Beyond Boundaries

MASTERING THE LIBERAL ARTS

Issue 1, Fall 2021

Beyond Boundaries: Mastering the Liberal Arts

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Letter from the Founders

We started this journal after a very isolated first semester of graduate school. New to the master's program, we had no benchmark to compare our online learning environment to in-person history courses. Was graduate school supposed to feel this… disjointed?

We found ways to connect with our cohort online: Zoom happy hours hosted by the department, group chats and social media. We shared and supported each other's scholarship and commiserated over anxieties and ambitions in an increasingly digital environment.

A common frustration we all shared was the lack of publication opportunities for scholars such as ourselves who were new to academia. We were eager to share our work but found barriers to publishing professionally. Some, like the global pandemic slowing down the process, were unalterable. Some, like finding the process a mystery, were due to lack of experience.

The idea for *Beyond Boundaries* came from a casual conversation one day in December of 2020 when Bryan, one of the co-founders, stated, "why don't we start our own journal?" So, we did: a student-run publication exclusively for master's students in the College of Liberal and Fine Arts. We imagined it as a platform for new scholars and an avenue for engagement with other students and faculty.

Creating a journal with relatively no experience during a pandemic had its fair share of challenges. Nevertheless, we persevered and moved forward. We enlisted, and are very grateful for, the help of interdisciplinary reviewers and editors. This journal would not exist without the participation of students and faculty across COLFA. It brings us great joy to see the participation of such departments like Anthropology, Art and Art History, History, English, and Modern Languages and Literatures. Thankfully, we have had the incredible support of our advisor, Professor Catherine Clinton, and Dr. Yaeger. Without either of them, this project would not have achieved realization.

This inaugural issue is a testament to the capabilities and endless possibilities that graduate students have at the University of Texas at San Antonio. When we envision *Beyond Boundaries* in the near future, we see it in the capable hands of UTSA's graduate students. We hope incoming, interdisciplinary editors will make this journal an enduring part of the UTSA experience.

We are proud to present the first issue of *Beyond Boundaries: Mastering the Liberal Arts.*

Sincerely,

Cindy Chavez   Catarina Garza
Cristóbal López   Bryan Morales

Letter from the Editors

Beyond Boundaries: Mastering the Liberal Arts is a testament to the capabilities and endless possibilities held by graduate students at the University of Texas at San Antonio. We created this journal so graduate students at the College of Liberal and Fine Arts could have a space to connect and showcase their excellent work during a tumultuous time in all our lives.

We are very excited and proud to present the inaugural issue of *Beyond Boundaries: Mastering the Liberal Arts*. In this issue, we are pleased to present seven incredible representations of original student work. We would like to thank every author for submitting their work and joining us in the publication process. Our authors have been wonderful to work with, even though as of publication we have not been able to meet most of them in person. The *Beyond Boundaries* team is honored to provide a platform for your work, and we wish you all the best in the future.

Creating a journal during a global pandemic did not come without challenges, nevertheless, we are appreciative to everyone who helped us persevere and create our final product. We would like to thank our first round of editors, Cristóbal López and Bryan Morales, for all their hard work in the submission and initial review process. Without their dedication, *Beyond Boundaries* would not have received the outstanding works that follow. Special thanks are due to Andrés Borunda for donating his time and skills to our website. We would also like to thank our friends and family who supported our early fundraising efforts.

We're excited to see what the future holds for *Beyond Boundaries*. We wish to expand, to include the voices of all COLFA graduate students at UTSA. This first issue of *Beyond Boundaries* is just a glimpse into the hard work and dedication of graduate students at the University of Texas at San Antonio. To our readers, we hope you enjoy *Beyond Boundaries* as much as we enjoyed creating it. We invite all current master's students and recent graduates of their respective programs to submit their work for consideration for the next issue of *Beyond Boundaries*.

