energy level and breathed new life into our Tuesday meetings, which routinely veer off into long discussions of topics raised by the papers. The student editors are the life-blood of our journal efforts and we invite others to join us.

We also have new faculty mentors from different disciplines in this issue, who have joined the regular contributors through their mentoring of papers. This has added to the intellectual diversity and interest of the issue, which includes papers from English, History, Sociology, Mental Health, Communications, Biology, and Art History. Without the mentors and their support for student writing, these papers could never have reached the level you see here, and I thank each one for supporting the students and the journal. Other faculty and administrative staff have also provided invaluable assistance toward the publication of *Distinctions*: Professor Judith Wilde nominated the art work by Ugne Janonyte for the cover from among the best of student work in her Graphic Design class; Professor Michael Rosson in KCATT used the art work to create our cover; Mr. Joseph Tammany and the Office Services staff printed the journal under much time pressure; and each member of the Faculty Advisory Committee has been available for advice and support. We especially thank Dr. Eric Willner, who shared in the founding of the journal, and Dean Reza Fakhari, whose contagious enthusiasm is felt throughout the college, perhaps nowhere more than in the production of *Distinctions*. Dean Fakhari has provided much wisdom in navigating the journal through the terrain of academic turf boundaries. He has made the journal a priority by his actions and I thank him for his prompt and kind responses to my endless stream of e-mail correspondence. We also thank Dr. Regina Peruggi, President of Kingsborough Community College, for her support. The entire team was thrilled when Dr. Peruggi received a letter of congratulations for the journal from Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. As always, I thank my department chair, Dr. William Burger, for his support in this and all my KCC endeavors. We hope that you enjoy reading Volume 2, No. 1 of *Distinctions* and that in it you will find inspiration for your own nonfiction writing and your work with students.

Barbara R. Walters

Dr. Barbara Walters
Faculty Mentor and Editor of *Distinctions*
November 2006

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“In spite of illness, in spite even of the archenemy sorrow, one can remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things, and happy in small ways.”

Edith Wharton

Edith Wharton: How Her Art Shaped Her Life

Aline Bernstein

English 74

Spring 2006

Mentor: Dr. Jane Weiss

Edith Wharton is considered to be one of the giants of American literature. She was born into a life of wealth and luxury. Although she was brought up not wanting for anything and led a comfortable existence, Edith was very unhappy. This paper will attempt to show how Edith Wharton was shaped by the society in which she grew up and how it affected her. Later, Edith was to write about this society in many of her works, most notably "The Age of Innocence.

Her parents, George and Lucretia Jones, were extraordinarily wealthy and were among the most influential families of New York City. Theirs was a world of old money and a tightly-knit society with strict social standards. Edith was born January 24, 1862 and she always felt that she was unwanted. Her two brothers were already teenagers and her mother was not pleased at having another child. Lucretia was totally indifferent to Edith and, as a result, Edith grew up to be very shy and introverted. She had a governess but received very little formal education. She was a very lonely and isolated child (Leach).

The world in which Edith Jones grew up was insulated. The "cream" of New York society only associated with other people who were in the same set and they had a very rigid code of how to behave. In their world young girls were expected to be agreeable, polite and pretty. They were supposed to marry young into wealth and become fashionable ladies (Leach, 15).

Edith's family had a luxurious home in New York City and spent their summers in Newport, Rhode Island. They also traveled a great deal and Edith as a young child was exposed to France and Italy. She developed a love for both these countries and immensely enjoyed traveling in general.

The unhappy little girl became really alive at ten years old. At that age she was allowed in her father's library for the first time and described the feeling in later years. "I was enthralled with words. Wherever I went they sang to me like birds in an enchanted forest" (Leach, 13).

Reading became more and more of a means of escape for Edith; she loved the works of Milton, Coleridge, Shelley, Dante and Keats. By fifteen she had read all of Shakespeare. To become a writer was her greatest desire, and throughout her life she resented her lack of formal education. Her parents, however, and especially her mother, did not approve of Edith's love for books. Despite her unhappiness with the society in which she lived, Edith did not want to fight her mother. At seventeen she was thus forced to "go out" into society, to mingle with eligible young men.

In 1885, at the age of twenty-three, Edith married Edward Robbins Wharton, known as "Teddy," and he adored her. Edith said later on that her marriage was a disaster. She had nothing in common with her husband, much as he tried to please her, and she had a fear of sexual relations, for which she blamed her mother. Lucretia did not give Edith any kind of sexual information about marriage and this "did more than anything else to falsify and misdirect my whole life" (Leach, 28). For appearances sake, she continued to stay with Teddy, but she turned to writing more and more.

"Teddy Wharton, wealthy in his own right, was representative of the men in his and Edith's society. He had no real profession; he was a dilettante hunter, a good fly-fisherman. Moreover, he was a generally ineffective person" (Lawson, 7). In 1913, she and Teddy were finally divorced.

It was then that Edith finally began to have a life of her own. She was released from the constraints of Old New York. She moved to France, which she adored. The American journalist, Morton Fullerton, became her lover and the era of her creativity began in earnest. "In this connection it is worth noting that even while Edith's tempestuous affair with Fullerton was introducing her, at the age of forty-five, to emotions and passions she had never known (her marriage to Teddy was practically sexless), she continued to present to the world a picture of discreet detachment and self-containment" (Lawson, 9).

One of her greatest friends was the author and novelist, Henry James, and he had a tremendous influence over her. He told her she should write about Old New York. "The European experience was to have a lasting effect. But what was to have a much greater influence on Edith as a writer, and to supply her with the subject materials for her most important work, was neither her father's library nor her early impression of Europe, but her own clear, direct, comprehensive little girl's vision of the New York society in which her parents lived" (Auchincloss, 6).

The Age of Innocence is one of Wharton's greatest works. It was published in 1920 and won a Pulitzer Prize. Wharton was fifty-eight years old when she wrote this masterpiece. She had lived abroad for many years; she was divorced and had certainly become a "modern" and free woman in every sense of the word. Yet she chose to write about the confining days of her young adulthood when she felt trapped in a world from which there was seemingly no escape. "The Age of Innocence (1920) is written in a Proustian mood of remembered things that evokes the airless atmosphere of an old, ordered, small-town New York" (Auchincloss, 29). Edith Wharton took great care with the women characters in her novels and they are always well-defined, down to the smallest detail. It is interesting, therefore, that in The Age of Innocence everything that

happens is seen from a male point of view. The reader perceives all the action and all the characters through the eyes of Newland Archer.

Newland is a smug, self-centered young man when we first meet him. He is one of the elite of New York society, a very wealthy and intelligent young man who lives with his mother and sister. They spoil him tremendously, living together on the ground floor so that Newland can have the upper quarters all to himself. He is a member of a prestigious law firm, but he is hardly ever at the office. Once in a while he goes there, probably for the sake of appearances. As the story begins, he has just gotten engaged to a young beauty from his set, the innocent and virginal May Welland. Newland sits in his opera box musing on how he will be able to influence his young fiancée. "We'll read Faust together...by the Italian lakes..." he thought, somewhat hazily confusing the scene of his projected honeymoon with the masterpieces of literature which it would be his manly privilege to reveal to his bride" (Wharton, 5). Newland knows it is time he should marry and settle down. He loves May in his self-important way, but he also considers her as his possession. He feels manly pride at the thought that he will be able to shape her into anything he wants, that she is pliable and anxious to please him. "May has been trained to go to any lengths to ignore the unpleasant. Her innocence is the innocence in the title of the novel, the kind that, in Wharton's words, 'seals the mind against imagination and the heart against experience'" (Lawson, 22).

Mrs. Wharton is at her sarcastic best when describing high society at the gala opera openings. It was considered very fashionable to attend the opera, especially when the soprano Christine Nilsson was singing "Faust" by Gounod. Of course, one did not necessarily need to be an opera lover (and most people in Old New York were not) but it was mandatory to attend. It was "the thing" to do. The opera house was a place where society could get dressed to the nines and observe through looking glasses what everyone else was wearing. It was a time to chat and catch up on gossip except during Madame Nilsson's solo. "The boxes always stopped talking during the Daisy Song" (Wharton, 3).

Into this staid and complacent world comes Countess Ellen Olenska, a cousin to May. Ellen had lived abroad, married to a Polish Count, but had come home to escape her marriage and her boorish husband. She is determined to get a divorce, but in the New York society to which she returns divorce is definitely a taboo. Newland finds himself drawn to Ellen. At first he just wants to help her, because she is a member of the family, but he is shaken out of his lethargy and finally realizes he is desperately in love with her.

It is ironic that Newland gets caught in a trap of his own making. When he and May first get engaged, he pleads with her to marry him within a very few months. May, however, does not want to go against her family's wishes: they prefer a longer engagement period. Newland goes to visit Ellen at her queer little home in a very unfashionable part of West 23 Street. No one in Newland's set would ever consider living in such a remote and sleazy part of town, but in going to that area a light dawns on him and he thinks about the new house to which he and May would be moving. "The young man felt that his fate was sealed: for the rest of his life he would go up every evening between the cast-iron railings of that greenish-yellow doorstep, and pass through a Pompeian vestibule into a hall with a wainscoting of varnished yellow wood" (Wharton, 69). At the very moment that Newland wishes he could now have more time before getting married, May's parents consent to a ceremony only a month or so later.

Newland is enlisted by the family to persuade Ellen not to divorce her husband. "Well, then: is it worth while to risk what may be infinitely disagreeable and painful? Think of the newspapers – their vileness! It's all stupid and narrow and unjust – but one can't make over society" (Wharton, 110). Ellen agrees.

Newland does the "right" thing: he marries his May but in his heart of heart he is always longing for Ellen. They both know they love each other, but they agree to stay apart. A few years later they meet again, when Ellen comes back to care for her Grandmother. For such a reserved and staid young man, Newland does a very impulsive thing: he begs Ellen to run away with him. "I want – I want somehow to get away with you into a world where words like that – categories like that – won't exist. Where we shall be simply two human beings who love each other, who are the whole of life to each other; and nothing else on earth will matter" (Wharton, 293). Being with Ellen makes Newland realize, for the very first time in his life, what a useless existence he has been leading. Newland feels a flame burning within him, and all sense of ennui vanishes. He loves Ellen, he wants Ellen. But she resists his appeal. In a heartbreaking passage she says: "Oh, my dear – where is that country? Have you ever been there?" she asked; and as he remained sullenly dumb she went on: "I know so many who've tried to find it; and, believe me, they all got out by mistake at wayside stations: at places like Boulogne, or Pisa, or Monte Carlo – and it wasn't at all different from the old world they'd left, but only rather smaller and dingier and more promiscuous" (Wharton, 293).

Edith Wharton hated her childhood and had very painful memories of her teenage years and young adulthood. She was painfully shy and withdrawn and hated going into society. Yet, she did not want to go against tradition and so she did what

was expected of her. She got married and tried to live a respectable life. Many years later she obtained her freedom and was able to live exactly as she chose. Why, then, did she deny Newland and Ellen the chance to do the same?

Louis Auchincloss makes this interesting statement: "It is Edith Wharton's tribute to her own background, this affirmation that under the thick, smoky glass of convention bloom the fine, fragile flowers of patient suffering and self-sacrifice. To run away from society may be as vulgar in the end as to crash it" (Auchincloss, 30).

Wharton was a realist writer. Although she wrote about people who had an enormous amount of money and could buy anything they wanted, she also focused on the realism of their narrow lives. They were afraid to flaunt what society deemed was right and proper. Newland Archer is paralyzed by his sense of duty to his wife and his family and obligations to the society in which he lives. Ellen has a freer soul, but she also does not want to be ostracized any more than she already is. She also has seen more of life than Newland and certainly knows the score. These two people, madly in love with each other, sacrifice their own happiness for the sake of convention, as well as love for family. "As Wharton presents it, Newland's decision is understandable and even praiseworthy. The reader nevertheless gets the sense of missed opportunities, of promising paths forever left unexplored. At the book's end, Ellen has returned to Europe, where at last she establishes herself as an independent person and pursues a life of art and culture. Again, she strongly resembles her creator, Edith Wharton" (Leach, 92).

Perhaps Wharton herself so identified with Ellen Olenska that she believed Ellen would be freer living in Europe. If Ellen and Newland had indeed run away, they would have been cut off from family and friends. As much as Newland loved Ellen and impulsively begged her to elope with him, I do not think he really was ready to cut the ties to New York society. He had too much of a sense of duty in him, a feeling that he must abide by the unwritten laws of his peers. Ellen was a much stronger person than Newland, just as Wharton was more resilient than her husband, Teddy.

Edith Wharton wanted to portray what life was like in her younger days. She showed in The Age of Innocence characters trapped in a fate from which they cannot untangle themselves. It is very interesting, however, to think that she must have been incredibly delighted that she herself had been able to escape from the society she so resented. In 1936, when Edith Wharton was 74 years old, she wrote: "I wish I knew what people meant when they say they find 'emptiness' in this wonderful adventure of living, which seems to me to pile up its glories like a horizon-wide sunset as the light declines. I'm afraid I'm an incorrigible life-lover, life-wonderer, and adventurer."

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As new ideas in music emerged, much of European society changed. In schools, music education was modified to implement new teaching methods and styles as it related to harmony. The 'new music' attracted many people, increasing the population of the continent. With more families moving into the cities, new schools and universities were built. Music influenced another discipline – art.

A Musical Revolution

450 A.D. to 1450 A.D: A New Paradigm

Dawn Taitt

History 65

Spring 2006

Mentor: Professor Abraham Edelheit

From approximately 450 A.D. to 1450 A.D. a gradual shift occurred in the musical landscape throughout Europe. This shift involved a change in both the practical (instrumental) and theoretical (structure) way music was performed in the Roman Catholic Church. This shift led to a radical transformation of musical structure that had existed both in and outside the church. Monophonic music (a style of music heard in the church) evolved into polyphonic music. By definition, the monophonic to polyphonic paradigm is the change from a single line of a melody to a more complex structure involving several simultaneous melodies. This change in the approach to musical structure brought about the introduction of counterpoint, harmonic chords and cadences, and music notation. Since its introduction, counterpoint, harmony and musical notation have influenced musical composers through the ages by forming the foundation of the “tonal” music which emerged in the 17th century. “Tonal harmony,” according to Taylor, (1997: 110) is the specific type of harmony found in music written during the 17th – 19th centuries (and afterwards), for although music developed greatly during this period, evolving many different forms and styles, it continued to be rooted in certain principles.” In order to understand where music is today, we need to understand the music that preceded tonality. Before tonality there was monophony, polyphony, and the Church. For full musical appreciation, a note of caution in examining monophony and polyphony as foundations leading inevitably to tonal music was perhaps best stated by musicologist Willi Apel (1945: 86): “Nothing is more dangerous and misleading in the study of the arts than to regard achievements of the past from the standpoint of technical progress. A superficial observer sees only what has been gained in the fight, and nothing of what has been lost.”

Pope Gregory I (the Great), an influential leader in the Catholic Church of the sixth century was said to have “brought out the best in education, art, poetry and... work in music” (Cooke 16). Pope Gregory’s contribution to music was strictly under the auspices of the Church. Upholding Greek learning as the ideal, he devised a system of scales/modes paralleling that of the Greek scales /modes. He even adopted Greek names for his scales/modes. These modes became the basis of the Church songs heard in the Middle Ages, which became known as Gregorian style chants or Plainsong.

Gregorian chants were written to accompany Latin text. These melodies were sung without accompaniment, filling the Catholic cathedrals with an echoing of rich vocal tones ascending to the heavens. “The melodies of the Gregorian chant were meant to enhance specific parts of religious services. They set the atmosphere for prayers and ritual actions...[and] represent[ed] the voice of church, rather than of any single individual” (Kamien 65). Music in the church connected its members to God through this form of worship. Monophonic music, a texture that characterized the style

of the Gregorian chants, is said to be “melody by itself” – i.e. without harmony, and not combined with other melodies to make counterpoint – [it] is known technically as ‘monophony’ (from the Greek for ‘single sound’) (171). For centuries, many of the hundreds of these monophonic chants were not written down; they were passed on orally. Only after the development of scales and notation, which enabled the accurate transmission of many of the chants, can we know exactly what was sung and heard.

While the Greeks had a system of pitch notation, which was transmitted through Boethius, Hucbald (840-930), a Flemish monk, is typically credited with introducing this system into medieval Western Europe. Notation is the writing of music. Hucbald developed a system that showed how notes or pitch (musical sounds) related to each other such as a ‘tone’- a whole step and ‘semitones’- a half step, using four stacked tetrachords with different tone-tone-semitone patterns: TSTTSTTTSTTSTT. Odo of Cluny, another monk followed Hucbald’s work. His system consisted of using letters of the alphabet with marks over them indicating whether the pitch should be raised or lowered. “Eventually, lines were drawn across these marks and a letter was marked on one of the lines to define the pitch of notes. This was the beginning of the staff and clef signs” (Ardley 128).

