Humanities

To what extent did the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign succeed in promoting military service to youth through the glorification of personal, social, and cultural identity?

Lucas Gauthier

The Warriors Wanted United States Army advertisement campaign originated at a time of turmoil for the US Army. Faced with "the most challenging labor market since the inception of the all-volunteer force" (U.S. ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND, 2019), a sharp decline in youth enlistment, and strong opposition against the military's ongoing foreign interventions (Carden, 2018), the US Army pivoted from the aging Go Army campaign to the new Warriors Wanted campaign to centralize recruiting efforts, reshape the cultural image of the Army, and adapt to the digital age. This transition served as a revolution in military advertising; for the first time the Army would use social media and targeted advertisements to deliver content towards their target demographic: American members of Generation Z aged 17 to 24-years-old. This approach allowed the Warriors Wanted campaign to expose a broader subset of American youth to the adapted military advertising of the 21st century (Fadel & Morris, 2019). This leads to the line of inquiry: to what extent did the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign succeed in promoting military service to youth through the glorification of personal, social, and cultural identity?

Through an analysis of the advertisements' use of provocative taglines, subject focal emphasis, sanitized combat imagery, and targeted digital advertising, viewers can see how the Warriors Wanted ad campaign ultimately succeeded in drawing youth to enlist by presenting the Army as an opportunity for self-actualization empowered by connections to American cultural identity.

The simplistic, bold typographic composition of the words, such as in Figure 1, causes the statements to appear direct and factual, while the use of bright yellow and white colors on the text enhances their visual emphasis, allowing the words to stand out from the background. By presenting culturally salient phrases alongside photos of masculine soldiers in combat uniforms, the advertisements begin to couple the viewer's perception of positive American cultural values with the Army. This perception is further enhanced by the split color scheme of the taglines, with "we" being colored in white while all the other words are colored yellow, drawing greater attention to the word "we". This extra emphasis presents the idea that the entire Army, from every warrior to the full fighting force, embodies the positive traits detailed in the succeeding phrase. Together, the phrases and typographic composition create a strong connection between American cultural values and the Army community, an association that appeals to the fledgling identity of youth and presents service as a way to embody prized cultural elements of the American ethos. This use of ethos begins to cultivate a sense of credibility and trust between the viewers and the Army, laying the foundation

Figure 1, taken from the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 1:56

for enlistment.

While the taglines contextualize the actions of the advertisements, the human subjects bring the military messaging to life. In every video and banner advertisement, the subjects are shown in motion with either a tight focal emphasis placed on the soldier or a broad focus on the presence of the military force in open terrain, both of which immediately attract viewer attention to the scenes. Intimate shots depicting combat, skydiving, or rappelling immerse viewers in the action of the masculine armed soldier depicted in the ads (Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 1:43). Whereas broad shots of military trucks barreling through an open field with helicopters above, such as in Figure 3, visualize the scope of the Army's strength and technological might.

Both of these stylistic elements present the Army as a capable and unrestrained force able to accomplish any objective, a theme consistent with the culture of rugged individualism associated with masculinity in the United States. This is done to appeal to the personal identity of young male viewers who seek independence and self-reliance as they transition to adulthood. This appeal is enhanced by the depiction of soldiers as placeholders rather than individuals, as evidenced by the rapid subject changes and lack of direct facial imagery present in the ads.

Figure 2 depicts the outline of a soldier backlit by the sun while a narrator states, "When America needs her best, she sends a soldier" followed by the "Warriors Wanted" tagline (Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 1:11). The visual in Figure 2 allows viewers to imagine themselves in place of the imposing faceless soldier as the manifestation of individualism, strength, and protection they are presented as both in the advertisements and the American psyche. This allows youth to view enlisting as a way to personify the masculine social identity of a "warrior" as idolized in American society. This use of pathos appeals to the emotions and cultural values of American viewers, further strengthening the motivation to enlist.

As the stylistic choices of the campaign create positive character associations with the military, the omissions isolate viewers from the horrors of war by presenting a sanitized depiction of armed conflict. At no point do the advertisements depict any entity other than American soldiers. There is never returning fire, enemy combatants, or civilians shown in any advertisement. By omitting adversaries and civilians, as shown in Figure 3, the advertisements remove the need for critical thought in viewers. The purpose of engagement is never explained, the possibility of trauma and death is never entertained, and the association of a common enemy is lost. Further, the omissions rehabilitate the United States Army's image by distancing the organization from historic civilian casualties and human rights violations (Khawaja, 2012) that would contradict the "We do what's right" statement

presented in Figure 1. The sanitized combat imagery causes the viewer to fixate on their role in the infallible Army force depicted in the advertisements without considering the impact of enlistment on their own lives. The lack of resistance further isolates the campaign from directing viewers to fight against a single enemy, instead focusing them on serving and embodying the values of the Army. By building associations with positive character traits and using phrases such as "Those armed with more than good intentions" (Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 1:48) the advertisements instill the idea that the Army only fights for noble causes while still exclusively depicting Americans as aggressors, an editorial decision that deeply appeals to the culture of American exceptionalism, moral superiority, and strength. This use of ethos further motivates enlistment by isolating the viewer from unfavorable aspects of military service.

The campaign's extensive use of internet and social media advertising allowed advertisements to directly engage with their target audience, Generation Z. The use of digital platforms was augmented through the use of interactive content, as shown in Figure 4, to allow viewers immediate access to relevant information and in-person enlistment opportunities. The extensive data-driven ad targeting employed by the Warriors Wanted campaign allowed it to deliver content tailored to the individual viewer, boosting engagement and retention. Banner ads emphasizing military scholarship opportunities would be shown to high school seniors, while ads detailing the signing bonuses of service would be shown to graduates (Rempfer, 2019). This targeted approach allowed the advertisements to exploit economic hardship by presenting the military as the solution to the viewers' most relevant financial concerns, from paying for college to supporting a family. In addition to personalized financial messages, the advertisements made use of interest-based targeting to serve content relevant to the skills and interests of viewers, such as showing advertisements depicting tanks to those interested in automobiles (Rempfer, 2019). In effect, this new digital approach allowed the Warriors Wanted campaign to target the basic skills and interests of individual viewers, allowing them to visualize success in specific career fields tailored to their interests, a particularly salient message for youth searching to develop their identity and place in the working world. This use of logos further drives enlistment by presenting service as an accessible choice for financial and career advancement.

The success of the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign came from its ability to develop a logical progression of thought in viewers that drove enlistment. By building an association between American cultural values and military service, the advertisements created a powerful connection between youth and the Army. This connection is then exploited by the placeholder subjects, which allow viewers to imagine themselves embodying the identity and social traits of a soldier. Meanwhile, omissions isolate the viewer from the realities of trauma and death associated with combat, instead redirecting them towards the action and content of the advertisements. This content is then targeted towards youth on social media platforms, exploiting economic instability and personal interests to drive engagement and further connection. The ultimate effect is a campaign that leads youth to fixate on the manufactured military culture of morality, individualism, and strength as a means to form their identity and realize self-actualization as they mature, while simultaneously isolating them from potential negative aspects of military service. It is this intrinsic identity-based motivation that produces a deep-rooted desire for viewers to become the American warrior demanded by the advertisements, a desire that drives enlistment above all else.

