

distinctions

journal of the kingsborough
community college honors program



Distinctions, the journal of the Honors Program of Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York, welcomes scholarly articles and creative works that explore important issues in all aspects of humanistic endeavor, not confined to a specific academic discipline. Our editorial staff is sympathetic to a broad range of theoretical and critical approaches; however, the views expressed in articles are solely those of the authors.

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All manuscripts should be submitted electronically by the student or mentor to robert.cowan@kbcc.cuny.edu as Microsoft Word attachments and include a working e-mail address and telephone number for the student. Submissions should be in 12-point font and double-spaced throughout in a legible typeface like Times New Roman or Arial. While there are no length restrictions, we prefer articles that are 3,000-5,000 words and do accept articles that include notes, diagrams, and illustrations. Articles should include a list of Works Cited and be properly referenced according to the guidelines of the Modern Language Association, American Psychological Association, or other citation system appropriate to the discipline for which they were written. Submissions are accepted from September through May.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Snappy Title

As we begin the fifth year of *Distinctions*, it is interesting to see just how submissions change from semester to semester. Again this fall we had over fifty submissions from a variety of disciplines, but while we had a lot of Art History in the last issue, this time, we have a lot of Sociology.

The overarching theme, or underlying current, that unites these various papers and projects, as much as there is one, seems to be the relationships between ignorance, fear, and oppression. These articles address the enforced ignorance of slavery and repressive regimes, the uncivilizing influence of North Atlantic values on other cultures, and even the assumptions and presumptions that affect such unconscious attributes as handedness. We travel from notions of gender-identification politics in Namibia to the cultural hybridity to be found on Brooklyn's Avenue J, just a stone's throw from campus. This issue of *Distinctions* reminds us that the connections between the global and the local are elastic, porous, ossified, lacking or close, from social issue to social issue.

I don't have a snappy title or primary concern to impart to you. Rather I offer you an opportunity to sit down with the beverage of your choice on a chilly fall day and marvel at the excellent work that our Kingsborough students are doing. Happy reading.

Dr. Robert Cowan

Assistant Professor of English

BERYL TEITELBAUM

Slavery and Hasidism¹

Although I don't believe that knowing a sickness is half of its cure, I do believe it's essential to understand the source of an issue before attempting to fix it. In this paper I cannot presume to solve the problem of slavery, nor can I set up such a plan, I can however draw similarities and correlations between many diverse cases of slavery with the hopes of finding the most powerful, malleable, aspects of forceful conditioning within the psyche of the slaves and their 'masters'. The hope is to understand and pin-point the aspects of slavery that enable it to work, in order to educate and induce change; when one is aware of the underlying issue, a fix can be set into place.

Growing up in an authoritarian, repressive environment, where all measures were taken to insure the least amount of outside influence and the most amount of control over my thoughts and emotions taught me that the first step to changing is understanding that there is a problem. For example, being taught as a child that as a Jew that I was the reason this world was created, and all non-Jews were here to aid us in our quest to bring God into the world seemed perfectly plausible. It wasn't until I had the opportunity to meet other people who felt that they too had a purpose under God that I realized what I had been taught may not be irrefutably true.

This paper can work as a self-diagnostic tool for those who are not aware how prevalent the tactics being used against them are. They will see themselves through the stories I bring, and hopefully they will know for sure that they can change their lives.

From what I've seen and read, I know that there are definitive characteristics -such as starvation and religion- that are commonly used to oppress. You may be shocked at how easily these tactics avoid the pendulum, and remain primitive with time.

By far one of the most prevalent tactics in the controlling of slaves is the withholding of food. Food is a basic necessity, and when it is controlled by an oppressor, and used against the oppressed, it can prove effective as a tool for confinement. I recall a friend of mine being mesmerized by a cult whose primary means of control was creating and maintaining an extreme protein deficiency in its members. The idea being, as seems prevalent in most cults, to keep its

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Robert Cowan for ENG 30: Introduction to Literature.

members crippled in their ability to leave by actively removing certain brain functions that cannot live without protein. Although this is harsh, it does not compare to the perpetual use of starvation in the blizzing of the mind and body of slaves. Slaves have ever been known to endure starvation. Starvation is a common tool of the oppressor because it takes away man's personal power, creates an extreme state of destitution, and a strong dependency upon the master.

In his memoir "Narrative of The Life", Fredrick Douglass mentions that in the less physically demanding periods of his slavery, when food was not so scarce, he thought more about escaping than when he was deprived of food (Lawell 967). Although one would think that it would be the more difficult times that would spark Dauglass's hopes of freedom, it became apparent to him that it was precisely in the hard times that he lost his ambition. With all the pain he lost the mental capacity or the physical ability to consider freedom. Fredrick Douglass, a man who spent a great portion of his life as a slave under many different masters, speaks about starvation repeatedly in his narrative. He distinctly remembers the power of the difficulties, and how they, with the increase of their gravity, dissipated any hopes he had of freedom. He says, speaking of his time with one of his more brutal masters, "I was kept in such a perpetual whirl of excitement, I could think of nothing, scarcely, but my life; and in thinking of my life, I almost forgot about my liberty" (Lawall 967). I almost cry every time I read this line because it encapsulates all the power of deprivation, and the lack of choice in a person forced to bare it.

Some descriptive examples of the power of hunger can be found in "All My Trials, Lord" a collection of woman's slave narratives edited by Mary Young. In the collection is a tale by Henry Trumbull entitled "A Woman in Hiding". Here Trumbull explains how women would "seek to obtain their freedom by secreting themselves in thick swamps and marshes; where they remain concealed until they either fall victim to, or are compelled by hunger to return again to their masters, and submit to the punishment which those unfeeling wretches deem the merited reward of their disobedience" (Young 21). To walk voluntarily from the dream of emancipation to inevitable torture, for the sole purpose of being fed, is the strongest testament to the power of starvation.

Religion has been the backbone of many heinous crimes in history, and usually plays a substantial role in the justification of the oppressor and the sublimation of the oppressed. In order for one to live a lifestyle that is detrimental to ones own well being and happiness, the said person must believe that there is a greater reason for their existence, in order to enable them to remain somewhat of a person. For a person in suffering, it seems, cannot live without believing their suffering is for a purpose; religion can easily serve that purpose; the opium in living color.

The role religion plays in justifying the actions of the oppressor, and the existence of the oppressed is known to most people. What is not necessarily understood about the misuse of religion is just how consistently it is used and how true to form (primitive) it remains.

I speak of religion because it's particularly difficult for someone being manipulated to notice the complete fallacy of the premise thrown at them, because they are told that it's god's will. For example, I was taught as a child that eating a candy bar would build spiritual dirt around my heart that would cause me to not believe in god. This being god's will, made it impossible for me to question. I remember a neighbor of mine gave me a cookie when I was about nine years old. The cookie was not strictly kosher, and when my mother found out she gave me a long speech about how careful I have to be with what I eat. Even now I remember the feeling I had that day, and on other days where I accidentally ate something that was not allowed. I remember feeling an acute sense of dirtiness in my mouth. It was a real feeling for me only because I was taught how bad it was to eat these things. It was so difficult for me to realize there was no harm in the cookie, merely phycogenic side-effects to the lies I was taught. This is just one of the reasons religious guilt is such a powerful tool.

It's easier for one to understand he is being manipulated when he is presented with the common symptoms, or generally used tactics. It's clear to me from my experience in a religious cult that people who are being misused on the basis of religion may not even know that there is another way. If my brain is wired (which it was) with the idea that god has a plan for me, how could I possibly know that it might be false? Add in the threats against nonbelievers, the fires of hell, seventy one virgins... and men will blow themselves up before their chained brains tell them to question it. And, as I always longed to say to my father, "you can't see the big picture if you're trapped inside the frame."

Although Frederick Douglass was a deeply religious man, he lends credence to my statements against the misuse of religion in his appendix. He apologizes if his narrative seems to bash religion, but goes on to justify his statements by saying "Between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference --- so wide, that to receive the one as good, pure, and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt, and wicked" (Lawell 976). He goes on to express much distain for the misuse of religion. "I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, woman-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land." says Douglass, "I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels. Never was there a clearer case of 'stealing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in'" (Lawell 976). His harsh and honest words go on and on to describe the abhorrent ways in which religion was used as a tool to justify the reprehensible misconducts of the slave owners, and confine the actions and rights of the slaves. With respect to Douglass and his religious beliefs, I will only say that I believe this misuse of religion is far more prevalent then he would hope to believe.

In "Sexual Enslavement of Girls and Women Worldwide," a book by Andrea Parrot and Nina Cummings describing the conditions, personal stories, and environmental factors of female sex slaves, there are clear indications of the use and misuse of religion in harboring and immuring slaves. Parrot and Cummings speak in depths about a concept called "Sacred Prostitution". Stemming from the ancient goddesses of Mesopotamia in New-Babylonian times,

the term describes rituals in which woman would provide sexual favors for the god fearing men. These favors were considered a benefit to the temple and were generally followed by a donation of valued commodities by the men to the temple; the gifts after this act were said to put the men in “good favor with the temple” (Cummings, Parrot 5). This excruciating ritual is just another example of the absolution abducted from the “words of god”. This example illustrates how far people will go while still using the name of god. I believe that this mistake is still made today. For example, my dad’s alcoholism was justified by his Hassidic upbringing. From the age of about fourteen, the men in my cult would be encouraged to drink alcohol on most days of the week. As a young adult I was encouraged by my teachers to drink on “holy days” of the year, which included every Thursday night, and turned into most nights of the week. Although alcoholism does not compare to sexual enslavement, the same justification was used for both. Religion has been used and misused too many times to be overlooked. It plays a great role in controlling masses, and in justifying terrible acts of cruelty and misconduct.

My own experience with confinement and misguidance does not stretch far from the guidelines unintentionally contrived by all of the oppressors of history. Although I was never starved or tortured as a child, I was the product of religious dictation which sought to remove the self from my person, and though it sounds strange, create through me a slave for god.

Although my story does not depict tales of blood or daily water-boarding, what I experienced was a subtle enslavement constituting the neglect of basic social needs by my parents and teachers. As a child I was not allowed to listen to music that was not made by Hassidim. I was not ever allowed to talk to females. I was not allowed to eat standard foods, only those accepted by the higher members of my cult. And I was constantly forced to believe the delusions fed to me for the fear of being called an (Apikoress), the worst kind of traitor...

My life, as set up by my parents, would consist of me studying the bible and the talmud everyday until I reached marriageable age. I would then be set up with a woman, settle down, have children, and teach them this wonderful tradition. What might not be understood is that in living this fairytale life I was neglected for most of life by my father, who was apparently too consumed in his own learning and relearning of the bible. My teachers did not have to be educated in anything other than the bible, and because of that I was never taught the ABC’s. In my elementary years, I never had a teacher who himself had obtained a High School diploma. In school I was never taught reading, writing, Grammar, History, Science, Math, or any other subject that was considered secular. For my entire life I was not allowed to eat any food that was not strictly kosher. This eating restriction serves as another confident that simply made it more difficult for me to break out.

What is frightening, and the reason this correlates with slavery is that these people who were forcing me to do these nonsensical things truly believed that this was an O.K. thing to do. The fact that people can justify murder, rape, neglect, imposed self-beliefs, starvation, and slavery by simply applying the “god rule” is unbelievable.

It is important to remember that the way we view these people cannot be aloof. These slave owners were men and woman just like you and I. They were not crazy. They were not born evil people. It's easier for me to see this because I can look at the people who believed that destroying my chances at a normal life was a good idea; I see them every day. I can talk to them. I know and even love some of them. But, while I was there I had no idea what they were doing to me. It was not until I found the strength to go against all the rules set forth by my cult, that I started to realize the fallacies it involved and was able to actually see the big picture. The only way that I and we can steer clear of becoming the people we disdain is by understanding that we can become them, and then seeking out the common mistakes they made and searching for those faults within ourselves.

Without guidance, without the belief that there is more out there, and most importantly without the simple knowledge that others just like you have gone through much of the same things that you are going through, ---this is not just to instill hope in the slave, for hope can dissipate with torture and neglect--- allows the enslaved to understand that he or she is actually a slave, which I believe to be the first step in the personal journey towards freedom.

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OLGA BELYY

Is the Right Always Right?¹

That was the day I had experienced one of the greatest shocks in my life. A few years ago, I was visiting my younger sister, and she decided to treat me with homemade ravioli. In our childhood, we spent a lot of time together; she always was “my little girl”. Now, I was proud that she could live independently, and she could take care of me as I usually did before. I saw, how easily she shaped the little meatballs with dough. I was happy that my sister grew-up to be a beautiful young woman. However, something was disturbing me. I looked at her hands repeatedly, and suddenly realized: She was forming ravioli with her left hand!!! I gave an exclamation of surprise, and asked her, if she acknowledged which hand she was using now. She stared on her hands for a while, then at me. She was surprised, too. I asked her, if she did something else with the left hand or feet dominant. The short examination showed that she stepped first with the left feet, washed dishes with the left hand, and listened to the phone by her left ear. Then, she was trying to write with her left hand, and it was not bad for the first time. I had experienced controversial feelings at that moment. I was so ashamed that I didn’t notice that before. I felt relief because her left-handedness could explain a lot.

It could explain, why we always experienced difficulties with her handwriting. Her calligraphy was awful. Letters were roughly square-cut and “jumped” in different directions. All our efforts to fix it failed. Twenty years ago in Ukraine, where I used to live, the fact that somebody could be left-handed, was simply ignored. In our family, everybody was “righty”. We didn’t have even a hint that she might use her left hand for writing. She also never told us she wanted to do so.

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Mark Isacoff for Psychology 32.

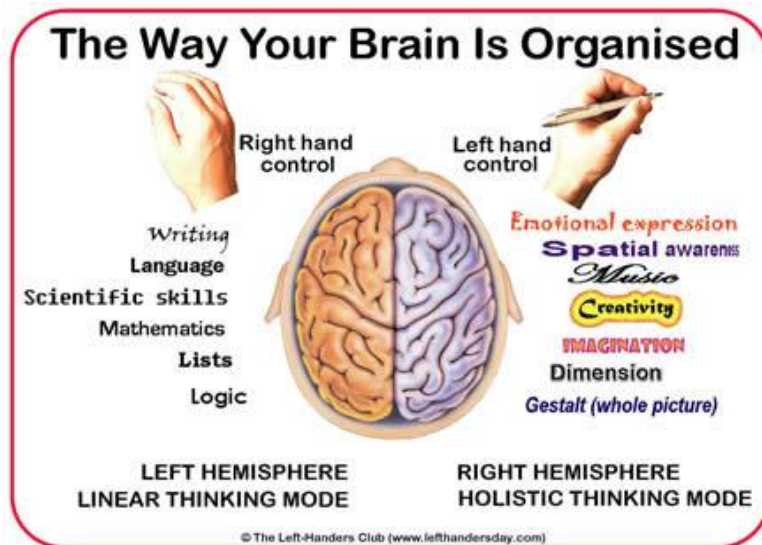
Nonetheless, there were some other differences that caused my mother to think that if she had not given birth to Nataly (my sister), she would have doubted that the girl is from our family. Naturally, it was a joke. Nevertheless, the way that little Nataly acted and learned caused some gray hairs on our mom. For my sister, the words “must” and “have to” were the last words in her vocabulary. If she didn’t like or want to do something, she never did it. Unfortunately, she didn’t like the same things as every child. She couldn’t stand to do her school homework, especially math. She didn’t like to spend any time at her desk. Despite that she was very smart and curious, she had far from the best grades in school which was a grief and shame for mother, who was a school teacher in the past.

Besides Nataly’s unwillingness to do undesirable work, she demonstrated prominent abilities in memorizing poetry she did like. She knew the poems by heart from the very first listening, and she remembered them for years, no matter how long the poetry was. It saved her a plenty of time. At the time I learned poetry from the school program, she listened to me and memorized everything. She grew older, had the same poetry to study, and she still remembered them. I had forgotten that poetry a week after I learned it. She still remembers them up to the present moment.

The other significant endowment of my sister is her communicability. She can freely make friends absolutely with everybody. She can keep conversations in any topic for a very long time. Any discussion with her is futile for her opponents: She always wins. In her bunch, she was the best sales-manager.

I wondered, if those abilities related somehow to her left-handedness, and if left-handed people have any other distinctions that I d still do not know about. Therefore, I decided to do research work on this topic. The information I found is very interesting and might be useful for understanding “lefties” better, especially for people who have left-handed relatives or friends.

Why is a person left-handed? The scientific research shows that this trait is inborn. Hand orientation is developed in unborn children, and usually determined by observing which hand is dominantly licked or held close to the mouth. According to the neurologist’s Geschwind theory, variations in levels of testosterone in the mother’s organism during pregnancy shape the development of the fetal brain. Testosterone suppresses the growth of the left cerebral hemisphere and a bigger number of neurons move to the right hemisphere. The more developed right hemisphere works better to function as the center of handedness. The newborn is more likely to become left-handed, since the right hemisphere controls the left half of the body.



Asymmetry is an important characteristic of the human brain. The left side usually controls speech and the right side controls emotions. In left-handers, these patterns are mainly reversed. The picture from the American Left Handed site shows which hemisphere controls which activities. They have more “popular” explanations of the phenomena: “The brain is “cross-wired” so that the left hemisphere controls the right handed side of the body and vice-versa and hand dominance is connected with brain dominance on the opposite side - which is why we say that only left-handers are in their right minds! ”

Let’s talk about statistics. Approximately, seven to ten percent of the human being adult population is left-handed, and that left-handedness is more common in men than women. Left-handedness, in comparison to the general population, also appears to occur more frequently in both monozygotic and dizygotic twins and several groups of individuals with neurological disorders (such as people with Down Syndrome, epilepsy, dyslexia, and mental retardation). The identical twin of a left-handed person has a 76% chance of being left-handed.

The majority of persons with schizophrenia also seem to be left-handed. In one psychiatric experiment, some four hundred patients with schizophrenia, depression with psychosis, bipolar psychosis, or no psychiatric disorders were checked on handedness. The schizophrenic patients were left-handed much more often than the other groups were, the researchers reported in the May 1994 *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*.

Tyrone Cannon, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry at the University of California at Los Angeles, and colleagues have brought to light, while estimating the neuro-cognitive test results for children of individuals with schizophrenia and their siblings, all together 258 persons. About thirty two percent of those with schizophrenia were left-handed, compared with only twelve

percent of their siblings .These results were published in the November 2003 *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

Later, Clyde Francks, Ph.D., of the University of Oxford in England, and his team reported a fascinating discovery in the July 31, 2007, *Molecular Psychiatry*—that they had defined a gene that amplifies the chances of being left-handed. The gene, named LRRTMI, accounts to be the first gene discovered that has a relation to handedness. They detected also that this gene might insignificantly increase the risk of exhibiting schizophrenia.

Left-handed individuals are also more likely to be vulnerable to the Post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD. Two Scottish researchers, Carolyn Choudhary, Ph.D., and Ronan O'Carroll, Ph.D., of the University of Stirling, monitored a group about 600 people for a relationship between PTSD and handedness. They discovered that eleven percent of the group was left-handed, that nine percent of the group met all criteria for PTSD, and that significantly more lefties than righties were the members of the PTSD part. The data were published in the June 2007 *Journal of Traumatic Stress*.

Does that mean that all left-handed are abnormal? Surely, no. Choudhary emphasized , "The majority of left-handers are not going to develop mental health problems because of their left-handedness." James Cantor, Ph.D., an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Toronto in Canada, added: "The association between left-handedness and disease is very complex.... Being left-handed does not make a person appreciably more likely to have any given disease."

From the ancient times, we have the word “right” as synonym to the word “correct”. Many cultures, languages are reflected the similar “historical abuse” for the left side. In Russian language, the expressions as a “left information” and “left money” mean that information is dishonest and money were gotten by cheating. In old-time China, the left has been the "bad" side. The adjective "left"

(“zuo”) means "improper". Nowadays, in politics, we have the “left” parties that mean they are radicals who provide the new ideas and reforms in society, which are not bad.