Music was not the exclusive preserve of the Church. In Europe, from about 800 A.D to 1100 A.D., secular music was on the rise, through the emergence of traveling musicians called troubadours or trouvères. They became very popular during the high middle ages. Troubadours were people who sang to rulers, nobility and royal families, usually about unrequited or distant love. Nobles encouraged this entertainment as the troubadours were the only connection they had to what was happening in the world. Troubadours entertained with “songs of love and daring exploits, even giving whole plays with songs. Troubadours developed songs with music in set sections making it easy to put words to the music and also to dance to it” (Ardley 129). An early type of this music known as “chansons de geste” (songs of action) developed in France. Troubadours traversed the landscape with their poetry and stories of bravery. Later, and especially in Germany these traveling singers were known as minnesinger or “singers about love.” (Kallen 17) Their songs included “love-lyrics... [that] often idolize [d] women as beautiful and unattainable” (Kallen 17). Troubadours were not only ordinary people; “Many of the troubadours were born to nobility, and were renowned counts, knights, squires and princes” (Kallen 18). Credit was given to people of esteemed positions by documenting their compositions in royal books.

While secular music among troubadours gained momentum, a new revolution was emerging in the Church. This revolution was polyphony, and engaged musicians

in greater understanding of natural harmonic sounds. Taylor (1997: 57) describes harmony as being “made up of mixtures of simultaneous sounds of different pitch, often combined in complex ways.” Understanding harmonic combinations was necessary for polyphony. “The terms ‘polyphony’ (several sounds) and ‘polyphonic’ are sometimes used as simple alternatives for ‘counterpoint’ and ‘contrapuntal’; but generally they are reserved for unaccompanied choral music, particularly from the 16th and earlier centuries” (Taylor: 127). “If the melody was accompanied by chords, it was said to be harmonized; the science of doing this is called Harmony” (Cooke 1925: 34). Understanding harmony allowed religious composers to deviate from the ‘norm’ of monophony, and write more expressively using consonant and dissonant sound configurations.

Polyphonic music often included a form of imitation. An example of this is the form of imitation heard in the popular nursery rhyme – “Row, row, row your boat.” In imitation, the melody line is sung by voices of the same pitch beginning at different intervals. Imitation can also be referred to as a “Canon.” In the early ages composers wrote music based on a simple melody - plainsong. Once music was written for all voices, that is, by having a melodious tune for each voice composers were able to express themselves in more complex ways.

The new understanding of ‘harmony’ gave rise initially to organum. Organum was the addition of melodic lines added to an existing melody. The science of combining melodies in this manner is called ‘counterpoint,’ which means point against point, or note against note” (34). Polyphonic textures in music were very rigid and strict at first. The pitch for each voice would move in parallel motion – according to the melody. The 1100s saw a change in polyphony when the second line in an organum took on a life of its own. “Now the ...lines could differ rhythmically as well as melodically. The chant on the bottom was generally sung in very long notes, while the added melody, on top, moved in shorter notes” (Kamien 2002: 73).

In 1030 A.D, Solfeggio (– do, re, mi) was introduced by a monk named Guido D’Arezzo from Italy. Solfeggio was instrumental in the development of organum. This system helped choir directors teach new music to church singers. D’Arezzo based his musical innovation on a Latin hymn. He took the first two letters of the first words of the hymn and related them to six notes. These six notes, or the hexachord, were the building blocks for the formation of the musical scale. Thanks to solfeggio, many of the choir members were able to sing “by ear.” The “Guidonian Hand,” a convenient system for remembering pitches, was later introduced. Through using the hand and fingers as a memory device, students were able to learn their parts quickly.

The majestic beauty of the Cathedral of Notre Dame graced the French landscape beginning in 1163 A.D. Innovations were not seen in music alone; they were also apparent in gothic architecture. Gothic arches, flying buttresses, steeples and stained glass windows were the newest developments of the day. From the school of Notre Dame (a choir school in the cathedral) emerged two choirmasters – Leonin and Perotin. These choirmasters were composers who in 1170 to 1200 created the system by which music is measured in time. Their contributions to music led to the development of “rhythmic time values.” Time values are notated to show the duration of a sound. The notations include whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and even smaller time values. With the development of temporal notation, composers were able to create music using rhythmic diversity. Musical notation facilitated an increase of musical compositions. Leonin wrote *Magnus liber organi*, or the *Great Book of Organum*, using two voices; Perotin was able to modify Leonin’s work to give it depth. He added up to four melody lines. Both Leonin and Perotin are said by Mann to have “laid the foundation of a polyphonic style whose flowering was to last for some 400 years” (Kallen 2003: 21)

A new polyphonic style of music emerged, which was called the motet. Motets derived from the French word *mot* or “word” because words were added” (Kallen 2003: 22). Motets initially used two separate parts. One part was constant – it never moved around, while the other part moved creating a distinct rise and fall in tones. The part of the music that was static was called “fixity.” The other part was called “freedom.” Thousands of motets were composed creating a surge of innovations in music. Composers were able to experiment with voices and musical textures.

As new ideas in music emerged, much of European society changed. In schools, music education was modified to implement new teaching methods and styles as it related to harmony. The ‘new music’ attracted many people, increasing the population of the continent. With more families moving into the cities, new schools and universities were built. Music influenced another discipline – art. Sculptors created free standing models. Painters were able to give their ‘flat’ designs a three-dimensional view. This technique was known as depth perception. Lines on a canvas were drawn diagonally to create a sense of depth. Music had grown to become a universal language. With the ability to read and write music, a new paradigm in music took place. This paradigm became known as the musical renaissance.

Towards the end of 1300 A.D., Europe experienced tremendous political, religious and social turmoil. This led to the Renaissance or “rebirth.” in 1400 A.D. The Church was losing its grip on its position in Europe due to people challenging its

religious doctrines. Societal changes such as “long catastrophic wars, the Black Plague and religious infighting” had also made people question their blind faith in the Church (Kallen 2003: 23). Those who forsook the Church and its practices soon found comfort in things such as “classical Greek culture for spiritual inspiration” (Kallen 2003: 23). People felt the Church had let them down and so needed to turn their energies and beliefs elsewhere. Such people included composers, artists and writers who became “motivated by an intellectual movement known as humanism, a belief system that emphasize[d] the personal worth of the individual – and the importance of human values as opposed to religious dogma” (Kallen 2003: 23). People who were once suppressed by the power of the Church intellectually and creatively were now able to express themselves as individuals. It has been said that “with the Renaissance came a sweeping wave of earthly feeling and expression, and a rebellion against the intellectual domination of the Church” (Kallen 2003: 23)

The revolutionary changes in music appeared to be connected to the relationship between the Church and society. As society became more secular in its thinking and less influenced by the Church, the changes of music increased dramatically. The Church’s control had earlier made it virtually impossible for change. Revolutionary innovations in music that seeped through the Church over a thousand years enabled gifted musicians such as monks, to experiment with elements of music. These elements: harmony, counterpoint and polyphony have remained to this day in the musical sphere. They have formed the foundation of the “tonal music” (music centered around major and minor keys) which emerged as the centerpiece of the Enlightenment and which is still enjoyed at concert halls everywhere today.

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Whether through government programs or its market system the United States as a high income country is also able to allocate far greater resources to health, education, and welfare than the Ukraine, one of the middle-income countries.

Global Inequality: The United States and the Ukraine

Veronica Orlova

Sociology 31

Spring 2006

Mentor: Professor Barbara Walters

GLOBAL INEQUALITY: the USA vs. Ukraine

The valuable resources of the world – money, education, and quality of life – are distributed unequally within and between societies. At the top of the global stratification system are the early industrializing societies of Europe, the United States, Canada, and select Asian societies like Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong. At the bottom are over a billion people who live on just a dollar a day.

This paper will compare the United States and my native country, Ukraine, in terms of inequality, culture, race, and ethnicity.

1. Poverty within a nation

A first step in understanding the gap between the rich and poor on a global scale is understanding what “poor” means in an international context. Organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank use two definitions of poverty:

- *Absolute poverty* is defined as a situation wherein people do not have enough food to nurture their families and themselves properly;
- *Relative poverty* means that people lack the resources necessary to survive as full participants in the society in which they live.

Poverty measurement is a difficult mission even within a society that has a single currency and set of prices for commodities. Measuring global poverty requires the comparison of living standards and consumption levels across and within a wide variety of social contexts. Many countries calculate their national poverty lines on the basis of a *minimum consumption basket* priced according to the specific circumstances of the country to reflect the basic human necessities, such as food, clothing, and housing.

Ukraine: In the Ukraine the poor are defined as those individuals whose consumption falls below a level sufficient to cover the cost of a food basket of about 2,500 calories per day plus a significant allowance for non-food goods and services. The cost of the basket in 2004 was UHA 150 (US \$30) per person per month (1).

According to *Poverty in the Ukraine Report* by the World Bank, after initial years of persistent levels of poverty around 30%, by 2004 the population below the poverty line was less than 20%.¹

The USA: As defined by the United Nations, no Americans live in absolute poverty, but many people live in relative poverty. Poverty in the United States is defined by a national poverty line of just over \$18,000 income for a family of four, or over \$4,500 per person. This amount comes from the average cost of food multiplied by three to provide a family with other necessities. According to the Census Bureau, in the United States the official poverty rate in 2004 was 12.7% of the population, up from 12.5% in 2003 (2)

2. Income distribution

One of the methods of measuring and standardizing inequality within a country is *the Gini index*. It is calculated from *the Lorenz curve*, in which cumulative family income is plotted against the number of families arranged from the poorest to the richest. In an ideal variant, 10% of the population receives 10% of the total income, 20% gets 20% of the income. If income is distributed with perfect equality, the index would be zero; with perfect inequality it would be 100.

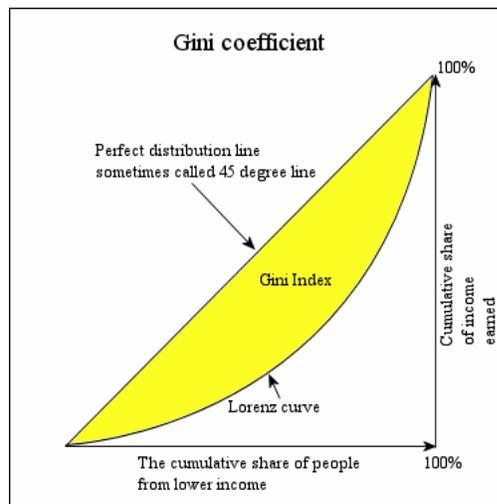
The Gini coefficient is the proportion of the total area under the 45-degree line that falls above the Lorenz curve. The greater the distance between the Lorenz curve and 45-degree line, the greater the level of inequality in the population. *The Gini index* is the Gini coefficient expressed as a percentage, therefore, it equals the Gini coefficient multiplied by 100. According to the information, presented on the CIA cite, the US has a Gini index of 45, while the Ukraine has an index of 29 (4).

[See Diagram on the next page]

3. World Bank Classification

Over the past five decades, consistent economic growth in the advanced economies of the world has led to a dramatic increase of real income per capita in the high end countries, while per capita in some countries at the bottom of the distribution have hardly changed.

For operational and analytical purposes, the *World Bank's* main criterion for classifying economies is *Gross National Income (GNI)* per capita. Based on its GNI per capita, every economy is classified as:



Gini Coefficient Illustration (3)

Category	Example of countries	<i>Demographic and Socioeconomic Research</i> by <i>the World Health Organization</i> showed: (5)
Low Income \$ 825 or less / year per capita	Ethiopia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Moldova, Nigeria, Mongolia	Current GNI in Ethiopia per person is \$710
Middle Income \$10,065 or less / year per capita;	Ukraine , Brazil, Colombia, Turkey, Indonesia, Hungary	Current GNI in Ukraine per person is \$ 5,310
High Income \$ 10,066 or more /year per capita	USA , Germany, Japan, Australia, Norway, New Zealand	Current GNI in the USA per person is \$37,750

4. World System Analysis

According to World Systems Theory, developed by the conflict perspective sociologist *Immanuel Wallerstein*, the world's economic system is divided into three unequal categories:

- *Core countries* - the most advanced post industrialized countries. Have strong central governments and extensive bureaucracies.
- *Peripheral countries* – the least advanced agriculture countries. Historically, lacked strong central governments or were controlled by other states, exported raw materials to the Core countries;
- *Semi-Peripheral countries*– manufacturing countries. Represented either core regions in decline or peripheries attempting to improve their relative position in the World Economic System.

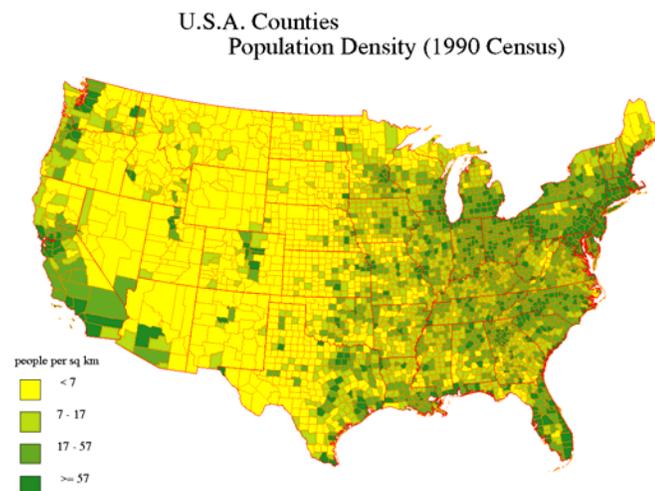
According to this theory, Core countries control and exploit developing countries. There is a fundamental and institutionally stabilized *division of labor* between the Core and Periphery: while the Core countries have a high level of technological development and manufacture complex products, the role of the Peripheral countries is to supply raw materials, agricultural products and cheap labor for the expanding agents of the Core. The statuses of countries are not, however, mutually exclusive and fixed to certain geographic areas; instead, they are relative to each other and shifting. Peripheral and Core zones can co-exist very closely in the same geographic area.

The United States is clearly one of the Core countries, while the **Ukraine** fits in the Semi- Peripheral category.

5. Ethnic Groups

The United States has become increasingly diverse in the last century. According to the **2000 U.S. Census**, the USA has 31 ethnic groups with at least one million members each, plus numerous others represented in smaller numbers. In addition, approximately 30 percent of the population currently belongs to a racial or ethnic minority group (6)

The USA Population Density (7)



The U.S. population more than tripled during the 20th century, a growth rate of about 1.3% a year, having been about 76 million in 1900. According to the *U.S. POP Clock Projection* of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the population was estimated to be **298,739,724**. This number is constantly changing to reflect births, deaths and immigration. For example, in April 2006, there was an estimated Net Gain of one person every 11 seconds (8).

The USA has a population density, the number of people per unit of area, of 30 persons per sq. km. on average.

According to the *2005 CIA World Fact* (9), America's racial composition is:

White 81.7%,

African Americans 12.9%,

Asian 4.2%,

Amerindian and Alaska native 1%,

Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander 0.2%

It should be noted that the Census Bureau has no separate listing for Hispanic. It considers *Hispanic* to be any person with national origins in Latin America or Spain. Thus, the term Hispanic includes those who have Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican origin, living in the US, and may be of any race or ethnic group (White, Black, Asian, etc.) By ethnicity, Hispanics comprise over 14% of the American population, surpassing African Americans as America's largest *de facto* ethnic minority. *The Census Bureau* projects that by the year 2100, non-Hispanic whites will make up only 40 percent of the U.S. population.

Multinational Composition of Ukraine

Ukraine: According to the All-Ukrainian Population Census data the total population of the Ukraine was **48.5 million** persons (10).



Multi-national Composition of Ukraine (11)

A particularity of the population of the Ukraine is its multi-ethnic composition. *The All-Ukrainian Population Census* (10) indicates that the representatives of more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups lived on the territory of the Ukraine:

- Ukrainians make up slightly over three fourths of the population – 78%,
- Russians constitute around 17.3%,
- Crimean Tatars 0.5%,
- Other: 4.4%. There are Jewish, Polish, Bulgarian,

Belarusian, Moldovan, Romanian and Hungarian minorities.

The Ukraine is characterized by a high population density, which is much higher than that of the USA. According to the *All-Ukrainian Population Census*¹⁰ data, it accounted for 80 persons per square km. on average in the country. The least population density is in the North-Western and the Southern regions of the country, where it is 60 persons per sq. km. The index is especially low in the Chernihiv region – 39 persons per sq. km. The Eastern industrial regions are the most densely populated; there the index is more than 90 persons per sq. km. and in Donetsk region it totals 183 persons per sq. km.