Figure 2, taken from the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 1:14

Figure 3, taken from the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 0:49

Figure 4, taken from the Warriors Wanted advertisement campaign, 0:49

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To what extent did the policies implemented by the War on Drugs negatively impact African American communities in the urban United States during the late 20th century?

Lucas Gauthier

The following is an excerpt from a longer piece. For the full text, please visit https://journals.colorado.edu/index.php/honorsjournal/article/view/1905

Introduction

The War on Drugs served as one of the most influential sociopolitical conflicts of the 20th century. While the war may have been initiated with the goal of decreasing drug use, it quickly spiraled into a conflict that fundamentally altered the fabric of the criminal justice, policing, and legal systems in the United States. Legislative action undertaken at both the state and federal level regularly implemented more stringent sentencing guidelines as prominent political figures called for drastic action to curb the epidemic of drug use in America. Routinely, action came in the form of harsher punishments and increased policing that perpetuated and worsened systemic inequalities towards African Americans. Although the punitive nature of the War on Drugs began to wane throughout the early 21st century, the negative economic, social, and political impacts instigated throughout the conflict continue to be felt by African American communities taken under its grasp.

Possibly the most striking aspect of the War on Drugs was the racial disparity present in the frequency of arrests and severity of sentences between white and African American populations. Nearly every law introduced saw a significantly higher proportion of African Americans imprisoned, with those individuals serving markedly longer sentences than white offenders. In many ways, the prison industrial complex ushered in by drug legislation represented a natural continuum of the societal oppression faced by African Americans in the United States. Despite this, advocates argue that the reduction in drug consumption and violence seen in the 21st century validates the overall success of the War on Drugs. Regardless of this fact, the war and policies instituted therein continue to play a significant role in the lives of African Americans living in the United States.

[...]

Conclusion

As the 21st century progressed, a negative sentiment towards the War on Drugs became prevalent, with three in four Americans agreeing that the conflict was failing in 2008, a major shift from years prior (Walther). Further, a United Nations report from 2008 found the aggressive criminalization of drug use adopted by the United States "has not solved the problem it was created to resolve" (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). Meanwhile, political will began to prioritize treatment and rehabilitation over the punitive

measures implemented in the prior decades of the War on Drugs. As a result, a widespread gradual loosening of drug policy began to occur, with 30 states implementing some combination of alternatives to traditional jail systems, decreased sentencing guidelines, and drug decriminalization between 2009 and 2012 (DeSilver). Despite these actions, many of the African American individuals and communities harmed by historic legislation have seen little restitution aside from early releases, as little has been done to address the years of lost life and opportunity spent in prison for low-level drug offences.

To understand the extent to which drug policy has impacted African Americans, both the negative and positive aspects of the legislation must be considered. If viewed with a statistical lens, the war on drugs benefited American society, and by extent black people, through the reduction of violent crime and illicit drug use. Between 1990 and 2010, violent crime saw a 50% decrease, and drug arrests trended slightly downward, though the extent to which the War on Drugs caused this is debated (Travis). However, when examining the social and cultural impacts of the War on Drugs on African American populations, it is reasonable to conclude that the policies enacted were reactionary in nature and gave little consideration to proactive management of the crisis, instead defaulting to racially targeted incarceration. This careless disciplinary attitude led to the creation of an oppressed social underclass that remains long after punitive policies have been revised. As a result, legislation associated with the War on Drugs was likely the largest factor in perpetuating systemic inequalities felt by urban African Americans in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

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The Spread of Anti-Islamic Sentiment in Middle Age Europe

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The following is an excerpt from a longer piece. For the full text, please visit https://journals.colorado.edu/index.php/honorsjournal/article/view/1875

The history surrounding the First Crusade is unique in its relation to religious authorities' role in influencing society. Before the First Crusade, anti-Islamic sentiment existed throughout Europe from Muslim conflicts such as the Reconquisita. Pope Urban II called upon European Christians during the Council of Clermont in 1095 to free the Holy Land. This speech then inspired the pan-European movement of the First Crusade. Anti-Islamic rhetoric gained traction from the desire to return the Papacy to power. The perpetuation of propaganda and negative rhetoric in feudal Europe and the recollections of survivors of the Crusades ingrained the accepted idea of Islamic barbarism into European culture. The impact of anti-Islamic rhetoric when initiated by the Church was significant because it inspired a pan-European response, which initiated the first portion of one of the longest and most deadly wars in human history. By portraying the Muslims as enemies of Christianity, Pope Urban II's speech and accounts from crusaders reinforced a sense of Christian identity that inspired a pattern of violence against non-Christians for centuries to come.

[...]

The anti-Muslim rhetoric utilized by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont and the persuasive language and imagery produced by Christian scholars, preachers and Peter the Hermit, encouraged and inspired the pan-European response that was the First Crusade. The crusaders, common folk and nobility alike, justified the waging of war on the Muslims through the words and encouragement spread by the Church. Although such sentiments existed prior to the conflict, specific word and imagery choices enabled these ideas to take root and be intensified in the uneducated public over the course of the war. By analyzing the timeline of this rhetoric's implementation, a greater understanding is attained as to how one of the longest and bloodiest wars in history was effectuated.

Dynamic Modernism in William Carlos Williams's Poetry

Jaxon Parker

From his early involvement in the Imagist movement, William Carlos Williams would develop his own poetic style which elevated a distinctly American-pragmatic approach to excavating the revolutionary cultural force of Modernity. The realism implied in Williams's adage "not ideas, but in things," materializes in his poetry as a remarkable concern with the dynamism of working-class American life, exemplifying the dissolution of traditional artistic expressions and social bonds by the cultural propulsion of Modernity. Akin to the Marxist adage, "all that is solid melts into air," Williams's poetry intently examines how Modernity has radically changed the relationship between working-class Americans and their material existence, which has reshaped social hierarchies, domesticity, aesthetics, and the everyday experience. With Williams's concentration on the dynamism of everyday American life, it's necessary that Williams's poetry is also concerned with a new relationship between art as a "thing" of Modernity and how it reflects the radical transformation of American culture and its people. It's no wonder that Williams is frequently associated with the flourishing American avant-garde painting and art movements of the 1920s and '30s, such as in his friendship with Charles Demuth, as his poetry often reflects the dynamism and fractured meaning expressed in Cubism, Futurism, and the uniquely American movement of Precisionism.