In the last two decades, our perception of left-handed has been drastically changed. People are even apt to think that lefties have very special intellects, even they all are geniuses. Indeed, many proficient people have been, or are, left-handed. The actual president of the United States Barack Obama and four of the past six presidents,-Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton were left-handed. Moreover, other well-known people have been (or are) left-handed: the Roman general Julius Caesar, the Renaissance painter Michelangelo, American novelist Mark Twain, Beatle Paul McCartney, television queen Oprah Winfrey.

What do the lefties say about themselves? The Britain site of the left-handed society, www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk, acknowledges that they have a number of jokes and anecdotes that “support the view that left-handers are over-represented at both the top and bottom of the learning and achievement scale “.They mentioned the new work of Professor Chris Mc Manus of University College, London. He has been exploring the theme, and a new book called *Right Hand, Left Hand* is ready for publishing. He believes that the proportion of left-handers is rising and left-handed people as a group have historically represented the majority of high achievers. He writes that “left-handers' brains are structured differently in a way that widens their range of abilities and the genes that determine left-handedness also govern development of the language centres of the brain.” He points out that in the past twenty years the number of left-handed people is visibly rising. The two main causes of that rising are the ceasing of the lefties’ discrimination and the tendency of older motherhood. Professor Mc Manus is agreeing, too, that the general growing population of left-handers also leads to the increasing percentage of individuals with neurological disabilities mentioned before.

That isn’t the whole story. The scientists distinguished that person who might be fully and partially left- or right-handed from the one who is one-hundred-percent “lefty”. This is someone with a dominant left hand, eye, ear and feet,. The partial left-handed individual could have the left dominant eye and ear but right hand. Some people feel no preferences between right and left sides; they evenly well can work by the both hands. Those kinds of people are called ambidextrous. At first glance, we may conclude that ambidexterity gives the superior intellectual abilities to the person.

A British psychiatrist Prof. Tim Crow takes the opposite point of view. He believes he can show that ambidextrous children are less intelligent than right- or left-handed. Crow’s theory is emphasizing that the human beings’ closest “genetic relative”, the chimp is who is truly ambidextrous. Professor asserts that this difference could be essential to the evolution of humans. The development of a separation in function between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, that result in person’s tendency to be left or right-handed , was a major factor in our leap from *Homo erectus* to *Homo sapiens*. "Handedness is the key dimension of human cerebral function," says Crow. "People who are truly ambidextrous are slower to develop verbal and non-verbal skills. It's the predictor of both reading difficulties at the age of 16 and psychosis".

He made his own research. Crow examined data taken from 12,770 one-year-old children taken in 1969 as part of the UK National Child Development Study. The kids had been tested for hand preference, reading, verbal and math ability. The experiment unraveled the age-old discussion over whether right or left-handers are more intelligent: the result showed that there is absolutely no difference between them. What was alarming was how badly ambidextrous children did in the study. They performed significantly worse in all 3 tests. "There seems to be an optimum level of handedness at which we perform best, although we are not sure what that is" said Crow. "Most of the variation in intelligence is to do with the degree of handedness in the child."

The thing that left-handed and right-handed have in common, is the language center. The left side of the brain is dominant for language in ninety five percent of the right-handed. Also, for almost seventy percent of the left-handed, the left side of brain deals with language. In the 1870s, two neurologists, Paul Broca and Karl Wernicke, noticed that patients, who were injured in a particular area on the left side of the brain, had language and speech problems. People with damage to these spots on the right side commonly did not have language problems. The two language areas of the brain that are used for language now have their names, Broca's area and Wernicke's area.

Nonetheless, there are some differences in development of the individuals with the left or the right side dominance. The left hemisphere, which is right-handed “authority”, is “responsible” for logical, analytic and abstract thinking. The lefties, which are led by right the hemisphere, are creative, musical and imaginative. The following table shows comparative characteristics of the left and right brain thinking.

Rational	Intuitive
Responds to verbal instructions	Responds to demonstrated instructions
Problem solves by logically and sequentially looking at the parts of things	Problem solves with hunches, looking for patterns and configurations
Looks at differences	Looks at similarities
Is planned and structured	Is fluid and spontaneous
Prefers established, certain information	Prefers elusive, uncertain information
Prefers talking and writing	Prefers drawing and manipulating objects
Prefers multiple choice tests	Prefers open ended questions
Controls feelings	Free with feelings
Prefers ranked authority structures	Prefers collegial authority structures
Left Hemisphere Style	Right Hemisphere Style
Sequential	Simultaneous
Is a splitter: distinction important	Is a lumpier: connectedness important

Is logical, sees cause and effect	Is analogic, sees correspondences, resemblances
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Table 1. The comparison of the left hemisphere and right hemisphere style of thinking.

Linear and Holistic Learning

The left side of the brain deals with information in a linear way. It transforms data from part to the whole. It takes parts, ties them up, and combines them in a logical manner; then it makes conclusions. The right brain, alternatively, proceeds holistically, from whole to parts. It starts with the end. It understands the whole idea first, not the details. If you are right-brained, you might have complications with following a lecture unless you are given the main picture first. It is better for a right-brained student to read a chapter or the main information before a lecture. If a professor doesn't give an overview before a lecture, you may need to ask at the end of class about the next lecture and you then can prepare for it. If you are dominantly right-brained, you may also have trouble with outlining (You could probably write many works first and then outline them because an outline was required). You're the person who wants to know why you should do something. Left-brained students would do well to train their right-brain in this way.

Sequential and Random Thinking

Besides thinking in a linear manner, the left brain works sequentially. The left-brained individual is a list-writer. The left-brained student would enjoy composing schedules and do planning. The best part in any work for the left-brained person is to complete tasks in the right order. The additional pleasure is in checking them off when they are accomplished. Learning anything in sequences is convenient and natural for the left part of brain. Spelling, math and following directions are the examples of such a work.

Alternatively, the way of reaching the goal for the right-brained student is haphazard. The right-brained person may shift from one idea to another. Making priorities in studying is also a problem. An assignment may be incomplete or late, not because you didn't work on it, but because you worked on something else. You are going crazy when asked to make schedules for the study. However, if the random nature is your dominant side, you have to make lists and schedules. This way may be your good model for success in college. You have to make extra-work to read directions. For the spelling, you should use the dictionary, carry a Franklin speller, use the spell checker on your computer. You should never turn in homework without proofing for spelling. The right side of the brain is color sensitive. Therefore, you might try to use colors to remember sequences, making the first step blue, the second yellow, the last one pink. Also, you may want to "make steps" on a sequence, either by physically going from place to place or

by imagining that. For the first step of the row, you might walk to the front door; for the second step, to the hall; for the third, to the living room, etc.

Symbolic and Concrete Operations

The left brain easily processes abstract symbols. Many academic subjects deal with symbols such as letters, words, and mathematical notations. The left-brained person is comfortable with linguistic and mathematical exertions. Left-brained students will simply memorize words in vocabulary or mathematical formulas. On the other hand, the right brain wants everything to be tangible. The learner with the right brain dominant wants to deal with the material things. They prefer to see the way an equation applies to a certain situation and wants to understand a word in context. For using your right brain, you should make flashcards, use something real when possible. You may also want to illustrate your notes.

Logical and Intuitive Decisions

The left brain thinks linearly. It prefers to deal with sequences and logical algorithms. The left side works by using information piece by piece to solve a math problem or perform an experiment. At the process of reading and listening, the left brain looks for the parts so that it can make logical conclusions. In contrast, the right side of the brain uses intuition. The person with the right brain dominant might know the correct answer to a math question but be not sure how s/he got it. S/he usually starts with the end and works toward the beginning. S/he has an insight as to which answers are correct on a test, and they usually are. The left brain pays attention to tasks such as punctuation and spelling in writing assignments. Nevertheless, the right side is looking for meaning and congruity.

Verbal and Nonverbal Processing

Left brain students feel not comfortable to define the right words to explain something. Right brain individuals know what they express, but frequently have problems to bring up the exact words. The good example of that is to look how differently people give directions. The left brain person will say : "From here, go west three miles and turn south on the forty seventh road. Go three or four miles and then turn east." The right brain person will describe: "Turn right (and pointing right), by the shop over there (pointing again). Then you will pass a church and a fountain. At the next block, turn left toward the gas station." So, how does it relate to shaping study strategies? Right-brain students have to make visual images of everything. To remember something, they need to draw it; otherwise, it would be forgotten. They have to acquire the habit of making a row of pictures of things as they read them. Right-brain students should know that the written assignment takes for them longer time than for the left brain learners, and their work may need more re-editing before it becomes clear what they want it to assert. It takes some extra time and should be taken into account during planning the work.

Realistic and Fantasy Basis

The left side of the brain is “the daughter” of reality. When left brain people find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, they adjust to it, as a rule. The right-brain person goes another way. S/he attempts to change the circumstances! Left brain people prefer to learn the rules and follow them. Even if no rules exist for the situation, they will likely make up the rules and act according to them. Left-brain students know the consequences of expired terms or of failing an exam. Unfortunately, right-brain people could not be aware that there is something wrong. In case a person is right-brain, s/he has to make sure by constantly asking for feedback and “reality checks”. The day before finals might be too late to ask for an extra-credit assignment you can prepare. That kind of student should keep records of his/her assignments and exams. S/he can transform the fantasy-orientation from a disadvantage to a benefit. Creativity might be quite helpful. In order to learn about the cardiac system, you may decide to “become a drop of blood”. Emotions are processed on the right side of the brain, so it is easier to remember anything that is emotionally depicted in the learning process.

There were just some of the distinctions that were detected between the left and right sides of the brain, but you can see the main idea. The left-brain schemes are that used mostly in the school or college, and the right-brain students could often feel unappreciated. Nonetheless, they know now that they can be adjustable and modify information to the right-hemisphere type of thinking. Furthermore, those, who have left hemisphere dominant, know that it would be a good perspective to use both sides of the brain and improve the right-brain strategies

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NATALIA MONDESIR

Sexuality across the Ocean: A Comparison of Homosexuality in Trinidad & Tobago and Namibia¹

Introduction

Although there are many countries with different views about homosexuality, the goal of this paper is to discuss the similarities and the differences of homosexuality between the cultures of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies and Namibia, South Africa. Some of the topics discussed will be the legal status of homosexuality, the fact that there are mixed views as to whether or not homosexuality is acceptable, and the religious influences on the people of both cultures.

The History of Homosexuality in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

The first cases of AIDS among gay men in Trinidad were diagnosed in 1983, three years before the Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago passed the Sexual Offences Act in 1986 (UNGASS, 2008). This Act made violent marital sex and homosexuality illegal. Since homosexuality was already frowned upon, section thirteen declared that anal intercourse between

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Suzanne LaFont for Anthropology 39: Sexuality and Culture.

men was defined as “buggery,” outlawed it, and attached a penalty of ten years imprisonment. Additionally, sex between men and young boys ages twelve to seventeen was also outlawed. Section sixteen defines a new offence, “serious indecency,” as any acts other than sexual intercourse which use the genital organs for arousing or satisfying sexual desire. This was punishable with five years imprisonment for both underage and unmarried sodomy. It did not apply to married couples or to males and females when both were sixteen years or older (Alexander, 1994, unhcr.org, 2005).

In a telephone interview done in 1995, the regional director of social sector programs and policy of the Ministry of Community Development, culture and Gender Affairs stated that there is a stigma attached to homosexuality. Due to this stigma, gay people are not open about their sexual orientation and hide it from their families and friends. Establishing support groups and encouraging people to attend would be very difficult because homosexuals would have to disclose their sexual orientation (unhcr.org, 2005).

Homosexuality in Modern Day Trinidad and Tobago

Sexuality is not an openly discussed topic on the islands of Trinidad and Tobago. This makes life more difficult for homosexuals. In 1995, their lack of knowledge about their sexuality led them to believe that they were second class citizens. They believed their homosexuality was a “perceived inadequacy”-it was understood as being unequal or inferior to heterosexuality. Some people considered their homosexuality to be something temporary. These people believed that when they were ready to settle down and have children, they become heterosexuals. Godfrey Sealy, an HIV activist who was living in Trinidad in 1995, stated that a personal friend of his considered his homosexuality as a phase and that heterosexual behavior was his “coming of age” (Sealey, 1995).

According to the Human Rights Report of 2008, the government does not enforce the law which criminalizes consensual homosexual relations, but the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a society which believes that women and men are naturally attracted to each other emotionally and sexually and that heterosexuality is normal and universal (Olson, 2009, state.gov).

Sexual Education in Trinidad and Tobago

Efforts to encourage young people to discuss and be comfortable with their sexuality have already been put into practice. The Trinidad Tobago Humanist Association is fighting to include sexual education classes in the schools. They state that “humanists firmly oppose the intolerant and repressive attitudes to human sexuality expressed by some religious and political groups and individuals, and it is clear to us, as it is to most in education, that the choice is not

between Biblical values and none at all...” As a supporting statement for their argument, they also stated that “programs in human sexuality should encourage young people to communicate honestly about their sexuality, take responsibility for their sexual actions, and respect the sexual differences of others” (“Sex and relationships education (SRE)”, 2009).

The Effect of Homosexuality on Immigration

As of July 1, 1976, chapter 18:01 of the Immigration Act of Trinidad and Tobago, includes a stipulation that forbids homosexual people from entering- lawfully coming into- the country. Subsection eight (e) and (f) states that entry into the country is prohibited to prostitutes, homosexuals, people who live on the earnings of homosexuals and prostitutes. Also, people suspected of entering the country for these or any “immoral purposes” or people suspected of attempts to bring in prostitutes or homosexuals are banned entrance (unhcr.org, 2005).

Subsection 9 (4)(a) of the Immigration Act states that if the minister thinks a person fits the description in subsection (8) or is “a person who practices, assists in the practice of or shares in the avails of prostitution or homosexuality,” he or she is no longer a permitted entrant. According to Subsection 9 (5), the minister is permitted to make a deportation order against anyone referred to in subsection 4. By law, they should be deported as soon as possible (Immigration Act, 2004).

In 1994, M. Jaqui Alexander wrote an article for the *Feminist Review*, titled “Not Just (Any) Body Can Be a Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas.” She described how life was difficult for her in both Trinidad, the country of her birth, and the United States of America, where she lived when the article was published.

I am an outlaw in my country of birth: a national; but not a citizen. Born in Trinidad and Tobago on the cusp of anti-colonial nationalist movements there, I was taught that once we pledged our lives to the new nation, 'every creed and race [had] an equal place.' I was taught to believe 'Massa Day Done', that there would be an imminent end to foreign domination. Subsequent governments have not only eclipsed these promises, they have revised the very terms of citizenship to exclude me. No longer equal, I can be brought up on charges of 'serious indecency' under the Sexual Offences Act of 1986, and if convicted, serve a prison term of five years (Alexander, 1994).

Homosexuality in Namibia, South Africa

In some towns in Namibia, there are mixed views on the topic of homosexuality. Homosexuality has become an important issue because of the homophobic remarks from Namibia's former

president Sam Nujoma in 1996, when he stated that “those who are practicing homosexuality in Namibia are destroying the nation” (Müller-Lensholz, 2008). Political, social and economic changes, which resulted from Namibia’s independence in 1990, have led to conflicts between the traditional ideas and the new views on human rights. In some towns there are people do not share the opinion of Nujoma, and in other towns there are people that do agree. Although homosexuality is not illegal in Namibia, homosexual sodomy is criminalized.

The oldest ethnic group in Namibia, the Damara, makes up thirty percent of the population. The Damara culture is an example of a culture with mixed attitudes toward homosexuality. A few people accept homosexuality, while the majority of people give lesbians a hard time. In their article “Same Sex Sexuality among the Damara Women”, Elizabeth Ikhaxas and Saskia Wieringa (2006) explained that, in response to a statement made by the former president, an interviewee stated that people from smaller towns are accepting of lesbians.

While there are some women who have admitted to being lesbians, a majority of the lesbian women in the Damara community are still hiding their sexual orientation. Most of them are unwilling to openly admit their sexual orientation due to a fear of gossip and rejection. Other interviewees stated that their relationships are not accepted by their families and the men in their community.

Some women identify themselves as men and take on the male role in their relationships with other women. Although there is no term for same-sex relationships between male identified lesbians in the Damara language, they are called “!hama²,” a derogatory statement which refers to animals that have both male and female genitalia. These women are conscious of their female bodies, yet they are more comfortable classifying themselves as men. They give themselves, or are given by others, male names. The names are a representation of a second baptism through which they affirm the masculine identity. Since children are an important part of society, lesbians manage to be mothers to their children while being fathers to the children of their lovers. They do not maintain their relationships with the fathers of their children.

Life is no easier for the gay men in Namibia. According to Robert Lorway in his article “Breaking a Public Health Silence: HIV Risk and Male-Male Sexual Practices in the Windhoek Urban Areas,” gay men in Windhoek have been rejected, but also accepted to a certain extent. When they decide to talk about their sexuality, it is mostly their family and friends who are unable to accept their homosexual orientation.

Rejection is often linked with some form of punishment towards the gay men. One man was beaten by his lover’s brother-in-law when his lover confessed being a homosexual to the church congregation. Another man’s father refused to support him financially, prohibited him from seeing his mother who had accepted that her son was gay, and sent him to a mental institution from which he escaped after two months. Another man explained that he was

² The Damara is a click language. The “!” represents one of their click sounds.

cornered by a group of men who were asking him questions. Failure to answer their questions led to a severe beating (Lorway, 2006, p. 282, 285, 288).

Homosexual men are not only harassed by other members of the community, sometimes effeminate men are harassed by their lovers. Men have been attacked because of a desire to use condoms. Similar to abusive heterosexual relationships, they feel that the violence towards them is a declaration of love. Many do not report acts of violence to the police since the officers refuse to grant them protection or press charges.

With the homophobic attitude of the Namibian people, there are homosexuals feel that they must commit suicide to apologize for their lifestyle and there are some who manage to break out of that type of thinking. According to an article in the *Washington Post*, Petrus Gurirab fought the urge to kill himself after he had been raped by the gym teacher at his school when he was fourteen:

"I wanted to change so badly and not be gay . . . but I couldn't, I knew I liked men. I decided I would kill myself. . . . I was so desperate I called a lifeline in London. They saved my life." (Wax, 2005).

One of Ikhaxas and Wieringa's interviewees told them about a girl who hung herself after writing three letters—one for each her pastor, the police, and her parents—stating that she could not change the fact that she liked women (Ikhaxas & Wieringa, 2006, p. 299).

Based on the fact that there are more people in the society who are homophobic, it is not surprising that a gay person is accepted when he or she displays more behaviors which are typical of a heterosexual of the same gender. A male had made the decision to stop cross-dressing because he did not want his sister's children to see him dressing as a woman. At a funeral he attended, he received much praise because of his change, even though he still had boyfriends. His actions and lifestyle as a gay person has had an affect on how he was treated by others.

Comparison between Trinidad and Tobago and Namibia

Religion and the gay communities

Religion plays an important role in the rejection of homosexuals in both Namibia and Trinidad and Tobago. According to the International Religious Freedom Report for Trinidad and Tobago, there is no dominant faith. It states that in 2001, about twenty-nine percent of the population practices Roman Catholicism, twenty-four percent practice Hinduism. Other religions include Islam, Anglican, Pentecostal, Seventh-day Adventists, Presbyterian, and Baptist. Since a majority of the religions in Trinidad and Tobago do not support homosexuality, the number of people who are homophobic is great.

The religious texts of these religions in Trinidad and Tobago believe in heteronormality. They teach the citizens that heterosexual relationships are the norm and only recognize marriages that are between one man and one woman. To the people, despite the fact that society willingly ignores anything out of the “norm,” homosexuality is seen as a disgrace and anyone who is gay is considered to be “a sinner of the highest order.” Campaigns to save homosexuals include reading scriptures from the Bible, praying for the person and urging him or her to go to church. “These attempts at conversion are so intense that many people succumb, sometimes temporarily, in fear of ostracism from peers and under threat of eternal damnation,” (Sealey, 1995, Encyclopedia Britannica 2009).