6. Languages

Although **the United States** has no official language, it is largely monolingual with English being the *de facto* official language, which is spoken by about 82% of the population as a native language and nearly everyone as a daily language. Even though English is not the official language, knowledge of it is required to become a naturalized citizen. Several states recognize English as an official language, and three states recognize other languages along with French in Louisiana, Hawaiian in Hawaii, and Spanish in New Mexico.

Spanish, the second most widely used language in the U.S., is spoken by approximately 10.7 percent of the population. Widely spoken languages also include:

- Indo-European - 3.8%,
- Asian and Pacific Island - 2.7%,
- Other - 0.7% (12)

In total, approximately 336 languages are used by the population.

Ukraine: Many Ukrainians speak both Ukrainian and Russian, except those who live in the Crimean Peninsula, where Russians make up the majority. The language composition of the Ukraine, according to *the All-Ukrainian Population Census* (13), was characterized by the following data:

- The part of those whose mother tongue is Ukrainian totals 67.5% of the population; this is 2.8 percentage points more than in 1989.
- The percentage of those whose mother tongue is Russian totals 29.6% of the population. Compared with the data of previous census this index has decreased by 3.2 percentage points.
- Other languages have increased by 0.4 percentage points since the previous census and account for 2.9%.

7. Education

According to the report by the *National Center for Education Statistics (NCED)* of the U.S. Department of Education, the **United States** is poorly educated in comparison to most developed countries, although more educated than most developing countries, with a reading literacy rate at 86-98% of the population over age 15 (14).

The percentage literacy for Whites, according to *the NCED*, decreased between 1992 and 2003 by 7 percentage points, while the percentage of Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islanders increased by 4 and 2 percentage points respectfully. The percentage of Blacks did not change much in this period. This information is summarized in the following table:

Ethnicity	1992	2003
Whites	77	70*
Blacks	11	12
Hispanic	8	12*
Asian/Pacific Islanders	2	4*

Ukraine: The education system, like many aspects of life in Ukraine, is going through tremendous changes. The results of the *All-Ukrainian Census 2001* (15) showed a tendency to a rising educational standard of the population, as evidenced by an increase in the number of people with higher and complete secondary education:

- The number of people with higher and complete secondary education accounted for 28.9 million people, which exceeded by 17.6% the analogous characteristic of population Census 1989.

The rise of the educational standard of the population is typical for both urban and rural population:

- ⊙ The number of persons with complete higher education per 1,000 persons of the population since 1989 has increased by 30.7% in cities and by 68.9% in villages.
- ⊙ The number of persons with complete secondary education has increased by 17.2% in urban areas and by 33.1% in villages.

8. Health Indicators

I indicated above that the USA is one of the High Income countries, while the Ukraine is considered a Middle Income country. The relationship between income level and health is not only one of the advantages of higher socioeconomic status, but also points to the disadvantages of poverty, include unhealthy living conditions, poor sanitation, greater prevalence of crime, violence, AIDS, heart disease, and various other physical and mental illnesses. To be poorer by definition is to have less of the good things produced by society, including health.

The USA: According to the *National Center for Health Statistics*, health indicators such as life expectancy and infant mortality have improved for most Americans. Life expectancy went up from 77 years in 2002 to 78 years in 2006, while infant mortality dropped from 8.5 deaths per 1,000 live births to 6.4 deaths (16).

However, minorities experience a disproportionate burden of preventable disease, death, and disability compared with non-minorities. Among elderly adults, for example, 17 percent of Hispanic, and 16 percent of black Americans report they are in only fair or poor health, compared with 10 percent of white Americans

Ukraine: Unfortunately, the Ukraine has a shortage of medical equipment and modern facilities, especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, the country has achieved a

relatively low infant mortality rate – 10 deaths for every 1,000 live births. This is lower than the rate in most former Soviet republics, such as:

- Belarus – 13 death per 1,000 living births,
- Russia – 15 deaths per 1,000 live births;
- Moldova – 38.4 deaths per 1,000 living births (17).

In addition, life expectancy in the Ukraine is 70 years, which is also a little better than the average in the old Soviet Union. For example, this indicator in Russia is 67 years, in Moldova – 65 years.

9. Population Growth Rate

Population Growth Rate refers to the rate at which the number of individuals in a population increases or decreases. This rate can be measured for any society by the formula:

$$\text{Population Growth Rate} = \frac{(\text{Birth Rate} + \text{Immigration}) - (\text{Mortality Rate} + \text{Emigration})}{\text{Number of people}}$$

Number of people

According to the CIA, the **USA** has a Population Growth Rate of 0.91%, while the **Ukraine** has a negative rate of 0.6% (18).

By the supportive information, presented on the *State Statistics Committee of Ukraine*, children in its population have decreased since 1989 by 4.9% , while persons of working age and older have increased by 2.65%. This complicates the present demographic situation and speaks to the aging of the population.

Russia, Tthe closest neighboring country of the Ukraine, has the same problem. On May 10, 2006, Russian President Putin called the demographic slide that shrunk Russia’s population by millions since the 1991 Soviet collapse “*the most acute problem of contemporary Russia.*” He encouraged legislators to budget for more generous birth bonuses of \$10,000 for a second child, childcare support subsidies and educational benefits for mothers to encourage women to have children. I hope that the Ukrainian government will follow with a similar move.

In this paper I have focused on measures of inequalities, such as income distribution, access to health care, levels of education, nutrition, and generally quality of life. From my point of view, income is the most accurate indicator of what a household or a society can afford to buy. Whether through government programs or its market system

the United States as a high income country is also able to allocate far greater resources to health, education, and welfare than the Ukraine, one of the middle-income countries.

- (1) <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/UKRAINEEXTN.html>
- (2) <http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p60-229.pdf>
- (3) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini_coefficient
- (4) <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/up.html>
- (5) <http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/CHHUKR/demographic>
- (6) <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-1.pdf>
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- (10) <http://www.churchdevelopmentaid.org/CIS.htm>
- (11) <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>
- (12) <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/us.html#Geo>
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- (14) <http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL/PDF/2006470.PDF>
- (15) <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>
- (16) <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/deaths.htm>
- (17) <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/up.html>
- (18) <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/us.html#People>
- (19) <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

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When talking about his first time ever killing a man, the look in Ira's eyes was very chilling. It was as if remembering this experience was still painful. He said that putting his hand on the trigger and seeing the man fall down was very emotional for him. After awhile, however, he got used to it.

The Forgotten War: An Oral History of a Korean War Veteran

Marcie Zilberman Dabach
Mental Health Field Work
Mentor: Professor Susan Ednie

Ms. Zilberman graduated from Kingsborough Community College and, more recently, from Hofstra University. She is currently applying for graduate school.

The senior population often enjoys participating in what Mental Health Professionals call "life review." Through this paper from one of our Mental Health students, we can learn a great deal about how to relate to our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and even great-great-grandparents as they move into their senior years. We can also learn a great deal about history from their first-hand accounts.

Barbara Walters, Faculty Mentor and Editor to *Distinctions*

It was a brisk Sunday morning in April 1932. Mrs. Julius lay in Lutheran Hospital in Brooklyn New York. A baby boy was born... later to be a hero.

Ira Julius was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He lived at home with both of his parents and his two sisters. Ira held several jobs as a youth, such as selling the Daily News, working as a delivery boy, and packing shopping bags at Macys. He saved his money by putting it in a bank. Ira always wanted to work to have that sense of responsibility. As will be seen, this drive continued for him later on in his life.

From an early age, Ira enjoyed watching movies about war; he was always captivated by it. During the time when Ira was growing up, a patriotic mood from World War II swept the country. There were many movies at that time that glorified the war, and people strived to "make the world safe for democracy." One time when he was seventeen years old, Ira was sitting next to a soldier on the train. Fascinated by all of his pins and medals, Ira began asking the soldier all types of questions. Made uncomfortable by Ira's inquisitive nature, the soldier answered concretely with one word answers. The soldier did, however, tell Ira that he had better hope the war was over before he became of age. Ira couldn't hide his disappointment; what good would it be going into the army when the war is already over? Ira wanted to know all about the war. He was very enthusiastic about it, and he dreamed of joining the army.

Ira graduated from New Utrecht High School at age seventeen, with an eighty-five average. When he graduated, World War II had just ended. Every day he would wait anxiously for the mail to come to see if he was going to be drafted. He would run excitedly to the mailbox. One day, Ira's father told him that mail had come for him. Like a little boy in a candy store, Ira excitedly ripped on the mail. Inside it said: "You are to report to Church Street for a physical examination." "Wow!" Ira thought. "This might be it; I might finally be able to live out my dream and fight in the army." Ira wondered if it was going to be anything like the John Wayne movies he watched as a child, where John Wayne always triumphed and never ran out of ammo. On the day Ira

was to report for the physical examination, he woke up early and had breakfast with his family. His mother jokingly said that she hoped everything was not okay with Ira so that he wouldn't have to go. True things are often said in jest, and although Ira's mother did not want anything to be wrong with him, she did want him to stay at home and not fight in the war. Any mother would feel the same way. Ira wanted his mother to support him, though, as this was the most important thing Ira would ever do.

The time arrived, and Ira went to take his physical examination. He knew that he would be notified on the spot of his results. Ira was very nervous. What if everything was not well? He thought that everyone would point at him, and he would stick out like a sore thumb! Ira was apprehensive; his palms were sweaty. When the sergeant informed him that everything went well, Ira was so happy that he wanted to kiss him. The sergeant told him: "Don't be so excited. You might not come back." Ira wasn't thinking of that, though. He just wanted to attack the enemy, to kill them.

After the physical examinations, the men had two weeks to prepare for leaving and to be at home with their families. Ira hung out with his friends and family, all the time anticipating the big day. During these two weeks, his parents would talk to him and give him words of wisdom, but Ira was too excited to listen. It went in one ear, and out the other.

The big day finally arrived. Ira's mother gave him a big hug and ten dollars. Ira felt a little awkward. Saying goodbye is always hard. The first day of basic training was definitely the toughest for Ira. They gave him a haircut, taught him to make his own bed, with perfect covers, and gave him his shots. Ira was exhausted; he couldn't wait to get into bed, only for them to wake him at 5:00 a.m. the next morning. He had to make his bed, shave, and get dressed. After that he would do 15-20 minutes of physical exercise. First they toughened up the new recruits, and then came breakfast. This was difficult for Ira to get adjusted to, as one might imagine. Half of the day, they would be in training. They would practice shooting at a target. To some extent, the practicing felt real.

After a few weeks, Ira began to feel like he was at home. It was then that he wrote a letter to his mother. He wrote the usual: "Hi, how are you? I'm doing fine." He also wrote, "I'm learning to be a soldier. You would be proud."

Basic training was supposed to be for nine weeks, but they were told to speed it up to six weeks because of the war. Ira didn't feel rushed at all. On the contrary, he felt very prepared. He didn't think the extra three weeks would make any difference. When it was over, the sergeant said: "Now I can call you guys soldiers." Ira felt a sense of pride. They were then given a seven-day leave to go home and prepare until they

were assigned where to go. Ira went home, visited his aunt and uncle, and spent time with his family. One day, while he was home on leave, Ira asked his mother for an ironing board. His mother was in disbelief, since she only knew Ira as a sloppy child. Ira claimed that the army made a man of him.

After his seven-day leave, Ira went to the West Coast to San Francisco, California. To get there, he took a train for four days, which they called a 'cattle car' because they slept all curled up. There were twenty men in each car. They had only one small bathroom, but they all seemed to manage. They finally got to California and went to a housing unit. Three days later, they got the order to board the ship. The sergeant told them that the ship would be their home for the next five days. Next stop, Korea...

The ocean was a little rough, and Ira got seasick. Luckily, when they got near Korea, the water was a little calmer, so Ira got over his seasickness. When they arrived in Korea, there was no break—they walked right into the war. This was very scary. They prepared and anticipated and thought they were ready, but they never imagined walking straight into war. But they were men now, brave men—they could do this.

It was June 25th, 1950, and the beginning of the war. The president of Korea called President Harry S. Truman in the White House and said that North Korea, the communist country, had invaded non-communist South Korea. Truman immediately flew from Washington to the United Nations. Truman told the Security Council that North Korea viciously attacked South Korea, and that he would like support from the UN. "This will not be an American war!" Truman said. The Security Council agreed, and many countries sent troops.

When the war began, Ira guarded the eastern front of a reservoir. There were 200 men on the eastern end. All but 50 were lost. Ira was one of those 50 who survived. War life was pretty scary; Ira began to realize that war was not at all like the movies he had seen. The North Koreans tried to kill them in sneaky ways. They would come while they were sleeping and talk in American accents, and then shoot them. Ira was always thinking that the next bullet might be for him, which is a pretty scary thought. Ira slept in a foxhole. Two men slept in each foxhole and, throughout the night, they took turns, one sleeping while the other guarded the foxhole, and vice versa. The foxhole was very dirty. There was no way out, no way for them to wash, or relieve themselves. They lived in constant fear. Ira witnessed his friend die right next to him. A North Korean soldier came and said "Hey, Joe," (because this was an American name). Ira warned his friend that it might be a trick. Unfortunately, his friend answered and got a knife in his back. When asked how he felt watching his friend die

before his very eyes, Ira said he was very frightened because he knew it could have been him. He then said, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," referring to the fact that he could tell his friend not to answer, but he couldn't make him not do so. Soon after, the rifle became Ira's best friend.

When talking about his first time ever killing a man, the look in Ira's eyes was very chilling. It was as if remembering this experience was still painful. He said that putting his hand on the trigger and seeing the man fall down was very emotional for him. After awhile, however, he got used to it. He said: "It became like shooting ducks in a row at Coney Island." Ira explained how war is much different than training and shooting at a target, and that it is definitely not like the John Wayne movies he saw while growing up where they would kill 50,000 men like it was no big deal. When one is there and experiences it, it is definitely not like out of a movie.

While fighting the war, Ira got shot in the left knee. He went to MASH (medical unit) to get the bullet removed. Although he couldn't fight anymore, Ira did not want to give up. He wanted to go back and fight. They told him not to be so brave. They also told him that he might develop arthritis in his later years as a result of his injury.

Every day life was very difficult. They ate packaged meals that were like TV dinners. After while, the kitchen was bombed. They had no food, and they were so desperate that someone actually shot a horse and they ate the horsemeat. Ira had never imagined what he might do under these conditions. He never imagined starving and having to eat horsemeat, but at that time, it was the only sensible thing to do.

The war lasted eighteen months and Ira stayed the whole time. The war ended on July 27th, 1953. They were negotiating a peace treaty in Panmunjon. According to the treaty, North Korea was to move back to the north and not invade South Korea. Both parties were each to remain in their own territory. Ira said that even though we lost more U.S. troops in the Korean War than in the Vietnam War, it is still the forgotten war. People seem to remember Vietnam and pay little attention to Korea. Ira is proud to have been in the war. He wears a Korean War hat everyday with army pins all over it. He has an infantry badge, a pin from General McArthur, a discharge button, and the Korea flag on his hat.

After 18 months in Korea, Ira's unit was relieved by the Turkish army. The men were then sent to Japan for 12 days. There they got hot food, and Ira said he really appreciated it after what he had been through. After arriving in Japan, they went to Osaka for a week for R&R (rest and recuperation). All Ira wanted was to get into a nice hot bath again, and for his black dirty skin to turn back to white. After Japan, they were sent to Hawaii for medical attention. In the hospital in Hawaii, they took care of Ira's

knee. He was on crutches for one month and a can for two additional weeks.

Getting readjusted to civilian life after the war was very hard for Ira. He said it took some time. He would have nightmares every night, and wake up feeling that he was on a battlefield again. He needed a lot of time to himself. He didn't feel much like staying with friends and family—it was too hard. Ira's father wanted him to go to work, but Ira wanted to find himself. Ira finally went to work at a laboratory as a can carrier for fifteen dollars a week.

After the war, Ira didn't really talk about his experiences much. It was too painful. However, years later he began opening up because he felt it was important for people to know about what happened in Korea. As Ira always says, he is a man of the "forgotten war." By sharing his stories with people, he hopes that it will no longer be the forgotten war.

When Ira was twenty-three years old, he got married to a woman named Jacoby. His wife couldn't deal with the difficulties Ira was experiencing in readjusting to civilian life. When he had reoccurring nightmares that he was on the battlefield again, his wife thought that he should go talk to somebody, that he should get help. Ira told her a doctor couldn't cure his problems, and that she would have to be patient. Five years after getting married, Ira and his wife divorced.