Like Cubism and Precisionism, Williams's poems "The Great Figure" and "The Young Housewife" unfold the immediate and transient sensations of the chaotic, everyday interactions of Modern life. What these poems offer is two dynamic yet solitary perspectives on the Modern world, with "The Great Figure" having a still speaker looking onto the blurring motion of a passing firetruck, and with "The Young Housewife" portraying its speaker inside a vehicle driving past and privately fantasizing the world around him. In "The Great Figure," Williams utilizes free-verse to reflect the speaker's sensual experience of an abrasive yet profound encounter with a firetruck passing by, with the line structure tightening to single-worded lines at the peak intensity of the speaker's close proximity to the firetruck, which then lengthens again once the fire truck has passed the speaker with its "wheels rumbling / through the dark city." This profound experience of the speaker to a seemingly mundane encounter of the modern city is elevated by how the speaker is alone at night "among the rain / and lights," where the speaker doesn't even recognize the firetruck itself before his eyes catch the 'great' "figure 5 / in gold / on a red / firetruck." A major component of the speaker's profound experience is this diffusion of various sensations of sights and sounds, such as "moving / tense… / to gong clangs/ and siren howls," along with the speaker's depth of perception and time it takes for him to recognize the

source of the fragmentary stimuli. What "The Great Figure" articulates then is the bizarre, frantic, and isolating environment of the Modern world, with the speaker becoming overwhelmed by the sudden "tense" and "unheeded" speed of the firetruck, which materializes at first to the speaker with the sublime image of "the figure 5 / in gold" before its entire form becomes wholly apparent.

This dynamic temporality and experience of Modern life is shared with "The Young Housewife," which reverses the formula of "The Great Figure" by pitting its speaker into a moving vehicle, and who, from a distance, briefly fantasizes over a young housewife in a distinctly working-class section of the Modern city. Where "The Young Housewife" departs the most from its similarities with "The Great Figure" is how it depicts Modern life more closely mediated and fantasized by the isolated speaker. This is also reflected by how Williams utilizes free-verse to allow its lines to more coherently construct the speaker's observations through three stanzas, each representing a distinct slice of time and a corresponding shift in the speaker's mood. The poem begins with the speaker's voyeuristic observations of the "young housewife... / in negligee," with the added projection by the speaker that she is seemingly trapped "behind / the wooden walls of her husband's house," painting a domestic scene ruled by the gender politics of patriarchal ownership.

However, the speaker's apparent sexual envy for the housewife in the first stanza shifts as the speaker "compare[s] her / to a fallen leaf" in the second stanza, where the speaker more empathetically observes her "tucking in stay ends of hair" as she performs domestic errands in the market "call[ing] the ice-man, [and] fish-man." While the speaker certainly objectifies the housewife still by describing her "shy, uncorseted," and the description of "tucking in stay ends of hair" could be a euphemism for promiscuity, these same descriptions could also be sympathizing with the housewife's humanity and her working-class conditions as the speaker briefly drives by her. This is perhaps best demonstrated by how the speaker is emphatically isolated in his vehicle and distant from the actual realities of the housewife. The speaker's vehicle itself is like a subjective window which only allows the speaker to observe the housewife from a one-dimensional and distant perspective, the ambiguities of which are filled by the speaker's innermost fantasies about her domestic life and desires. The speaker's vehicle then becomes a stand in for Modern industrial and cultural life itself, expressing an increased sense of isolation and longing as Modernity pressures individuals to devote themselves to work more and perform the expectations of bourgeois domesticity. The final stanza supports this in how the comparison of the housewife to a "fallen leaf" suddenly becomes subsumed by the other "dried leaves" which the speaker rolls over with his car, indicating how the speaker can only briefly fantasize and observe the complex and transient life swirling around him. When these brief moments of private observation and fantasizing are over, the only thing the speaker can do is "bow and pass by smiling," a final recognition of the housewife's humanity.

From the urban exploration of "The Great Figure" and "The Young Housewife" with their emphasis on the radical dynamism and isolation of Modernity, "Pastoral" illuminates William Carlos Williams's optimism of Modern working-class American life in its breakaway from European traditions of social hierarchy and idealized collectivity. In "Pastoral," there is even perhaps an echo of the mass violence inflicted in World War I, as the speaker observes the apparent innocence of the "little sparrows" who "hop ingenuously... quarreling / with sharp voices / over those things / that interest them." The speaker then sharply contrasts his projection of the innocent quarreling

of the sparrows to the real destruction which results from the quarreling of adult humans, "who are wiser / [to] shut ourselves in," since "no one knows / whether we think good or evil." The poem's progression from the 'natural realm' of the youthful quarreling of the sparrows to the 'human realm' of violent social conflicts, which have sapped any sense of innocence or even right or wrong, then leads to the poem's reversal of the 'Pastoral' in the Modern age, depicting an "old man who goes about / gathering dog-lime… / in the gutter / without looking up." This mundane image of a presumably economically poor old man collecting dog-lime by the city's sewers and gutters is profoundly invested in by the speaker, as he contrasts the old man's poor means of existence to be far more spiritual and fulfilling than "that of the Episcopal minister / approaching the pulpit / of a Sunday." This reversal of the 'Pastoral' in the Modern setting emphasizes how the pragmatic existence of American working-class life can be more meaningful than Pre-modern traditions and morals, such that from strict social and religious hierarchies and beliefs.

As the advent of Modernity has drastically changed the material existence of Western cultural life, with European literary figures such as T.S. Eliot taking a profoundly academic and perhaps hierarchical approach to understanding its cultural upheaval, the poetry of William Carlos Williams seeks to examine the resilience of American working-class life. Williams's poetic development towards realism and the dynamism of material "things" in working-class life reveals his optimism towards new expressions of humanity by the productive and aesthetic forces of Modernity. With his poetry reflecting the artistic developments of Imagism in the early 1910s to his eventual splintering to develop his own American style alongside Precisionism, William Carlos Williams locates new possibilities of human expression in the pragmatic and material means of Modern American life.

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Modernity, Myth, and Innovative Poetic Form in Allen Ginsberg's "Howl"

Jaxon Parker

During the mid-20th century, where free-form jazz and the hovering spectre of nuclear annihilation swirled in the post-war American landscape, Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" cried out in defiance to the conformity of American consumerist society and the traditional poetic forms found in academia's movement towards New Criticism. In "Howl," Ginsberg lays out an eye-witness testimony of the desperate lives of the Beat generation in their struggle to attain spiritual enlightenment in the rancorous environment of post-war America, which Ginsberg lambasts as materialistic, unfulfilling, rigid, and even gluttonous, with the mythic figure of Moloch representing the irrational sacrifice and exploitation of workers and artists to the mechanisms of state power and capital. Following a 'tradition' of innovative poetics from Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and Charles Olson, Ginsberg formulates his generation's malaise of the destructive tendencies of modernity through a relentless torrent of gritty visuals and sensations which document the "the greatest minds of [his] generation destroyed by madness," with this particular content and form finding resonance in Olson's conception of poetry in "Projective Verse." In "Howl," Ginsberg breaks away from traditional poetic forms by projecting a literal howl from his breath (Olson) rather than following standard meter and rhyme, while also unleashing a flood of sensations and perceptions of the anguished lives of the Beats in resistance to the hegemony of the state, capital, and academia. This political dimension in Ginsberg's rejection of conformity and the violent forces of modernity finds not only resonance in this innovative use of projective verse in "Howl," but also how his deployment of myth stands in opposition to that other landmark poem of the 20th century, T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land." By way of a reversal of the regeneration myth through the figure of Moloch, Ginsberg illustrates how the established order of modernity and capitalism reproduces itself through the sacrifice of the youthful, creative, and innovative, rather than the 'aging,' established order itself.