The Lutheran church in Namibia has a strong influence on the people within the Damara community. Similar to the situation in Trinidad, their homosexual orientation is considered to be a sin. Some homosexuals do not admit to having a different sexual orientation. Others have completely stopped going to church because they are received with hostility. They pray in the privacy of their own homes. There are also those who are willing to fight for the respect of the religious community.

Denying Homosexuality

The sexual morés of the Trinidad culture enforce the norms of heterosexual relationships. The government has permission to exile people as punishment for their sexual orientation. For this reason, many men who have sex with men (msm) stay in the closet. They participate in the heterosexual lifestyle with wives and girlfriends, and they do not consider themselves to be gay when they share sexual experiences with other men (Lokai, 2007, Gershaw, 2009)

Robert Philipson, a member of the LGBT RPCV group who volunteered with the Crisis Corps in Windhoek, Namibia, was advised to “run, not walk, into the closet” by another Crisis Corps member because his sexual orientation would have been the main focus of the people while he was there. According to Freedom House, a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing political and economic freedoms, homosexuals encounter discrimination because the government holds them responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS (IRBC, 2007, Philipson, 2003, freedomhose.org).

Conclusion

This cross-cultural comparison explores the social attitudes between these two different countries. It is apparent that there are many similarities in the way homosexuals are viewed in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and Namibia. Due to the religious beliefs of both cultures, homosexuality is believed to be a sin. In terms of the government and the illegal status of

homosexuality, it is punishable with the exile of any gay people from their country, a jail sentence or acts of violence. Although there are laws in place to fight homosexuality, the government does not enforce these laws.

The homophobic attitudes of the people within these communities play a significant role in the level of self esteem of homosexuals. Although I have not found any information about suicide attempts in Trinidad and Tobago, there have been attempts in Namibia. These attempts have been the results of the pressure for gays to change their sexual orientation.

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NOELIA CILLI

Renal Failure and Treatments¹

Kidneys, I can personally say are unappreciated. You don't know what you really have until you lose them. My great grandfather passed away at the age of 64 from a syndrome called diabetic nephropathy caused by type 2 diabetes that he had. His diabetic nephropathy caused him to have chronic kidney failure. Diabetic nephropathy typically affects the network of tiny blood vessels in the glomerulus. My great grandfather never took care of himself. He was a heavy drinker and he loved food, mostly food that was bad for him, like fried foods or foods high in fat. He also never really went to see a doctor, not even for a checkup. When he was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in his late 30's, he still didn't change his lifestyle. He still drank, had a poor diet and didn't care about his insulin levels. Sooner or later his case got worse and he ended up with (ESRD). He refused any treatment because he saw himself useless and had no hope at this point, so eventually he passed away.

I actually had a scare when I was 19 years of age. I ended up in the emergency room (ER) for severe abdominal pain and pain in the flank area. I too, can admit that I barely saw a doctor before this incident. In the (ER) they did a sonogram first on me. In the sonogram they detected 3 kidney stones, but there was one huge stone in my left kidney. I had a cat scan done soon after and it appeared that I had 2 small stones in my urethra that I was passing, which would explain the pain I was having. I was also diagnosed with Polysplenia. My spleen had an abnormality which a urologist indicated that my spleen is in multiple pieces, actually 4 pieces. The spleen was not their main concern. Their main concern was the bigger stone they found in my left kidney, which they called a Staghorn Calculi. The reason why they called it a Staghorn Calculi is because it filled my renal pelvis and calyces and its shape resembled a deer's horns. The urologist told me that the Staghorn had to be removed immediately to prevent any blockage of

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Theodore Markus for Biology 12.

urine needed to flow out and also since the Staghorn has horn- like branches, he also told me that the horns can damage my kidneys by scarring it, which he said can lead to renal failure. At this point I was really afraid and confused too, but all I knew was that I did not want to lose a kidney. Since the size was big to pass I had to have 3 procedures done. I had shock wave lithotripsy done , a ureteroscopy done and finally a percutaneous nephrostolithotomy, which an incision was made to remove the large stone. The Staghorn Calculi was finally removed completely and I still go to follow-ups to see my urologist to make sure everything with my kidneys are looking normal, since I have a family history of diabetes and renal failure. I'm now more aware on how important my kidneys are to me and I pay more attention now to my health. I get checkups with my urologist every 6 months followed by some blood tests, urine tests, and a sonogram.

The kidneys are miraculous organs in the body, they are shaped like beans and they are about the size of a man's palm. The kidney's lie below the ribs on the upper abdomen, one on each side of the body. The kidneys have many important crucial functions essential for life. Yes, they just don't just make urine only, it's much more than that. Among the most important are filtrating the blood, removing waste products from the blood and ensuring that the electrolytes in the blood are correctly balanced. In addition, the kidneys produce erythropoietin, a hormone responsible for the production of (the oxygen carrying) red blood cells and another hormone rennin is also produced by the kidneys, which regulates blood pressure. Therefore when kidney function is no longer adequate, dialysis treatments or a transplant is needed for survival. A person diagnosed with kidney failure also known as renal failure should be informed that there is still hope to live life with these treatments that are offered.

As mentioned, the kidneys play a very important role in getting rid of waste products. When soluble wastes products of food in the blood reach the kidneys it is the job of the kidneys to get rid of them in urine that is made. What the kidneys do is to sift and filter the blood, removing the waste and putting them in the urine, but leaving the "good things" in the blood. Healthy kidneys have no problem getting rid of all the many toxins normally produced in the body. In people with renal failure, however the levels of toxins build up in the blood. It is the build up of toxins that make people with renal failure feel unwell (Fox, et al. 2).

Another important function of the kidneys is to remove excess water from the body. In people with renal failure, water cannot so easily be put into urine. Excess fluid can therefore build up in the body causing a condition called fluid overload (Fox, et al. 2-3).

Kidney failure also known as renal failure is a condition in which the kidneys are less able than normal to perform their usual functions. There are two types of renal failure acute and chronic. Acute renal failure is a sudden loss of kidney function that happens within hours or days, some causes include low blood pressure, blockage in the urinary tract, severe infection, or injury; however, in this situation, the kidneys usually return to normal. Chronic renal failure occurs when the kidneys slowly loose their function, some causes include diabetes, heart disease, kidney stones, lupus, blockage or problems in the urinary tract. Warning signs of kidney trouble may include high blood pressure, frequent urination, difficult or painful urination, puffy eyes, swollen hands or feet (Hoehn, Marieb 1022).

Each kidney contains about 1.2 million functional units called nephrons. If you can understand the function of one nephron, you will understand nearly everything about the functioning of the kidney (Saladin 90)

In the nephron, a glomerulus, consists of specialized capillaries with a tiny urine-collecting tubes called a tubule. The glomerulus acts as a filtering unit, proteins and blood cells are kept in the bloodstream, allowing substances like fluid, wastes and beneficial products to pass through as the filtrate into the proximal tubule, then to the loop of Henle, which has both thick and thin segments. From there, the tubular fluid passes into the distal tubule then into the collecting duct. While all this is going on a complicated chemical exchange takes place, as waste materials and water leave the blood and from the collecting duct it goes on to be released in the urine. (<http://kidney.niddk.nih.gov/kudiseases/pubs/yourkidneys/>)



Most kidney diseases attack the nephrons, causing them to lose their filtering capacity. Damage to the nephrons can happen quickly, often as the result of injury or poisoning. But most kidney diseases destroy the nephrons slowly and silently. Only after years will the damage become apparent. Most kidney diseases attack both kidneys.

The two most common causes of kidney disease are diabetes and high blood pressure. People with a family history of any kind of kidney problem are also at risk for kidney disease. <<http://kidney.niddk.nih.gov/kudiseases/pubs/yourkidneys/>>

Diabetes is a disease that keeps the body from using glucose, a form of sugar, as it should. If glucose stays in the blood instead of breaking down, it can act like a poison. Damage to the nephrons from unused glucose in the blood is called diabetic kidney disease. Keeping blood glucose levels down can delay or prevent diabetic kidney disease. Use of medications called angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) to

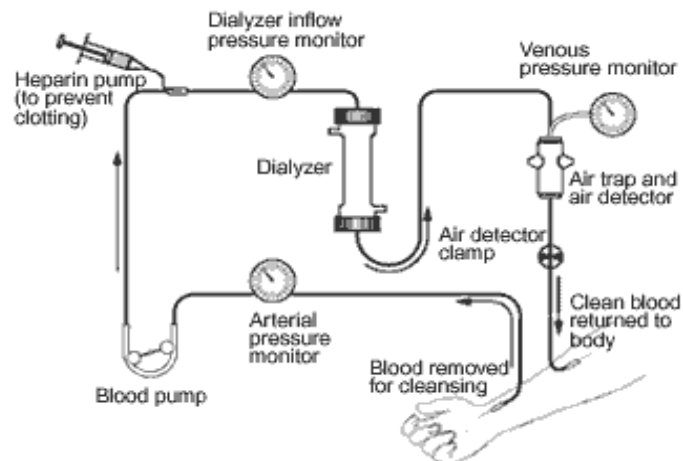
treat high blood pressure can also slow or delay the progression of diabetic kidney disease.
<<http://kidney.niddk.nih.gov/kudiseases/pubs/yourkidneys/>>

High blood pressure can damage the small blood vessels in the kidneys. The damaged vessels cannot filter wastes from the blood as they are supposed to. A doctor may prescribe blood pressure medication. Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACE) and Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) have been found to protect the kidneys even more than other medicines that lower blood pressure to similar levels. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), one of the National Institutes of Health, recommends that people with diabetes or reduced kidney function keep their blood pressure below 130/80(<<http://kidney.niddk.nih.gov/kudiseases/pubs/yourkidneys/>>)

Diagnosis of kidney failure is confirmed by blood tests measuring the buildup of waste products in the blood. Blood urea nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine become elevated, and the glomerular filtration rate decreases. This is the rate with which blood is filtered through the kidneys and can be calculated based upon the creatinine level, age, race, and gender. Urine tests may be done also to measure the amount of protein, detect the presence of abnormal cells, or measure the concentration of electrolytes. Your doctor will check your symptoms and medical history. Blood and urine tests are also helpful

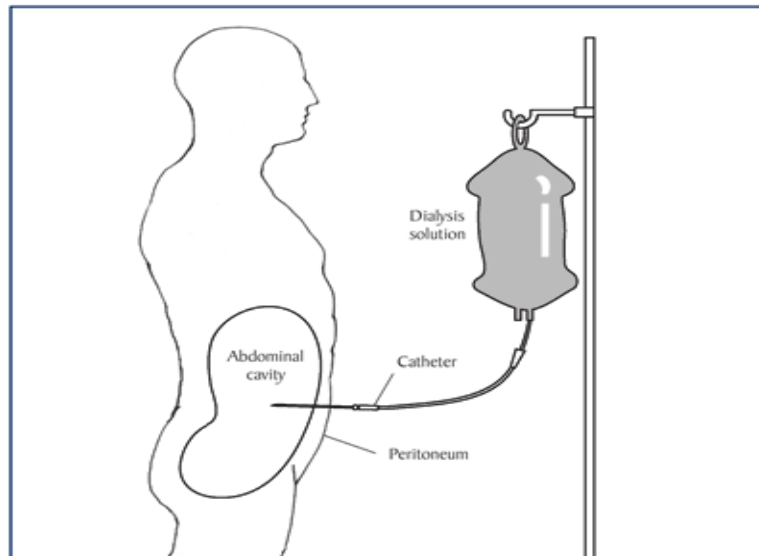
When the kidneys completely stop working it is called end stage renal disease (ESRD). At this point treatment is essential to take over the work of kidneys, so the patient can stay alive. The treatment options for end stage renal disease (ESRD) are dialysis and transplantation, keep in mind that these procedures do not cure renal failure it only helps as the disease progresses.

Hemodialysis uses a machine filter called a dialyzer or artificial kidney to remove excess water and salt, to balance the other electrolytes in the body, and to remove waste products of metabolism. Blood flows through tubing into the machine, where it passes next to a filter membrane. A specialized chemical solution (dialysate) flows on the other side of the membrane. The dialysate is formulated to draw impurities from the blood through the filter membrane. The blood and dialysate never come directly in contact with the artificial kidney machine.



Peritoneal dialysis uses the lining of the abdominal cavity as the dialysis filter to rid the body of waste and to balance electrolyte levels. A catheter is placed in the abdominal cavity through the abdominal wall by a surgeon and is expected to remain there for the long-term. The dialysis solution is then dripped in through the catheter and left in the abdominal cavity for a few hours and then is drained out. In that time, waste products leech from the blood normally flowing through the lining of the abdomen (peritoneum).

<http://www.medicinenet.com/kidney_failure/page6.html>.



There are benefits and complications for each type of dialysis. Dialysis only provides about 5 percent of renal function compared to a person with 2 healthy normal kidneys that provide 100 percent renal function. Dialysis does take energy and time out of a person's life so it is likely for a patient to feel depressed.

Hemodialysis patients typically have three sessions per week 4 to 8 hours per session. In addition to inconvenience, hemodialysis carries risk of infection and thrombosis. Blood tends to clot when exposed to foreign surfaces, so an anticoagulant such as heparin is added during dialysis (Saladin 925).

The treatment decision depends on the patient's illness and their past medical history along with other issues. Usually, the nephrologist (kidney specialist) will have a long discussion with the patient and family to decide what will be the best option available for them.

Kidney transplantation is a procedure that places a healthy kidney from another person into your body. This one new kidney takes over the work of your failed kidneys. The transplantation process begins when you learn that your kidneys are failing and you must start considering your treatment options. Whether transplantation is to be among your options will depend on your specific situation. Transplantation isn't for everyone. Your doctor may tell you that you have a condition that would make transplantation dangerous or unlikely to succeed.

A kidney transplant offers no guarantee. A person can reject the organ which can happen suddenly or slowly. A successful transplant only provides 50% of normal kidney function, which is enough to return your blood chemistry to normal levels (Auer, Juliet pg. 51). However the kidney transplanted only last up to 10 years. When an individual requires a transplant, two or more immunosuppressant drugs are necessary to prevent their body from rejecting the new kidney and these drugs are taking for life time. If a person fails to take these drugs, even for a couple of days the immune system will respond to the kidney as a foreign body and it will start attacking the new kidney. Serious problems can be caused by suppressing your immune system. These can include infections by certain viruses (Juliet 52).

For a kidney transplant to be successful, it is necessary to prevent your body's immune system attacking the kidney and rejecting it. Rejection is caused by differences between your tissues and those of the donor. The closer the match the better it will be because the chance of rejection to occur is lower (Higgins, Et al).

To work the match between you and your kidney donor, doctors need to carry out a number of tests so that they can work out your blood group and tissue type. Doctors will check matching blood group from the A, B, AB, and O blood groups.

A kidney transplant is surgery to replace your own diseased kidneys with a healthy (donor) kidney. A living donor may be a family member, a friend, a coworker, or any person who is willing to give a kidney to someone in need. A person only needs one healthy kidney to live. A cadaver donor is someone who has recently died. Most donor kidneys come from this source <<http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/kidney-transplant-20666>>

In both cases, the key to success is having the closest possible blood and tissue matches. A family member is not always the best match. You will need to have tests to make sure the donor kidney matches your tissue type and blood type. This helps reduce the chances that your body will reject the new kidney. You will also be evaluated to make sure that you do not have significant heart or lung disease or other diseases, such as cancer, which might decrease your life span <<http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/kidney-transplant-20666>>

Kidney transplant surgery takes about 3 hours. During surgery, the donor kidney will be placed in your lower abdomen, blood vessels from the donor kidney will be connected to arteries and veins in your body, and the ureter from the donor kidney will be connected to your bladder. Blood is then able to flow through the new kidney, and the kidney will begin to filter and remove wastes and to produce urine. The new kidney usually begins to function right away <<http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/kidney-transplant-20666>>

Kidney transplants in the U.S during 2001 numbered 15,311, almost 5000 of them from living donors. But this leaves 57,000 Americans still waiting for a kidney, more then for any other organ. Stem cell research may provide the ultimate answer. Recently, scientists cloned kidney cells from adult cow skin cell nuclei, grew them, on three-dimensional molds, and placed the molds on incubators, where the cells attached and formed tissue. When transplanted back into the cows that donated the original nuclei, the cell mold structures excreted a urine like fluid containing metabolic waste products, and they did not trigger an immune response. In short they behaved tantalizingly like miniature kidneys (Hoehn, Marieb 1023).

In conclusion, early detection is the key for chronic kidney disease. A person should routinely see a doctor, especially if the person has high blood pressure and has a strong family history of diabetes, since these are the two main common causes of renal failure. For people who have renal failure I would like to address not to give up fighting, because our technology that we have today is advancing and survival rates are rising so consider dialysis treatment or a transplant.

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SVETLANA AKHMADIEVA

Excerpts from *The Little Book of Huge Problems*¹



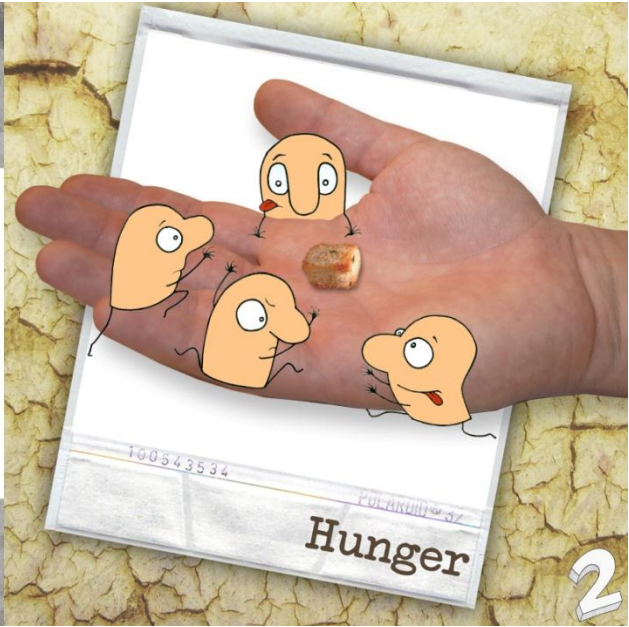
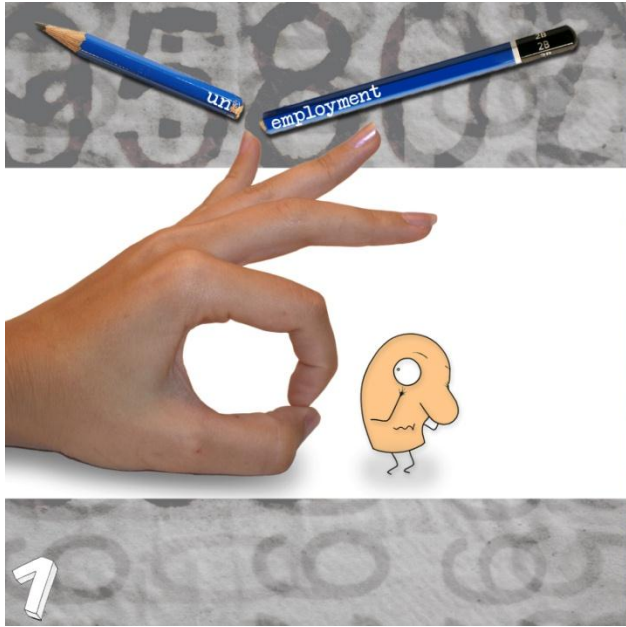
¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Valerie Sokolova for Art 69.