When Ira was thirty-two, he married a woman named Rachel who had two children. Ira never had any children of his own, yet he treated Rachel's children as he would his own. He even made her son a bar-mitzvah. This time, Ira told his wife right off the bat that he doesn't play games and that she would have to be able to tolerate his nightmares. Rachel was very supportive. She asked him what she should do when he had a nightmare, and he said, "Nothing. Just let me be." Rachel developed leukemia at around age thirty. Ira noticed some changes in her, but when he asked her what was wrong, she said "nothing." Rachel hid her illness from him for awhile. Two years later, she finally told him. Ira couldn't believe it. He told her to get up, get dressed, and come home with him. The doctor told Ira there was no cure and that his wife was going to die soon. Yet Ira was still hopeful. Rachel told Ira that she wanted him to meet someone else and marry again; they were both so young. Ira didn't want to think of that. Ira didn't really talk about his experiences in Korea with either of his wives. He said that they had their life and he had his. He didn't really talk to anyone about it for a while. He felt that no one would understand except those who had fought with him.

Ira retired at age sixty-five from the motion picture business where he worked for about 38 years. He now enjoys spending his time reading, swimming, and listening to classical music. Ira is seeing a woman named Irena. She lives in the same building as

him. They enjoy spending time together, going dancing, playing cards, and talking. Every once in awhile, Ira will cut out an article from the New York Times that he thinks she might enjoy and slip it under her door. Their relationship is good because they both want the same thing—companionship, not marriage.

Ira says that all people remember is World War II and Vietnam, while the war in Korea was right in the middle. He feels it kind of got lost in the shuffle. This is why he calls it “the forgotten war.” Ira enjoys telling his story now especially to younger people, because they are the ones who will help keep the memory alive. At the end of his talks with young people, Ira always says, “I hope you never have to see the face of war, except in the movies.”

I am glad I had the opportunity to write this oral history on Ira, because now I am knowledgeable about the Korean War. Talking to Ira gave me a feel for what it must have been like to fight in the Korean War. I also learned a lot about Ira himself, and his feelings and beliefs. Ira is a man of much strength. He is determined, ambitious, and sensitive. I am so grateful that Ira gave me this opportunity to learn more about himself and about the Korean War. I hope this will help others to learn and understand, so that the Korean War will no longer be “the forgotten war.”

No one know how genetically modified foods will change over time. Many unknown diseases might develop if scientists continue to change the genome of animals and plants. Many people agree with genetically modified foods and think it a good way to prevent many diseases but I think that some day genetically modified foods will cause more harm than good.

How Safe Are Genetically Modified Foods?

Melissa Chambers

Biology 37

Spring 2006

Mentor: Anthea Stavroulakis

A Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) is produced by transferring or inserting DNA into cells of plants or animals, by which a new organism is made. Genetically Modified Organisms are organisms that have been genetically altered to increase their nutritional, medicinal or agricultural values. With some genetically modified organisms, not only do they increase the nutritional value, but also, they produce their own herbicide and pesticide resistance. Altering the genetic material or information in animals, plants, and bacteria will increase their nutritional value, but how safe are these genetically modified foods?

Genetically Modified foods are called gene-altered, mutant, Genetically Engineered (GE) and "Frankenstein Foods." A few genetically modified foods include: rice, tomatoes, corn and pork. Rice is one of the food crops that have been genetically modified to increase its nutritional value. It has been genetically altered to reduce the growing time period, and to improve the taste and nutritional value. Since many countries such as Asia, Africa, Japan and China rely on rice as their main source of nutrition, increasing the nutritional value in rice seems like a good way to stop malnutrition. Malnutrition is the main cause of many diseases in children and adults in these countries, which depend on rice as a main source of vitamin and proteins. Since a deficiency in vitamin A can cause blindness, increasing the vitamin A through genetic modification is a good way to prevent it in these areas.

The procedure to increase the vitamin A level in rice involves implanting three genes into rice to produce the genetically modified product. Two of the genes are taken from a daffodils and the third one is taken from a bacterium. The gene that must be inserted to make "Golden Rice" (the genetically modified product) is called beta-carotene. Beta-carotene is the precursor that is responsible for making vitamin A in many organisms, from vegetables like carrots to mammals. By inserting this gene into rice, it will increase the biosynthesis pathway that leads to vitamin A synthesis. Because of the insertion of the beta-carotene gene, the genetically modified rice ends up with a yellowish color.

Tomatoes are also another food that has been genetically modified since 1994. Tomatoes were the first genetically modified product on the U.S. Market. They are usually modified before they are ripe, and then shipped to their destination. They have been genetically modified to increase the shelf life and the lycopene level. Lycopene is found in tomatoes and some fruits. It is also an antioxidant that helps fight cancer. The gene that has been inserted into tomatoes is called the Arctic Flounder anti-freeze gene. This gene is found only in deep-water fish and it's essential for the survival of fish in the cold water of the Arctic Sea. This gene will help tomatoes to look and smell fresh. Another gene that has been inserted into tomatoes is beta-carotene. Like rice, tomatoes are now rich in vitamin A because of this beta-carotene gene. As a result of increasing the vitamin A level in tomatoes, the level of lycopene which is naturally found in

tomatoes will also increase. Genetically modified tomatoes will help in the fight against cancer, atherosclerosis and heart disease.

Corn is also another crop that has been genetically modified. Like rice, corn is the food staple for many countries in Central and South America. For many people, corn is an essential component of their diet. One of the benefits from eating corn is getting B1 vitamin (thiamin), which helps to maintain good memory. Corn is also good source of fiber, which aids bowel movements. It also produces an acid called pantothenic acid, which supports the adrenal gland. The adrenal gland works interactively with the hypothalamus and pituitary gland by releasing hormones. One reason why corn is genetically modified is for it to produce its own herbicides and pesticides to kill harmful insects, which would destroy it. The genetic produce is called "Bt-corn." *Bt* is the abbreviation for *Bacillus thuringiensis*, which is also the name of the gene that is found in soil bacteria, and has been inserted into corn to produce its own pesticide and herbicide.

Another example of a genetically modified product is pigs. Pigs are being genetically altered so that they can produce omega-3 fatty acids. It is not natural for pigs to produce omega-3. In fact, the only type of pigs which produce this fatty acid is a Spanish breed called Iberico. To produce pigs with their own omega-3 fatty acid, a gene from fish is inserted into pigs. The reason why the gene is taken from fish is because omega-3 is abundantly found in fish like tuna and salmon. This is considered a healthy component of our diets to reduce heart disease.

On March 27, 2006, a *New York Times* article read, "Pork that's Good for the Heart May Be Possible with Cloning, Possibly of Healthy Pork." The purpose of this article was to inform the public about the possibility of genetically modified pigs. A group of scientists from Harvard Medical School, the University of Missouri, and the University of Pittsburgh Medical center came up with the idea to genetically alter the genome (the set of genes carried by an organism) of pigs. The result of this project was five piglets with tissues consisting of omega-3 fatty acid. The piglets are now living at the University of Missouri. These four genetically modified foods are not the only food that has been genetically engineered. Other genetically modified plants include soybeans, potatoes and cotton. In 1996 a company called Pioneer Hi-Bred inserted a Brazil nut gene called Methionine-rich 2s albumin into soybeans. Methionine supports the digestive system and also helps prevent the increase of fats in the arteries. Because so many people were allergic to nuts, eating soybeans resulted in severe allergic reaction. Scientists have also inserted gene from a cold-water fish into potatoes to prevent the seedling against frost. Cotton has also been genetically modified to produce its own pesticide. The genetic produce is called "*Bt*" or transgenic cotton. On May 16, 2006 a *New York Times* article read: "Frankencotton, the shirts: Coming soon to a Wardrobe near You". Since cotton has been genetically altered, it is possible that many of us are wearing genetically modified clothes such as skirts and underwear without realizing it!

What Are the Ethnical, Legal, Social Issues?

One of the social and legal issues, with genetically modified foods, is that there have been lawsuits against farmers who have produced genetically modified foods unintentionally. An farmer claiming to grow organic foods was sued for growing genetically modified crop that was found in his field. Pollen from a truck, which was carrying GM plants, blew in his field and bred with his organic produce. One of the ethical issues with genetically modified foods is that by creating and altering the nutritional level in foods by inserting different genes from other organisms makes it appear that many scientists want to play God. Many vegetarians and people with strong religious beliefs do not want to consume foods containing genes from animals.

Another issue with genetically modified product is proper labeling. Many consumers want proper labeling of these genetically modified foods and are calling for the FDA to place proper labeling on its produce. Without the proper labeling there is no way to differentiate between genetically modified foods and non- genetically modified foods. Many consumers are completely ambiguous to genetically modified foods and are uniform about it. According to Dr. John Fagan who is part of the Natural Law Party, they believe that “without labeling, it will be very difficult for scientists and doctors to trace the source of new illnesses caused by genetically engineered food” (Dr. Michael W. Fox, *Killer Foods*, p.216). This is why proper labeling is very important. No one knows what disease or mutation can occur in the human body in the future because of genetically engineered foods. Keeping proper labeling on genetically engineered foods can allow the FDA to identify and withdraw genetically engineered food that might pose as a threat to the public.

Genetically modified foods seem like they are very beneficial and good because of the increased nutrition, but in 1989 many Americans died and thousands were affected by a genetically altered version of food supplement called ‘L’- tryptophan. Typtophan is an amino acid that is an essential part of our diet, naturally found in beef, brown rice, fish, soybeans and peanuts. Using Genetically Engineered products to make vitamin supplements has caused death for many Americans and perhaps will cause death for many more.

How Safe Are Genetically Modified Foods for the Environment?

One of the growing concerns about genetically modified foods is how these will affect the environment and other organisms. Genetically modified foods can cause unintentional harm to other organisms. A study was done in *Nature* on *Bt* corn and found that the pollen may have caused death in Monarch butterfly caterpillars, even though the caterpillars do not consume the corn. Since “*Bt* corns” are engineered to kill

pesticide and herbicides, the moment caterpillars consume the pollens, they too will die. Many people think that scientists are going too far in altering the natural make up of biodiversity. There are worries and concerns about the survival of natural foods that have been created by nature. There are possibilities that genes can be passed down from genetically engineered organisms to other wildlife and change the natural make up of the ecosystem. Once again Charles Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest will be proven. Unlike GE, selective breeding seems less harmful to the environment.

In fact, many people eat foods that are fertilized by selective breeding and they have not caused any allergic reaction or death. An Austrian monk by the name of Gregor Mendel performed an experiment with wrinkled and smooth peas. He selectively fertilized the peas by transferring the pollen from one plant to another. This fertilizes and hybridizes the peas. The purpose of his experiment was to observe the traits, color, and texture of the peas. This not a controversial issue since there is no alteration of the genome of pea. Therefore, I think it is safer to selectively breed organisms that are closely related. Selective breeding of plants with other plants that are similar do not seem to create any controversial issues or endanger other organisms. But, the insertion of different genes from different organism creates controversial issues and also raises many issues about safety for society, such as the example I mentioned about the insertion of genes for fish into pigs. Fish genes do not naturally end up in pigs. Scientists are altering and creating their own organism with new genome.

The Concerns About GM.

These are some of issues and concerns about genetically engineered foods. Many doctors and scientists are concerned about genetically foods on the U.S. market today. There are concerns about how genetically engineered foods will affect the population, the human body, and the environment. The fact that many scientists are altering the genome of many organisms raises many safety questions. For example, how safe is omega-3 fatty acid in pigs? According to Alexander Leaf, a professor of chemical medicine at Harvard University, "I was confident the pork and other foods with omega-3's would eventually get to American consumers and that they would be better for it" (*Science Times*, Gina Kolata, p. A17). But according to Mr. Mendelson who is a part of the Food Safety Group said "cloning process could produce unhealthy animals."

Pigs are naturally a fatty animal and adding more lipids (fats) by inserting omega-3 fatty acid may create too much fat to call it healthy. Too much fat in a person's diet can cause heart disease and hypertension. So far, Canada is the first country to approve of the genetically modified pigs with omega-3 fatty acid. Another concern is the level of lycopene in tomatoes. Increasing the level of Lycopene can be toxic to the human body.

One of the main concerns with genetically modified products is when the GM product is used to make medicine for women who might be pregnant, young children and the elderly. How will medicine that's made from genetically engineered products affect the fetus? No one knows for sure. Many years ago women were given thalidomide, a medicine to reduce morning sickness, but as a result many babies were born with undeveloped limbs.

Vaccines are now being created in a new way to stop infectious disease by inserting viruses or bacteria that normally cause disease in foods. The vaccines are known as edible vaccines. The procedure involves removing the gene that normally causes disease from the virus or bacteria, hoping that the gene is completely switched off and then inserted in foods. A genetically modified food seems like a good way to prevent malnutrition but I am against using genes from other organisms to improve the nutritional value in foods.

Foods we consume are not the only organisms that contain DNA information from viruses. In fact, humans are also being inserted with viral vectors. This procedure is called Gene Therapy. Gene Therapy corrects the abnormal gene by inserting the corrected gene into the white blood cells. This type of therapy was first done on a young girl by the name of Ashanti De Silva. The procedure involves using virus vector to carry the corrected gene in the body. This a very risky procedure because the instruction to make the disease must be completely switched off and if not the viral vector can do more harm than good..

I think inserting genes into humans and foods that was once was an infectious virus is very risky and dangerous. I am against changing the genome of any organisms whether it increasing the nutritional level in foods or inserting viral vectors into humans. I also think that these new techniques will some day cause many unknown mutations and diseases in the body.

I understand that many doctors and scientists are concerned about health and want to prevent many diseases by increasing nutritional level in foods, but changing the genome of an organism might result in unhealthy animals and plants. I think inserting any DNA information into other organisms unethical and immoral. I believe that these scientists are playing God. I also think the natural make up of the environment will change in the near future. No one know how genetically modified foods will change over time. Many unknown diseases might develop if scientists continue to change the genome of animals and plants. Many people agree with genetically modified foods and think it a good way to prevent many diseases but I think that some day genetically modified foods will cause more harm than good.

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Perhaps people in border towns would have a higher understanding of Spanglish among the older and younger generation because they have a higher rate of immigrants crossing the borders: these immigrants might use Spanglish as a form of communication to compensate for their inability to speak English.

Spanglish: An Effective Form of Communication or Just a Trend among Young Latinos?

Stephanie Betances

Speech 32

Spring 2006

Mentor: Dr. Cindy Greenberg

Section 1: Research Question and Literature Review

Research Question:

The effectiveness of Spanglish as a form of communication was explored among a group of people that speak both languages, Spanish and English. The lyrics of a song written in Spanglish were presented to eighteen different participants whose ages ranged from fifteen years of age to sixty years old and plus. Written instructions accompanying the lyrics asked the participants to identify the lyrics as either understood, or not understood. One hypothesis is that all participants will be able to understand the lyrics without any problems because of their knowledge of the English and Spanish language. Another is that for younger participants (thirty five and younger) Spanglish will serve as a more effective form of communication.

Literature Review:

Spanglish is a combination of the Spanish and English languages. Spanglish roots can be traced as far back as 1848. The Southwest of Mexico became part of the United States after signing the treaty that ended the U.S.-Mexican war. This radical change suddenly forced native Mexicans to integrate into an American culture. This new change served as a force to incorporate the English culture into the Spanish/Mexican culture and consequently set forth the mixing of Spanish and English known today as Spanglish. Another version of how Spanglish came to be is narrated by the author Ed Morales in his book Living in Spanglish. Morales writes about an indigenous woman called La Malinche (Dona Marina) from the Maya region of Mexico (Chol was the main language of the Maya civilization). During the treaties between Europe and the Americas Dona Marina traveled with the Spanish conqueror Hernan Cortes as a translator. While traveling with Hernan Cortes, La Malinche became pregnant and gave birth to Cortes' son. It is said that this child was the "first mestizo child of the Americas; La Malinche set off a chain reaction of race-mixing that gave birth to the encroaching Spanglish reality of the twenty-first century" (Morales 32). La Malinche's interracial union with Cortes created a fusion of two cultures and two languages. She accepted the different cultures and the different languages as one and adopted them both as her own; springing to life what came to be called Spanglish.

Is Spanglish a language? Many people would agree that Spanglish is a mixture of race and culture encompassed in a form of language spoken among many Spanish-speaking people. Spanglish influences could be seen in many parts throughout the United States particularly where the Spanish speaker population is high. The United States Census reports "that the population of Hispanic origin accounts for about 12 percent of the United States total today and it is expected to rise to 24 percent by

2050" (Hess, Stein, Farrell 150). There are about four major Spanish groups that have a strong influence in the United States: Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central/South American, and Cuban. Furthermore, each of these groups brings a different and particular flavor to Spanglish. With such strong influences it is not surprising that Spanglish is beginning to extend and is filtering into the American cultural mainstream.