What Ginsberg's "Howl" shares with much of the early Modernist poets, such as Pound, Williams, and even Eliot, is capturing the both beautifully transient and brutal environment of modernity, and then forcefully relaying this experience to the reader through the 'kinetic' sensations of the poem's 'content.' This conception of innovative 20th century poetry is best expounded upon by Olson in his theses that the form of projective verse contains "one perception [which] must immediately and directly lead to a further perception," and that each perception "move, instanter, on another!" (Olson). But these perceptions, or sometimes "objects" in the field of the poem's composition, is also rooted in the sound of syllables and how the fully formed line

follows from the poet's "breath," which according to Olson, link together the "heart" and "mind" of the poet. This combination of illustrative and perceptual "objects" within the poem and the phonetic effect which they produce follows Olson's formation of "kinetics" to describe this aesthetic movement of perceptions leading "instanter" to further perceptions. This is realized in early Modern poets such as in Williams's "For Elsie," with the line "the pure products of America / go crazy—," utilizing alliteration to punctuate and link together multiple perceptions which converge to illustrate the 'craziness' and fractured meaning of American consumerism, and how this leads to a sterile, often violent and sexist environment for the American working-class.

In Ginsberg's context of the mid-20th century, this dynamism of poetic perceptions and their phonetic qualities are employed in "Howl" to illustrate the destructive nature of the consumer revolution and the American modern environment towards individuals who resist conformity and materialism through sex, drugs, and the search of spiritual enlightenment. This "kinetics" or relentless energy of perceptions is expressed by Ginsberg's eye-witness account of the Beats who are "starving hysterical naked," with each word its own perception leading to the next, illustrating not only the physical depravity of the Beats, but also their shattered psychological condition, which is as fragmented and distorted as their modern environment. These visceral perceptions are also emboldened by the energy released in the stressed assonance of each syllable, "starv-ing / hyst-er-i-cal / nak-ed," which compliments Olson's linking of the heart and the mind to realize the full force of kinetic language, as well as highlighting the fractured and distorted sense of reality experienced by the Beats. This connection of the heart and mind also seems to mirror a major theme throughout "Howl" of the Beats experiencing the gritty, brutal, and ethereal sensations of the modern world in order to achieve some sort of spiritual enlightenment, which Ginsberg portrays as both noble self-expression and futile self-destruction. This dichotomy is most poignant in how the Beats "purgatoried their torsos night after night," twisting the noun purgatory into a verb in order to highlight the spiritual and ascetic dimension of the Beats cleansing themselves both physically and spiritually "with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock and endless balls." This torrent of perceptions bridges the sensations of the body to the ethereal nature of the mind, punctuating the Beats' desire to achieve a higher plane of enlightenment in the gritty American landscape.

In their raw experience of reality, the Beats are seen "burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night," juxtaposing the religious desire for heavenly connection to the seemingly soulless and nihilistic reality of rampant industry and machinery. Like the disillusioned Beats themselves, they find their urban environment to be "incomparable" and "blind," with the "shuttering cloud" of the city's streets reflecting their distorted outer and inner sense of subjectivity, as the "lightening in [their] mind leap[ed] toward poles of Canada & Paterson, illuminating all the motionless world of Time between." What this line illustrates is the profusion of the senses and transcendental reflection, where the drug-influenced hallucinatory faculty of the Beats attempt to apprehend the "lightening" of the world around them as well as the "lightning" of their own cognitive thoughts in between, with the inclusion of "Canada & Paterson" referencing Jack Kerouac's origins in Canada and Ginsberg's own origins in Paterson, New Jersey. This apprehension of "lightening," representing the transient, contingent, and instantaneous nature

of both the mind and reality, uncannily reflects Olson's conception of how the projective poem itself should "in syntax, the sentence as first act of nature, [become] as lightning, as passage of force from subject to object, quick." Ginsberg's quick and abrasive perceptions of the Beats' state of mind and their experience of reality, such as in the emphasis on Time, space, objects, and origins, seem to show how ambitious yet hopeless the Beats are in their desperate attempt to understand the distorting and confused world around them, which is also mirrored in their own subjectivity.

This jarring and instantaneous content of Ginsberg's "Howl," with its juxtaposition between the materialist sensations of modern life to the Beat's spiritual journey to ascension, extends itself to the very form of the poem, the structure of which releases the content's visceral and kinetic energy. The form itself is a literal howl from Ginsberg's breath, projecting the despair, defeat, humiliation, and hopelessness of the Beats who struggle to live and express themselves in an isolating and mechanistic society, which disciplines and punishes those who resist the conformity of American consumerism and state power. This deliberate style of form to be an extension of the content of the poem harkens to Olson's essay on "Projective Verse," where he outlines how the kinetic movement of the poet's voice from various objects and perceptions draws from the poet's "breath," which "allows all the speech-force of language." Olson then curiously emphasizes the practicality of the typewriter to indicate the pause between the breaths, and the fully formed perceptions of the lines during each breath: If a contemporary poet leaves a space as long as the phrase before it, he means that space to be held, by the breath, an equal length of time… If he suspends a word or syllable at the end of a line… he means that time to pass that it takes the eye—that hair of time suspended—to pick up the next line.

This is fully realized in "Howl" by how Ginsberg utilizes space and indentations of the page to indicate to the reader how their breath should be utilized to communicate the full "speech-force of language." Because these indentations go on for several lines, leaping from one visceral perception to another, and utilizing the sounds of syllables to their full force, the overall effect of the poem is one of a howl—a cry against the rigid obstacles, soulless institutions, and crushed dreams of modernity. Each breath becomes packed with a flurry of assonances and images which completely barrel through any syntactic conventions of language, such as in the line "yacketayakking screaming vomiting whispering facts and memories and anecdotes and eyeball kicks and shocks of hospitals and jails and wars." In lines such as these (and so much more), the perceptions of the Beats which Ginsberg relays to the reader is intensified by this very form that communicates instantaneous perceptions within a single breath. This use of breath to further illustrate the hectic, drug-fueled, and despairing lives of the Beats demonstrate how their lives are intimately intertwined with the dominating forces of state power, social conformity, and capital. Many of the Beats, including Ginsberg himself, have been incarcerated, drafted, and institutionalized for the sake of the continuation of the homogenous body-politic, and Ginsberg's use of breath in "Howl" not only breaks the conventions of language and traditional poetic form, but the ideological, political, and hegemonizing contours of post-war America.