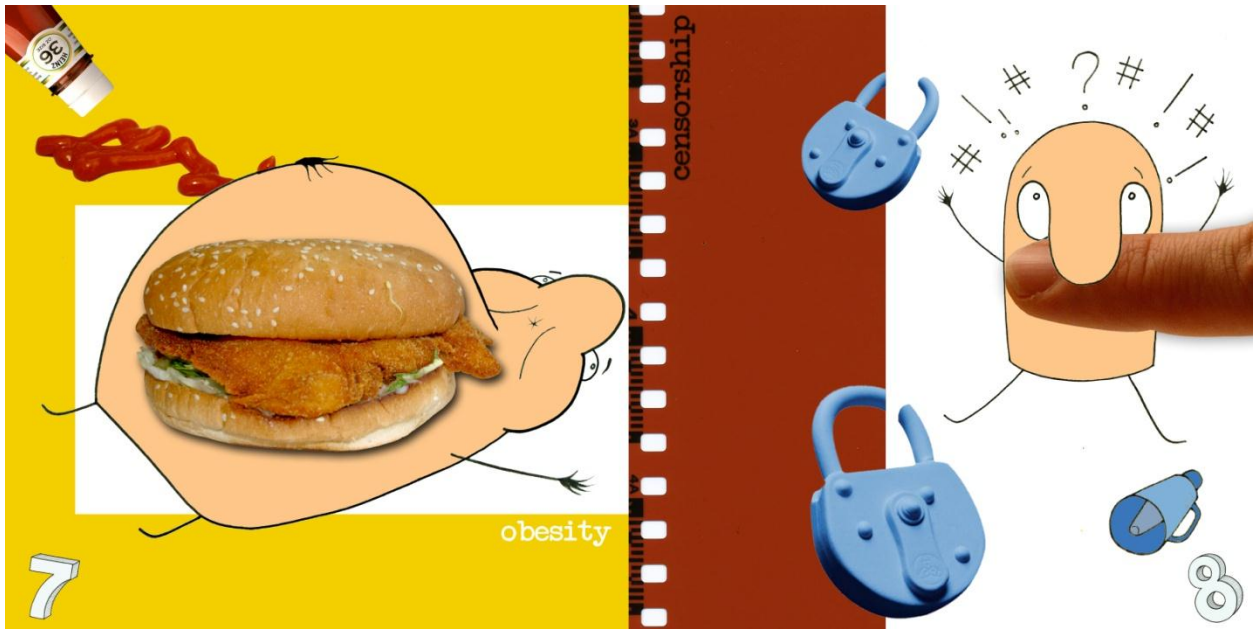
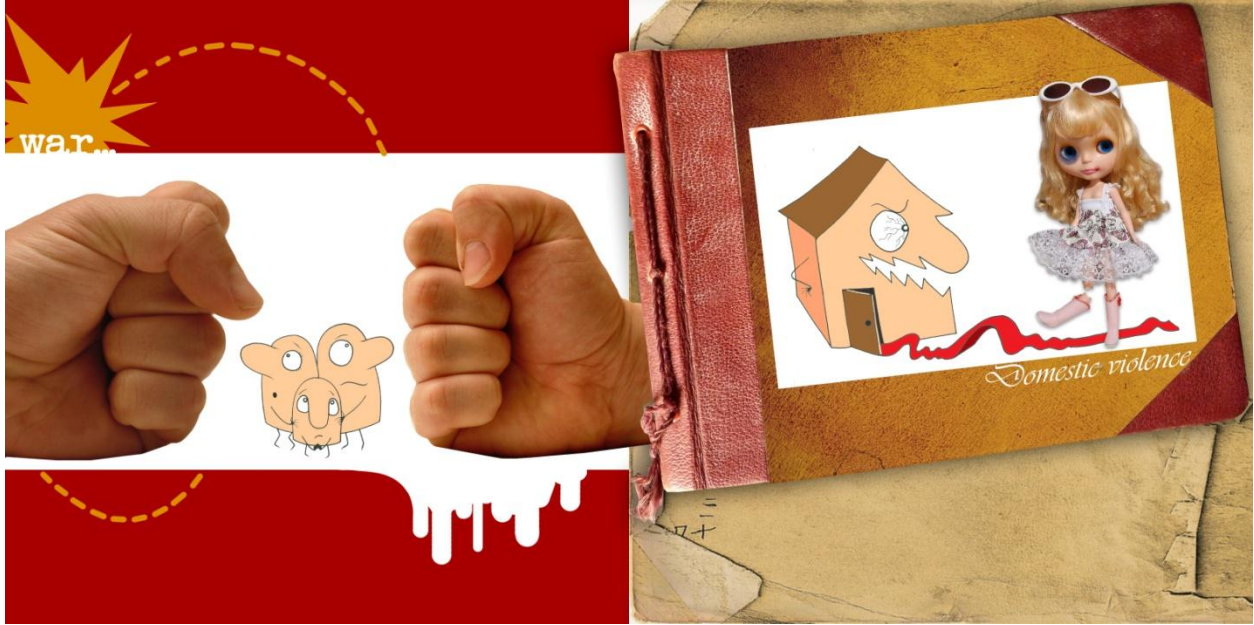


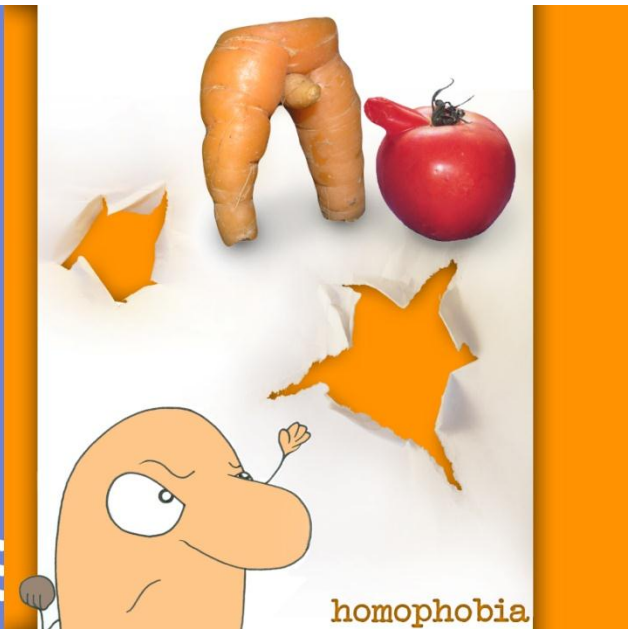
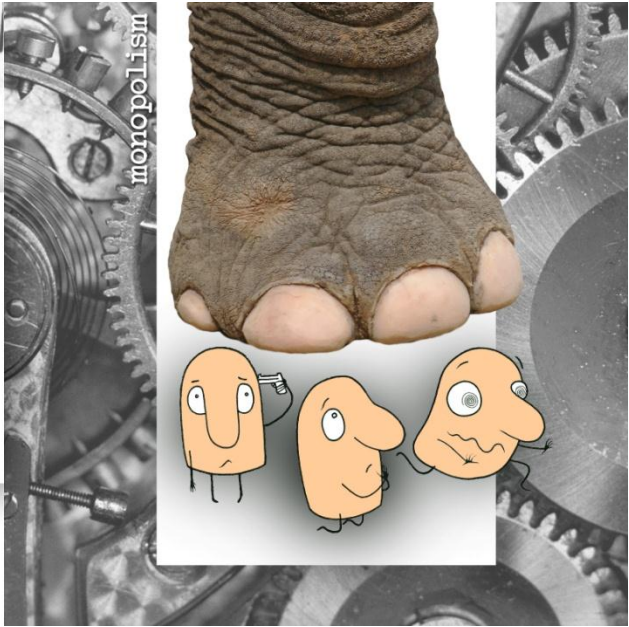
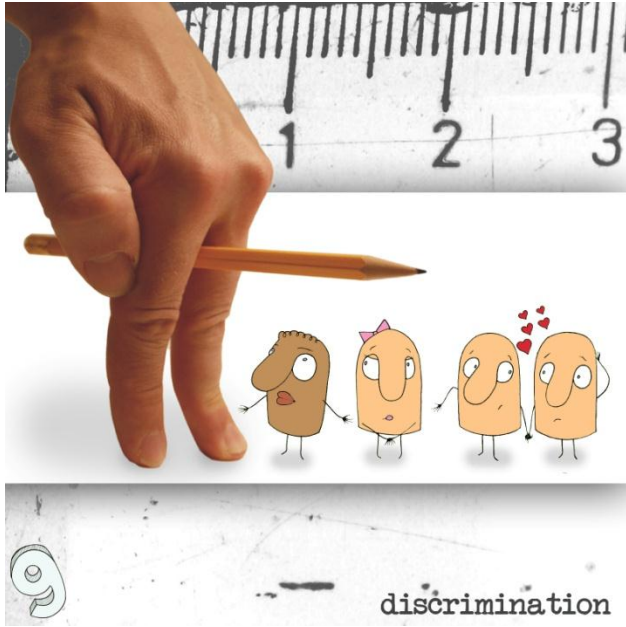
Introduction

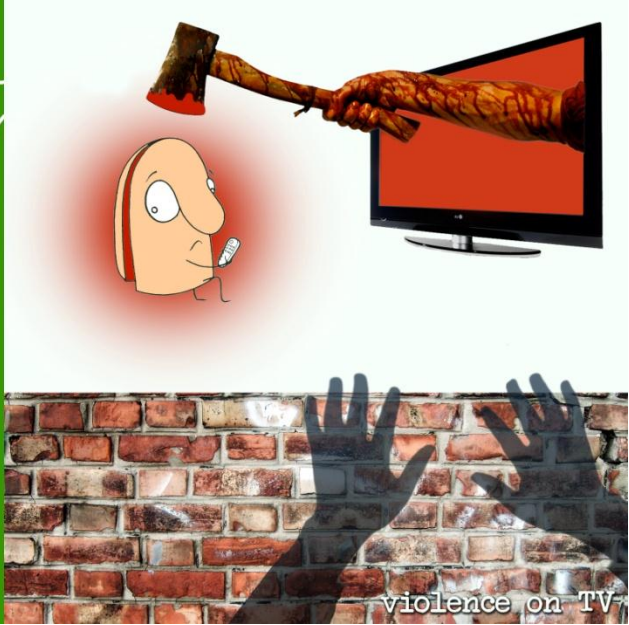
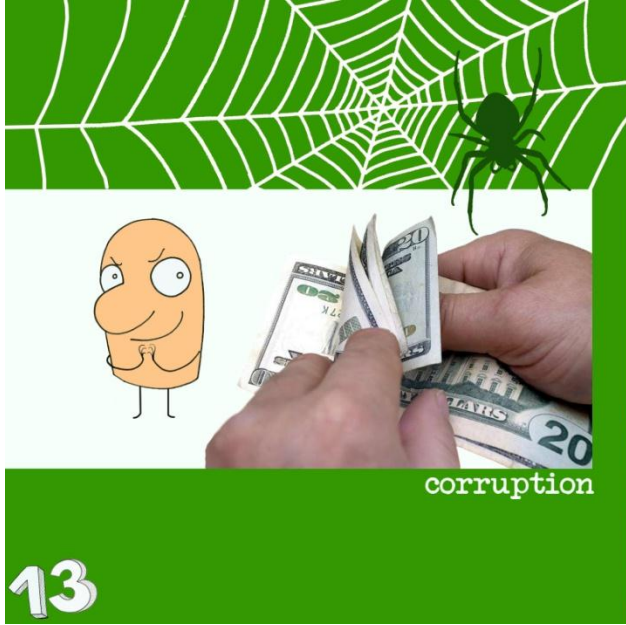
We live not in a perfect world. We are surrounded by lots of problems, which make our life only more complicated. Instead of fighting with all these problems we are getting used to them, close our eyes and hope that someone else will solve them for us. To change world for the better all we have to do is unite and say at loud that we want it. It is much easier than it seems. To live your life just for yourself is a waste of time, but if your life changed something in the world which is inhabited by millions people is very exciting! We all have to remember that small things count. Everyone should fight with unfairness but do it noble, with love in heart and with the sense of humor in order to stay forever in history as generation that changed the world for the better. Remember Good is when you make someone happy and Bad is when you make someone suffer and if you believe you make someone suffer for his own good it is more likely a bad idea.

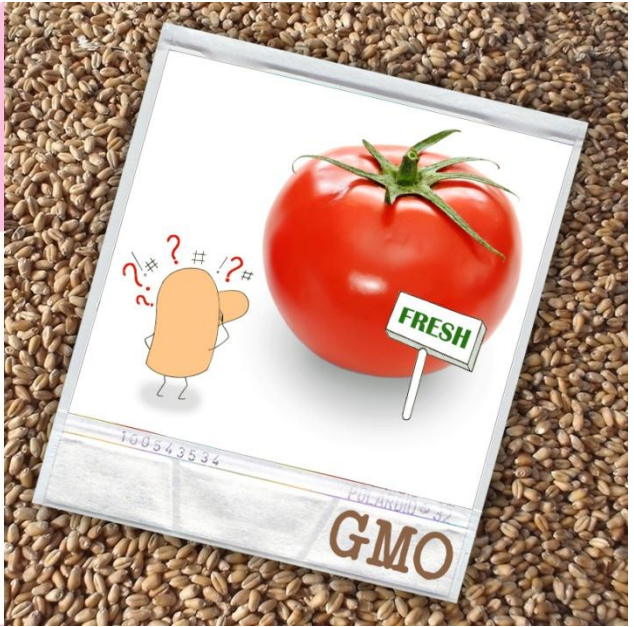
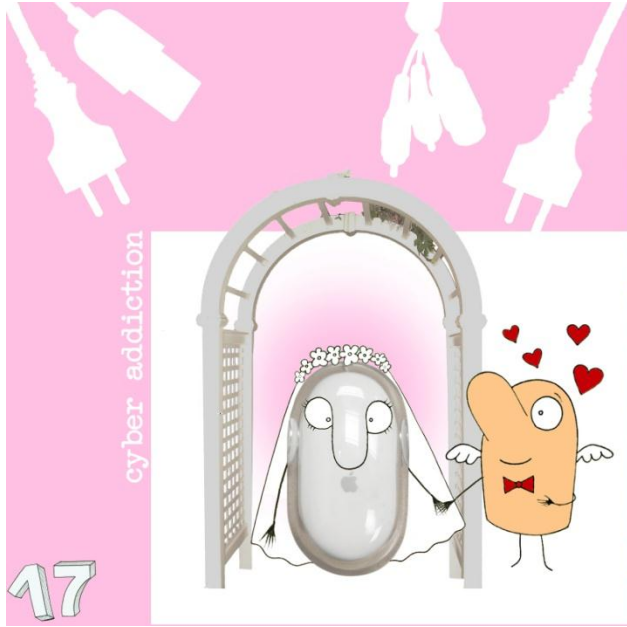


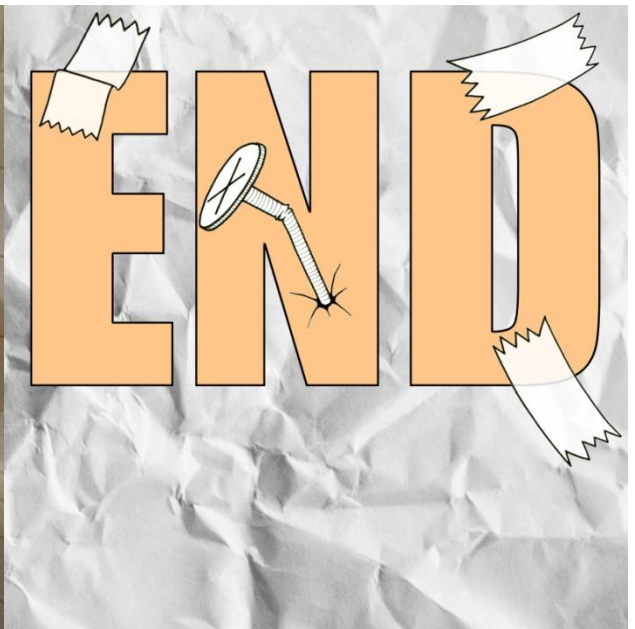
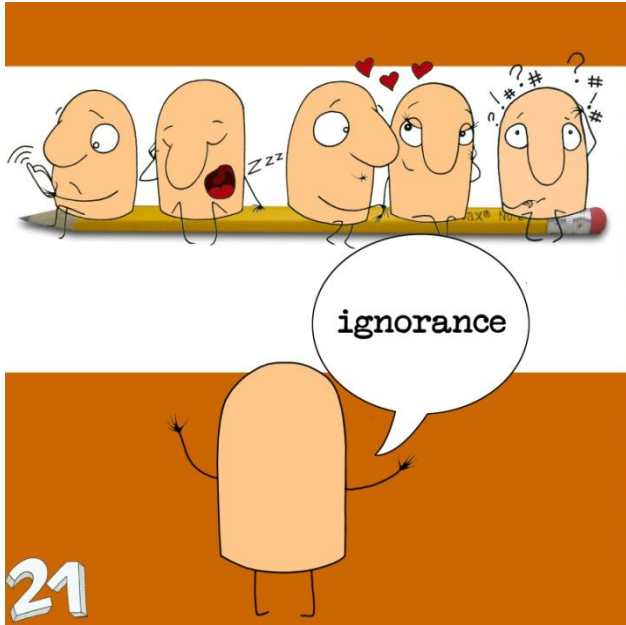












NINO KATSIA

The Influence of American Women's Attitudes and Values on Georgian Women in the United States¹

Introduction

Among various minority groups in the United States are immigrants from very traditional countries whose values, beliefs, and behaviors are very different from those of Americans. Some immigrants experienced cultural shock and some did not. Some managed to adapt to American culture and some could not. But in most cases, environmental influences made them experience the transformation and change of their values and viewpoints. I have chosen to study Georgian women to see how American values, beliefs, and attitudes influence even Georgian women with very strong traditional backgrounds to become more similar to Americans – in values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors.

“A minority group is a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their lives than members of a dominant or majority group. Worldwide, minority groups share several conditions: Their physical or cultural traits are held in low esteem by the dominant group, which treats them unfairly, and they tend to marry within their own group” (www.academic.udayton.edu).

It is clear that women in Georgia and in the United States represent minority groups. Moreover, inequality and patriarchy, or male dominance, appear to be universal. The origin of discrimination against females is lost in history, but the primary theory of how females became a minority group is their own society's focus on the physical limitations imposed by childbirth, according to Henslin. Inequality began very far back in history when men were hunters and women gathered edible plants for food and were at home taking care of children. These roles were determined by human nature as men were strong to handle tough tasks better than women. As a result, men became dominant. However, let's look at the latest history and see how women progressed in the United States and in Georgia.

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Aline Nusbacher for SOC 31: Introduction to Sociology.

1. Women as a minority group in the United States and in Georgia

a. Women in the United States

To understand how American women established their roles in society and became the women they are today, it will be better to see the path they took. “Not very far back in the United States society, both, a husband and a wife were legally one person – him. Women could not vote, buy property in their own name, make legal contracts, or serve on juries. The majority of women accepted that situation as no other way of behaving was appreciated by society or by them either. However, some felt that they had no identity of their own and tried to change that. This situation gave rise to the first wave of the feminist movement. The first wave of feminism, which lasted from 1848 to 1920, fought for women’s right to vote. The conservative branch dominated, and after the right to vote was won in 1920, the movement basically dissolved.

The second wave, which lasted from the 1960’s to the 1980’s, dealt with discrimination in pay and promotion, as well as cultural inequalities. Sociologist Janet Chafetz (1990) points out that up to this time most women thought of work as a temporary activity intended to fill the time between completing school and getting married. As more women took jobs and began to regard them as careers, however, they began to compare their working conditions with those of men. This shift in their reference group changed the way women viewed their conditions at work. The result was a second wave of protest against gender inequalities. The goals of this second wave (which continues today) are broad, ranging from raising women’s pay to changing policies on violence against women.