Spanglish is not only a popular form of oral expression among the Spanish speaking communities; it is being used in commercials, radio, poetry, novels, literature, lyrics, and in many other industries. For example Spanglish is being used in movies such as: *Terminator 2*, where Arnold Schwarzenegger says "*Hasta la vista, baby*," which means "See you later, baby." Another example is a TV advertisement for McDonald's in which a rapper rhymes "As a matter of fact, *te va a encantar!*" which translates to "As a matter of fact, you'll love it!"

Spanglish is not exactly a language; it has no specific rules or grammar that one should follow. Moreover, Spanglish is not considered a dialect; it is more an informal language created by its users as they see fit. Two parts compose Spanglish: switching and borrowing. Spanglish speakers use switching "when they insert or substitute words from one language into another" (Hernandez 3). For instance, "*tengo hambre*, let's go eat," means "I'm hungry, let's go eat." Spanglish speakers use borrowing in two ways: the first one is translating a word or phrase literally, for example "*casa azul*," which means blue house. The second one is making up words. "This method makes new words by pronouncing an English word 'Spanish style' dropping final consonants, softening others, replacing M's with N's and V's with B's, and spelled by transliterating the result using Spanish spelling conventions" (Alvarez 485). A few examples are: Chatting - *Chattear*, Pushing - *Puchear*, Double Bubble - *duble buble*.

Spanglish is used among Hispanics; some speakers are fully bilingual and can switch effortlessly from one language to another. An excerpt taken from Alvarez's writing explains why some Spanish speakers choose to express themselves using Spanglish. It "conveys anger, joy, love or embarrassment, because Spanish is a more descriptive, emotional language than English – not because they don't know the word" (Alvarez 486). However, there are those new to the English language uses Spanglish as a way to compensate for their inability to communicate in English.

Spanglish is a way for the Spanish speaker to acculturate into the American culture without losing his or her Hispanic heritage. Over the decades, Spanish speakers have been so heavily influenced by the English language that many of them living in the United States would automatically code switch between English and Spanish without realizing it. Even though Spanglish is not formally a language; it is

gaining considerable popularity among the Spanish speaking communities. At one time, mostly Mexican Americans spoke Spanglish; now it is the talk of the Pueblo.

Section 2: Methodology

Participants

The study included 18 Spanish and English speakers. Six of the participants were between the ages 15-20, six were 35-45, and six were between the ages 60 and plus. The participants were neighbors, classmates, and relatives and were selected based on their age and their knowledge of the Spanish and English language.

Materials

The lyrics of a Spanglish written song called "Mentirosa" by the author Mellow Man Ace, were typed on an 8.5 X 11 inch piece of paper. Instructions on how to rate the lyrics were included. Participants were asked to provide their ages and then to rate the lyrics on a Likert scale ranging from understood to not understood.

Procedure

Participants were asked individually to rate the lyrics of the song "Mentirosa." I gave each participant one of the 8X11inch pieces of paper. They read the lyrics of the song and according to their understanding, circled a number on the scale that best matched their understanding of the lyrics.

Section 3: Results

Table 1

Spanglish Lyrics Rating

Scale Rating	Ages 15-20	Ages 35-45	Ages 60 and +
1	4	2	1
2	1	1	0
3	1	1	1
4	0	1	0
5	0	1	4

Table 2
Age Group Mean and Standard Deviation

	N = 6	N = 6	N = 6
	Age group 15-20	Age group 35-45	Age group 60+
Mean	1.50	2.66	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.89	1.63	1.67

Participant ratings were clustered according to their ages. Table 1 represents their ratings. For the age group 15-20, four participants circled the number 1 (*understood*), one circled the number 2 (*mostly understood*), and one circled the number 3 (*somewhat understood*). For the age group 35-45, two circled the number 1 (*understood*), one circled the number 2 (*mostly understood*), one circled the number 3 (*somewhat understood*), one circled the number 4 (*barely understood*), and one circled the number 5 (*not understood*). For the participants in the age group 60+, one circled the number 2 (*mostly understood*), one circled the number 3 (*somewhat understood*), and four circled the number 5 (*not understood*). In Table 2, the data from each age group were used to calculate the mean and standard deviation. For the age group 15-20 mean was 1.50 (SD = 0.89). For the group age 35-45 the mean was 2.66 (SD = 1.63). For the 60+ age group the mean was 4.00 (SD = 1.67).

Section 4: Conclusion

Each participant rated the Spanglish lyrics based on two adjectives (understood/not understood). Participants circled a number from 1-5 on a Lickert scale that best represented their understanding of the Spanglish written lyrics. The mean and standard deviation for each age group were analyzed to determine each group's understanding of the Spanglish lyrics. Based on the information obtained the age group 15-20, the mean was 1.50 (SD = 0.89), for the age group 35-45, the mean was 2.66 (SD = 1.63), for the age group 60+, the mean was 4.00 (SD = 1.67). In the age group 15-20, where the ratings are closer to the mean the standard deviation is small. For the age group 35-45, where the ratings are spread out between the numbers 1-5, the standard

deviation is considerably larger. For the age group 60+, where the ratings are further spread between the numbers 1-5, the standard deviation is extremely larger. From these data it is safe to conclude that the younger generation considers Spanglish an effective form of communication while the older generation thinks that it is not an effective form of communication. The goal of this study was to find out if younger people considered Spanglish an effective form of communication, meaning they are able to communicate easily and understand each other using borrowing and switching across languages. Most of the younger participants were very comfortable switching words and interchanging them from Spanish to English, mixing them up to create new words. The older generation found Spanglish difficult to understand. Some were bored or did not even want to continue reading the lyrics after the first sentence. Most of the older participants said Spanglish is all rubbish; they don't understand it and it is difficult. Perhaps, this study could be modified or improved to be repeated in other parts of the country where the Spanish population is more in touch with their Spanish roots, such as border towns and diverse economic classes. My interviews included the older generation who are familiar with both Spanish and English, but who come from different social backgrounds and are considered middle class income. These people have higher educational backgrounds and more often than not stayed within their social class. I think it would be interesting to find out whether gender or age have any relevance on code switching. Perhaps, women use code switching more often than men or men uses code switching more often than women or if age plays an important role in code switching for either men or women. Perhaps people in border towns would have a higher understanding of Spanglish among the older and younger generation because they have a higher rate of immigrants crossing the borders: these immigrants might use Spanglish as a form of communication to compensate for their inability to speak English. Border citizens mingle with these immigrants in some way or another and in doing so acquire their way of speaking.

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Section 6: Appendix

Please, write your age then rate the lyrics of the following song. On the number line below circle the number that best reflect your understanding of this song. Select from understood/not understood: 1 means understood and 5 not understood.

AGE: -----

MENTIROSA

Check this out baby Tenemos tremendo lio
 Last night you didn't go A la casa de tu tio (Huh?)
 Resulta ser hey you were at a party
 Higher than the sky Emborrachada de Bacardi (no i wasn't)
 I bet you didn't know que conocia al cantinero (what?)
 He told me you were drinking and wasting my dinero
 talking about come in and enjoy
 what a women gives an hombre
 (but first of all see, I have to know your nombre)
 But I really wanna ask ya que si es verdad (would I lie?)
 and please por favor tell me la verdad
 cause I really need to know, yeah
 necesito entender if you're gonna be a player
 or be my mujer cause right now you're just a liar
 a straight mentirosa (who me?) today u tell me something
 y manana es otra cosa

Understood---1---2---3---4---5---Not understood

Therefore, it follows logically that the parent who has been more involved in raising the child is the one that should be granted custody. True, there may be other forces at work that influence to which parent the child feels closer, such as maternal love or gender, but these factors seem to pale in comparison to the power of the primary caretaker.

Single Parenting and Custodial Rights

Eli Hellmann

English 24

Spring 2006

Mentor: Professor Leslie Fintz

There is an epidemic sweeping our country. Single parents are becoming the norm at an accelerated rate. Psychologists and sociologists have repeatedly discussed the importance of a healthy family structure for the proper development of a child. Conversely, the negative effects of a weak family structure resulting, for example, from the absence of one (or both) of the parents, have also been supported both by research and psychoanalysts. Boys in fatherless homes are more likely to be unemployed and incarcerated, and display a lack of involvement in their own children's lives (Demuth and Brown 58-81). This means that not only are the absent parents responsible for their children's social instability, but that they are also indirectly responsible for their grandchildren's developmental retardation. The fact that the number of single parents keeps rising despite the wide spread communication of these studies, is unsettling.

The three leading causes for single parenting are: premature spousal death, premarital pregnancies, and divorce. In the instance of widows and premarital pregnancies, custody is awarded to the remaining parent by default. Divorce, however, is a different matter entirely. One of the biggest disputes during a divorce is almost always about who is going to get custody of the children. Generally, when all things are equal (mental health, parenting skills, and other similar factors) custody is awarded to the mother. This has been a great reason for debate, especially since the "Tender Years Doctrine" (mothers should be awarded custody of young children) has been deemed unconstitutional in some courts.

Psychologists and sociologists differ in opinion as to who should get custody of the children. Some believe that the mother should always get custody of the children as long as she is emotionally and financially fit to raise them. Others argue that parents should be granted custody of their children based on the gender of the parent and child (same-sex parenting). But the superior argument seems to lie with those that believe that custody should be determined based on the parents' involvement in their children's lives prior to the divorce. It follows logically that those that have been actively involved are the most suited to give the children the emotional support they need.

The mother plays an important part in the child's life. Freudians believe a child's attachment to the mother to be stronger than to the father. This is due to symbiosis and the Oedipus complex, two strong connections that the child has with the mother. Symbiosis refers to a belief and longing that the child has in the early stages in life. Until the child is about eighteen month old, the child is unaware that he is a being separate from the mother. This misconception lasts until the child reaches a stage

known as “separateness” when the child finally realizes that he is an independent being (Voirst 34-40). The other maternal attachment a child experiences, the Oedipus complex, is one of Freud’s better known theories which states that people have secret sexual feelings towards their parents of the opposite gender. A boy has a desire to be the sole recipient of his mother’s love, but is afraid that his father will retaliate by castrating him. A girl desires to be the sole recipient of her father’s attention, but suppresses that feeling out of fear of losing her mother’s love. Thus, boys hide their feelings for their mother and identify with their father out of fear, but girls suppress their feelings for their father out of love for the mother (Voirst 100-114).

Many believe that a child learns his or her behavior via imitation. The theory of imitation states that a child chooses a role model and emulates his or her actions (Miller 183). This being the case, it is imperative that the child has a good role model to emulate. Since the child feels such a strong bond with the mother (due to symbiosis and the Oedipus complex as seen above), it follows logically that the child would choose his or her mother as a role model. In contrast, the more frequent decreased attachment to the father does not facilitate paternal emulation.

The problem with these theories is that they may work for toddlers who have a symbiotic attachment with the mother. But once they outgrow this symbiotic attachment, the child is just as likely to choose the father as much as the mother as a role model. And the Oedipus complex, too, is not such a strong factor. Let us revisit the Freudian Oedipus complex theory. The Oedipus complex states that the boy loves the mother, yet sides with the father out of fear. It is likely that the boy, given the choice, would emulate the mother over his father since he loves her but fears him. Likewise, the daughter may choose the mother since she values her love so much that she suppresses her feelings for her father. That might be true when both parents are present. However, if custody is awarded to the father, the child would choose his or her only familiar option, namely the father, as opposed to some stranger.

This brings us to the next theory, social learning. This theory states that imitation is the method by which behavior is learned. Social learning theorists go on to say that children learn behavior via a system of reward and punishment. If the child sees reward for his imitated behavior, he continues to do that behavior, but drops it if he experiences punishment. Since the child operates by imitation, the child imitates those closest to him, namely parents and older siblings. Once the child grows older and leaves home, the child finds other role models to imitate. Bandura, a social learning theorist claims that not only does the child learn via direct reward and punishment, but also by observance. If the child sees his role model receive reward or punishment for a

particular behavior, the child will follow the behavior based on whether that role model was rewarded or punished (Miller 185). Studies go on to suggest that children are more likely to choose like-gender parent (son to father, daughter to mother) to be their role model (Juni et. al. 89-99).

Some may argue, especially those in favor of the Tender Years Doctrine, that fathers are incapable of raising a child by themselves. Even if this were true, it is only due to the microstructural factors; societal norms have convinced us that the mother is the one who is responsible for or capable of raising children. Especially the media continue to support these stereotypes, as Wineburgh states: "Role choices are now also seen as more culturally influenced through sexual stereotypes implicit in toys and television" (261). Nonetheless, with the increase of single fathers in recent years, people have learned to accept the fact that fathers are capable of single parenting. There are a number of supporting organizations, such as Parenting Without Partners, which help to unlearn preconceived cultural beliefs that fathers are incapable of parenting (Risman and Park 1050). Once we come to the understanding that both genders are equally capable parents, it would be wise to choose the ones the children have a higher chance of emulating, the same gender parent.

The problems with social learning theory are similar to those mentioned earlier in reference to the Freudians. Social learning makes sense when there are two parents present. In such circumstances, the child may be more prone to choosing his or her gender as a role model. However, once that option is revoked, it leaves the child with only one parent to emulate. Even if this parent would be the opposite gender, it is safe to assume that the child would rather emulate his own parent rather than a complete stranger. Thus, a preference for same-sex parenting may make sense. However, a study done by Demuth and Brown compares children of male and female single parent homes, and indicates that there is no significant difference between children raised by like-gender or opposite-gender parent (Demuth and Brown 58-81). Another study by Peterson and Zills concludes that youths in same-sex households have lower rates of depression and hyperactivity than in opposite-sex households. However, Downey and Powell are quick to point out that this study is unreliable since the study was done based on a national sample of over 1,400 and only 28 of them lived with fathers (Downey and Powell 58). In summary, there is no conclusive evidence that same-sex parenting should be preferred.

The one thing that both social learning and Freudian theories have in common is that they are both concerned about whom the child will pick as a role model. Those in favor of maternal custody support their claim by using Freudian psychology to

maintain that the child is innately closer to his mother and would therefore be more likely to choose the mother as a role model. Those in favor of same-sex parenting claim that the child feels closer to his or her own gender, and would therefore be more likely to choose same-gender parent as a role model. Either way, both of these theories maintain the position that an initial close relationship or bond between child and mother should be a determining factor in custodial rights. However, since this is not always the case, custody should be granted to the parent whom the child is most likely to choose as his role model. It would seem fair to suggest that the parent who is more active in raising the child is the one the child sees as the role model, or at least the more influential role model. Therefore, it follows logically that the parent who has been more involved in raising the child is the one that should be granted custody. True, there may be other forces at work that influence to which parent the child feels closer, such as maternal love or gender, but these factors seem to pale in comparison to the power of the primary caretaker.

There are additional reasons for granting custody to the most involved parent. Risman and Park studied parents who have either fought for custody to spite their partner or were forced into custodial responsibilities due to a death in the family. Results show that children of such homes were far more likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Risman and Park 1059). It would be pretty fair to assume that in these cases, the custodial parent was not the primary caretaker, otherwise the parent would not fight for or be forced into custodial responsibilities. By granting custodial rights to the primary caretaker we can effectively eliminate the forced custodial scenario. It would also be logical to state that the primary caretaker will continue to give better care than the secondary caretaker, since the primary caretaker has made it a point to be involved and care for the child until now. True, the primary caretaker is generally the mother, but that does not mean we should exclude the father if he was the primary caretaker. It seems in the best interest of the child to award custody to the one parent that the child will emulate most, typically the primary caretaker, regardless of gender.

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The Zambian government came to this decision after consulting with the British Medical Association which disagrees with the Royal Society of Britain, the American Medical Association and several other prominent scientific and health organizations about the safety of GM foods (Plaut). This incident is an excellent illustration of how detrimental incomplete or inaccurate information on GM technology can be.

Agricultural Biotechnology: A Struggling Revolution

Solomon Bisangwa

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Mentor:: Professor Anthea Stavroulakis

Fifty-three years have passed since James Watson and Francis Crick, two researchers at Cambridge University in England, published their discovery of the structure of the DNA molecule in the journal Nature (Wright 1). The decades following this discovery brought forth great hope for the possibilities that this paper reported. It was not until 1973 when two researchers, building on the knowledge that bacteria are capable of transferring small pieces of their DNA between themselves, finally produced a major practical application for Watson and Crick's discovery (Schacter 11). The pair of scientists, Stanley Cohen and Herbert Boyer, used two new tools of biochemistry, restriction enzymes and DNA ligase (essentially the scissors and glue of DNA), to excise an RNA encoding gene from a toad and integrate it into the DNA of a bacterium. This transformed bacterium expressed the inserted gene and passed it on to future generations (Schacter 11-13). It was the first time that a gene had been artificially transferred from one organism to an organism of an entirely different species. The result of the experiment's success was the opening of new frontiers in biology. It did not take long for researchers to realize the potential as well as the possible dangers this technology could present.