In the second section of "Howl," Ginsberg's innovative employment of form and breath is directed at the figure of "Moloch," the embodiment of capital, mass-industry, consumerism, war, and the rigid conformity of state power. As a figure of child sacrifice through war or fire in the Bible, Moloch becomes a figure of irrational idolatry in "Howl"

which modern society revolves around. Similar to the story of the Golden Calf, but brought to the dark reality of the modern age, Ginsberg illustrates how the violent mechanisms of power sacrifice the young, new, and innovative for the regeneration of the dominant social order. This connection to the absurd and conformist idolatry is first indicated in the line, "what sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open their skulls and ate up their brains and imagination?" These references to the "cement" and "aluminum" of the idol of Moloch not only point out the industrial composition of modern society, but also to the inherent meaninglessness and absurdity of modern society to willfully sacrifice its workers and artistic innovators to its oppressive institutions and mechanisms. This is punctuated again by Ginsberg's use of breath to illustrate this horrifying absurdity of modern life, with Moloch being "loveless!" "Mental" and "the heavy judger of men!" Moloch itself is the embodiment of the bureaucratic powers of modernity, it being the "incomprehensible prison… the crossbone soulless jailhouse and Congress of sorrows… whose buildings are judgment… the vast stone of war! Moloch the stunned governments!" This stark and absurd reading of the mechanical forces of modernity can be read in opposition to the regeneration myth employed in T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," which itself was a kind of idol to New Criticism academia. In "The Waste Land," Eliot employs a plethora of classical, anthropological, and literary-critical sources to conjure the Grail Legend in order to illuminate Europe's decline. From Wagner's operas, From Ritual to Romance, and the cultural criticisms of Paul Valéry and Hermann Hesse, Eliot ultimately argues in "The Waste Land" that the figure of the Fisher King, symbolizing the ineffective and aging ruler(s) of Europe, must be sacrificed in order for authentic cultural renewal to continue. Ginsberg's employment of Moloch then in "Howl" becomes the absolute antithesis to Eliot's Fisher King, which Ginsberg uses to point out how the regeneration of the social order doesn't actually sacrifice the aging 'establishment,' but instead absurdly and meaninglessly sacrifices the poor, working-class, creative, and youthful to the state mechanisms and institutions to uphold the balance of power.

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America Turned Inside Out: Insurrections and the Theatrics of Unmasking

Jaxon Parker

The following is an excerpt from a longer piece. For full text, please visit https://journals.colorado.edu/index.php/honors-journal/article/view/1779

In a 1787 letter to William Smith (the son-in-law of John Adams), Thomas Jefferson made this disquieting statement about the trials and tribulations of the 11-year-old United States and its destiny:

[W]hat country can preserve it's [sic] liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms… What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is it's [sic] natural manure.

What makes Jefferson's letter so disturbing is not only its apparent callousness towards the "few lives" needed for sacrifice so that the nation can be renewed, but his assertion that Liberty itself is nurtured ritualistically by "the blood of [both] patriots and tyrants." This conception of Liberty directs us towards a veiled, yet no less profound, contradiction emanating from the idea of freedom and democracy in the United States: that in order for Liberty to even exist and flourish, it must be linked together with its direct opposite—tyranny and oppression. For us in the 21st century, we can sigh in relief that the political system of the United States isn't governed by Jefferson's preferred method of near-constant violent revolution, but is ruled by an orderly democracy where the president is elected through the collective ritual of voting, which is then further filtered by the Electoral College. However, when faced with the inflow of "dark money" from anonymous donors to political campaigns, and the dwindling participation of American citizens in the democratic process (which only slightly increased during the uniquely rancorous 2020 presidential elections), perhaps the ritual of voting and the counterintuitive system of the Electoral College contains a hidden semblance of democracy's eternal foe. The ritual of voting, rather than a pragmatic, objective system where the will of a unified and cohesive people is genuinely expressed, paradoxically covers up the radical fragmentation, ambivalence, and oppression that permeates in American democracy. In the aftermath of a contested election that led to rioting and violence at the Capitol on January 6th, 2021 and racial protests against police brutality that swept the nation in 2020, we must recognize how the ceremonies of democracy are in fact sustained by a force of violence lurking underneath. In the 20th and 21st centuries, American insurrectionary groups have contested the core assumptions of the state not only through flashes of collective violence, but when they enact a "theatrics of unmasking" which reflects the contradictory and incoherent rituals of American democracy. From the Black Panthers, the Chicago Seven Trial, and the January 6th storming of the Capitol, these insurrections "unmask" the established order by appropriating its theatrical

elements, collapsing the gap between idle audience members and active participants in the internal and irreducible conflicts of American democracy.

The contestation of political space is one of the most prevalent and effective means for insurrectionary groups to enact a theatrics of unmasking, with the Black Panther Party performing their radical politics both on the street and on the state's seat of power. One instance was on May 2nd, 1967, when California's State Capitol was temporarily taken over by thirty armed Black Panthers. On the Capitol's steps, Panther Chairman Bobby Seale delivered a speech written by Minister of Defense Huey Newton condemning the "racist California Legislature" for the upcoming signing of the Mulford Gun Bill, which was to keep, in Seale and Newton's words, "the Black people disarmed and powerless at the very same time that racist police agencies throughout the country are intensifying the terror, brutality, murder, and repression on Black people." According to Patrick Charles, this demonstration only hastened the signing of the Mulford Bill, which saw the Oakland Police Department, Democrats, Republicans, and the even the NRA come together and rally support for its signing. Here, we can see how the Black Panther's "invasion" of California's Capitol was not only theatrical in their show of force, but how the demonstration caused the ideological division between Republicans and Democrats to momentarily evaporate, revealing their true solidarity with one another when confronted with the Black Panthers' revolutionary presence and rhetoric. The Mulford Bill was notoriously a response to the Black Panthers' institutionalized practice in predominately Black ghettos and communities known as "cop watching," where they evoked the self-defense rhetoric inscribed in the Constitution's Second Amendment to defend themselves against "racist police oppression and brutality" (Foner 3). Essentially, "cop watching" was the reversal of the theatrics underpinning the activities of the local police departments: a public "unmasking" which was used to not only defend Black communities from the racist violence perpetuated by local police departments, but most significantly, constituted this community and the Black Panther identity through this performance and reversal of force. In evoking the language and rhetoric of the Constitution in their self-defense programs and in the "Ten Point Program," the Panthers were able to appropriate the foundational elements of American democracy and highlight the hypocrisy of racism and violence underpinning the California legislature to pass the Mulford Gun Bill into state law.

The Black Panthers were quite successful in cultivating this sense of group identity through theatrical performance, where they utilized Marxist-Leninist theory to emphasize how the "vanguard party" of the Panthers is used to educate the masses: "the party must engage in activities that will teach the people… to awaken the people and to teach them the strategic method of resisting the power structure" (Foner 42). Vanguardism for the Panthers was a strategy of visibility which bridged their insurrectionary activity to the public audience, which was for them, a process of education. One their programs of educating the public was the Breakfast for Children program, which performed the Panthers' radical politics within the space of the public itself. As Fred Hampton mentions, the "people came and took our program, saw it in a socialist fashion without even knowing it was socialism" (Foner 139). In Steve McCutchen's Panther Diary, this same strategy of bridging group solidarity through embedding the Party into the public space is seen when McCutchen's Panther chapter, after suffering from harassment and arrests by police officers, is directed to "establish Black

Community Information Centers (BCIC) in houses that are at the heart of the Black community, surrounded by the masses" (Foner 123). Not only does this strategy of visibility put the Black Panthers within the space of their target audience, but doing so also offers them protection from police harassment since their actions would also be visible to public: "Pigs won't be so trigger happy to vamp on our facilities if there is a chance of others being privy to their military-style murderous attacks on our buildings and programs" (123). Public space is a profoundly ambivalent source of power for insurrectionary activity, becoming a stage of conflict between the theatrics of the Panthers and the state police force. Visibility, performance, and public submergence were integral strategies of the Black Panthers to expand their influence to the audience of the masses, where they were also able to expose the hypocrisy, poverty, and racist violence festering within the cracks of American democracy in the 1960s and '70s.