Catarina Garza
Veronica Vasquez

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A Pilot Study Examining Ceramic Paste Fabrics at the Ancient Maya Site of Hun Tun in Northwestern Belize

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Abstract

This article is a pilot study applying a petrographic analysis to ceramic body sherds from the ancient Maya site of Hun Tun, a hinterland site in northwestern Belize. The goal is to understand if there are multiple producer groups at the site, and determine what, if any, trade, and exchange are taking place at the site. The study revealed two distinct paste fabrics, being the Sand-Carbonate, and Carbonate fabrics. The Sand-Carbonate fabric is distinguished by well-sorted and rounded to well-rounded sand sized calcite grains, while the Carbonate fabric is distinguished by poor sorting, angular calcite grains, and large amounts of voids. The results of the study show the validity of the method at a small site, while also serving as the basis for future research.

A Pilot Study Examining Ceramic Paste Fabrics at the Ancient Maya Site of Hun Tun in Northwestern Belize

Introduction

Previous research has noted the benefit of using petrography to analyze paste fabrics among ceramics in the ancient Maya lowlands, a place where bedrock has the potential to interfere with chemical analysis (Brennan et al., 2013). As noted in the work of Quinn (2013), ceramic producers can have their own "signatures" hidden within the clay used to produce their vessels, where individual choices made by craftspeople have the potential to affect the function of vessels (Rice, 1987). Lechtman (1977) has noted how the process in which ceramics are manufactured are constrained in certain ways due to specific forms that are determined by cultural norms that still leave room for craftspeople to express their own agency through variations in production methods, referred to as technological style, such as temper of ceramics. By studying these variations, producer groups within and between archaeological sites can be distinguished from one another based purely on choices involving paste fabrics.

Ceramics are primarily produced for two main purposes: Internal consumption, and distribution. As Hirth (1998) notes, if ceramics are produced internally, a limited set of technological styles will be found; whereas a site where ceramics are imported will find a much greater mix of paste fabrics, occasionally with inclusions that cannot be found in the local area (i.e., volcanic ash, marine shell). Understanding ceramic production can further sub-divide vessels in ways that cannot by understood with purely type-variety, an analytical technique where ceramics are classified broadly, then divided into groups based on surface treatment (i.e., slips), then divided again into types as determined by decorations on the surface, and then into varieties (Rice, 1987). Combining type-variety with petrography allows variations to be linked to specific varieties to discriminate between technological styles that may be taken by craftspeople at a given site, or between sites.

This study is focused on an ancient hinterland Maya site called Hun Tun, located in the Rio Bravo Conservation and Management Area (RBCMA) of northwestern Belize, and managed by the Programme for Belize Archaeological Project (PfBAP). Research at Hun Tun by its site director, Dr. Robyn Dodge, has focused on understanding social stratification through household studies (Dodge, 2016). Through this research into households, questions about how craftspeople fit into communities start to arise. The goal of this pilot work is to understand how many, if any, producer groups are responsible for the ceramics present at Hun Tun, and to serve as a basis for future research in ceramics at the site.

Background

PfBAP was established in 1992 and has focused on collaboration between a large collective of scholars, each bringing their own skillsets and expertise to the project, while also doubling as a host for a major collective of field schools that train students in archaeological excavation and lab methods (Adams et al., 2004). Due to the size of the RBCMA and PfBAP, research goals have focused on understanding regional interactions between major centers, and their smaller counterparts, as well as specifically researching smaller sites (Lohse et al., 2004).

One such example of these interactions is between the large site of La Milpa, and the smaller site of Hun Tun. Hinterland sites such as Hun Tun or the nearby Medicinal Trail make up the vast majority of sites in the region. These sites were made up of everyday people including craftspeople, farmers, as well as other laborers, among others, and are commonly referred to in literature as "commoners" (Robin, 2003). Authors such as Scarborough et al. (2003) have noted how hinterland sites may also be specialized communities, that provide specific resources to other communities, or even produce goods for export. By studying hinterland sites, PfBAP helps put people back into archaeology through studies of everyday life and interactions.