Cohen and Boyer's results were presented at the 1973 Gordon Conference on Nucleic Acids. The attending scientists recognized the risks posed by such research and by the end of the conference concluded that a letter would be sent to the National Academy of Sciences requesting that this research be approached cautiously. Upon receiving this letter, the NAS requested that all scientists performing "transgenic" experiments put a halt to their work until further studies could be done to assess their safety (Shachter 15). For this purpose, a larger meeting was convened in February 1975 in Pacific Grove, California. The Asilomar conference was attended by 140 scientists and members of the media from around the globe. They spent four days debating ways in which to avoid the risks of recombinant DNA technology while not overly limiting themselves in the pursuit of more knowledge on the subject (Schacter 19).

This type of self-regulation did not emerge without its critics. These critics, who included members of the research community, felt that the researchers were acting out of self-interest. It was suggested that by setting up their own rules they were attempting to keep any government regulatory agency from impeding their progress (Schacter 19-20). Criticism was minor, however, because the technology was still in its infancy. Research at the time was focused mainly on the genetic modification of bacteria -- an abstract subject for the general public. The media was not interested in reporting stories which would not arouse strong emotions from its audience. It was the application of genetic engineering principles to modify agricultural products many

years later that catalyzed the debate's turn from a largely internal scuffle into a full-force public row.

Researchers discovered that a common soil bacterium, *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*, could be used to insert desired genes into plants. *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* normally infects wounded plants and inserts its own genes into the plant's genetic material. The infected plant cells express the bacterial genes which code for nutrient production to sustain the bacteria on the plant's surface. These particular bacterial genes, which are contained on an autonomously replicating piece of DNA called a plasmid, also cause uncontrolled cell growth which results in tumor formation at the infected site (Fedoroff 123-124). It was the bacterium's ability to insert its genes into plant cells that made it attractive to researchers. They hypothesized that if they could remove the tumor inducing (*Ti*) genes from the *A. tumefaciens* plasmid and replace them with genes from another organism that coded for a desired trait, the bacteria could then transfer its infectious plasmid into a plant cell. This cell would then incorporate and express the plasmid genes, including the one that was previously added.

The gene used for experimentation was one that coded for resistance to kanamycin in bacteria. Kanamycin is an antibiotic which kills bacteria and also inhibits growth in plants. The kanamycin resistant gene was introduced into the *A. tumefaciens*' *Ti* plasmid genome, which conferred its resistance to the antibiotic. The tumor inducing genes of the plasmid had previously been removed. The bacterium was then allowed to infect tobacco leaves and insert its plasmid DNA inside the plant cells. The leaves were cut into small pieces and placed to grow in a medium containing nutrients, the proper hormones and kanamycin. The kanamycin prevented any plant cells that had not adopted the resistance gene from growing. Those that had adopted the gene expressed it and grew into the first transgenic plants (Fedoroff 125-126).

The agricultural applications for this process were seemingly endless. Researchers could insert genes into crops that would make them grow larger or faster so a farmer could have a larger yield per growing season. They could potentially produce crops that would thrive despite harsh weather or other uninviting environmental conditions. Pests have been a major nemesis of farmers since the advent of agriculture. The main method of controlling pest damage was the use of chemical pesticides which were harmful to the environment, killed organisms which did not feed on the plants and sometimes were even harmful to the human handlers (Chrispeels 422). What if plants could be produced which were resistant to pest damage or were capable of making their own pesticides which would only affect organisms that ate the plant? Crops could be grown that stayed fresh longer or tasted better. The technology

could also aid in humanitarian efforts. Many people in developing countries do not receive adequate nutrition because they have no access to a varied diet. Perhaps a crop could be engineered that could substitute for these in the developing world.

All of these possibilities did not escape the imagination of the creative minds that were involved in transgenic research. Work began immediately and success was not far behind. Eventually, methods were designed to address all of these problems and the solutions to many agricultural ills were on the horizon.

It was nearly twenty years after the Asilomar conference that the Food and Drug Administration approved the sale of the first genetically modified produce. The FlavrSavr tomato was the first whole food to hit the public marketplace. The tomato had been genetically modified to have delayed ripening. Tomatoes are notoriously difficult to keep fresh through the nearly ten days it takes to get them from the field to the supermarket. The conventional method of delivering fresh fruit to the consumer involved picking tomatoes while still green and firm and then using ethylene gas to ripen them in transit (Mather 25). The problem with this process was that it often resulted in a fruit that was flavorless (Pringle 68). Genetic engineers for the Calgene Company, in the late 1980's, began working on a tomato that would stay fresh long enough to be picked after ripening and make it to the consumer without turning mushy. They managed to isolate the gene that coded for the enzyme polygalacturonase (PG), which played a large part in the fruit ripening process. They made a retrograde copy of this gene and inserted it into the tomato's genome. The reverse copy of the PG gene in effect neutralized the regular copy and inhibited production of PG in the cell. They had created a tomato that ripened slower than a conventional tomato. At first, the tomato at first appeared to be a success. It stayed fresh for three weeks after being picked and was in high demand by grocers. Calgene, however, was inexperienced in marketing and was unable to keep up with the demand. The next year, the company went bankrupt and was acquired by Monsanto (Pringle 77). The FlavrSavr tomato was big news but only to those involved in the farming, processing and sale of tomatoes. It did not receive much publicity out of those circles.

The most publicized accomplishment of genetic engineering to date was researchers Ingo Potrykus and Peter Beyer's invention of Golden Rice in 1999. Potrykus and Beyer had been collaborating since 1993 to genetically engineer a type of rice that would produce beta-carotene, a precursor for vitamin A (Christensen, 2). Vitamin A deficiency is one of the most common vitamin deficiencies in the developing world. Approximately 1 million children die each year from weakened immune systems related to vitamin A deficiency and another 350,000 go blind (Pringle 19). To many of

these children, rice is the main source of nutrition, but rice contains no vitamin A. Dr. Ingo Potrykus, a professor for the Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland, had been researching how to modify the genes of staple grain crops such as rice for the benefit of underdeveloped nations. At the same time Professor Peter Beyer of the Freiburg Botanical Gardens in Germany was researching the cellular metabolic processes involved in creating beta-carotene in daffodils; he wanted to know if the genes encoding the enzymes involved could be transferred into and expressed by rice crops. Potrykus and Beyer met at a 1992 Rockefeller Foundation seminar in New York for experts on beta-carotene and the two scientists began combining their efforts (Pringle 30). After six years of struggling with funding and the methods for getting the three genes necessary for beta-carotene synthesis into the rice, the researchers finally developed rice that produced beta-carotene (Christensen 2-3). They published their success in the journal *Science*. It caught the attention of the media, which made it headline news around the world.

Critics of the experiments such as the international environmental activism group Greenpeace charged that the Golden Rice was just a ploy to improve the image of the agbiotech (agricultural biotech) industry. They pointed out that given the average serving of rice available to a person in a developing country, golden rice would only supply 25% of the daily recommended allowance of vitamin A. Researchers were aware of this and acknowledged that the product was not yet capable of alleviating vitamin A deficiency (Pringle 27). By 2005, Swiss agribusiness giant Syngenta developed "Golden Rice 2," which contained 23 times the amount of beta-carotene in each grain than the previous version. This, however, did not put to rest the protests (Coghlan).

Each accomplishment in biotechnology, not just Golden Rice, was accompanied by sometimes misleading campaigns by opponents of biotechnology. These campaigns were intended to instill fear in the minds of consumers and discredit the entire field altogether. Although there were many legitimate concerns raised by critics of biotech, the bulk of the objections were based on unsupported speculation and pseudoscience. Protesters pushed and still push today for overly oppressive governmental regulation or more drastically, a ban on all genetically modified agricultural products. Some of the more radical groups even resort to vandalizing experiments that are conducted to test the safety of the foods (Pringle 31).

The arguments for objection to genetic engineering research are varied and numerous. A large number of people are wholly opposed to the genetic manipulation of food products because they deem it to be "unnatural." This reveals a misunderstanding of how many of the crops that have become dietary staple items came into being. For

example, crops such as corn, ruby red grapefruit and modern wheat would not exist were it not for human intervention. Corn would not be able to reproduce without the aid of a farmer to sow its seeds. The ancestor of corn, teosinte, has loose seeds enclosed in a hard outer casing. The looseness of the seeds aids in their dispersal to different growing locations and the tough outer casing serves to protect the seed. Neither of these qualities made the plant easy to farm or eat. Ancient farmers of the Americas selectively bred plants that had desired characteristics such as soft fruit (kernels) which were held tightly to the plants body and an outer husk enclosing the fruits. The result of the thousands of years of selection resulted in the corn (maize) we have today (Campbell 797). Modern wheat underwent much of the same artificial selection (Fedoroff 28-29). Red grapefruit was created by exposing the cells of an ordinary grapefruit to radiation which caused genetic mutations. Most of the crops in the human food supply have been under the pressure of artificial selection or direct manipulation to make them fit for cultivation and human consumption.

Another explanation for the unreasonable aversion many people have to genetically modified food stems largely from a misunderstanding of the science behind it. This situation is not helped by opponents of biotech, who have spread misinformation and cite poorly executed studies for their evidence. One such case involved a study performed by Arpad Pusztai, a researcher in Scotland who was enlisted to test the safety of a potato that had been genetically modified to produce a pesticide (Fedoroff 177). A gene from the snowdrop flower which codes for an enzyme called *galanthus nivalis agglutinin* (GNA) was inserted into potato cells which grew into full plants. The transgenic potato plants expressed the gene and produced GNA in their cells. GNA is toxic to many of the insects that attempt to feed on the snowdrop flower but is not toxic to humans or most other organisms. Because the GNA was now being produced in a potato, a crop which had never expressed it before, researchers felt it was prudent to make sure this version of GNA posed no risk to humans (179). Pusztai used rats as the subjects of the experiment. Over a period of three months he fed a control group of mice normal potatoes laced with GNA; to the experimental group he fed the transgenic potatoes which produced their own GNA. At the end of experiment Pusztai discovered that the organs of the experimental rats weighed less than the organs of the control group rats (Fedoroff 181).

Pusztai revealed the unsettling results of his study on a British television program in August of 1998. His findings drew worldwide attention and cast a negative light on the field of biotechnology (Fedoroff 177). The head of the Rowett Institute, which employed Pusztai, felt it was necessary to investigate the methods used for the experiment. They were criticized as inadequate and Arpad Pusztai was forced into

retirement. Pusztai's supporters accused the Rowett Institute of persecuting him for revealing results that displeased them (Federoff 177-178). An additional review of Pusztai's experimentation was conducted by the Royal Society, an exclusive group of British scientists (Federoff 178). They also found that Pusztai's conclusions were unsupported by his data and that his experiments were deeply flawed. They pointed out that a diet of raw potatoes, which was what Pusztai was feeding the rats, is not healthy for them because they are low in protein. This likely contributed to their low weight (Pringle 112-113). This did not dissuade biotechnology's detractors including Greenpeace, which is often on the forefront of genetic engineering opposition (Pringle 113).

The evidence was not of any importance to Greenpeace and other GM opponents. Their only concern seems to be focused on promoting an anti-scientific agenda by spreading fear through exaggeration. Their efforts were successful. Mistrust of transgenic agriculture was widespread throughout the world, especially in Europe. It was further amplified by Prince Charles of England who is quoted as saying, "I personally have no wish to eat anything produced by genetic modification, nor do I knowingly offer this sort of produce to my family or guests" (Pringle, 117).

Another case that drew public attention and helped to further the negative image of the biotechnology industry bore many similarities to the Pusztai case. It involved a transgenic crop that was engineered to express a gene encoding a pesticide. In this case it was corn that was manipulated, but the transgene did not come from another plant as in the Pusztai snowdrop. The gene came from *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a bacterium that was found to kill pests by producing spores that dissolve the intestinal tissue of insects that ingest them (Alcama 250). *Bacillus thuringiensis* or *Bt* had been in use as a spray-on insecticide since the early 1900's and drew interest as a possible genetic donor for creating a pest resistant plant (250). By the early 1990's researchers had successfully engineered a cotton plant that could produce the *Bt* toxin in its cells. The crop was incredibly resistant to pest damage and by 1996 three million acres of *Bt* crops including corn, cotton, potatoes and others were planted in the United States (251).

As with any pesticide producing crop, or any pesticide for that matter, there were concerns that there could be non-target organisms harmed by the toxins. Professor J. Losey, an entomologist at Cornell University, devised a study in which he would assess the toxicity of *Bt* corn pollen on Monarch butterfly larvae (Chrispeels 530). Monarch larvae normally feed on milkweed leaves which are occasionally located close enough to corn fields to come into contact with corn pollen. Professor Losey wanted to

test if pollen from transgenic *Bt* was toxic to Monarch larvae who might eat it off milkweed leaves. In his experiment, he fed one group of larvae milkweed leaves dusted with *Bt* corn pollen, another group was fed leaves dusted with non-*Bt* corn pollen and a third group was fed leaves that were not dusted with any pollen. At the end of the four-day experiment, Professor Losey found that over 40% of the larvae that were fed the milkweed leaves coated with *Bt* corn pollen had died and the group's surviving larvae were half the weight of the larvae from the control groups (Pringle 122-123).

Professor Losey published the results of his study in the prestigious international scientific journal *Nature* (Pringle 122). The media response was immense. This news was especially upsetting to the public because, unlike the Pusztai experiment in which it was "vile" rodents that were alleged to be harmed by products of genetic engineering, in this case the victim was the "delicate" and "majestic" Monarch butterfly, however, in its larval form (Pringle 121). Opponents of genetic engineering, including Greenpeace, exploited the gut reaction of the public to garner support for a push to ban genetic engineering. Proponents of the technology pointed out that this study did not reveal any novel information. It was already known that *Bt* toxin would be poisonous to butterflies and many other insects (Fedoroff 205). It was an insecticide after all. The reason for creating a plant that produces its own toxin was that only insects that would eat the crop would be affected. Monarch larvae, however, do not feed on corn plants. The only way that they would come into contact with *Bt* corn pollen was if their milkweed plant was bordering on or inside a corn field. Moreover, a study by the National Academy of Sciences found that most corn pollen is quite heavy and remains inside the corn field (Fedoroff 207). Once again the evidence did little to quell the furor stirred by biotech detractors armed with preliminary and largely irrelevant evidence.

The agricultural biotechnology industry has suffered severe damage from unreasonable opposition which calls for a halt on all genetic engineering research. They choose to close their eyes to the immense promise this field holds and instead focus on the negligible risks it poses. They call the products of genetic engineering "frankenfood" and spread propaganda portraying outlandish creatures, such as a fish-strawberry hybrid, supposedly in the works (Chrispeels 533). They have been so successful in their misinformation campaigns that it could prove to be quite harmful to developing nations. In 2002, the government of Zambia, in which 2.4 million people faced starvation, rejected food aid from the World Food Program because it contained U.S. corn that may have included GM varieties (Coghlan). The president of Zambia, Levy Mwanawasa, even went so far as to call the food "poison" (Plaut). The Zambian government came to this decision after consulting with the British Medical Association which disagrees with the Royal Society of Britain, the American Medical Association

and several other prominent scientific and health organizations about the safety of GM foods (Plaut). This incident is an excellent illustration of how detrimental incomplete or inaccurate information on GM technology can be. Hopefully, the future will bring terrific accomplishments in genetic engineering that can counter the inflated negative press, which has tarnished this field, and perhaps restore its credibility as a technology that could change the world for the better.

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Some children are already living with same-sex couples in foster homes, with the foster parents willing to adopt them but not able to do so. This can cause many legal issues for these foster parents such as not having the right to authorize medical attention, or being able to provide medical insurance from their employers.

Adoption by Same-Sex Couples Should Be Encouraged

Rachel Revzin

English 24

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Mentor: Professor Leslie Fintz

It is the year 2006 and the concept of the traditional family has become a vague and distant memory. Some might even question its true existence in the first place. Gay adoption has been an ongoing controversial issue in the U.S. Should same-sex couples be allowed to adopt children in order to start families? As long as there is the human instinct to procreate so as to produce unwanted children and a large number of parentless children, adoption is ethically and morally a right that a capable adult should have, regardless of sexual orientation.

Social scientists and psychologists are among the impressive list of experts who condone and encourage gay adoption rights. Their studies and observations support the thesis there are no specific differences related to gay and lesbian couples which devalue their capabilities as good parents. Other prestigious institutions that fight for and condone gay adoption are the American Bar Association, The American Psychological Association, The American Academy of Pediatrics, The National Association of Social Workers, and the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. All of these institutions harbor more than enough worldly intelligence to draw a credible and sound conclusion. Each has spoken out about the issue and supports the idea. It is evident and even commonsensical that love and support are what children need to flourish, and these are precisely what any adoptive parents seek to provide upon entry into an adoption agency. This is so obvious, that one wonders how this simple fact can be overlooked by anyone. The children of healthy and loving same-sex couples turn out the same way as any other healthy couple's children would. Opposing arguments present information about misguided or mistreated children living with same-sex parents, however, any indicators of troubled children are related to the same dysfunctions that occur in families with heterosexual parents as well.