The Trial of the Chicago Seven in many ways was a microcosm of the social and political contradictions permeating the United States in the same period as the Black Panthers: the Vietnam War, systemic poverty, racial oppression, and the state ceremonies and rituals which attempted to cover up these incongruences.... The seven defendants, Rennie Davis, David Dellinger, John Froines, Tom Hayden, Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, and Lee Weiner, were notably charged with conspiracy and crossing state lines to incite a riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, who were there protesting against the lack of public representation in the convention and the continuation of the Vietnam War which ended in a violent clashed with the police force. Although Judge Hoffman ruled the court room with impunity against the defendants and their attorneys, the ambivalence of the courtroom also opened a space for the Chicago Seven to assert themselves and reclaim the ideals of American liberty and democracy.

This ambivalence is apparent during a scene in the trial where the defense attorney, William Kunstler, motioned for recess so that the defendants could participate in Moratorium Day, one of the nation's largest peace demonstrations against the Vietnam War. Here, Kunstler argues that "the refusal to give permits to marches of protest is probably one of the main reasons why we are all before you this moment," bridging the demonstrations and political activity occurring across the nation into the legal space of the courtroom, which implicitly illuminates the partisan, undemocratic dimension of the prosecution's case (43). Kunstler then offers a populist argument for the motion to recess to Judge Hoffman, stating that Moratorium Day was "not declared by the President but declared by the supreme holder of all power in the country, the people" (44). Following this thread, Kunstler argues that Moratorium Day is on par with the recess ordered by President Nixon recognizing the death of General Eisenhower, claiming that the court "ought to close for the deaths of thousands and millions of innocent people whose lives have been corrupted and rotted and perverted by this utter horror that goes on in your name and my name" (45). This populist rhetoric in the motion for recess provokes Judge Hoffman into retorting, "Not in my name" (45). The subsequent bickering between Hoffman and Kunstler illuminates one of the fundamental issues of the trial: under whose authority is the trial based on, the will of the people or an elite individual (such as the president or the judge)? This confrontation then is based on the legitimacy of the trial itself and for whom the trial really serves (the "people" or just a select few?),

which makes Hoffman rather uncomfortable, since he is caught between conceding to Kunstler that the United States government is indeed acting "in your name and my name," which would put both persons on an equal playing field, or to argue that this is in actuality not true.... This scene between Hoffman and Kunstler is not just an argument over a recess, but a confrontation between two radically conflicting interpretations of American democracy taking place within the courtroom: the right-wing elitism of Post-War America (through Hoffman and the Nixon administration) and the populist fervor of the Yippies, Panthers, and the other New Left movements protesting against this establishment (the Chicago Seven and their attorneys). Under this light, the space of the courtroom is thoroughly fragmented through its embeddedness within the totality of social dynamics, theatrics, and conflicts occurring in the cultural revolutions of the '60s and '70s.

Although the world of Yippies and Black Panthers is long gone, the January 6th Capitol riot has shown not only how theatrics remain an integral component of contemporary insurrections, but how these theatrics harness their power from the ritual of "unmasking" which reveals the contradictions of the dominant political order. As one Trump supporter noted on his way towards the "Stop the Steal" rally, the insurrectionists weren't just demonstrating against Trump's loss in the 2020 election, but they genuinely felt they were fighting for "the American" way of life which is becoming increasingly eroded and erased within our mass media channels and established pathways for political representation (The New York Times). But this way of life, like American democracy itself even, is radically fragmented and incoherent.... The Confederate flags, "Don't Tread On Me" flags, and various militia groups and insignias reveal, in all of their contradictions, that there wasn't enough coherence to supplement another worldview and political structure which could have replaced our democracy. However, this incoherence and fragmentation paradoxically remains the insurrection's greatest strength: by remaining decentralized and vague around the figure of the Trump, the "Stop the Steal" movement was able to subsume every sect of right-wing extremism, from the Proud Boys to the QAnon conspiracy. The insurrection ultimately failed due to these contradictions, but these contradictions point towards a more disconcerting aspect of the political system they were insurrecting against. Like the confrontation between Judge Hoffman and Kunstler, the insurrection highlights the problem of authority underlying the ceremony of the Electoral College. The Electoral College is really political theater, which through its ceremonies and rituals, captures and dictates the "will of people" rather than a vehicle which expresses this will.

Each of these American insurrections have performed what I've called a "theatrics of unmasking." Through appropriating language, rituals, and theatrical spaces of the dominant political order, they "unmask" the hidden inconsistencies and contradictions emanating from within American democracy. What we see then also is a process of fragmentation of not only American ideology, but of political space, where each group marches and momentarily takes over a seat of power, such as California's State Capitol, the 1969 Democratic National Convention, and the Chicago Seven's courtroom. The January 6th Capitol riot would seem to fit right in to this lineage of theatrical unmaskings, yet we are uneasy to do so.... [In] the same way Chris Hayes called the riot "goofy and terrifying at the same time," the insurrection has reminded us how easily our democracy could fall if the insurrectionists were more competent and disciplined. A tragic downfall of our imperfect democracy seems closer to reality than distant fantasy after January 6th. But this downfall is not determined by any means; rather than falling into

fatalistic despair, or even worse, empty platitudes about moderation and "unity" when the far-right is more invigorated than ever to take power, we should continue to confront, reflect, and unmask the undemocratic underside of our political system in its false theatrics to really continue the American project of liberation.

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Remembering the Nation: Allegory in the Literature of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

Jaxon Parker

The following is an excerpt from a longer piece. For the full text, please visit https://scholar.colorado.edu/concern/undergraduate_honors_theses/fq977w193

Abstract

This thesis traces how national allegory is employed, developed, and altered in the early novels of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. Primarily guided by Fredric Jameson's essay on national allegory and his assertion that the category is "profoundly discontinuous, a matter of breaks and heterogeneities, of the multiple polysemia of the dream rather than the homogenous representation of the symbol," this study explores how A Grain of Wheat (1967) and Petals of Blood (1977) reconstruct the dislocated memory of the individual through the traumatic history of the collective, and how this reconnection of the private and public allows for a new imagining of the postcolonial nation.

The ambivalent motif of shared cultural memory and its many figurations throughout these novels are investigated extensively. In A Grain of Wheat, the motif of betrayal, experienced by nearly every character in the novel, signals an ironic, introspective turn on national unity and an examination of the unfulfilled promises of the Mau Mau's decolonial struggle. Told through the characters' individual flashbacks to one another, principally through the arch-traitor Mugo, the memory of betrayal is seen as simultaneously the hollowing of social bonds and the basis for collective regeneration, with the survivors of the Emergency recognizing and negotiating the pitfalls of national consciousness while dedicating themselves to redeeming those who sacrificed their lives for it. Benedict Anderson's essay on memory and forgetting and Frantz Fanon's critique of the national leader are vital components to this discussion of how the novel employs the motif of betrayal and memory in order to counter the mandate by Jomo Kenyatta to "forgive and forget" the Mau Mau's struggle against Kenyan loyalists and colonial occupants.