While PfBAP studies small sites, the research area is home to several major sites, such as La Milpa, Wari Camp, Dos Hombres, Great Savanna, Grand Cacao, and Ma'ax Na, among others that have potentially not been identified yet (Adams et al., 2004; Levi, 2012; Sullivan & Valdez, 2004, 2015). Dodge (2016) notes how studies into commoners developed as a challenge to more binary "elite" and "commoner" relationships. Due to visibility, major centers were commonly the primary target of earlier archaeological studies, leading to small sites being pushed aside as insignificant. Such ignorance led to a very limited understanding of the lives of the ancient Maya, where the lives of the few outweighed the lives of the many. As a response, scholars began to create a shift in focus from temples to households. Hun Tun is one such example of household studies, as the site is a perfect example of how social complexity can be studied at a site that retains ties to major sites, as well as some nearby smaller sites, such as Medicinal Trail (Dodge, 2016). To address this complexity, research at Hun Tun has focused on understanding how the interactions of relationships of inequalities between large and small sites can be understood archaeologically through distributions of material goods and resources (Dodge, 2016).

Kent Flannery, one of the leading experts into household studies in Mesoamerica noted how clusters of households exist in settlements, appearing in the forms of residences, storage areas, or other features that are separated by open areas (1976). Such clusters allow for households to be related to specific groups, which may themselves be nested in other larger groups within sites. Flannery's work has been useful in the study of settlement at Hun Tun, as it allows households to be viewed as distinct from the rest of their community. Each cluster has their own function that distinguishes them from the rest of the site, where some residences can focus on agriculture, while others can be groups of craftspeople. Because groups can be separate from their communities, the materials produced by craftspeople can vary based on how those people interact with the spaces around them (Wilke & Rathjhe, 1982). This understanding of how variations can exist within communities is the basis of this study into ceramics at Hun Tun.

While excavations at Hun Tun have revealed a diverse set of resources and trade goods, such as obsidian, jade, and marine shell, among others, this pilot study focuses purely on the production and exchange of ceramics. Within PfBAP, ceramics have been well documented and studied by various ceramicists within the collective (Adams et al., 2004; Sullivan & Valdez, 2004). Broadly, ceramics range from the Middle Preclassic period (800-400 B.C.E.) through the Terminal Classic period (800-900 C.E.). Sullivan and Valdez (2004); (Sullivan & Valdez, 2015)

note how that there is a dramatic increase in the number of small hinterland sites, as well as a dramatic increase in quality of utilitarian ceramics. The Late Classic (600-800 C.E.) and Terminal Classic (800-900 C.E.) periods at PfBAP sites are identified as the Tepeu sphere, which is divided into three phases. The majority of ceramics at Hun Tun are from the Tepeu 2-3 phases, and are made up of a large variety of types (Dodge, 2016). Due to the short occupation of Hun Tun, the site presents a fantastic opportunity to study variation in craft production among households in the ancient Maya.

Following the work of Rice (1987), if ceramics are being produced for trade, an obvious mass-produced standardized form or type will be present. Craft specialization among the Maya allows communities to grow their relationships through interdependence between various sites (Valdez, 2012). Most Maya households were not sufficiently able to produce all of the material goods necessary while maintaining a food supply, and as such, had to rely on trade and exchange of goods (Masson & Freidel, 2012). As Hirth (1998) explains, due to exchange playing such a massive role in the lives of the Maya, all households should see some degree of homogeneity among their artifacts. Eckert et al. (2015) explains how variation in ceramics can exist due to ideological beliefs, or as a result of export. When understanding variation due to ideological beliefs, the potential for de-centralized production has the potential for even further difference among stylistic intentions, especially compared to the functional choices of individuals when tempering ceramics. Due to time constraints involved with making ceramics, the possibility exists that craftspeople could be made up entirely of part-time actors, who spend most of their time focused on food production or providing other services to nearby sites. This study aims to understand if ceramics at Hun Tun are being produced for export, if there is any standardization among craftspeople, and if the actors producing ceramics are full-time specialists, or part-time producers.