Despite the opposition, there are families popping up all over the U.S. with same-sex parents as well as other types of alternative families. Their successful efforts to achieve happy, healthy family lives are a demonstration of their capabilities. There is a growing need for willing and able parents to provide homes for the increasing number of children in foster homes with little or no chance for adoption by anyone else. This is just one of the important reasons why adoption by same sex couples should be more widely encouraged.

There has been a plentitude of research over the years on same-sex adoption, including monitoring children from an early age, which has led researchers to conclude that gay and lesbian parents are just as capable of raising happy and stable children as are heterosexual parents. In a piece called "Sexuality Not Relevant to the Adoption

Process," from *The Daily Campus*, a Connecticut University Press publication, The American Psychological Association's official statement is quoted as saying, "Children who are raised by gays and lesbians turn out no different than their counterparts who are raised by straight parents." Furthermore some psychologists suggest that gay and lesbian parents may offer some advantages over straight parents because gays have to work harder to be better parents or to be accepted as good parents in our society. In the straight community, adoption is not a first choice, and having a child is not always planned either. For the gay community, adoption is an achievement of a goal. "In the lesbian and gay community, parents are a self-selecting group whose motivation for parenthood is high" (Patterson quoted. in Gilgoff), says Charlotte Patterson, a psychologist and researcher at the University of Virginia. She was quoted in *The Rise of the Gay Family*, by Dan Gilgoff who is a reporter for *U.S. News and World Report*. Psychological examination of these families have shown no differences between the way gay and lesbian parents care for and treat their children and the treatment of children by straight parents that can be interpreted as damaging.

Sociologists in the U.S. have been researching the issue as well. Judith Stacey, a professor of sociology, gender, and sexuality at New York University, as well s other researchers, agree with the advantage gay and lesbian couples may have over some straight parents, as Gilgoff reports. It has also been confirmed by social science research that, "experience and common sense have already demonstrated that a person's sexual orientation has no bearing on his or her capacity to be a good parent" (Jeffrey G. Gibson). Gibson is a trial lawyer who served for six years on the American Bar Association's Committee on the rights of lesbians and gay men.

One study shows that children of same-sex couples are "less likely to exhibit gender-stereotyped behavior" (Gilgoff). Ellen Perrin, a professor of pediatrics at the Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts-New England Medical Center, responds to this by saying, "If we could break down some of society's gender stereotypes, that would be a good thing" (Perrin quoted. in Gilgoff). The American Academy Of Pediatrics also reportedly advocates gay adoption and supports the idea that gays and lesbians may have some advantage over straight parents. The people who are being so brave and fighting for legalization of gay and lesbian adoption are setting a precedent for an uncommon practice and changing concept of what is considered the "ideal family"; giving men and women an equal opportunity to exhibit good parenting through love and care rather than the stereotype that what a child needs is one male and one female parent present.

The orphan epidemic is a critical concern. Children are remaining in foster care

unnecessarily long and the number of children being put up for adoption is increasing. Though it may be in the best interest of the child to be adopted by able and willing gay and lesbian couples, conservative organizations continue to promote legislation that would prohibit prospective same-sex parents from being eligible to adopt children. Some children are already living with same-sex couples in foster homes, with the foster parents willing to adopt them but not able to do so. This can cause many legal issues for these foster parents such as not having the right to authorize medical attention, or being able to provide medical insurance from their employers. It can be traumatic for the children that have been living with their foster parents for years and who recognize them as their loving parents if their moms or dads have no legal parental rights; they have to live with the fear that they could be taken away from their parents at any time. The same is true for second parents, for example the partner of the birth mother. If the birth mother dies, the second parent has no legal rights without a legally recognized parental relationship. It would be devastating for a child whose birth mother died to be taken away from his or her second mother in the wake of the trauma. A big plus for gay and lesbian parenting is that many couples are willing to adopt children with disabilities. With this kind of dedication, sacrifice and kind heartedness, it is hard to understand why it is illegal for them to adopt. There is no reason for this prejudice. It is only worsening the conditions and fate of these parentless children that are stuck in limbo, especially for minority, disadvantaged, sick, or older kids that are often not considered by heterosexual couples and are statistically more accepted into same-sex couple families.

In Florida there are 3,544 foster children eligible for adoption. Reports indicate that approximately 80 percent currently are in the process of completing adoption proceedings. This leaves 709 children still in need of permanent housing. This is just one state compared to tens of thousands of disadvantaged children around the U.S. embroiled in the foster care system. Florida has the most restrictive ban on gay adoption in the U.S. The ban has been in effect since 1977. Florida bans homosexuals from any possibilities of adopting, but allows them to be foster parents. This is both contradictory and hypocritical.

Florida's Senator Nan Rich is sponsoring a bill which would allow a judge to confer a gay adoption if three things are in order: (1) the child must already be living with the person who wants to adopt him or her, (2) the child has to acknowledge that person as his or her parent, and (3) the allowing of the adoption is in the best interest of the child's needs. Instead of letting the child stay in a home only temporarily, this gives him or her more stability. The American Bar Association has been working towards the same goal for many years. The ABA has put forth its efforts to have these laws

implemented that will increase the permanent placement of children in stable homes and eliminate Florida's ban.

On February 14, 2006, a Florida Senate committee was not convinced and the bill was defeated. Steve Bousquet wrote a piece for the *St. Petersburg Times* in Florida called "Bill to Let Gays Adopt Kids Hits Dead End Fast." In it he describes a witness on that day by the name of Frank Alexander. Frank told senators about his situation. He was born with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Two gay men were fostering him. Having their support has given him some stability, and spared him "a life of despair and being shunted around" (Alexander quoted in Bousquet).

On May 17, 2004, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts became the first state to offer marriage licenses to same-sex couples. In "Sexuality Not Relevant to the Adoption Process," the Connecticut University press writes: "Currently only nine states and the District of Columbia have allowed gay and lesbian couples to adopt children" (*The Daily Campus*). Arkansas prohibits gay foster parenting. Two other states that prohibit gay adoption are Mississippi and Utah. Mississippi law allows adoption by gay singles but not by gay couples. Utah law states that unmarried couples are not allowed to adopt. Gays are legally not allowed to get married, so that automatically rules them out as prospective adopters.

The problems faced by children of same-sex couples come in the form of bigotry and discrimination. Friction, scorn, and insensitivity come from other family members, classmates, and unfair laws. There is discrimination against Jews and Blacks, too. Does that mean everyone should try to be whiter and convert to Christianity? It is every parent's responsibility to teach tolerance of all people and to set an example themselves. When women had no rights, they were also victims of prejudice. When people realized that they are capable of making decisions on their own, they earned the rights they deserved and we have now grown accustomed to it. The more common adoption becomes the more accepted and encouraged it will be. As for the future generation, if children experience gay people as parents first hand, they will be less likely to be prejudiced against others who do not fit into the "ideal" standard.

Some conservative organizations publicize that children of same-sex couples "are more likely to be molested by homosexual parents, that they will grow up to become homosexual, and that they are more likely to develop psychological problems" (*The Daily Campus*). Yet the American Psychological Association and the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry both state that there are no studies that show any significant differences between children raised by gay, lesbian, or straight couples. There are routine examinations for all prospective parents that check for

mental stability. They go through a series of psychological examinations to determine whether they are fit to be parents before any consideration for adoption occurs, which is a good practice for all people who wish to adopt. Other arguments are about children experiencing their same-sex parents arguing or separating. The divorce rate is about 50 percent in this country and those statistics relate to straight couples since same-sex couples are not allowed to marry. This means in half of the families in the U.S. children experience their straight parents arguing and divorcing. These issues are faced regardless of sexual orientation.

Despite the laws and discrimination, 60 percent of agencies actually are willing to work with same-sex couples and accept applications from them. Two in five agencies in the country have knowingly placed children in same-sex couple families. The agencies most likely to do so are public, secular private, ones focusing on special needs, international agencies, and Jewish or Lutheran affiliated agencies. The National Association of Social Workers has proclaimed that gays and lesbians are competent as parents and is working towards undoing bans and putting an end to discrimination as is the American Bar Association. There is ample evidence and enough suffering children. It is time that the government stepped in and implemented regulations for all agencies and policies. They need to put an end to the suffering; the sooner this happens the easier it will be on the children and the less discrimination they will incur.

The fact is that families with gay and lesbian parents are out there and they are everywhere. A book called *Love Makes a Family: Portraits of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Parents and Their Families*, edited by Peggy Gillespie, uses as an example the Serkin-Poole family. It consists of Michael Serkin-Poole and David Serkin-Poole, the two dads, and their three adopted children, Jason, Danielle, and Gene. All three of them are “special needs” kids. Michael and David made the conscious decision to adopt them because they know how many of these kids are out there who are not getting adopted or getting the attention they need. Their son Jason didn’t speak at all when they first met him. He was deemed with having a really low IQ. This was not the case. Michael tried using sign language with him and right away he caught on. Michael states, “Jason was like a sponge just waiting to learn. Nobody had ever known before how Jason felt. Nobody had ever known if he was mad or upset or had questions. It must have been incredibly frustrating for him” (Michael Serkin-Poole quoted in Gillespie, 208). Now Jason has a family and people who care about him and with whom he can communicate.

Gina Bellafante covers a story for *The New York Times* headlined “Two Fathers, with One Happy to Stay at Home,” in which she introduces Mr. McConnell and Dr.

Atmore, who together adopted their son Ben as an infant. Mr. McConnell left his job as a corporate litigator at a prestigious law firm in order to stay home with their son, while his partner Dr. Bill Atmore, an anesthesiologist, works fulltime. A demographer named Gary Gates concluded that “the percentage of men who stay home is significantly smaller among married heterosexual couples” (Gates quoted in Bellafante). Gay fathers are aware of the hardships and are more willing to face them. This particular family is a perfect example of that.

Gay and lesbian parents have demonstrated more mentally stable and healthy children and better parent/child relationships. There are always myths such as gay parents producing gay kids, which spawn out of ignorance. It is absurd to even think this, considering that most gay people came from straight parents. Tolerance must be taught at home and in schools in the same way that resisting drugs and violence are taught. Bigotry is a shameful and outdated bad habit. Gay parents are more accepting of their children and allow them to explore who they are in different ways without pressure or judgment because they know what it's like to be judged. They teach their children to love people for who they are and not who they love. This is why same-sex parents have an advantage over many heterosexual parents. They are a step ahead in social developmental terms because they are beyond hate and first impression discrimination. They are also beyond gender stereotypes. They want to be respected and recognized as people with the same love for their partners and children as everyone else. Most importantly, they need to have the same rights. It is time to rise up and see how many gays and lesbians contribute to society in a positive way. They provide society with doctors, lawyers, entertainers, designers, and chefs. If gays and lesbians are capable of taking on any of these roles in society, how could it be that they are incapable of making great parents as well? The old and tired laws based on bigotry and myths should be retired and all the studies and physical evidence should be seriously examined and taken into account. Laws have intentionally created parentless children. Laws also shape how people think. If it were legal for same-sex couple to adopt, people would get used to it and the discrimination would die down, making it easier for the children of same-sex couples to co-exist with other children at school. It would make people generally more comfortable with each other. Trying to fit into to an outmoded standard of what is believed to be considered normal is abnormal, uncomfortable, and counterproductive toward human development. The idea of the traditional family has obviously changed; love and support are the most important determinants of a happy, healthy, and “normal” family. All of the studies and observations reported here form primary reasons for why adoption by same-sex couples should be accepted in society and remain as the new standard.

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Painted with such awe-inspiring dedication, Montepulciano successfully communicates the meekness, greatness and spiritual nature of the piece simultaneously and thereby captures a glimpse of heaven. Whilst in heaven serenity, majesty, and melodic aura greet the spectator unwillingly drawn in to this otherwise flat (lacking special depth) painting. The figures share a commonly passionate countenance that beseech your friendship and instigates a mental dialogue.

Montepulciano's Madonna of Humility

Madonna and Child with Angels

1420 Pietro di Montepulciano da Montepulciano

(Italian, Marchigian, active first quarter of 15th century)

Tempera on wood, gold ground

Also called Montepulciano's's

Madonna of Humility

Raquel Flecha

Art 34

Spring 2006

Mentor: Professor Caterina Pierre

I chose *Madonna and Child with Angels* by Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano because of my interest in Renaissance art. I particularly like works of religious value such as the Madonna and child, the Annunciation and the Passion of Christ, and all of the popular religious themes that were beautifully conveyed throughout the Renaissance era. The Madonna by Montepulciano appears to be sincere and graceful as she stares down at her child, who also has the appearance of softness and purity. Flanking them are two pairs of angels. Elegant and poised, they look straight into the eyes of the viewer. There is an overall feeling of calmness and a peculiar feminine quality about the piece that pulled me into the world in which they were created and made me question the artist's intentions. What kind of life did he live? What was his background and with whom did he study under? Did all of his pieces have this same effect? Was he interested in portraying a certain vision of the Madonna and child? All of these questions influenced my choice of the piece. Although I have now completed my research in the library, I intend to study more of his work as well as the works of other artists from his region and time period, because I would love to learn more about religious works as a whole and the symbolism that often accompanies them. I am especially intrigued by the glorification of the Virgin Mary as a central figure in the Roman Catholic Church and how it developed through art during this period.

The Madonna and Child with Angels struck me primarily because of the beautiful patterning on the gown and drapery that lay beneath the Madonna, which remind me of the organic shapes and patterns in Islamic art. Her cloak, painted in a deep violet, is covered with what seems to be a diamond shaped flower in delicate gold strokes with a crimson center. Her body is somewhat flat because of the lack of drapery folds and the light and dark that would indicate mass. I believe Montepulciano does this intentionally to display the intricate patterning, and to pull the eye in immediately to the focal point, the Madonna and child. The figures are done in tempera, a paint mixture made of egg yolk and pigment, and are all placed on a gold ground. Aside from this intensely dark and patterned center, the painting is very warm, using hues of gold, crimson, and pinks with touches of violet. The frame is original and intact and is also golden and lined with hand-painted flowers.

Found throughout the painting are beautifully hand painted inscriptions in Latin, beginning at her halo and reaching the bottom of the frame. Her halo, or nimbus, a circle of radiating light signifying holiness, reads AVE GRATIA PLENA D[OMIN]US TECU[M] – (Hail, you who are full of grace. The Lord is with you), from Luke 1:28 (And the angel came in to her, and said, Hail, you that are highly favored, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women); on her gown, ACCIPE CORONAM –

(Receive [Thy] Crown; on the border of her mantle on the outer garment, MARIA VIRGO SPONSA CRI[ISTI] (Virgin Mary bride of Christ); on the neck of her dress, REGINA C[O]ELI (Queen of heaven); on the edges of her sleeves, AVE MARIA (Hail Mary); and on the base of the frame, PETRUS DOMINICI. DEMONTE PULITIANO PINSIT M CCCC XX (Peter Dominic of Montepulciano painted this 1420).

After appreciating the beautiful floral patterns, I focused in on the Christ child, also with a halo and what seems to be a rosary or prayer necklace around his neck. To me, the baby Jesus bears some resemblance to the Byzantine style in that there is still an elongated feel to the body, and the lack of the fleshy chubbiness of an actual infant, although there are attempts to achieve this with the exaggerated folds of the skin. Despite this lack of proportion the baby appears as such, a baby, and not like the little men usually seated on the laps of the Madonna portrayals of late Byzantium. His face is exquisitely done in a very fragile and feminine way, showing a sort of disinterest as he rests, with his arm falling much as an innocent baby would, unaware of the world around him. This again is different from early images of baby Jesus where he is portrayed as stiffly seated, upright and mature, seemingly aware of the divine calling.

The Madonna holds her baby with one hand and caresses him with the other, gazing passionately at him. This speaks greatly of Montepulciano's ability to capture intense emotion. Her face is sweet and loving, just as one expects a mother should be.

On either side of the central figures are sets of angels. The outer two hold an instrument, a lyre (or harp) and a lute, (a small pear shaped guitar). Pretty shades of pink and blue clothe the angelic musicians, who are nicely draped, giving a greater sense of the body that is absent in the Madonna. The two inner angels stand with arms crossed in pink dresses and gold cloaks. The use of chiaroscuro, an illusion of dimension using light and dark shades of color, is cleverly done and reminiscent of classical times, as is the hair, done up in soft curls. Montepulciano gives these angels a very life-like feel as they stand solidly and grounded with rosy cheeks in contrast to Giotto's *Lamentation* fresco (a painting technique that uses wet paint on wet plaster to form a permanent mural on a wall or surface) at the Arena Chapel in Padua, where the angels appropriately float in the sky.