Whereas A Grain of Wheat was primarily concerned with the immediate aftermath of independence on the national psyche, Petals of Blood directs our attention to the epic volume of history and the metamorphoses that the nation undergoes in its constant battle against imperialism and its desire for unity. The ambivalent motif of betrayal in A Grain of Wheat is mirrored by the motifs of ceremony, fire, and education in Petals of Blood, which are employed to construct a Janus-faced history of the nation exploited by the neocolonial government for its self-interest, and intervened upon by the workers and peasantry to cultivate a tradition of renewed resistance. Anderson's essay on Walter Benjamin's Angel of History is discussed in reference to how the postcolonial nation inherits the state from its predecessor, and Fanon and Ngũgĩ's essays on national culture are considered for their dialectical frameworks of history and the cultivation of "combat literature." In both these

novels of his early career, Ngũgĩ sought to imagine how the nation could rejuvenate the energy and idealism of the Mau Mau uprising and empower the Kenyan workers and peasantry into a different, more equitable, socialist mode of the nation.

[...]

Conclusion

Marx writes that "[t]he tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living" (595). For Ngũgĩ, the precolonial past of Africa, the specter of colonialism, and the failures of Kenyatta's regime continue to haunt Kenyans, and it is for them that Ngũgĩ writes his novels. Peter Nazareth echoes something similar in his study on A Grain of Wheat, where he notes how the novel attempts to bridge the "wounded souls" of his characters to the historical totality of the nation, since the traumas of individuals are collectivized and understood through the social nightmare of Kenya's State of Emergency and its decolonization struggle. As Nazareth asserts, Ngũgĩ deals with "very complex questions: not only does he want to show how Kenya has gained its independence but also he wants to find out what happened in the process to the souls of the people" (131). What Ngũgĩ depicts in his novels are a people physically and psychologically damaged by colonialism and neocolonialism, but he also shows how Kenyans attempt to understand their wounded souls by reflecting on their national experience, the site in which history and politics have overdetermined the identity, memory, and psychology of the people.

In A Grain of Wheat and Petals of Blood, personal and public identity, along with personal and public memory, are interconnected. For Ngũgĩ, memory is a process where the "wounded souls" of the postcolonial nation reconstruct their selfhood, which as Fanon notes, is the discovery of how individual experience is linked to the national collective (140). But memory can also be the site of manipulation and distortion, such as when Kenyatta resurrects of the Mau Mau oath of unity to retroactively rewrite history, and to enflame ethnic tensions by reverting to a chauvinistic definition of the nation. Under imperialism, whether during colonialism or Kenyatta's postcolonial state, the memory of the past is used to torment the living of the present. This is why Ngũgĩ emphasizes that "re-membering" Kenya is also the process by which the nation, like his novels, are invented and reinvented. Ngũgĩ's mastery of the novel coincides with his rearranging and assembling of the various fragments and voices of the collective's memory as they are confronted with the neocolonial reality of their situation. By exploring the wounded souls of a nation who have undergone independence and the failed promises of the postcolonial regime, Ngũgĩ examines the broken fragments of the nation, and through its fissures, reimagines what the nation could be if made whole again.

As this thesis has argued, this process of "re-membering" the nation is accomplished through Ngũgĩ's employment of national allegory, where the maimed souls and bodies of individuals are mended through the linking of history and the collective. When national allegory is produced, a total map of meaning is presented which unfolds the changing space and history of the nation, which as Fredric Jameson notes, is a search to reunite with the older forms of communal life that have been uprooted by international capitalism. However, national allegory is also the site where Ngũgĩ imagines a continuous conflict between imperialism and the people throughout Kenyan history, and where the nation, like allegory itself, changes at every level of the text, or in Kenya's case, in the heat of political struggle. Through Ngũgĩ's evocation of social and historical change, the ambivalent politics of the nation is opened up. But rather than dispensing with the nation altogether, Ngũgĩ scrutinizes the fissures

of the nation and the fragments of memory for sources of the nation's popular and political power that can be utilized to imagine different modes of the nation, as opposed to its construction under the neocolonial state. As Jameson notes, the cure for the individual cannot be found through their own efforts to demystify the ideology surrounding them, but truth is realized through the social being: "in the Marxian system, collective unity—whether that of particular class, the proletariat, or of its 'organ of consciousness,' the revolutionary party—can achieve this transparency [of class determination]; the individual subject is always positioned within the social totality" (The Political Unconscious 283). By engaging with national allegory in his writing, Ngũgĩ is influenced by the utopic potential of the Kenyans to understand and change their historical moment.

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Virtual Time, Music, and the Sublime

Jessica Stouder

The following is an excerpt from a longer piece. For full text, please visit https://journals.colorado.edu/index.php/honors-journal/article/view/1681

Music is part of our humanity: It is connected to our emotional repertoire, to our cognitive skills, and in it we can give expression to that urge to transcend that gives birth to the most sublime art. (Bicknell, 2009, p. 149)

Introduction

In this essay, I utilize the song "She Weeps Over Rahoon" arranged by Eric Whitacre (2008) to demonstrate how Langer's expressivism can be understood to fulfil Burke's account of the sublime such that certain music is aesthetically experienced as an instance of the sublime. I focus on Langer's concept of virtual time, where the listening experience of music is unique from chronological time, in that it is multidimensional and accessible for our complete comprehension (Langer, 1953). I will first give an account of Langer and Burke's philosophies, and subsequently apply them to "She Weeps Over Rahoon," originally a poem by James Joyce written in 1913 (see Appendix) inspired by a woman visiting her lover's grave in Rahoon, Ireland, to demonstrate how the objective experience of listening to music can elicit the same affective responses as the sublime and be transcendental for the listener.

Background

On Langer's (1953) account of expressivism, music is about feelings and symbolizes the structure of emotions in virtual time, where we lose our sense of ourselves. She argues that musical expression is ambiguous, not expressing named emotions, but representing how our emotional lives develop over time, revealing and presenting knowledge about human feeling. As I will be arguing that music can be experienced as sublime, I will focus on music that expresses negative emotions for the listener, which are then taken as pleasurable.

[...]

I argue that the pain conveyed in "She Weeps Over Rahoon" is enough to constitute a sublime experience, as listeners experience a negative emotion at a distance which elicits the positive emotion of pleasure. In addition, the highest degree of the sublime is astonishment, where all motions of the soul are suspended in a degree of pain or terror that stops our reasoning, and the "mind is entirely filled with the sublime object" (Bicknell, 2009, p. 29). This is exactly how music encapsulates us in virtual time, and how the chosen song captivates its listener with uncomfortable sadness and beauty. In what follows, I will examine each of the sources of the sublime in turn to demonstrate how "She Weeps Over Rahoon" embodies them: obscurity, power, privation, vastness, and infinity.