The third wave of feminism, which began in the 1990’s, is still emerging. Three main aspects are apparent. The first is a greater focus on the problems of women in the least industrialized nations. The second is criticism of the values that dominate work and society. Some feminists argue that competition, calloused emotions, toughness, and independence represent “male” qualities and need to be replaced with cooperation, openness, connection, and interdependence. A third aspect is the removal of impediments to women’s experiences of love and sexual pleasure (Henslin, 264).

b. Women in Georgia

Georgia, a small country situated in the Caucasus, has an old history and distinctive culture. Consisting of approximately 5 million people, it has always been at the edge of Europe and Asia. As communication with eastern countries was more frequent, that culture had more influence on Georgia than western culture. Today, Georgians are building democracy and attempting to integrate with western countries’ economy and culture. However, there are many sources of resistance since Georgia is a very traditional country with a lot of values that are important to every Georgians. The roots of tradition hark back to the age of feudalism as well as

a more ancient period of time. As Georgians always followed the irtraditions, they became so rooted that it became hard for Georgian people to get rid of them and adapt to new ones that came from America or Europe. These strongly rooted traditions infuse Georgian norms and inform the cultural conflict with American culture. Women face inequality in Georgia, although historically, women were always venerated in Georgian society. One example, of this is that Georgians always say “mother and father,” “wife and husband,” “girls and boys,” never vice versa. The Georgian woman’s character is best symbolized by the statue of Mother Georgia* (*Kartlis Deda*) that stands in the hills above Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. In her left hand she holds a bowl of wine with which she greets her friends and in her right hand is a sword to draw against her enemies.

The major problems Georgian women have always had were taboos and stereotypes in the minds of both men and women regarding the image of an ideal woman. Women had to be devoted to family, educated, untouched before marriage (cohabitation before marriage was not allowed), obedient to parents and husband, and much more. Every parent wanted their children to have these qualities and raised them according to these norms. If a woman did not follow these norms, she was considered vulgar and nobody wanted to marry her or be her friend. For example, I had a friend who I had known for a long time. When we turned 13, she had a boyfriend and, to my surprise, they started living together without their parents’ supervision. Because she was one of my best friends, I did not reject her. My parents did not forbid our friendship because they knew how much I valued it. However, they did not like me to go to my friend’s home. Even though my family is very hospitable, I felt that she was not welcome in my house. My parents’ attitude was very strange to me at that time, but later I understood why they acted that way. Soon after, I heard people talking about her as a disreputable girl and they said that she was a shame to her parents. My parents were the kind of Georgians who believed in stereotypes. A person’s reputation was important to them, and they cared about what others said. If my best friend had a bad reputation, that would affect me too. That was the reason why she was not as welcome in my house as she had been before. It did not end our friendship, but after several years, we stopped seeing each other because as we grew up we come to understand that we had different values.²

According to Baratashvili’s “*Research of Gender stereotypes and women’s discrimination in Georgia*” Georgians believed that women ought to have the following characteristics: trusty and devoted (99.5%), caring and kind (99.3%), calm and tolerant (98.3%), careful and restrained (95.9%), modest and respectful (93.7%). Characteristics such as being courageous, risky, initiative, active, independent, and ambitious were not valued. The more of these positive characteristics a woman had the more respected she was. Parents raised girls to follow these values, which were rooted so deeply that they were not challenged.

² See figure 1.

However, things have changed in recent years. After the Soviet Union disintegrated, Georgia was the first of its former republics to claim independence. This is when Georgian women's attitudes began to change due to cultural and economic integration with capitalist countries. Before this time, travel around the world, and foreign culture, music, literature, etc., were forbidden and mostly impossible for a typical Georgian, but now everyone had an opportunity to do whatever he or she wanted. As technology developed, it gave Georgians the opportunity to communicate, travel and access information more than in previous years. Georgian women started to change when they saw images of women from countries where the feminist movement had already changed the culture.

c. Women and Family in the United States

Women were mistreated when society thought of them as just housewives. "Looking back on the 20th century, we can see that the most unusual and distinctive decade for family life was the 1950s. In the period from the end of World War II to the early 1960's, many of the century-long trends turned around. Birth rates rose sharply, creating the "baby boom." The age at which the typical person married dropped to the lowest point of the century. Although the divorce rate continued to rise, it did so at a slower rate than in most other decades. Compared with any other decade, a larger proportion of children – slightly more than half – were being raised in a "breadwinner-homemaker family," consisting of a father who was employed outside the home and a mother who remained at home to care for the children and do the housework.

Observers at that time and scholars now, speak of a more family-oriented value system in the 1950's. Perhaps it would be more accurate to call it marriage-centered because attitudes toward marriage were more positive in the 1950's than in subsequent decades. Some intriguing testimony is reported in *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* by historian Elaine Tyler May, who studied a set of 300 interviews that had been conducted with white middle-class couples in 1955. The interviews showed the high value women and men placed on home, children, and marriage. Nearly everyone cited the benefits of children, home, and marriage in their personal lives. Few had seriously considered divorce. By and large, they told the interviewers that the sacrifices they had to make for the sake of their home lives were worthwhile.

Nevertheless, the sacrifices were not evenly distributed between husbands and wives. It was wives who were asked to make the greater sacrifice by forgoing employment outside the home. Bowing to contemporary ideology, the vast majority of wives refrained from working outside the home at least until their youngest children were in school. Some did not wish to work for pay and therefore sacrificed little; others gave up their dreams" (Cherlin, 32).

However, attitudes toward the family changed during the course of the following decades. In the 1950's the rate of women in the labor force was low. However, according to Robert H. Lauer and Jeanette C. Lauer, "in the 1960's and 1970's, the population of women

going into the labor force increased rapidly. Nearly 6 out of 10 women aged 16 and above were not in the labor force” (Lauer, 237), as shown in the following chart.

Year	Number (1,000)	Percent of Female population
1950	18,412	33.9
1960	23,272	37.8
1970	31,560	43.4
1980	45,487	51.5
1990	56,829	57.5
2000	66,303	59.9
2006	70,173	59.4

d. Women and Family in Georgia

Let’s take a look at women’s role in families. According *Research of Gender stereotypes and women’s discrimination in Georgia*, the situation is complicated. The inequality in Georgia is very noticeable. The majority of respondents (400 people in 4 regions) do not see a problem with inequality because their traditional understanding of family roles is that gender (male) automatically determines who is a head of a family. About 81.8% of women and 83.1% of men say that the head of a family should be a man. Others, mostly the younger generation, say both could be coequal heads of a family. Only 2.9% of women and 1.5% of men name a woman as the head of a family. The respondents claim that “it is just the way it should be.” Surprisingly, a majority of women did not see anything wrong with having inequality in their families. The best explanation to this would be the traditional norms for women.

It is believed that men and women have different roles in the families. Men are supposed to be bread winners and women are supposed to be housekeepers. Most of the time, women’s and men’s roles in families are affected by these beliefs: who is the bread-winner, who does the majority of the work at home, who has decision- making power, and who takes care of the children. In respondents’ families, only 18% of men were bread-winners. In 74%, this function was shared equally between men and women. Responses to the questionnaires indicated that both men and women exaggerate the extent of sharing responsibilities. Most men think that both of them take care of children equally. However, only 1.4% women think that.

Men admit that in families most of the housework is done by women, and they see that as a natural role for women, but women claim that their role is bigger than that. There are different opinions regarding who solves family problems. 32.4% of women think that they solve them, and only 2.9% think that their husbands do. Men think that they solve the problems 16.9% of the time and their spouses 7%. However, almost equal numbers of spouses think that they solve problems together.

e. Women and Work in the United States

According to the website Feminists for Life, “During World War II, with a shortage of male employees, factories and other work places opened up to women. Rosie the Riveter** was a well-known PR icon representing this shift in the 1940’s. In essence, when women have been perceived by a male-oriented structure as needed and valuable in the workplace (e.g., during wartime), the workplace has accommodated them. After the war, when the men returned, there was a major reversal. To help open up jobs for men and ease women back into their traditional roles, new public relations tools came into play, glorifying the role of homemaker and mother. This historical aberration in the 1950’s still strongly influences policies and attitudes regarding work-family issues. The Equal Pay Act ensuring women equal pay for equal work was not passed until 1963, and many people still considered this to be a radical piece of legislation.”³

Although women in the workplace started to be more widely accepted, mothers in the workplace were still not welcomed” (www.feministsforlife.org). However, women wanted to work and weren’t going to give up.

The lifestyle of women in the 1950’s became different compared to the one they had during World War II. During the war women were pushed to work. However, a decade later they were supposed to devote themselves to family and home. Women began to feel as if they had no personality. One such woman was Betty Friedan, a part time reporter, a mother, and a housewife. The traditional role of women in society as a wife and mother had been disturbing her for years she decided to study housewives. After seven years of research, her book titled *The Feminine Mystique* was finally published in 1963. The book spoke for women, proclaiming that they no longer would bear their dissatisfaction in silence. As already mentioned, World War II encouraged women to compete with men for jobs. Women accounted for only 25% of workers in 1940, but 36% in 1945. Things were going to change as men returning home expected to return to their jobs and women were expected to return to their home roles. Women were assigned to light and low paid categories of work. Furthermore, there was a fear that allowing women to continue working would undermine families. Despite this propaganda, 75% of all women wanted to continue their work.” (www.daphne.palomar.edu)

According to Lauer and Lauer’s *Marriage and Family*, “since the 1960’s, women have gone into the labor force in increasing numbers. Most married as well as single women now work outside the home; the most dramatic increase in labor force participation has occurred among married women with children under the age of 6. Women may take jobs or enter careers. Those who are employed become part of either a dual-earner or dual-career family. Dual-career families include three types of marital roles: traditional, participant, and role-sharing. The commuter marriage is a special form of the dual-career family and poses a serious challenge to the maintenance of intimacy.

³ See figure 2.

Women who choose employment outside the home do so for a variety of reasons. They work for economic reasons (including consumerism and the desire for financial security), for the fulfillment that work brings, or the power gained.

Home and work affect each other. Problems can arise from home-to-work spillover or work-to-home spillover. Both men and women experience conflicting demands from home and work.

Dual-income families face a number of challenges. One is the issue of equity, especially in relationship to household responsibilities. Progress has been made, but husbands and wives still do not assume equal shares of the responsibilities, even when the wife as well as the husband is involved in a career. Other important challenges include the issues of children and child care, the costs of both parents working (including its effects on children), time management, and role negotiation.

However, dual-income families can have as much satisfaction as single-income families. If the various challenges are addressed successfully, the couple can have greater higher marital satisfaction as well as a number of other benefits from the arrangement.

Work is an integral part of our well-being. Wives and mothers, who want to work and gain employment tend to find themselves assuming a heavier load of responsibilities. They still prefer to work and are more satisfied if they have employment. Men still tend to think of themselves as responsible for being providers and may have ambivalent feelings about cutting back on their hours or becoming house-husbands. But the life satisfaction of both men and women in dual-income families can be as high as it is for those in other arrangements” (Lauer, 255).

f. Women and Work in Georgia

Historically, women in Georgia's male-dominated society have been expected to serve their husbands and children, while the men made the decisions and observed their warrior traditions. In wartime, the women carried out their husbands' duties as well, - hence the Georgian word “deda-katsi,” which literally means “mother-man.” It is, however, a stereotype which has been constantly challenged over the last 10 years, as women find themselves forced to leave the family circle and find themselves jobs. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many Georgian men have found they are unable to adapt to the new realities and the demands of a market economy. In a nation where 90% of the population lived below the poverty line and 30% suffered from malnutrition, women were often obliged to take on the role of the family's breadwinner. However, it often led to arguments between spouses because of Georgians' understandings of the family and women's roles in society. Georgians believed that women want to and have to take care of their families and homes and not have careers or jobs. They say that working is good but they believe that their primary role is as a housewife.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, women struggle to establish their roles in businesses. While the law tries to make the business environment equal for men and women, we still face inequality in practice. N. Elizbarashvili, president of the Georgian association “Women in Business,” states that out of 16,376 small enterprises, only 1.3% are owned by women. The reason is, again, the gender stereotype that women are responsible for raising children and carrying out the vast majority of household duties (www.unece.org).

A perfect example would be a situation that occurred in my family. After my mother graduated from the State University of Georgia, which is the main university in Georgia, as an honor student from the business faculty, she had several offers from state and private organizations to work. My parents were just married and wanted to have a baby. My father asked her not to accept the offers and become a housewife. Of course she wanted to work but not as much as she wanted to have a family, because she gave up her career and devoted herself to her family. Here we have a situation that deals with the beliefs Georgian women have; for them being a mother and wife is the primary goal in their lives. Later on, I will return to this example to show how both my father’s and my mother’s values and beliefs have changed and how American society influenced this change.

g. American Women and Education

According to James M. Henslin, “In early years in the United States, there was no free public education. The average family could not afford to send its children to grade school. As the country industrialized during the 1880’s, political and civic leaders recognized the need for an educated work force. They also feared the influx of foreign values, for this was a period of high immigration. They saw public schools as a means to accomplish two major goals: Producing more educated workers and “Americanizing” immigrants.” (Henslin, 354)

Henslin also states that “as industrialization progressed and fewer people made their living from farming, formal education came to be regarded as essential to the well-being of society. With the distance to the nearest college too far and the cost of tuition and lodging too great, many high school graduates were unable to attend college. Based on statistics, today Americans receiving a bachelor’s degree is twice as common as completing high school used to be” (Henslin, 354).

h. Georgian Women and Education

Education has always been a priority for every Georgian, especially those who lived in the capital, Tbilisi, and in large cities. However, the goal was not to produce career women, but to educate women to be better mothers and raise well-behaved children. In addition, an educated woman would know how to behave in society and not defame her family. When a woman was ready to marry, an important requirement was an educated man. Parents’ permission was an important value, as well. Thus, if someone married a person his or her parents did not

like, this could destroy the marriage. However, marriage without the parents' permission did occur.

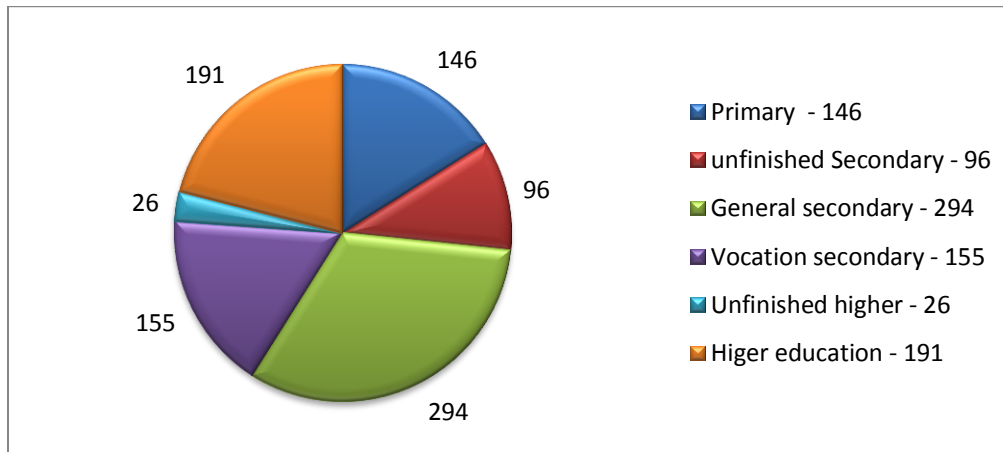
The following information is provided by the statistics department of Georgian:

Students at higher educational institutions by regions⁴

	2006/2007		2007/2008	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Georgia, total	73,221	67,586	61,513	50,590
City of Tbilisi (Capital)	45,506	44,605	42,407	35,655
Abkhaz AR	4,446	3,401	3,269	2,340
Adjarian AR	5,267	6,412	3,809	4,154
Guria	69	70	14	22

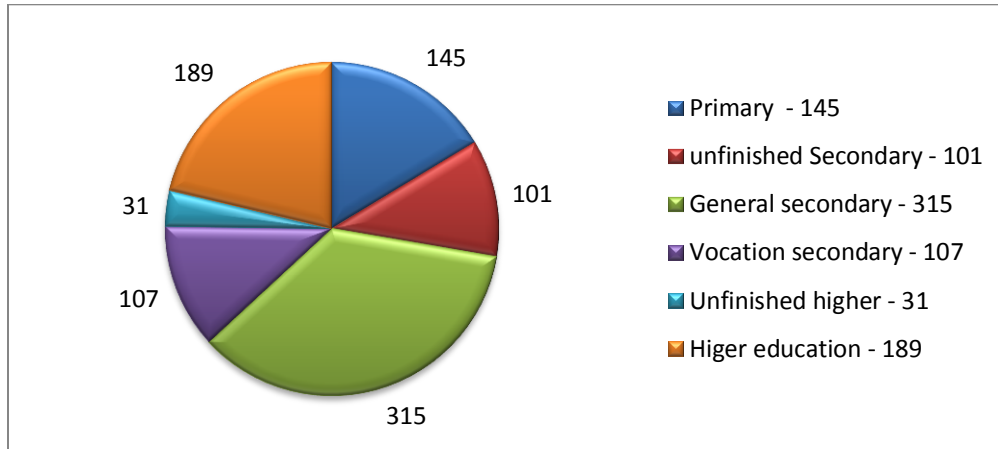
Source: DS/Division of Social and Demographic Statistics.

The level of education of the whole female Georgian population, having 6 or more years of education per 1000 women



⁴ According to the location of the educational institution.

The level of education of the whole male Georgian population, having 6 or more years of education per 1,000 men



Source: DS/According to the data of 2002 census.

2. Media's role in shaping American women's image and how that image impacts on Georgian women

The magazines, including radio, movies and television, play an important role in the shaping of social values. In the 1950's, television shows portrayed women in traditional roles. Examples include *The Burns and Allen Show* (1950-1958), *Father Knows Best* (1954-1962), *I Love Lucy*, *Our Miss Brooks*, and *The Honeymooners* reviled the gender issues. In the 1960's many women realized that only being a housewife was not enough for them. Television used women's aspiration to work and build a career and produced shows and movies that portrayed men and women who sought what they really wanted. This in turn affected people's consciousness. (www.daphne.palomar.edu). For example, a movie based on a book by Dashiell Hammett, *The Maltese Falcon*, showed that a woman can be something other than a housewife; it showed women's new roles. A woman could work as did Effie Perine, Sam Spade's assistant, or be a risk taker such as Miss O'Shaughnessy. These new images gave birth to the concept of a femme fatale - a woman to whom a person feels irresistibly attracted, usually with dangerous or unhappy results - which played a huge part in shaping a new risk-taker image for women.

Some academics consider the role of the media as manipulative and, at the same time, reflective. Historians avoid debate over the media's influence because they are more comfortable with the traditional print media. They do not tend to be heavy consumers of mass culture themselves. The content analysis confirms that although in the 1950's television did systematically reinforce the feminine mystique which Betty Friedan found so important), it has limits. Today, sitcoms and dramas portray women as central characters or in positions equal to

men's, in contrast to the 1950's sitcoms. Examples are, *Ally McBeal* and *Will and Grace* (www.daphne.palomar.edu).

Therefore, the images of competent professional women seen on television had a huge impact on American women. Women began to be more independent and their status improved. However, discrimination still exists in some areas. Today, American women think of themselves as independent and strong. They know what they want and make every effort to fulfill their wants. This media message reaches people all over the world, including Georgia. As already mentioned, during the Soviet Union's rule, economic and cultural integration with capitalist countries was discouraged. Communists did everything to avoid it. However, after becoming an independent country, everything changed. American music, literature, art, and movies that were forbidden by the communists now became available. Georgians started to adapt to what they were reading, listening to and seeing on television.

Although Georgians became familiar with modern western culture, it still did not feel right. Generations that were brought up knowing and believing one thing now came across something different and contradictory. Where they previously believed that a woman should be a housewife who is devoted to family and always listens to a husband, they now saw an image of a courageous, risk-taking, active, independent and ambitious woman. Integration helped them become familiar with this image but the taboos they held were so strongly rooted that they didn't try to realize that kind of behavior in their lives. However, a new generation was on its way beginning around 1990. The youth were brought up seeing the independent American woman's image. The Georgian traditions and that image mixed with each other, but a new generation managed to maintain balance between the old Georgian stereotypes and the new American woman's image.