Methodology

Borrowing from geological sciences, petrographic analysis was first applied to Mesoamerican ceramics by Sigvald Linné (Bishop, 2014) on ceramics from the ancient Aztec site of Teotihuacan, and later in the Maya lowlands by Anna Shepard in her research (Shepard, 1942, 1948, 1958, 1967). The use of petrography allows thin sections of ceramics to be viewed under a polarizing microscope to identify inclusions present in the ceramic sherd (Rice, 1987). One of the major benefits of petrography is the ability to distinguish between whether or not inclusions were intentionally ground for temper, as well as the sorting and maturity of inclusions in the vessel (Quinn, 2013). Another benefit is the cost-saving nature, as petrography requires less samples at a lower cost when compared to something like neutron activation analysis (NAA) or laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS), both of which require a large amount of samples, and have dramatically higher costs than petrography. At the same time, petrography shows the intentionality of craftspeople, which is understood through distinguishing inclusions from the clay matrix, as well as potentially non-local inclusions (i.e., volcanic ash, marine shell), as compared to something like grog (crushed pottery). Due to limitations in funding and the destructive nature of NAA and LA-ICP-MS, this study sticks to

petrography, as the research questions at hand are based on identifying producer groups and exchange.

Twenty-three thin sections were sent to National Petrographic Service Inc. in Rosenburg, Texas for processing. In processing, the ceramics are trimmed to size with a wet saw before being impregnated with epoxy. The sample is then ground to a thickness of 0.03 mm before being mounted on a glass slide (Quinn, 2013). After the finished samples were returned, they were viewed at the University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences Graduate Microscopy Lab on a Zeiss Axioskop 40 polarizing microscope, where point counts were taken to calculate inclusion percentages and to aid in grouping paste fabrics. As Quinn (2013) discusses, petrography is able to indicate firing temperature of ceramics, as the mineral dolomite begins to disintegrate at temperatures above 800℃, whereas calcite will remain until temperatures reach 900℃.

Petrography has three main elements to it that are studied, which are the clay matrix, the inclusions, and the voids that are found in the paste of a vessel. Clay is the main actor in a vessel, and almost always makes up most of the paste (Quinn, 2013). Clay is understood as a naturally occurring mineral that is easy to work and shape into form for firing (Rice, 1987). Some craftspeople may elect to mix two or more sources of clay for their vessels, which petrography is able to reveal. Clays can also have their own naturally occurring inclusions, which are not usually bigger than 0.10 mm (Quinn, 2013). The color and composition of a clay matrix reveals information about clay sourcing and firing environment, something which can help distinguish local and non-local ceramics based purely of the clay used in production.

Inclusions are particulate materials which are distinct from the clay matrix (Quinn, 2013). These are the most distinct actor in ceramics, and typically reveal some of the most important information, such as intentionality, trade, or even meaning when inclusions such as volcanic ash or marine shell are found (Quinn, 2013). As a result, inclusions are the most commonly studied component in ceramic petrography. Examples of inclusions are seemingly endless, but most commonly found are minerals, grog, bone, shell, plants, among a long list of others (Rice, 1987).

Finally, petrography also studies voids. Voids, as the name suggests, are empty spaces in ceramics, and are understood as the absence of materials (Quinn, 2013). Voids themselves play a major role in ceramics, as they influence the weight, strength, permeability, insulation, and thermal conductivity of a vessel (Quinn, 2013). These can occur naturally in the clay, or even be created during processing by having air be trapped in the clay during kneading. While naturally occurring voids are very small, 0.05 mm and below, other voids created during processing and firing can be dramatically larger (Quinn, 2013). During the firing process, new voids are created primarily in four different ways: shrinking rates of clay, organic or plant materials burning away, or the decomposition of inclusions (ex: dolomite), or even in through shock in the post firing. Voids are also able to be created through weathering or decomposition after they are deposited in their resting place before excavation (Quinn, 2013). To assist in the classification of voids, the samples from Hun Tun were impregnated with a blue epoxy to aid in identification.