Sources of Sublimity

Obscurity is one of Burke's requirements

for sublimity, for when we know the full extent of something, or can "accustom our eyes to it," our apprehension disappears (Burke, 1990, p. 80). Here, Burke is referencing visual obscurity; however obscurity is not just visual. When listening to a song for the first time, you do not know where the music will take you. Even after repeating it a hundred times, I believe there is still obscurity in the way you will be immersed in virtual time, and you cannot know what emotions the music will elicit in you this time you listen to it. There is also obscurity in the meaning of the song; you cannot ever fully know what the artist's intended meaning was, and the song can be interpreted in many different ways. Burke (1990) believes music is inherently obscure, because it cannot clearly communicate full ideas, and that "words have little or nothing to do with the ideas they represent"; thus, the lyrics and song could mean anything, raise image-ideas in the mind or not, and are obscure in themselves (Wurth, 2012, p. 28).

[…]

The next requirement is power, as it moves us away from our standard state of indifference towards the passions. Burke argues that we cannot make objects of great power or strength subject to us, as that would remove its influence; the terrible of the sublime does not follow our will (Burke, 1990). Engaging in virtual time is to allow ourselves to be swept away in the movement of the chords; we are always subject to music, it is never subject to us. Similarly, Longinus explains that the sublime "subverts reason and takes us out of ourselves" and affects the listener if they will it or not (Bicknell, 2009, p. 26). Music takes us with it, uses rhythm to prepare us for a future we do not know, sets up our expectations for the future, and creates feeling. Therefore, music is powerful, but has none of the contextual elements of emotion (such as an intentional object about which to feel sad about, per Levinson (2019)), so we can allow ourselves to get swept away in it but not affected by it in a real-world context. This is an instance of Burke's sublime, as the pleasure from the experience of a painful object comes when one faces that object, and realizes that the pain is not real, and thus a tension is released; there is delight in the relief. Under Burke's reasoning, the power of music is that it "does not transfer ideas [of pain] but passions that may be analogous to certain ideas…music can even anticipate ideas insofar as it can rouse passions to which ideas correspond that have not yet been pronounced" (Wurth, 2012, p. 33). Thus, "She Weeps Over Rahoon" allows listeners to experience death and grief at a safe distance, and gain relief and delight in the process of listening to the hauntingly beautiful music.

[…]

One of the most easily recognizable instances of the sublime is vastness, "greatness in dimension" (Burke, 1990, p. 97). Here I return to the idea of virtual time as an analogue of virtual space, which is infinite, incomprehensible, boundless, and grand. One cannot experience vastness in music as Burke describes visually; however, there is great vastness in hearing music, as there are no bounds to virtual time, or virtual space. In music, space functions to "develop the temporal realm in more than one dimension" and provides orientation for our hearing (Langer, 1953, p. 117). If one is to take vastness as a lack of bounds, music represents an openness that feeds a feeling of the sublime through the "felt presence of an absence," where an openness "constantly suggests the possibility of something other," beyond limits, something like immensity in the virtual time and space created by music (Wurth, 2012, p. 37). Here resides a strong parallel between the experience of music and the sublime, as in music one is overwhelmed by

the totality of the experience, just like how one is overwhelmed by the grandness of the sublime. When we are immersed in music, there is a sense of "letting go," as we are "consumed by, or somehow taken up into, the musical soundworld unfolding around us" (Krueger, 2018, p. 2). In Langer's theory, "music spreads out time for our direct and complete apprehension, by letting our hearing monopolize it—organize, fill, and shape it, all alone" (Langer, 1953, p. 110). In other words, music fills up virtual time and space; however, we have the ability to comprehend it all at once. This is similar to Kant's idea of the mathematical sublime, where the infinity and magnitude of a scene render us incapable to fully comprehend it at once; however, the free play of our imagination is moved to think about it in its totality, so that we can imagine and comprehend the whole, which creates the affective response of uplift when experiencing the sublime (Kant, 2008). Langer herself describes music as a "sonorous beauty taking over the whole of one's consciousness," where we lose our own continuity in the vastness of virtual time (Langer, 1953, p. 104). "She Weeps Over Rahoon" uses conflicting notes, voices, rhythms, and messages to fill up virtual time and space, demonstrating how one piece of music can stretch across the elements of formal music that the listener transcends in comprehending the piece as a whole, not just the sum of its parts.

Burke also believes that infinity is a requirement, which produces the most genuine effect of the sublime: "delightful horror" (Burke, 1990, p. 99). He writes that as we cannot perceive the limits of many things, our minds create the same effects as if they were infinite, and we experience pleasure as an effect. "Whenever we repeat any idea frequently, the mind by a sort of mechanism repeats it long after the first cause has ceased to operate" (Burke, 1990, p. 99). This maps very well onto the experience of listening to "She Weeps Over Rahoon," where the last notes echo over and over in the mind as the song dies away, and continues in the allotted silence at the end of the piece. Music has an interesting quality in this way, as one does not need to hear it to experience it; one can 'play' a song in the mind, which does not employ the conventional sense of hearing, but simply utilizes the operations of the mind. In addition, Bicknell (2009) argues that very beautiful things, like a beautiful song, have such a powerful hold on the listener that when it disappears, there is a sense of loss akin to pain, and thus the feeling of the sublime arises. Even though songs might not elicit terror, "the reality of their transitory nature can be sobering, if not painful" (Bicknell, 2009, p. 124). "She Weeps Over Rahoon" is such a full-bodied piece of music that the listener cannot help but feel not only the grief in the loss of a loved one presented in the song, but the loss of the song as well. In Burke's infinity, the imagination looks forward to fulfilment in a piece of music and looks backward to suspend tension in a repetition in open space (Wurth, 2012). This oscillation between progression and regression allows the listener to hesitate in between pain and pleasure, and experience the sublime in music. Returning to the concept of virtual time, because it is outside of chronological time it can be called boundless, and infinite in itself. The rhythm of "She Weeps Over Rahoon" clearly conveys these ideas, through the intentional slowness of some notes and the quick movements of other passages, the conflicting combination of high and low, sharp and flat notes, offset vocals, and inconsistent messages of hope and despair, beauty and death all invite the listener to get lost in the oscillation between pain and pleasure.

Conclusion

Langer's (1953) concept of virtual time and musical expressivism can be understood in conjunction with Burke's (1990) account of the sublime, demonstrating that music and the medium in which it operates, virtual time, can be sublime.

In virtual time, the listener is overwhelmed by the music as it expresses tension and emotion, allowing the listener to transcend the formal elements of the song to experience the sublime. The song "She Weeps Over Rahoon" (Joyce, 2008) exemplifies Burke's requirements for the feeling of sublimity, exhibiting pain, obscurity, power, privation, vastness, and infinity as the listener experiences it in felt time. Thus, one need not face a bull to experience the sublime; one must simply listen to music.

APPENDIX

She Weeps Over Rahoon
By James Joyce

Rain on Rahoon falls softly, softly falling,
Where my dark lover lies.
Sad is his voice that calls me, sadly calling,
At grey moonrise.

Love, hear thou
How soft, how sad his voice is ever calling,
Ever unanswered, and the dark rain falling,
Then as now.

Dark too our hearts, O love, shall lie and cold
As his sad heart has lain
Under the moongrey nettles, the black mould
And muttering rain.

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