3. Georgians in the United States

a. When and How It Started

The people of Georgia have strong beliefs and have always fought for them no matter the situation. Throughout Georgian history, which began approximately in 10 B.C., there were hundreds of wars and invasions. Georgians tried to be a free and independent people. They could not adapt to the Soviet Union's regime. After the 1970's, a small group trying to avoid communism immigrated to the United States. These immigrants were brought up on old traditions and taboos and were not familiar with American culture. They knew that living conditions were much better in capitalist countries than in communist countries and their rights were taken into consideration. They knew that they would have opportunities to realize their goals in personal lives and in careers which were practically impossible in the Soviet Union, especially if you were against the regime. That very first wave of Georgian immigrants adjusted fairly well to the United States. They learned English and the American way of handling things,

but most of them rejected some of the American values. The reason was their backgrounds and the traditions and taboos they had internalized.

a. The influence of American culture on Georgian women in the United States of America

1. Changes in attitudes towards family

The media's influence did not only impact American society but influenced many other countries as well. The images it showed spread the idea of an American woman's image worldwide, including to Georgia. Slowly, the idea spread that a woman can be more than a housewife. Not being a housewife became a choice a woman makes.

Georgian women's attitude towards family changed, but not significantly. The divorce rate, for example, has risen since 1990. In earlier years, there were several reasons why people did not divorce. One was a woman's reputation while the other was the economic situation. A woman who had more than one sexual partner was a disgrace. It was a shame for her, her parents and her children. In order not to disgrace their families, women stayed with their spouses whether they were happy or not. After being integrated into American culture, Georgian women realized they can support themselves and raise their children alone. The economic situation in the United States helped them find a well paid job. That gave them an incentive to rethink the values of happiness. Nowadays, if divorce is necessary, the economic problem does not stand in their way. However, before integration into American society, it was different. Women tried not to divorce and stayed with their husbands even if they were not happy together. There were exceptions, of course. Often, women who were single, divorced or widowed chose to live with their parents or relatives. They did this to conform to society's norms.

Most of the time remarriage was difficult because most men wanted a pure wife with no children. This was even true for men who were divorced and had children. However, a woman could find a future husband if everyone knew that she was truly devoted to family and no one heard that she did something inappropriate, such as cohabitation with a man. Let's take my great-grandparents as an example. My great-grandfather was one of the first scholars to establish the economic faculty in the main university of Georgia. A man in his position had to be in the Communist Party, but he didn't want to join the party or cooperate with the political regime. He knew he was in danger. In 1936, at age 33, he was killed. My great grandmother was left with no financial support and an 8-year old child. She started living with her brothers but a librarian's salary was not enough to support herself and a child. She met a man who did not care that she was married before because he knew that she was a very respectable woman. She was a good mother and a good housewife. They were married.

However, the stereotype of divorced women still exists, although not as much among the young generation. It's still not a good choice to leave a husband no matter how bad a husband or father he is, and live alone with children or with a different partner. Most women prefer to devote themselves to families and not divorce because of their children. They believe it is

important for both parents to raise the children together for the children’s benefit. They don’t realize that being in an unhealthy and unhappy environment may have a worse effect on children than being far from their fathers. But divorce still is a choice nowadays. Georgians living in the United States who are influenced by American culture may see that divorce may be a better choice for them and their children. To live alone is okay as well, as long as they can support themselves and their children.

However, American women’s image and lifestyle has not influenced the generation of the 1970’s or earlier. For them it is still not appropriate for a woman to live alone without a parent, husband or other relative. For example, I’m a 24 year old Georgian woman living with my parents. When I decided to transfer to New York University, I suggested to my parents that it would be more convenient for me to live on the campus. My parents were opposed, telling me that it is not appropriate for a woman to live alone without supervision, even though they really trust me. It means that they still were not able to get rid of the stereotypes as a new generation, including me, did.

2. Changes in attitudes towards education and work

Even though Georgian women always saw themselves as housewives, in times of financial crisis in their family they went to work. Most Georgian immigrants came to the United States for economic reasons, although some looked for political refugee status, and others came for education, and on. But most of the time, the poor economic situation in Georgia made men and women come to in the United States to work and support themselves and relatives in Georgia. Most of them already had an education and degrees in Georgia. From the schedule provided by the statistics department of Georgia, we see that the unemployment rate is considerably higher among graduated specialists. In 2007, 44.4 percent of unemployed women and 40.6 percent of unemployed men had a higher education. In comparison with 2005, this number increased by 4.8 percent and 2.2 percent respectively (www.statistics.ge).

Unemployment by level of education in thousands

	2005		2006		2007	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Primary	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.1
Basic	2.8	9.8	4.3	8.5	4.7	8.2
Secondary	30.7	58.4	25.2	61.6	29.4	53.6
Primary Professional,	10.7	12.9	9.4	10.2	4.6	5.5

Vocational						
Secondary Professional	28.0	16.3	24.7	19.6	26.1	17.9
Higher	47.6	61.1	45.1	64.5	52.1	58.4
Total	120.1	159.2	109.1	165.4	117.3	143.7

Georgian immigrants had a hard time adjusting due to language barriers, different working skills, and many other factors that prevented them from getting decent jobs. To support themselves, they became home attendants, sales persons, babysitters, etc. They could not use their higher education skills in the United States.

As the new generation in America experienced a hard time, some of their traditional values changed. Parents saw that the American lifestyle differed from Georgia's in many ways. Some things were not acceptable for them, for example, a couple living together without marriage. But some values were exactly what they wanted for their children. An American education and career success were primary values. Thus, intergenerational mobility among Georgians in the United States is common. Let's look at how American women influenced Georgian women.

Georgian parents in the United States saw that a woman can be a good mother and wife and still be successful in her career. That made them take a second look at higher education. Instead of viewing education for women as something that helped them marry educated men and create an intellectual family nest, they began to see education as a means for economic success. They knew that there were opportunities to reach a good career. By pushing their children to study and by supporting them financially, the children could achieve more success than their parents. Having my parents' example in mind, we see how Georgians who follow Georgian traditions are still influenced by American culture. If my father asked my mother to stay at home and she did not go against him, believing that it was the right thing to do, they act differently when it comes to me. They push, help, and support me to study well and build my career.

3. Child discipline, Housework, and Conflicts in Georgian families

One of the main traits men looked for in their future wives was what kind of mother a woman would be. Traditional Georgian women were exactly what they needed. Mothers played the main role in disciplining children as they were the ones who were at home, while fathers were at work. Accordingly, men wanted to marry women who would raise well disciplined and true Georgians. Children were raised based on the values most Georgians had. The main traits a child had to have were respect for elders and politeness. One example that illustrates the way parents and grandparents thought children should show respect is that in some Georgian areas older people stood up whenever a child entered a room. That showed children that they were

respected and were expected to do the same. They also had to help parents, with boys doing some of the man's work and girls helping their mothers with house work. However, as times changed the new generation's attitudes changed. Teenage girls wanted to look as beautiful, independent, and strong as images of women on television. Children in high schools started to wear makeup, dress like adults, and smoke to prove that they were adults. The more they acted like this, the more disappointed their parents were. The mothers were blamed for their children's behaviors because they were the ones who spent more time with them and were responsible for their behavior. This often caused arguments between spouses, which sometimes led to serious conflict.

Georgians responses to permissiveness in American families are interesting. Those Georgian parents who are traditional prefer to send their children to Georgia, at least until graduating from secondary school. Seeing the difference between American and Georgian cultures and not wanting their children to lose their roots, parents try to raise children with Georgian traditions. As peers and environment plays a large role in a child's development, they prefer that their children be surrounded by Georgians at homes, at school, and other places. However, the young generation thinks otherwise. They want their children raised with American values.

Domestic violence exists in some Georgian families. In some cases, children's bad behavior was added to a bad economic situation. Most of the time, financial crisis is the reason for aggression and abuse in families. Men who are unable to find decent jobs take out their frustration on their families. Women are so dominated by men that they do not do anything to defend themselves. According to information provided by the Anti-Violence Network of Georgia, "the problem of the domestic violence was tabooed. Some regarded it as a problem that was created by the feminists but the others thought that talking about the problem of domestic violence openly was unacceptable, and they were claimed that interference in the private life of a person is wrong. In many cases discussions of domestic violence caused aggression. Often the problem was ignored. A majority of Georgians said that, such cases did not happen. Psychologists' explained that abused women denied being victims. The Georgian Young Lawyer's Association (GYLA) studied domestic violence. They stated that the courts do not have the data on domestic violence cases because it was not against the law. But, jurists and human rights analysts successfully influenced the Georgian parliament to adopt the law Protecting and Aiding Victims of Domestic Violence" (www.avng.ge). However, it still does not work well. Georgian women prefer not to bring their problem into light. Below is the number of reported cases of domestic violence in Georgia.⁵

⁵ Statistics department of Georgia, 2007-2008.

	Offender		Victim	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
In Georgia, total	38	320	313	45
<16	0	0	0	1
16-24	2	20	19	0
25-44	19	182	183	20
25-44	19	182	183	20
>44	17	118	111	24

Conflicts or abuse occurs less often in the United States than in Georgia. One possible reason is that immigrating makes spouses feel alone. Therefore, they depend on each other and work as a team instead of fighting. Another possible reason is that spouses immigrated to America either to work or to study. In the early years of arrival in the United States, the struggle to adjust to the environment may exhaust them so that they do not have the strength to fight with each other. The third and possibly the main reason is women's new attitudes. Knowing that they and their children will be defended by the law, women do not let men abuse them. However, statistics show that many abused women still avoid reporting their situations.

Conflicts in families have other causes. Housework is a major issue. The young Georgian men raised in Georgian traditions still follow Georgian values, although not as strongly as their parents. It is well known among Georgians that women have more ability to adjust to a situation or environment than men. Accordingly, the men expect the women to be traditional women and do all the housework. Most of the women now are more focused on their careers and have work schedules as busy as men's. After a hard working day, women and men need a rest, but men, still thinking a woman's primary role is being a housewife, do not appreciate that fact and want spouses to keep house and take care of them and the children. Women find their role very exhausting. That raises issues in the family and becomes the reason for conflict. Of course, there are exceptions. For example, men may help do the shopping, or take the children out for a walk. In a normally functioning family, where husbands take into consideration that wives also have a busy work schedule, spouses try to find ways to make women's roles easier. For example, they hire babysitters and housekeepers if they can afford these services.

Conclusion

I have shown how American society influences immigrants from a traditional country like Georgia. Although Georgians have adapted to the United States tradition, Georgian traditions do not let Georgian women realize themselves in many areas. Even though the law places no limits on women's rights to marry or not, to cohabitate or not, to work, or choose careers, this does not mean that husbands, parents, or internalized social stereotypes and taboos let them do so. However, I have shown that traditional culture changes as immigrants are exposed to new modern American women's statuses and roles. Georgians in the United States experience changes as they face a culture that contradicts theirs. So far, the changes are small because of deep-rooted traditions. But change has begun and I believe Georgians will become more like Americans the longer they live in the United States.

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Figure 1



Figure 2

MARIA SUBERT

Ebonics, Integration, Human Rights, and Human Dignity: An Examination of Mother Tongue¹

1. Ebonics and the Problem of Integration into the American Society

It is difficult to add something new to the long-time debate on Ebonics, even though it is widely acknowledged that the dominant factor in the underperformance of African American children in American public schools is their poor English language abilities. When educators in Oakland, California alarmed the nation that the black community's different language is worth more attention as part of the problem, 71% of African American students were enrolled in special education classes already.²

To improve black students' English proficiency, the Oakland United School district called for acknowledging Ebonics as an individual language in its resolution plan, and recommended the contrasting method between their home language and Standard English. This proposal created further dispute whether Ebonics was a dialect, slang, incorrect use of English, or a complex individual language with its own inner logic and rules. Linguists, such as Robert L. Williams and Ernie Smith, defended Ebonics, relating it to the Niger-Congo speech based on dominant pseudo linguistic and non-verbal aspects of both languages, common underlying thought processes, along with similar morphology and syntax. They emphasized the common patterns of what Americans think are 'deviations' or 'mistakes,' and connected them to their historical origin and cultural background.³

In 2008, thirteen years after Oakland United School District's resolution, 44 out of 77 students did not pass the eighth grade at Myra Bardwell Elementary School in Chicago.⁴ ACT

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Maureen Haggerty for English 12.

² John Rusell Rickford and Russell John Rickford, "Education," *Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English* (New York, 2000), 164.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-177.

⁴ Bradwell Elementary School, <www.cpsalumni.org/school/bradwell,-myra-bradwell-elementary-school.>.

statistics released by Susan Tave Zelman, superintendent of the state education department, Ohio, are similarly “not so positive for African-American students, whose 2008 results are actually lower than they were in 2004. In fact, the gap between whites and blacks has been growing, not shrinking. The scores demonstrate that black children are still being left behind in this era of No Child Left Behind and charter schools. They were supposed to erase the achievement gap, not make it worse.”⁵ As it can be seen, the language problem of the African American youth is still worth further analysis.

California scholar, Alondra Oubre, took a popular standpoint in her writing on Black English Vernacular, a position that can also be linked to the above statistics. She summarizes Sheila Meyer’s ideas that “African American modes of communication and expression, or what she called Ebonics, are grounded in African World View, a view which she claimed emphasizes rhythm, analogy, metaphor and intuition.” Oubre acknowledges that “over the past twenty years, several other Black linguists have maintained that Ebonics is based on an African perspective which, they say, differs radically from Euro-Western views of nature and reality.” However, she said, “this is not to diminish the importance of Blacks becoming proficient in the language of the dominant culture – standard English – if they are to become integrated into mainstream American society.” Oubre thinks that sooner or later, prejudice, discrimination, and negative stereotypes on black people’s “irritating” speech pattern will lead African Americans to assimilate into white “middle class codes and conducts.”⁶

Based on the phenomena that in certain situations black people perform some level of “code switching” between Ebonics and Standard English in their language practice, Alondra Oubre suggests that they will become bi-vernacular – speaking African English and Standard English equally well – if they want to integrate. In this argument, Oubre does not consider Meyer’s idea that language is fundamentally connected to a specific world-view, since if she expects black people to become equally proficient in both English and Ebonics, she automatically anticipates the existence of both an African and a Western European mindset. The objective of my examination is whether these two world-views can be united, and if yes, how would it be possible.

Villem Flusser, Brazilian philosopher, analyzes this African World View in a different context. He writes about Brazil in 1987: “Africans made up a majority of people, but there was no conscious connection to Africa. These people were naked when they were thrown from the slave ships onto the Brazilian shores. Only in their inner selves deformed by hard work they carried with them and then brought out their cultural traditions in the form of music, dance and religious rites.”⁷ Flusser’s analysis on language brings up something what I find very important. “There was one common thread: the Portuguese language. On the one hand, Luso-Brazilian is

⁵ Susan Tave Zelman, <<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cnscs/view.asp?id=713379585632411193>>.

⁶ Alondra Oubre, “Black English Vernacular (Ebonics) and Educability A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language, Cognition and Schooling” (1997) p 3., <<http://www.aawc.com/ebonicsarticle.html>>.

⁷ Villem Flusser, “Taking Up Residence in Homelessness,” *Writings* (Minneapolis/London 2002), p. 96.

archaic in comparison to the language spoken in Portugal ... on the other hand, it is wild (African elements had made their way in).”⁸ This shows a natural correlation between cultures and languages.

Alondra Oubre puts Ebonics’ problem between “cultural-algebraic” coordinates. “Very little of the recent public discourse on Ebonics has been focused at the intersection of, one hand, Black English Vernacular and on the other hand, cognitive development ... and intelligence performance within the context of Euro-Western literate societies. Yet, the interlocking multiple causes of African American academic underachievement probably converges at precisely this intersection.”⁹

From now on, the dispute is not about linguistics, but about communication. In every form of interaction, the basic problem is that meaning can’t be communicated. In every message, the receiver decodes only what is understandable for him or her; people use their own background and experience to encode and decode messages in their own frame of reference. Only if we put our message in the same frame of reference can we expect understanding. The burden of communication lies with the sender. If we accept that African Americans preserved a different word-view in Ebonics, we have to accept that Standard English, especially reading and comprehension, is out of their frame of reference. Their life experiences, their logic, and their messages can’t be understood by “Western Literates,” and vice versa. Since Oubre misses this logical continuity, she expects a “code switching” on behalf of the black community. This will never result in communication.

In my understanding, the solution requires double “code switching.” “Western Literates” in the United States have to give up their superior position and widen their word-view by accepting Afro-American culture and Ebonics as part of it. On the other hand, African Americans ought to open for the larger society. Reverend Jesse Jackson gave the same suggestion in his famous speech on Ebonics: “Your message is not getting through,” he said. “The language and the message must get synchronized.”¹⁰ He mistakenly talked to the Oakland educators with this advice, when he was supposed to address the black community. African Americans and the rest of American society need to work out a common frame of reference for a successful dialogue.

Although Oubre’s reasoning is different, she arrives at the same conclusion; in order to help black youth achieve higher levels in education, both African American students and their teachers need a “perceptual transformation” in code switching between Ebonics and English. It needs to be clarified that this process involves linguistic and non-linguistic elements, since this

⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

⁹ Alondra Oubre, “Black English Vernacular (Ebonics) and Educability A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language, Cognition and Schooling” (1997) p. 3., at <<http://www.aawc.com/ebonicsarticle.html>>.

¹⁰ John Rusell Rickford and Russell John Rickford, “Education,” Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English (New York, 2000), 163.

dialogue requires not only legitimate language and an intention to communicate, but also an ability of correspondence.

2. Mother Tongue and Human Rights

Academic dispute on Ebonics in America is following an inductive logic, in which Western linguistic classifications are applied to define whether it is a legitimate language or just an English vernacular. The most sensitive point in this argument is that Ebonics is spoken by people who were stripped and robbed from their original language by the very same Western culture when they were forcefully removed from their original culture. The objective of this essay is to analyze the diverse definitions of Black English and to bring the logic and power system behind those classifications to light.

It is a “tragic irony,” says Mateene, that the languages of original African nations were seldom “national” or “official” languages until now on the African continent, “whereas non-African foreign, colonial languages” were.¹¹ Mateene defines this as academic imperialism,” in which mother tongue speakers of English... have determined what English should be taught and how it should be learned.” Beyond this dominant function of “Standard English,” independent languages of the world were (and still are) judged by western linguistic norms. Danish linguist, Skutnabb-Kangas, professor of Roskilde University, calls to attention that when we define vernaculars as a localized “nonstandard” use of Standard English, this definition contains a top-down power relation.¹² Our perception on Ebonics similarly contains a top-down perception when we define it as African American English Vernacular, since the definition contains its dependency from and to the Standard American English. The power relation drastically changes using a bottom-up approach. From this perspective, African Americans seem to be “people who have had power – power to govern their own lives and societies,” says Peter L. Patrick, but this power was “withheld from them by others.”¹³ (Moreover, their access also to Western culture was constantly denied.) This life contained a primary language; it is inevitable when they had a well-organized human life. As a historical parallel to this phenomenon, we might examine Native American languages and their fate in American society. “Navajo children are to taught in a foreign language,” explains Pfeiffer, “they are taught concepts which are foreign; they are taught values which are foreign, they are taught life styles which are foreign; and they are taught by human models which are foreign.” This is the way both Indians and African Americans reflect to they incorporation to Western culture. Skutnabb-Kangas reveals that the hidden purpose behind this academic model is to overpower people of other ethnic groups, as they

¹¹ Tore Skutnabb-Kangas / Robert Phillipson, Mother Tongue: The Theoretical and Sociopolitical Construction of a Concept (Denmark,1984), p. 460.

¹² Ibid., p. 462.

¹³ Peter L. Patrick, “Answers to some Questions about ‘Ebonics’ (African American English)” <<http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~patrickp/aaavesem/EbonicsQ&A.html>>.