The clay matrix can be described through its color under plane polarized light (PPL) and optical activity, such as isotropic or anisotropic clay. Anisotropic clay has different, and much more active visual properties when viewed from different angles in cross-polarized light (XPL), whereas isotropic clay lacks these features (Zhang et al., 2019). Samples were classified with either an anisotropic, or isotropic clay matrix.

Inclusions are characterized here through percentage estimation, angularity, sorting, and a list of minerals present. Percentage estimations are based off of point counts from a single thin section and are used to roughly determine the number of inclusions in the remainder of the vessel. Angularity is broken down into four categories: angular, subangular, subrounded, and rounded. Figure 1 shows a chart used to aid in determining the angularity of inclusions. Sorting is characterized as: well sorted, moderately sorted, poorly sorted, and very poorly sorted. Figure 2 shows a chart used to help estimate the sorting of the paste and its inclusions.
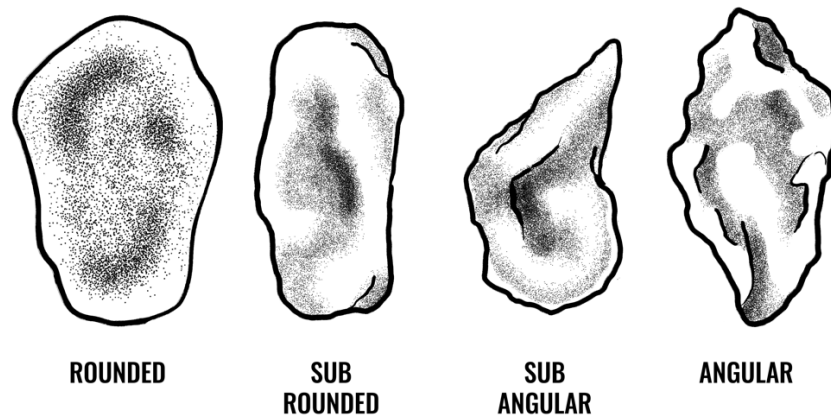

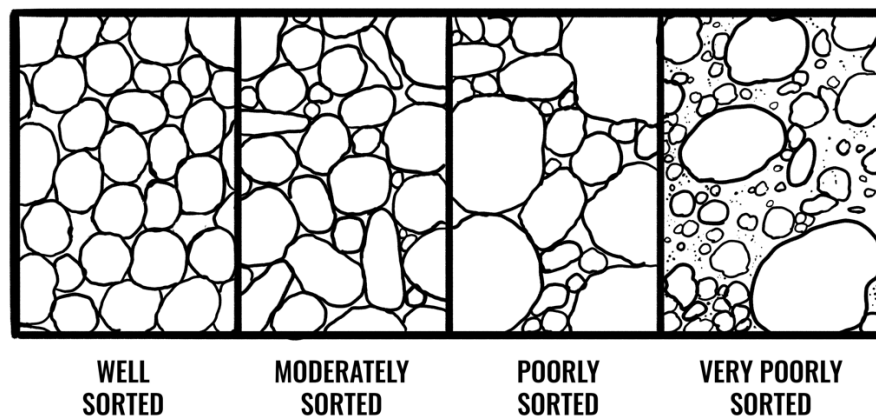Figure 1: Inclusion Angularity Chart

Figure 2: Grain Sorting Chart

Point counts are a quantitative form of analysis which is completed by moving a thin section along an x-axis and y-axis at a set interval. The interval used here is 0.3 mm, and 150 point counts were taken. Each time that the slide is moved on an interval, whatever is targeted by the crosshairs is either counted as clay matrix, or as inclusions or voids. The decision was made to collect 150 points due to the high number of inclusions in some of the samples. Rather than adjust the point counts to fit some samples where the sherd may be bigger than others, having a standard from which inclusions were calculated made for more meaningful comparisons.

Firing is one of the final steps in the processing of ceramics. Rice (1987) describes three main variables that affect the results of how ceramics leave the firing process, which are: time, temperature, and atmosphere. Since all three of these factors play major roles, all three must be examined, rather than just temperature. While the list of outcomes is numerous, the factors relevant here are the presence, absence, and alteration of minerals which are used to understand temperature, and the color of the paste of the sherd when viewed with the naked eye, which suggests time and atmosphere.