So who was the artist of the *Madonna and Child with Angels*? He was a central Italian artist named Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano also known as Pietro da Recanati. His primary name comes from his city of origin and the latter was named for a polyptych (an altarpiece made up of more than three sections) executed in the city of Recanati signed and dated 1422, approximately the time of his Madonna of Humility. Recanati and Montepulciano, both small towns located in the Marches, an entire region that spanned the central part of renaissance Italy, are fairly unknown areas, although

Recanati is now recognized as the home of one of Italy's greatest poets, Giacomo Leopardi, and of the painter Lorenzo Lotto (Vertova, 428).

Known for working in the International Gothic Style which is a fusion of Italian and Northern European art, it is speculated that Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano was influenced greatly by a prominent artist of the time, Gentile da Fabriano, from the transitional early fifteenth century. An article written for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where this artwork hangs, states this on Montepulciano's work, "...it embodies rather the spirit of a painter of the Umbrian country, a painter who has known the work on Gentile da Fabriano, whom one might call the father of Italian genre" (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 1908, 118).

Gentile da Fabriano was born in Umbria, also in the Marches, was well traveled and subsequently left his mark in many of the "minor cities" of Italy, rather than the great cultural centers of Florence and Siena. Gentile da Fabriano contributed greatly to the training of many up and coming painters, as well as to the spread of the Late Gothic or International Gothic Style, a merging of ideas from all over Europe. Specifically these artists sought the highly decorative motifs of the Gothic era, discerning the scientific use of perspective and the canons of proportions, achieving thin, flat and elegant figures with a remarkable sense of realism, characteristic of Northern European art, in their depiction of detail (Zuffi, 104). This style is seen in both Fabriano's and Montepulciano's works of the Madonna and child where both are centered on the picture plane, surrounded by delicate floral patterns. Their violet cloaks are trimmed in gold inscriptions and the lack of body is balanced skillfully with the careful detail of the faces, showing much expression and energy despite the static poses and absence of spatial depth.

These humble depictions of the Virgin Mother and child are two of many similar works throughout Europe during the trecento and quattrocento. Though very popular in Italy and thought to be of Sienese origin (Meiss, 437), this class of meek Madonna reached Flanders, Germany, Spain and France. The French version is beautifully painted in a Book of Hours, an illuminated manuscript (handwritten and painted in ink on vellum) used as a daily prayer book (Meiss, 435)

This period of the Cult of the Madonna is identified by her ignoble position in real life, making her a relatable, affectionate woman and mother embracing and almost always gazing at her child in what is known as *virgo lactens* (Reiss, 435). The pictorial illustration of the similarly popular "Madonna Enthroned" is in stark contrast to this modest depiction. As seen, for example, in Cimabue's *Madonna Enthroned with Child and Eight Angels*, the Virgin Mary is portrayed as a royal figure who sits upon her throne, staring at the viewer. There is a heightened sense of disconnection of *maria lactens* between the mother and child that is not present in the former (Meiss, 435). According

to *The Art Bulletin* columnist Millard Meiss, “She is no longer the Madonna of Humility, but a remote and celestial apparition” (Meiss, 448).

This interesting contrast in iconographies is a direct reflection of The Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages. The role that the Mother plays in the Passion of the Christ, the final week of Jesus’ incarnation leading to his crucifixion, is of particular importance to her status in The Church. Many believed that Mary shared in the physical suffering of Christ, the innate maternal suffering one bears with their child, and was the provider of the sacrifice. By giving life, she was exalted much as a queen and viewed as a direct human link in which one could relate to and be connected with God. This maternal or “bodily” connection between the mother and son, or more specifically a tangible or material channel to God, gave rise to the “Mary Cult,” a following of devout Christians, especially women, whose central spiritual figure was the Virgin Mother. This also corroborated the use of relics, icons and symbols in search of divinity (Ellington, 229). The popular fourteenth-century saint, Bridget of Sweden (1301-73) said that Christ had spoken to her in a vision:

“And therefore I can well say that *my mother and I* have saved Man as it were with *one heart*, I by suffering in my heart and flesh, she in the sorrow and love of the heart.’ This is the traditional interpretation of Mary’s compassion....” (Ellington, 237).

Other theologians recount Mary’s grief “...as so unified...that she actually became one with Jesus on the cross” (Ellington, 238).

Though his artwork hangs amongst many a famous name in one of the principle museums of the world, not much is known about the artist behind the *Madonna and Child with Angels*. Despite the initial static feeling of the work, you can soon appreciate the moving celestial joy of the angels as they play their instruments in soothing harmony. The perfect backdrop for a fervent Mary, who through her eyes exudes a heightened feeling of genuine agape, selfless and unconditional love associated with the love of Christ, and the child whose purity and innocence radiate through his soft rosy face. Capturing all of these sentiments precisely, Montepulciano chooses an overall warm palette and includes inscriptions throughout to reemphasize the dichotomy between the humble/relatable and the godlike status of the protagonist.

Painted with such awe-inspiring dedication, Montepulciano successfully communicates the meekness, greatness and spiritual nature of the piece simultaneously and thereby captures a glimpse of heaven. Whilst in heaven serenity, majesty, and melodic aura greet the spectator unwillingly drawn in to this otherwise flat (lacking special depth) painting. The figures share a commonly passionate countenance that beseech your friendship and instigates a mental dialogue. Curious of the intriguing and

delicate power, you begin to question the religious significance, the period style, and the remarkable painter with a Giottoesque ability towards facial expression and emotion.

After failing to find a biography on the life of Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano, I refocused my attention towards the highly influential styles of the trecento and early quattrocento. Called the International Gothic Style and co-existing with the early Renaissance, this style was a mix of the decorative Gothic period and the exquisite detail of the Renaissance. Equally important to my research was the religious overtone of the work. Exploring the origins and dominance of Madonna and child in history I learned of a specific sect of Virgins called the "Madonna of Humility". The Marian representations of this period are identified by their lowly position on the floor and made way for the Madonna Cult, still thriving today in many countries. Montepulciano's interest and career in this style made him a direct contributor to the rising worship of Mary during this time, thus influencing art history tremendously.

Montepulciano, born in the Marches on an unknown date, is today little known, probably due to his lack of travel, which was of absolute necessity in the art field of Renaissance Italy. Today this can be compared to the exposure modern artists have via art exhibits and the increasingly popular internet.

Some things that I had hoped to have learned about in my research on Montepulciano were his upbringing, schooling, family, and career as an artist. This information would have given me a broader understanding of him as a person and artist. Because of his contribution to keeping that part of art history alive, he is owed a more notable place in literature. Perhaps a book of artists from the central region of early Italy, and even possibly a published work that describes in depth all of his known works today and the histories of these works, is necessary.

Reinforcing my research on Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano is my art history course which has allowed me to not only understand the history of art, more specifically that of the Italian Renaissance, but the conventions and devices used by these artists that defined them as period artists and carried them to new places and styles in art. This study also helped me learn again in collaboration with my course study that art history is a wonderful roller-coaster of ups and downs as it associates with the culture and ruling faction of the time. It is also a history of repetition where art, intentionally or not, borrows from past times ultimately finding its way to the very beginning. Art is full of abstractions that capture true organic forms and expression!

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One must wonder what vision the current administration is trying to recapture with abstinence-only until marriage health education. It must be a simpler time they are trying to recapture, a time when women did not have the vote or a voice about their state of chronic pregnancy, as Margaret Sanger so succinctly put it.

Abstinence-Only Health Education: The President's New Clothes

John Fitzgerald

English 24

Spring 2006

Mentor: Professor Leslie Fintz

What does every student deserve from a public school in America? The obvious answer is an education, or at the very least, a basic knowledge of the subjects taught that will enable him or her to make informed decisions about the future, a future where it is within his or her right to enjoy the blessings of liberty. Much is heard about the rights of the unborn child, but the adolescent does not really have rights. His or her rights are protected by parents, and many of these parents have voiced the opinion that the public school system is failing their children. Legislation holding schools to a higher accountability has been enacted. Sadly, without a codified student bill of rights decided upon in each school district by administrators, teachers, and parents, there is not much hope for real change. Professor Michael Apple says, education “serves as a proxy as well for larger battles over what our institutions should do, who they should serve, and who makes these decisions... Thus education is both cause and effect, determining and determined” (quoted in Lugg 182). It is unfortunate that health education is the arena in which the current administration has chosen to wage its first battle in the war on contraceptive practices, established as within the rights of every American. The “abstinence-only until marriage” health education, as it is currently structured, poses a threat to the health and welfare of the adolescents it is in place to inform and protect. Our children deserve better.

As Christian fundamentalists organize and become the major political force in the U.S., they work tirelessly to defeat “welfarism.” This should be accomplished by “Tithe[ing] fully organizations that will remove from government those tasks that are more properly addressed by religious and private organizations” (Falwell 6). But this is inappropriately applied in the case in abstinence-only health education. The latter was initiated in 1981 through the Adolescent Family Life Act [AFLA], which was established by Congress to promote “prudent approaches” and “self-discipline” (United States 3). This was the only the beginning of federally funded abstinence-only until marriage health education for our youth. In 1996, Congress authorized \$50 million annually for five years to promote abstinence-only education under Title V Section 510 (b) (2) (A-H) of the Social Security Act. States must provide \$3 in matching funds for every \$4 in federal funds.

Despite the fact that these programs are not yielding the statistically significant results that might warrant this increased funding, the grants and the number of years the grants are funded continues to increase. “As Title V abstinence-only until marriage programs enter their eighth year of federal funding, only eleven states have evaluated

their programs and publicly released the results. Funding for these unproven abstinence programs has increased nearly 3,000 percent since the federal entitlement program was created in 1996" (United States 2). In the 2002 interim report evaluation of these programs the claim that they "are changing the local landscape of approaches to prevent teen pregnancy," is evident (Devaney 21). The efficacy of these programs is another matter. In the years 1991 to 1997, before the Title V programs were implemented there was an eleven percent decrease in the number of 9th through 12th graders that reported that they had sex. From 1999 to 2003 this number leveled off. In other words, there was no statistically significant decline in the number of teens who reported having sexual intercourse. Moreover, in 2003 eighty percent of 145,000 babies born to girls under the age of 18 were born to unwed mothers, according to the Center for Disease Control (Hamilton quoted in First 2). While no direct causal relationship can be directly drawn between the implementation of The Title V abstinence programs and the end of improvement in adolescent sexual risk behaviors, these are not statistics that should be ignored (Advocates 2-3). Nonetheless, beginning in fiscal year 2006 the current administration has increased the period of funding from three years to five years for abstinence-only education.

It is important to note the difference between abstinence-based education programs and abstinence-only health education. An abstinence based program provides a comprehensive sexuality information program, stressing that the only guaranteed method of avoiding pregnancy and or sexually transmitted diseases is to refrain from engaging in sexual activity. "Under the SPRANS (Special Projects of Regional and National Significance) requirements, abstinence-only education programs are not allowed to teach their participants any methods to reduce the risk of pregnancy other than abstaining until marriage" (United States 8).

There seems to be a discrepancy between what parents want the public school system teaching their children in sex health education, and what the federal government is willing to spend these parents' tax dollars on. In a 1999 national study on sex education conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Princeton Survey Research Associates found 85% of parents, teachers and school principals surveyed said they look to sex education to provide the information as to where to obtain and how to properly use condoms. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's report on AIDS prevention states clearly that "Where the [AIDS] epidemic has been slowed, education has been the foundation" and adds "Knowledge while not sufficient is indispensable" (UNESCO 14). "Social silence results in soaring infection. Faulty knowledge results in careless behavior. Lack of knowledge leads to lack of care for those that are infected - and to stigmatization that turns the infected into

outcasts" (UNESCO 13). When it comes to health education ignorance is never bliss. In an effort to understand this discrepancy we must understand just how and when our prevailing attitudes toward sex, sex education, and women were formed. It was not until 1827 that "scientists discovered the existence of the female egg -- the ovum. Prior to this, it was known only that semen must enter the female body for conception to occur. In 1843 Scientists learned that conception occurs in human reproduction when the sperm enters the female egg. It was assumed that men created life and women just provided the home for it (American timeline). Beginning with Eve in the Garden of Eden women have been vilified and objectified by the male of the species. The puritanical views that this country was founded upon have perpetuated this negative stereotyping of women.

In Margaret Sanger's book, What Every Girl Should Know, this founder of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America talks about adolescent females of the Yuman Indian society in California and how after the first menstruation the subject of marriage and sexuality is openly discussed and naturally taught. She goes on to say "savages have recognized the importance of plain sexual talks to their young for ages, while civilization is still hiding under the black pall of prudery"(24). These same words apply today. An interim report, published in 2002 by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., noted that despite initial enthusiasm, sustaining active parental involvement in these programs is problematic (Devaney 20). These parents are looking to health education to provide comprehensive, life saving information about sex to their teenagers.

In this country, distributing birth control information was a crime equal to distributing pornography under the federal and state "Comstock laws" of 1873. It was as a nurse that Sanger saw first hand the throngs of women who had neither the means nor the remedy to escape their state of chronic pregnancy, except paying five dollars to hack abortionists, or risking their lives in an attempt to self abort. A friend, Anita Block, a Barnard graduate, was the editor of a socialist newspaper, The Call. She began writing articles and publicly speaking on what she called "family limiting." When her series of articles entitled "What Every Girl Should Know" became popular she announced the next installment would pertain to venereal disease. *The Call* was notified by the post office if it ran such articles; the entire issue would be suppressed for violating the Comstock Law. This was run in the paper instead:

WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW.

BY ORDER OF THE POST OFFICE - **NOTHING** (Gray 43).

As of 1964, eight states still prohibited the sale of contraceptives, and laws in Massachusetts and Connecticut still prevented the dissemination of information about birth control. It was not until June 7, 1965 that Estelle Griswold and Lee Buxton took their Connecticut case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. By a vote of 7-2 in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the Court struck down the Connecticut law prohibiting the use of birth control as a violation of a couple's right to privacy. *Roe v. Wade* was won on this same Fourteenth Amendment guarantee: a woman's right to privacy.

It would seem that all Americans, even the American Supreme Court justices, agree their sexuality is one of their private rights; but shouldn't this sexual privacy take a back seat to sexual health when it involves the reluctance to share life saving information? The most harmful outcome of the abstinence-only curricula, as it is currently structured, is that it can present distortions and errors as fact – in particular that HIV and other pathogens can “pass through” condoms. This directly contests the CDC's (the Center for Disease Control) findings that latex condoms provide an essentially impermeable barrier to particles the size of STD pathogens (United States 13). None of the curricula supplies any information on contraception on the premise that this will send a mixed message to adolescents.

Re-Capturing the Vision is a year long elective class that targets primarily seventh grade girls in Miami's Dade County judged by school guidance to be “high need” and includes an annual teen abstinence rally. What does “high need” mean in this context? A month of classes is dedicated to marriage in which the girls paint their own small hope chests and plan their own mock weddings. It also provides participants with “makeovers” to improve their self-image. This program is insidiously sending a damaging mixed message to its young participants; their self-esteem revolves solely on their ability to get a “good partner in life” (Maynard 16-17).

Under a new provision in federal funding grantees are required to use 15 % of their grant money for evaluation. “However they are only required to document the number of youth served; the hours of service provide to each youth; and the number of youth that complete the program” (SIECUS 5). As far as the curriculum, they need only submit only the table of contents or a brief summary of the curricula they plan to use (United States 3). This is yet another flaw in this nationwide program.

The statistics speak for themselves. As of June, 2000 “approximately one in four new cases of HIV affects someone younger than twenty-two years of age (Arndorfer 1). “A 2003 Columbia University study showed that 88% of virginity pledgers had intercourse before marriage but that young people who too who took virginity pledges

were 30% less likely to use contraception when they did become sexually active than their peers who had not pledged" (SIECUS 200). This pledging therefore can lead to other riskier sexual behavior in the hopes of maintaining virginity.

One must wonder what vision the current administration is trying to recapture with abstinence-only until marriage health education. It must be a simpler time they are trying to recapture, a time when women did not have the vote or a voice about their state of chronic pregnancy, as Margaret Sanger so succinctly put it. How far back in history we must we travel to find the source of the vision? Must we travel back to a fable -perhaps to the fable of *The Emperor's New Clothes* -- as this current federal spending of taxpayers' money on nothing substantial is reminiscent of this Dark Age tale. The difference between that fable's unjustified spending and this real life tragedy is that it's not only the emperor's reputation at risk, but the health and future of America's youth.

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“Choosing the Best Life” is the most widely used SPRANS curriculum.