“cannot be human unless they speak English, and behave according to the values of capitalist society based on competition and achievement.”¹⁴

Originally, Indian tribes and African nations (among many others in the world) had distinctive individual tongues that fulfilled all requirements for successful communication. The fact that they don't apply certain grammar and sentence structures doesn't mean that they are broken or invalid languages, only that they can't be measured by Western linguistic categories. Correspondingly, Western languages from the view of those natural cultures may be judged as broken languages missing the strong pseudo linguistic and non-verbal elements that, indeed, exist in very old cultures. It does not mean that modern Western tongues are invalid languages, they just cannot be judged from the view of other cultures.

Realizing these existing power structures, the UNESCO offered a different definition to define dialect in general. In this suggestion, “vernacular is a language which is the mother tongue of a group which is socially or politically dominated by another group speaking a different language.”¹⁵ Although this proposal did not result in major changes, it was remarkable in that it urged to set up new linguistic definitions without concern for Western power structures, to save the world's natural diversity from linguistic imperialism and forced cultural assimilation. Since then, many scholars acknowledged that the academic dispute about language and vernacular goes farther than linguistics; it is about power. Precisely, who has the right to control the norms of language has the power over the speakers of other languages as well.¹⁶

As we can see, the problem of primary language or mother tongue is more than academic dilemma. The problem is even more complicated for African Americans, since their original mother tongue is not even exactly known. Their language was built up as an unconscious bridge between two continents, Africa and America. Many linguists emphasize African historic roots, others – because the above mentioned historical discontinuity – stress only social relevancies in American society.¹⁷ They all tend to agree that Ebonics is a complex language with its own rules. They disagree, however, whether it is an individual language or a dialect. Defining language and vernacular is important from academic and linguistic aspects in order to analyze correlations and make comparisons. Furthermore, linguistic definitions are important in civil rights movements. Granting legitimacy for Ebonics would give more linguistic, cultural and educational rights to African Americans: the right to the mother tongue. On the other hand, defining Ebonics as a

¹⁴ Tore Skutnabb-Kangas / Robert Phillipson, Mother Tongue: The Theoretical and Sociopolitical Construction of a Concept (Denmark, 1984), p. 464.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 460.

¹⁶ Larry A. Samovar / Richard E. Porter, Communication Between Cultures (United States, 2001), p. 272 See also P. Andersen, Cues of Culture: The Basis of Intercultural Differences in Nonverbal Communication in Intercultural Communication (Belmont, C. A; Wadsworth, 2000), p. 258.

¹⁷ Alonda Oubre, “Black English Vernacular (Ebonics) and Educability, A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language, Cognition, and Schooling” (1997), p. 2., at <<http://www.aawc.com/ebonicsarticle.html>>.

vernacular (AAEV) would legitimate the ignorance towards its special historical, cultural and psychological determinations, and would make Ebonics inferior to Standard English, considering only the social determinations of the language. In the first version, Ebonics' definition needs historical analysis, which studies languages throughout thousands of years (if it possible), and makes comparisons between them. In the second account, African American English Vernacular's definition needs structural, descriptive analysis, which focuses on present day tongues to establish general laws that apply to all languages. Comparative approach uses deductive logic and descriptive approach utilizes inductive logic, therefore, they logically lead to opposite results.

Ebonics-speakers, however, are not the only language group at disadvantage. Crystal brings into attention that emigrants are in the same socio-linguistic position; their different English is also negatively discriminated by Standard English speakers. "The importance of accents and dialects is obvious to those who have found themselves making judgment about another person based on the person's accent or dialect. Because most people view 'Standard English' as proper and correct, anyone not using this standard is perceived to be of lower status and/or not speaking correct English."¹⁸ But which English would be the etalon, English or American English? Which accent should have priority over the others? Wouldn't the critic itself be judged negatively in another city, country or culture?

Confusion about mother tongue is also reflected at an individual level. Wallace, in the 1960's, realized that there are two kinds of different attitudes regarding mother tongue. One group accepts and strives to save their primary language, but others seem to be indifferent toward it. But still, he says, in this second case also, mother tongue is involved in their lives "as an aspect of moral learning," while the other language, "for instance the majority language for a minority, remains an aspect of technique."¹⁹

Amy Tan emphasizes the mother tongue's moral importance, introducing a special "language of intimacy" between her and her mother. She gives a wonderful description about how much this "mother-talk" was important for her as it formed her first impressions about the world.²⁰ This was, however, a "fractured English." The phenomenon of an immigrant's broken language is different linguistically from the above-discussed vernacular. Immigrants' speech is some mixture of accent, dialect and a deficiency in language. Amy Tan is a pioneer in defining accent from a positive aspect in her personal encounter, "Mother Tongue."

"Some of my friends tell me they understand 50 percent of what my mother says. Some say they understand 80 to 90 percent. Some say they understand none of it, as if she was

¹⁸ Larry A. Samovar / Richard E. Porter, Communication Between Cultures (United States, 2001), p.184.

¹⁹ Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue" 3. <<http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~kitchens/tan.html>>.

²⁰ Ibid.

speaking pure Chinese. But to me, my mother's English is perfectly clear, perfectly natural... [it] is vivid, direct, full of observation and imagery."²¹

My first reaction to Amy Tan's experience was that Wittgenstein was not right in saying, "what can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence."²² For Wittgenstein, proper grammar was important, as the only possible form for language. The philosopher didn't talk about vernacular or dialect in his thesis; I use this parallel only to borrow his category of silence as an important and valid element of language. Silence doesn't mean passivity. As Nietzsche says about Schopenhauer: "What he said, is gone. What ever he was remains." There are experiences, perceptions and values we transmit from generation to generation only throughout our lives, and vocabulary and grammar rules are not the primarily important factors of this process. These experiences are mostly esthetic, ethical, logical and go along with such feelings as joy, love, safety and trust. In this understanding, silence, or broken structure, has a meaning as well.

Amy Tan reports about discriminations her mother suffered from because of her terrible English. Remarkable, that this "language of intimacy" was not her real "mother tongue," which was, in fact, Chinese. Avoiding discrimination might be the motivational force behind not using her original Chinese language, not even with her family. This problem leads us back to human-rights problems again. "In countries in which equal rights are not accorded to all the indigenous languages or the languages of permanently settled immigrants, multilinguals are increasingly demanding human rights,"²³ urges, Skutnabb-Kangas, Danish linguist. As can be seen, the problem of mother tongue is not purely theoretical; it has a great part of social - political aspect as well.

3. Ebonics and the Human Dignity of Black Americans

Alarming national statistics show that African American students perform considerably below grade level in American public schools. There are many theories to find the reasons, all of which use the same hypothesis, that one of the main causes behind this phenomenon is the divergence between black student's home language and Standard American English. The latest is in fact, the official language of the American school system.²⁴

In my analysis, I present that underperformance is true for African Americans in many other aspects as well, and education is only a slice of the problem (but it is highly

²¹ Ibid.

²² Wittgenstein, Tractatus <[http:// accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-93610872/borges-and-wittgenstein-borders.html](http://accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-93610872/borges-and-wittgenstein-borders.html)>.

²³ Tore Skutnabb-Kangas / Robert Phillipson, Mother Tongue: The Theoretical and Sociopolitical Construction of a Concept (Denmark, 1984), p. 457.

²⁴ Alonda Oubre, "Black English Vernacular (Ebonics) and Educability, A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language, Cognition, and Schooling" (1997), 1., <<http://www.aawc.com/ebonicsarticle.html>>.

representative). Furthermore, the only way to solve educational problems are by helping Black communities out of their identity crisis, by letting them recover as humans and minorities, by having positive idols, and by restoring their human dignity and basic human rights.²⁵

The real problem is that African American's Ebonics exists embedded in a Western-European culture, compared to a Western language and measured by Western linguistic categories, a situation that brings about the dilemma of culture-assimilation. American society has a great ambition to assimilate African Americans, and some members of the Black community assist in achieving this goal. However, this assimilation needs a sacrifice, the victim of which would be their unique language, Ebonics. Skutnabb-Kangas, a leader in the linguistic human- rights-movement, calls this linguistic genocide.²⁶ "The maintenance of diversity is counteracted by the increasing dominance of English and other killer languages. These are often learned subtractively, at the cost of the mother tongues, instead of additively, in addition to mother tongues. Schools participate, through assimilationist genocidal education, in processes of linguistic capital dispossession."²⁷

In 1996, the same year when the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights was signed by UNESCO and other non-governmental organizations, Oakland Public United School teachers brought Ebonics into attention, and wanted to "teach children mainstream English by contrasting it with their home language." After that simple request (which contained nothing more than the educational rights of those disadvantaged black students), a "six-thousand-member Linguistic society and other organizations, among them the American Association for Applied Linguistics and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, " were involved in a fiery debate.²⁸ Today, Ebonics' place in education is still unsolved and the Black community is still deeply rooted in an identity crisis. However, the strong correlation between this crisis and the struggle for a mother tongue is still not revealed.

The latest linguistic symposium on human rights in April 2008 in UN, Geneva, declared that education should maintain minorities' mother tongues with major care. "The most important Linguistic Human Right (LHR) in education for Indigenous peoples and minorities, if they want to reproduce themselves as peoples/minorities, is an unconditional right to mainly mother tongue medium education in non-fee state schools. This education (of course including teaching of a

²⁵ Skutnabb-Kangas, "Language, Education and (violation of) Human Rights, Abstract." From Psychology of Poverty and Disadvantage (New Delhi, 2000), pp. 261-284. <<http://www.linguistic-rights.org/tove-skutnabb-kangas/>>.

²⁶ Skutnabb-Kangas, A Symposium to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Universal Esperanto Association and the 60th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights (UN, Geneva, 2008), at <<http://www.linguistic-rights.org/en/linguistic-rights-en.html>>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ John Russell Rickford and Russell John Rickford, "Education," Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English, (New York, 2000), p. 175.

dominant language as a subject, by bilingual teachers) should continue minimally [for] 8 years, preferably longer.”²⁹ Where are we from this educational model?

Since Ebonics is still not a legitimate language, there is no bilingual education for Black children in the American public school system. An Oakland public school parent said years after the Oakland resolution that she has seen many changes in her local schools, but none of them was relevant. “A number of the changes have been about increasing the testing of students, subjecting schools to penalties, and revamping school communities. Unfortunately, many problems continue because important pieces of the puzzle are still missing... One of the biggest pieces of the puzzle for helping the schools, and one that is never mentioned, is nurturing...[which] means to nourish, to feed... that makes people feel better, and lets them know that someone cares.”³⁰

Who are more competent to nurture those students than African American teachers? According to census data, while African American students make up 16 percent of the public school population,³¹ only 8.4 percent of all American teachers are black.³² These students are disproportionately concentrated in high-poverty, low-performing schools. “More than 60 percent of black students attend schools where more than 50 percent of the school population is identified as living in poverty, compared to 18 percent of white students.”³³ Ebonics can not be the exclusive reason for all of these statistical data. There are some deeper problems in this society that separate black children from the academic world. Code switching between two cultures seems to fail. Oubre emphasizes that a teacher “to some extent... must be part psychologist and part anthropologist, at least in order to be able to see the world from their student’s point of view. If teachers themselves can successfully make these perceptual transformations, they will be more efficient at translating Black English Vernacular into Standard English on a level that captures cultural meaning –a level that ventures beyond rote memorization of outward word forms and grammatical structures.”³⁴ The burden of the student performance lies on the teacher. Only black teachers can teach code switching effectively.

Where are these role models? There are not enough African American teachers in education. Many say that people of color show excellence in music, dance, and sports, and

²⁹ Skutnabb-Kangas, “Language, Education and (violation of) Human Rights, Abstract.” from Psychology of Poverty and Disadvantage (New Delhi, 2000), p. 261-284. <<http://www.linguistic-rights.org/tove-skutnabb-kangas/>>.

³⁰ Perimeter Primate, On nurturing (June, 2008), <http://perimeterprimate.blogspot.com/2008_06_01_archive.html>.

³¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. The Condition of Education (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006).

³² U.S. Census Bureau, “U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 2000–2050,” <<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/>> (accessed September 23, 2008).

³³ G. Orfield and C. Lee, Why Segregation Matters: Poverty and Educational Inequality (Cambridge, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, 2005).

³⁴ Alonda Oubre, “Black English Vernacular (Ebonics) and Educability, A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language, Cognition, and Schooling,” (1997) 7-8. <<http://www.aawc.com/ebonicsarticle.html>>.

intellectual jobs are just not for them. Others contend that preachers can substitute teachers within the black community. Toni Morrison describes the perfectly ordinary African American neighborhood, as “everything you want is right where you are: the church, the store, the party, the women, the men, the postbox (but no high schools).”³⁵ These stereotypes show that society acts very much in line with these negative anticipations with regards to school and education. As most discriminatory stereotypes, this assumes the superiority of other races, which is totally unacceptable. Since not every African American is good in music, dance and sports, many of them could be excellent teachers, professors, doctors and lawyers. The lack of African American teachers requires a more complex explanation. There are, however, many unspoken words when it comes to black women and men.

Black women have to be strong; they carry family-responsibilities all by themselves. Men want to be free. The idea of this freedom, however, contains high levels of “emotional unmanageableness,” and just a limited level of liberty, as Toni Morrison says in the Foreword of *Jazz*.³⁶ Morrison describes the black man as one who carries lots of doubt about himself, a “proud hopelessness.” This dichotomy has deep roots in history, when those who were so greatly attached to freedom became enslaved. Morrison wants to go against the damages that history has caused in the morals of the black community, affirming, “the past might haunt us, but it would not entrap us.”³⁷

Search for identity normally belongs to the dynamic period of puberty in a person’s life. When a whole group can be characterized by an extended “social adolescence,” it is definitely a warning sign. The fact that more young African American boys are in prisons than in colleges is alarming, and is a result of years of negligence. It cries for attention and help.

More educators of African descent are needed in the Kindergarten, where right and wrong are first learned. African American children need teachers who speak their language and resemble them not only by appearance, but by inner emotions and struggles as well. Boys need to learn a new kind of manly attitude. However, when young people do not see their race represented in schools, they turn away from it, and without education they sink into poverty and crime. When, from every hundred educators, only eight or nine are people of color (and just two of them are black male teachers), they have no power. They are outsiders in their professional society as well.

The long academic dilemma on Ebonics is part of a larger failure. Solving moral, social and human rights problems would go along with giving rights to mother tongue whether it is a vernacular or individual language. This would make real changes in every aspect of life. America has to unfold the injustices committed in the past against African Americans, talk about it directly and more often, admit wrongdoings, and apologize. The respect and dignity that belongs

³⁵ Toni Morrison, *Jazz* (New York, 2004), p. 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. Xvi.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

to every human being needs to be given back to the black people. We have to focus on restoration not as a single act, but as a continuity, since damages committed through generations can not be corrected in a short time.

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SIHAM OURI

“Drillers” Behind Classroom Doors¹

Introduction

Middle sized class rooms, empty and pale walls with nothing but chairs and desks occupied by girls. Wide blackboards with pieces of chalk ready to be used by female teachers. Books and notebooks, placed neatly over each desk, which are made especially for girls who are different than boys when it comes to education. The girl needs to learn what will help her become a faithful woman to her husband and a better mother to her children. Behind one of those wooden desks sat a girl who thought of the information that are in her books as materials needed to be pasted in her mind and copied on her exam sheets at the end of the year. That girl would be me. I was an “A” student in one of Saudi Arabia’s schools. But that A was earned by memorizing and memorizing only. From elementary until high school,, memorizing was my way to reach college. And when I finally had the opportunity to study college in the United States of America, I found out that if I were to ever actually learn more about what I read, I needed to leave the act of solely memorizing back home so that I could start adapting to the new ways of engaging with course material that was required of me.

Learning in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia’s society has a different perspective when it comes to education, such as having two different independent types of textbooks according to gender or having girls separated from boys in different schools. These points of view were never questioned by Saudi Arabia’s population. The education system was divided into two different authorities. Al-

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Cheryl Smith for English 24.

Ma'arif was the boys' Ministry of Education that provided boys with textbooks full of science information that suited their lives as men. Psychologically, Saudis believe that boys are more active and hyper than girls. That is why boys find it hard to sit down for hours and memorize huge amounts of information. However girls are more of a disciplined type. They have the capability to read and memorize complicated material. The Girls' Ministry of Education dealt with providing girls' textbooks with more information than boys' textbooks plus focusing on information that would introduce girls to motherhood. The materials that were in the girls' textbooks were presented in a complicated way, thinking that the girl's mind can handle complicated texts; however, boys are hands on workers. They need less complicated texts and more hands on experiences. Such a stereotype made boys' textbooks' materials presented in a simple way with more colors and pictures. It is not due to what type of gender is smarter, but to the biological, cognitive way that both genders are created and learn.

A couple of years after my graduation from intermediate level, both educational institutions were combined to one education authority under the name of AL-Ma'arif. Therefore, material in textbooks became the same for both genders. But this move did not create a significant difference with the level of students passing any given course. Girls still got the highest level of passing due to their disciplined type of personality that led them to focus more on their studies than boys. Also the concept of having non-mixed schools was something comfortable for females because of the familiarity². Religious Islam prefers the girls to be separated from boys, especially if there were no reason for them to be mixed. And since the Saudi Arabia's ministry of education is based on Islam religion, it is able to afford having separate schools for each gender.. Moreover, the idea of having a girls only school is because of the society's belief that a girl's performance would be better when she is surrounded by females in terms of her shyness and purity.

Studying in such an environment was nothing to regret, except that took me time to discover its side effects. The fact that teachers, in my first twelve years of education in Saudi Arabia, were providing information from our student textbooks to memorize whether we understood the lesson or not did not help me to really learn. Teachers would walk inside the class, go over what is already written in books and ask students, strictly, to memorize it for their exams. The forty-five minutes of each class were spent only on lecturing, trying to cover as much material as the teachers could. There was no time for open discussions, no time for suggesting ideas or solutions to problems, and certainly no time for examining theories. Students

² Girls don't feel comfortable being mixed with boys, especially in high school. That is compared with girls who are studying in international schools. When girls are mixed with boys, girls worry about boys' comments in class and boys focus on being "cool" in front of girls. Therefore, in this situation, there is less focusing on education and studying.

would just sit back with eyes and ears wide open to each and every word the teacher would say, because at the end that material should be memorized by heart. I remember teachers used to use their famous phrase, while explaining a lesson, “memorize what I say until you know it like you know your own name”. And that was what I and my classmates used to do until we started calling ourselves computerized robots!

Being raised up with that method of teaching, made me rely on memorization to pass my exams. All I cared about was getting high marks on my exams regardless of how much I understood the material. I was so good at memorizing that it reached a point where I would memorize math’s verbal problems as they were. If I faced a different verbal problem on the test, although it had the same steps of answering those I had studied but phrased in a different way with different numbers, my mind would block and I wouldn’t be able to answer the question. After each exam I would imagine myself pressing the “delete” button in my head and erase everything that I have studied, because simply it meant unnecessary information to me.

Learning in the States

I shall never forget the first time I was introduced to my college textbooks. Tears filled my eyes, and being certain of failing took over me. “I cannot memorize these books mother!” That was the phone call I made to my mother after first day of school. Suddenly, the pressure of wanting to pass college with high scores was like a dream that would be too far to reach. I understood that college would be different than high school, but I could not imagine ways to be able to memorize every word of every very thick textbook. I was not sure if I would be able to recall everything by the end of the semester. So for class, I read what was required, and made sure I took notes of every single word the professor would say, knowing I would have to recall everything for exams. But then instead of just parroting back information I had read or heard, I discovered that part of each course required group discussions, which gave me the opportunity to share my ideas and experiences about different topics with other foreign students.

Those group discussions helped me engage textbook materials with my arguments and discussions, which made that information much more comprehensible than just reading it from a book. We also conducted research to help us better understand the concepts in the course. In other words, group discussions and research supplemented my understanding of the information in the textbooks. Therefore, by the end of the semester I would not be only filled with required information that I memorized from textbooks, but also with extra knowledge from actual understanding what I read. Lectures became a time where I sat back and received knowledge without worrying what to memorize for the test, just simply understanding the information and engaging in discussions. Exams for most courses became an opportunity to show my understanding of material rather than repeating back what I had memorized from books.