The lowest temperature at which ceramics can be fired with no major changes to minerals is between 600-700°C (Cultrone et al., 2001). Above 700°C, dolomite begins to decompose, or alters into other minerals, typically into calcite and periclase with the equation given by Trindade et al. (2009).

$$CaMg(CO_3)_2 \text{ (dolomite)} \rightarrow CaCo_3 \text{ (calcite)} + MgO \text{ (periclase)} + CO_2$$
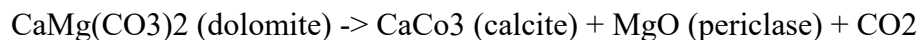
Once temperatures reach upwards of 800°C, dolomite is fully decomposed, whereas calcite remains until temperatures of 900°C (Cultrone et al., 2001; Trindade et al., 2009).

The color of the clay matrix can also be used to understand firing temperatures. When ceramics are fired at high temperatures, iron contents in clays can tint the clay matrix into a red shade (Rice, 1987). When ceramics are fired at high temperatures in an environment where oxygen is restricted, the clay matrix will change from red or brown to black (Rice, 1987).

When ceramics are viewed with the naked eye, they can occasionally have a black strip in the center of their core. This is caused by ceramics containing organic material, such as plants not being fired long enough and hot enough to fully burn off all of the organics. If organic material is fully burned off, a homogenous color will be present, whereas if ceramics are not fired long enough or hot enough, they will have dark cores. This also requires a free flow of oxygen being constant during the firing (Rice, 1987).

Similar to time, atmosphere performs the same way, where a flow of oxygen and proper temperatures are needed to fully burn off organic material. Rice (1987) discusses two main atmospheric conditions that affect ceramics, which are oxidizing atmospheres, and reducing atmospheres. An oxidizing atmosphere is one with free circulation of large amounts of air, a reducing atmosphere is one with limited amounts of airflow that is likely restricted. Dark cores are a result of a reducing atmosphere (Rice, 1987)

Because petrography is destructive in nature, and the limited number of ceramics recovered from some contexts at Hun Tun, the ceramics chosen consist of unidentifiable body

sherds with no distinguishable characteristics. This was done to avoid destroying any rim sherds, or elaborately decorated ceramics, such as polychromes, due to their scarcity at the site.

Results of Petrographic Analysis

The results of the pilot study have revealed more than one paste recipe present at Hun Tun. The most common inclusion by far is calcite, followed by lower amounts of dolomite, grog, hematite, and quartz, among others in more trace amounts. Table 1 shows the percentages of inclusions compared to voids present in each of the samples.

Two major paste fabrics were noted among the samples. The first is the Carbonate fabric (n=9), which is characterized by poor sorting, subangular to angular grains, and abundant voids (Figure 3). The next is the Sand-Carbonate fabric (n=12), which is characterized by moderate to well sorting of sand sized grains (number from Quinn), subrounded to rounded grains, and less abundant voids (Figure 4). There was a total of two sherds which could not be placed into either group, due to the scarcity of calcite inclusions, and the large amount of grog present in one sample (HT4).