Rote Memorization Versus Understanding

My whole twelve years of studying were based on rote memorization. Rote memorization is defined, based on the Oxford English dictionary, as “mechanical or habitual repetition”. The student repeats the information over and over until it is part of his/her long-term memory without understanding it. If we think about the human being’s capability of memorizing, we find that memory is divided into three types. The “sensory memory”, which is memorizing any information by using our senses (Feldman,2008, p. 212). As Feldman (2008) tells us, this type of memory would hold information for one second approximately which means it is fast to be forgotten (Feldman,2008, p. 212). The second stage or type of memory would be our “short-term memory”, which holds information for fifteen to twenty-five seconds before it gets pushed back and forgotten (Feldman,2008, p. 212). But in order to transfer the information that is in our short-term memory to our “long-term memory” (Feldman,2008, p. 212)., we would either use “rehearsal”, that is the repetition of information, or “Elaborative” rehearsal that is to link information to something else that is easy to remember in order to easily recall the information back (Feldman,2008, p. 214-215). Even if information is placed in our long-term memory, it will still be difficult to retrieve it if we do not keep on using it. Therefore, our system of memorizing is very sensitive to handle with. No matter how much we memorize, we still need to find a way to keep that information and to be able to recall it in different situations.

R. E. Mayer (2002) explains the role of memorizing in a meaningful learning situation in his “Rote Versus Meaningful Learning” article. He points out the two main goals of education. The first goal is “retention” (Mayer, 2002, p.226) which is the ability to remember what was learned in a later time. The second goal is “transfer” (Mayer, 2002, p.226) which is the ability to apply what was learned in later problem solving or answering a new complicated question. If we applied Mayer’s theory to a Math test, a retention question would consist of asking students to write down a mathematic rule or law. The transfer question would involve asking students to apply this previous mathematical rule in a complicated equation in order to get the correct answer. Rote- memorization would only make use of the retention goal, recalling information, but would block the ability of transferring which is making use of what was learned.

Methods of Teaching

W. J. Poham (2006), an expert in assessment, divided the teaching process into two categories. The first one is “curriculum teaching” (as qtd. in Jerald, 2006, p.2) which is a method where teachers focus on the curriculum as a whole, not only what would probably be on the test. By this we mean the teacher would cover the curriculum from all sides so the student would have more knowledge than what is wanted precisely on the test (p.2). The second teaching process is “item-teaching” which is the teacher would focus on teaching students what would probably be on the test only (p.2). The item-teaching method would limit student’s knowledge and make

them focus on exams only rather than building general knowledge. Students who are involved in this process are more likely to memorize (p.2). For example, teachers would give students a list of ten vocabulary words to study and focus on them “rather than employing instructional strategies that help students develop the kind of rich and broad vocabulary” (Poham as qtd. In Jerald, 2006, p.2). Both teaching methods are found in every school and behind every classroom door. Based on my experience, I have been a student of both types of learning. I happened to have experienced more of the item- teaching in Saudi Arabia’s schools. It was easy because our time and minds were focusing on certain information to be able to pass our exams, which is a goal for both types of teaching. However, it was meaningless because eventually our goal did not develop to actually learn for the sake of building knowledge. As for the curriculum teaching, I have experienced that more when I reached college in the States. Because college level requires more of understanding and less memorizing, information that I learned became part of my daily life when problem solving and thinking. Although the teaching and learning are different than the college level, secondary schools should still prepare their students through the curriculum method of teaching to promote in their students a desire to learn rather than simply striving, and therefore learning only enough, to get an A.

Rote memorization is not totally unwanted, because at the beginning of the students’ educational ladder, they are introduced to all the basics in science, math, and literature. And, of course, their textbooks would be filled with concepts that need to be memorized. J. Piaget explained in his cognitive learning theory that children at their first years of education rely on hands-on experiences (Morrison, 2008, p. 69). Children would have the ability to explore using their senses, touching the object or observing the experiment, to understand the meaning of things around them (Morrison, 2008, p. 69). Children would hold on to these kinds of experiences in their memory for the rest of their lives. But as children develop physically, they develop cognitively too. Their minds start to handle complicated texts and can make logical senses of concepts and theories. That’s when they start using memorizing as a basic method of learning laws and theories. But we should help our students to develop new methods along with memorizing so students are not confined to rote memorizing.

Therefore, when children reach “formal operation stage” (Morrison, 2008, p. 71), teachers should avoid “drill-focused forms of teaching” (Jerald, 2006, p.3) which consist of only memorizing because students would lose the opportunity to develop cognitive skills, such as thinking and miss the ability to develop methods of problem solving. Students in this stage should also be able to differentiate between “memorized versus comprehended” (S.B. Lovett, J.H. Flavell, 1990, p.1843) materials. Comprehended materials are “structured or organized materials such as words, sentences...and stories” (S .B. Lovett, J.H. Flavell, 1990, p.1843) that can be understood rather than memorized. When a student understands a story, he would be able to recall it and write it again using his own words.

Siham Today

It may seem like each country has its way of teaching, but my focus in this paper is not to describe which country provided me with better way of learning, because there is no such thing as a country that provides a poor level of education versus a higher level, at least in my experience. I have learned from studying in both countries that when it comes to designing a curriculum for a specific country or nation, society's traditions, cultures, and values play a big role in deciding what would be appropriate to teach and for what age it should be taught. I truly feel lucky to have such an experience in both types of learning in totally distant countries. When I think about my educational journey, I can divide it into two main parts. My basic first twelve years of education were focused on the culture and values that my society honors. It set my first step towards a bigger and higher level of learning, in a multicultural country. Also in my first twelve years of education, I gained the ability to memorize, which was helpful in history and psychology courses when I reached college. For me, new methods of learning and understanding started to emerge in college. And with applying both, memorizing and understanding to my way of learning, I have attained the ability to apply a meaningful learning style as determined by the academic task, and the ability to do so has allowed me to both achieve my goal of passing exams that require memorized facts while at the same time building knowledge in the many disciplines I study. Being able to do so has brought me to recognize the fact that both countries had a hand in educating me, and I would have not been able to master my learning skills without the help of both countries.

Conclusion

The fourth Rightly Guided Caliph of Islam, Ali Ibn Abi Talib once said "Knowledge is of two kinds: that which is absorbed and that which is heard. And that which is heard does not profit if it is not absorbed". Those students heading to their schools, from 7:00 in the morning till 3:00 in the afternoon, are the ones to build our future. No matter what country it is, those students should be our top priority to make sure they receive a meaningful education during these long school hours. And as an education studies student, I would always concern myself with students' methods of learning, because simply I was a student, and as a future teacher I would not wish any of the students to suffer by getting stuck with only rote memorization.

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DEVIN ROBINSON

Grandma Was a War Bride¹

The dust from World War II had barely settled when thousands of women made the decision to immigrate to a new country and leave the old world behind. Lucette Lachaussee, my grandmother, became one of the many war brides who immigrated to the United States after the end of World War II. Lucette's story is very similar to that of many women who fell in love with American soldiers and decided to undertake the adventure overseas to start a new life. Gaining entry into America was the first step on the road to beginning their new life. Once settled on their new countries' soil, the war brides had to make adjustments to the everyday living conditions of their new home. Assimilating with American culture was of monumental importance in order for these women to be accepted in their households and communities. Generations after the war brides immigrated to America, it remains intriguing to ask what drove a mass population of women from all over Europe to marry foreign soldiers and move across the globe to start a new life.

Lucette Andree Lachaussee was born on December 1, 1921 in Flagy, France. Her father, Marcellin Lachaussee, fought during World War I as a scout for the French army. Once the war ended he returned home and married Malthe Thomas. Shortly after their marriage, Malthe gave birth to two other children before giving birth to Lucette, which she did in their house with only the assistance of a midwife. Her father, Marcellin, worked as a mason and her mother, Malthe, was a housewife who tended to all facets of the household. Lucette's family was by no means so privileged as to have an affluent lifestyle. She went to school until she was eleven years old, when she was immediately put to work as a maid for an aristocratic household. In 1937, at the

¹ Written under the mentorship of Libby Garland for History 20: United States Immigration History.

age of sixteen, Lucette left home for Fontainebleau, a French town in the metropolitan area of Paris, to help her older sister, Odette, with her seven children.

In the spring of 1940, Germany invaded France and the southern countries of Europe. When the Nazis invaded, no one knew what was going to happen. Lucette and Odette, whose geographical location was very close to the entryway of the German forces into France, became very nervous. The local gossip fostered a growing hysteria about what the Nazis would do to them, so in fear for their lives, Lucette and her sister's family abandoned their home and fled to the south of France. They walked for miles in the countryside, taking only short breaks every few hours. After days of walking, they came across a recently abandoned farm where they took refuge for a week. During their stay at the farm, Lucette was able to milk the remaining cows and cook smaller barn animals in order to feed herself and her sister's family. Once they had gotten word that the Germans were not imprisoning civilians, they began the journey back to Fontainebleau. Upon returning to their home, which was now under German control, Lucette went back to work at a restaurant as normal until the end of the war.

After World War II ended in 1945, Lucette was attending a wedding party where there were many American soldiers off duty, who were also enjoying the celebration. While she was dancing, a young American soldier, William Mazzacoli, was watching her intensely from afar. After the musical number had ended he approached her to ask for the next dance. Not wanting to have anything to do with a soldier and fearful of gossip, Lucette did not oblige. Although she refused him the dance, the two talked for the rest of the night. For the next few weeks she would visit him for hours while he was on prison guard duty. William soon proposed to Lucette, who accepted. They had two weddings to solidify their union for both their home countries. Their American wedding took place at La Madeleine church in Paris, where an American army chaplain wed them. The French wedding was held in Villejuif, where the mayor of the town pronounced them husband and wife. Lucette's family was extremely happy she had found a husband who would be able to take care of her. Once it was time for William to depart France with the American troops, Lucette had to travel to northern Germany to the port of Bremerhaven, where she boarded an American army ship carrying soldiers and war brides to New York City. While on board the ship, Lucette shared a cabin with other war brides from all over Europe who were making their way to America to meet their husbands. When the ship docked in New York, William was among the first to greet his wife and show her her new home.

Gaining entry to the United States for war brides was not an easy task. According to Virden Jenel, "United States legislation and army policy in the early days of the war did not make immigration or transportation easy for newlyweds."² The majority of the women who had married servicemen fell outside of the existing army transportation service simply by virtue of marrying soldiers in lower-ranking positions. Many women who married American soldiers did not have enough money to pay for transportation to immigrate to America on their own. The

² Virden Jenel, *Good-bye, Piccadilly* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1996), p. 49.

army eventually changed its position on giving assistance to all army personnel, no matter what class, to help bring families over to America. While they were deciding who should be assisted first, some war brides immigrated to the United States by way of Canada if they were unable to obtain a visa from the USA.³ Once in Canada, they would sneak across the border to be reunited with their husbands. Chinese immigrants also used this tactic of illegally immigrating into the United States during the Chinese exclusion period during the early 1900s.⁴ While there was now a way for many war brides to gain entry to America, the difficulty of gaining citizenship was another roadblock in the way of newlywed happiness. Even if married to an American, the foreign-born women would not be able to become American citizens until they were approved and granted a visa by the United States. War brides could come over on a temporary visa but there was the chance they could still be deported once the visa expired. Children of servicemen and foreign-born women, on the other hand, were allowed to stay permanently and were considered American as long as their father was a citizen of the United States. On December 28, 1945, Congress passed the War Bride Act which eliminated the restrictions on visas and the exclusion requirements so that all women could immigrate to the United States if married to a serviceman.⁵ Now war brides did not have to worry about being separated from their husbands, and could enter the United States with the certainty of becoming a citizen of their new home. Lucette was unable to depart for America at the same time as her new husband because Williams was in the infantry. Instead she waited patiently until the army had made arrangements for her to come to America. She first had to travel to Germany to take a military ship that was carrying soldiers and war brides back to the United States, where she was picked up by her husband.

The assimilation process for war brides was paramount to their survival in America. Fortunately for them, “the transition was, theoretically, eased by a friendly and public welcome in America.”⁶ Americans were happy to welcome these women, with many different organizations and outreach programs like the Red Cross helping the war brides from the very beginning of their journey by providing them with medical treatment for themselves and their children during the boat ride over to the United States.⁷ For those who took part in all that was available to them, “They had the benefit of numerous orientation programs. They were also targeted by various agencies for inclusion in war bride clubs and other organizations in the United States.”⁸ These clubs would also hand out pamphlets and newsletters instructing the war brides how to care for an American family and a few tips for newlyweds. Many of these women did not understand the generosity of groups such as the Red Cross, thinking that there was a catch and that they would have to pay money for the services provided, but once they realized that everything was free many women were touched by the kindness and sent in donations of

³ Ibid., p. 53.

⁴ Lee Erika, *Enforcing the Borders: Chinese Exclusion Along the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico, 1882 – 1924* (The Journal of American History, 2001), p. 55.

⁵ Jenel, *Good-bye, Piccadilly*, p. 51.

⁶ Ibid., p. 106.

⁷ Ibid., p. 106.

⁸ Ibid., p. 106.

their own to help the organizations.⁹ People in America were very willing to help the assimilation for these women to make sure they were equipped to handle everyday life in America.

Unlike most war brides, Lucette had the benefit of spending quite a bit of time conversing with her husband before they wed, which enabled her to acquire some insight into her new home before she immigrated to America. This prepared her for what to expect of her new home when her husband would talk about where he lived and his life back in the United States. But there were also those war brides who came over and found it rather difficult to leave their country behind. Gilberte A. Crowell remembers feeling that “soon after my arrival, I wanted to go back home. I missed my family so much. I thought how foolish of me to leave my country, but I firmly believe that God has a plan for each one of us. I probably would not do anything differently today than what I did 49 years ago.”¹⁰ Here we can see that all of the war brides did not fall in love with their new homes instantly, but for the most part they stuck to their convictions and remained in America.

The adjustment to American life was difficult at first for Lucette. She had worked all her life and was uneasy about becoming a housewife. William worked as a master plumber and was able to provide everything for his wife. There was also the problem of travel. In France you could walk to the market and nearby stores for the necessities of day-to-day living. But in America many of the stores were far apart and Lucette would have to learn to take public transportation or drive an automobile. Many of the technological devices used in the common household in America were much different than what Lucette was used to, if not completely foreign to her, and she would have to master these to become a successful housewife. All of these challenges and more faced her on a daily basis, but her strong and determined personality enabled her to persevere and become fully acclimated to the new tasks of American life.

Other war brides were not so lucky and could not make the adjustment to life in America. Jeannie Ricou–Allunis was unable to adjust to life in America because of her relationship with her husband, who was an alcoholic and abused her every day. Many times war brides did not know their husbands very well or the situation they were getting into once they immigrated. This was the problem with Jeannie: she blames herself for her marriage not working out because she believes that she was too naïve in her younger years to realize what she was doing.¹¹

Similar to other immigrants, many war brides did not completely assimilate to American culture. Many tried to keep their native cultural values and traditions alive in their families. These customs from the old countries would heighten tensions in their families because they felt their children were becoming too Americanized. Immigrant families would often insist that their children only speak in their native tongue when in the household, learn a skill for the job market

⁹ Thomas Michele, *The American War Bride Experience*, http://www.geocities.com/us_warbrides/index.html.

¹⁰ Thomas Michele, *The American War Bride Experience*, <http://www.geocities.com/us_warbrides/index.html>

¹¹ Ricou-Allunis Jeannie, *Memoir of a French War Bride* (Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2004), p. 147.

and only take part in practices from their home countries.¹² Unlike many European immigrants, Lucette had married an American who introduced her to many American practices and customs. When they had children, Lucette had already had the opportunity to become somewhat familiar with the ways of America. Her knowledge of the differences between American culture and her French heritage made her better equipped to judge the things she felt were all right for her children to take part in and those she wished them to stay away from. As Ewen Elizabeth has written, “Feeling threatened, they tried to keep their daughters within the orbit of maternal authority, passing down the skills they thought would be useful in finding an acceptable trade.”¹³ However, Lucette did not feel threatened by American culture. She understood that her children were born American and thus would become part of America. However, understanding this made her want to make sure her children knew about their heritage and had a sense of what their people before them experienced in life. She passed down a plethora of skills to her children, from the secrets of traditional French cuisine, to sewing and tailoring clothing, to speaking French. She did not demand that her children abide by all the old French customs, but she wanted to make them aware of what they were and how to practice them correctly.

Between 1944 and 1950, 150,000 to 200,000 war brides married to American service men immigrated to the United States from continental Europe.¹⁴ But why did all these women just suddenly uproot their entire lives to move across the globe? It could have been that after experiencing the atrocities of war many of these women were looking for some hope and happiness in their future. America was always labeled the land of opportunity and for most of these women, whose own home lands were suffering from physical and economic destruction because of World War II, America may have seemed like a fresh start for young women willing to take on an adventure. Another factor is that America’s saving of Europe from the Nazis could have prompted many women to marry American men. If these men had saved the women’s homes and countries from tyranny, maybe they could save the women as well. No matter what the reasons were behind these women’s decisions, they forever changed the course of their families’ lives and heritages by immigrating to a new land where opportunity awaited.

As for Lucette Mazzocoli, she decided to take the plunge and marry an American soldier purely out of love. She remembers that “I didn’t want to have anything to do with him when I first saw him, but then once we got to know each other, I knew I was in love and that was it.” Perhaps there is no greater power than love to encourage us to take risks that we otherwise would never take. That is precisely what Lucette did: she followed her heart and married a man she fell in love with.

War brides came to the United States by the thousands. They survived the war and survived the journey to become part of a new home. No matter what the reasons may be that found these women starting families on different shores, they shared the same motivation as

¹² Ewen Elizabeth, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), p. 186-191.

¹³ Ewen Elizabeth, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), p. 191.

¹⁴ Thomas Michele, *The American War Bride Experience*, <http://www.geocities.com/us_warbrides/index.html>

many other immigrants who seek a better life. They wanted to be happy and live their lives and that is exactly what they did.

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ERICA DUSHEY

Excerpt from *Avenue J*¹

In doing a photo essay, one needs to make a visual story that highlights a particular area. The story needs continuity and flow so that the viewers are drawn in and given the opportunity to really appreciate a subject that may ordinarily seem boring and mundane. We often don't stop and pay attention to our surroundings because they are a part of our everyday lives. How many New Yorkers have not been to the Empire State Building or the Statue of Liberty? How many people in Park Slope have not seen Coney Island? How many people live in neighborhoods and never really pay attention to what is going on around them because the neighborhood is part of the background of their everyday lives. Being behind the lens of a camera has certainly opened up my eyes and made me stop and enjoy my surroundings. In Art 52 we are working on a photo essay, in addition to other projects. I decided, along with Professor Coyne, to do a digital photo essay as my honors project and chose Avenue J as my topic. Avenue J at first glance would seem boring. It is just a block with many stores yet it is a place where many culturally diverse people live and congregate.

Avenue J, from east 16th street to Coney Island Avenue has gone through many changes over the years. It is a predominantly Jewish neighborhood with many Muslims and Italians living there as well. Currently many people on the street call Avenue J "Little Israel" because of the abundance of kosher restaurants, butchers, fish markets, fruit store and many Jewish owned businesses. Avenue J is a major train stop for the Q train as well as the B6 and B11 buses. This transportation is what brings people from all walks of life to frequent these shops. Avenue J is a place where all worlds collide. I have attempted to show this diversity through my images. From young to old, rabbis to Muslims, banks to Korean manicurists and of course the most famous pizza place in all of Brooklyn "Di Fara's". I have included storefronts, close ups and wide angle shots of the people walking the streets and the everyday events of life on Avenue J. I have shot hundreds of images, and with the help of Prof. Coyne, I narrowed them down to those that would make this photo essay as interesting and exciting as possible. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed working on this essay. I have digitally made all correction and had the photos printed on lustre paper for your viewing pleasure.

¹ Completed under the mentorship of Professor Janine Coyne for Art 52.