Sherd ID	Context	Calcite	Dolomite	Grog	Quartz	Hematite	Mica (Muscovite)	Voids	Fabric
HT1	7-CX-3	49	0	0	0	22	0	29	Ungrouped
HT2	7-CX-3	29	43	0	1	2	1	24	Sand-Carbonate
HT3	7-CX-3	24	40	0	0	8	1	45	Sand-Carbonate
HT4	7-CY-3	11	0	39	1	4	0	47	Ungrouped
HT5	7-CY-3	51	0	0	0	2	0	47	Carbonate
HT6	7-CY-3	17	48	1	0	1	10	23	Sand-Carbonate
HT7	7-DA-6	50	0	0	1	2	0	47	Carbonate
HT8	7-DA-6	50	0	0	3	11	0	36	Carbonate
HT9	7-DA-9	82	1	3	0	1	0	23	Sand-Carbonate
HT10	7-DA-9	81	1	1	0	1	0	26	Sand-Carbonate
HT11	7-DA-9	60	0	0	0	1	0	49	Sand-Carbonate
HT12	7-DB-2	10	56	0	1	1	0	32	Sand-Carbonate
HT13	7-DB-2	54	0	0	0	2	0	44	Sand-Carbonate
HT14	7-DB-2	51	0	0	0	5	0	44	Sand-Carbonate
HT15	7-DB-3	7	56	0	3	6	0	28	Carbonate
HT16	7-DB-3	64	0	0	1	1	0	34	Carbonate
HT17	7-DB-3	74	0	0	1	1	1	23	Sand-Carbonate
HT18	7-DD-2	60	0	0	2	1	0	37	Sand-Carbonate
HT19	7-DD-2	50	0	0	2	10	0	38	Carbonate
HT20	7-DD-2	9	58	0	1	1	1	30	Carbonate
HT21	7-DG-2	60	0	0	1	1	0	28	Sand-Carbonate
HT22	7-DG-2	31	0	1	8	2	0	58	Carbonate
HT23	7-DG-2	32	1	0	1	2	0	64	Carbonate

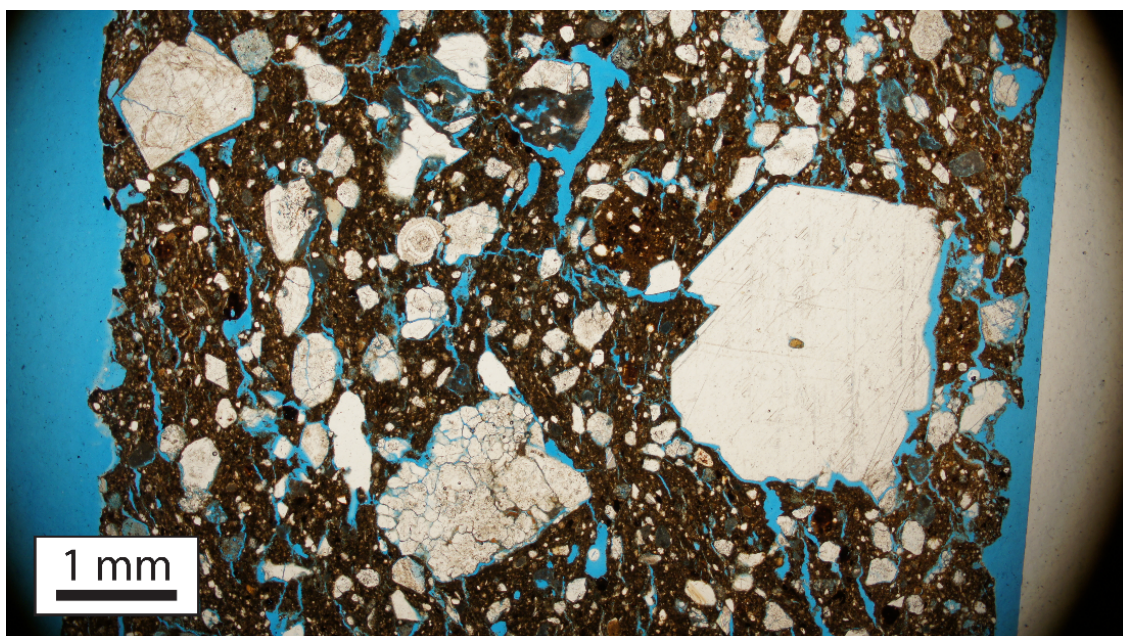Table 1: Percentages of Inclusions per Sample

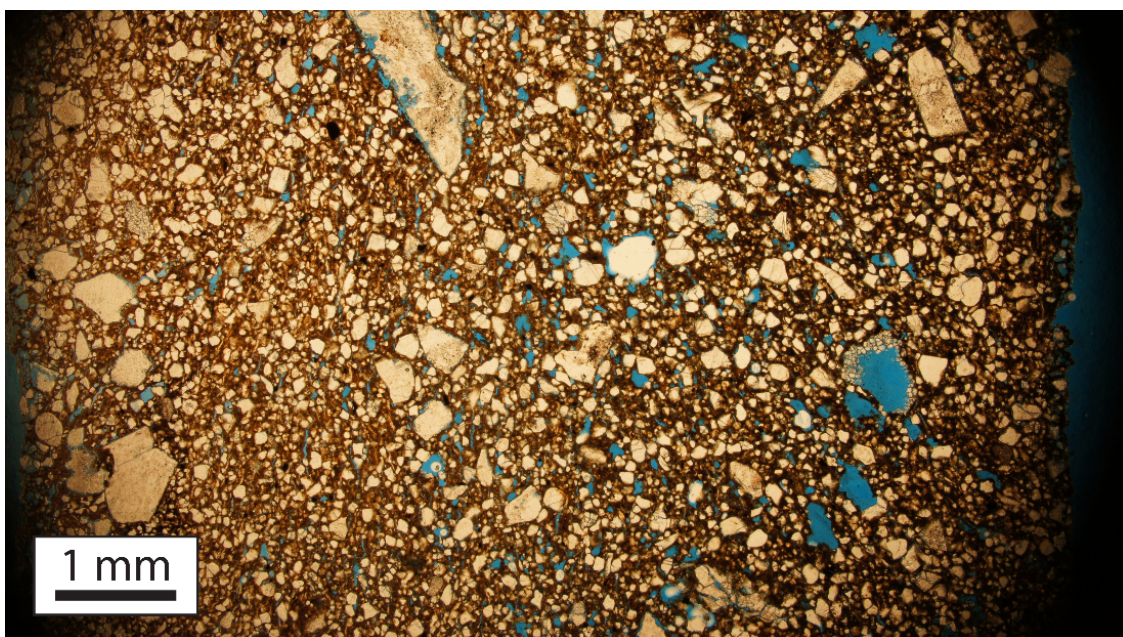Figure 3: Example of Carbonate Fabric (HT22)

Figure 4: Example of Sand-Carbonate fabric (HT10)

The total number of samples containing grog (n=6) suggests the inclusion was not intentionally added, simply due to the small amounts in five of the six samples, with the sixth being in an ungrouped category. This suggests the possibility that there was not enough grog available to use for temper, that craftspeople elected to use other tempers instead, or that the clay being used had no need for more tempers, as might be the case with the Sand-Carbonate fabric.

There also exists variation within the Sand-Carbonate and Carbonate fabrics. Dolomite dominates the inclusions in a total of six samples. Within the Sand-Carbonate fabric (n=4), only one sherd contains grog, and in small amounts, while the Carbonate fabric (n=2) has no grog inclusions. This suggests two different clay sources, one dominated by calcite, and one dominated by dolomite, but still retaining the scarcity of grog that most other samples display.

For anisotropic clay matrixes, there are a total of three samples, all of which are dominated by dolomite. This suggests a possibility that these were either imported from another site with a clay source containing anisotropic clay dominated by dolomite, or a group of craftspeople at Hun Tun traveled to a different area to collect their clay for pottery production.

As for matrix colors, all but one sample (HT14) display some variety of brown matrix, suggesting a similar origin and firing environments for all samples. At same time, this suggests a lack of long-distance trade, where ceramics were produced in a region with a different bedrock than is local to Hun Tun and PfBAP, which is dominated by limestone.

Interpretations

The result of the petrographic analysis leads to an argument that Hun Tun had two or more paste fabrics local to the region, if ceramics were being produced at the site. For ceramics placed into the Sand-Carbonate fabric, the samples which show both primarily dolomite inclusions and an anisotropic matrix (n=2), they may have been imported from another site, potentially made by another group preparing ceramics in a different way than those producing the other two main fabrics at Hun Tun, or even experimentation with a new clay source. Each of these possibilities creates the potential for innovation within Hun Tun, as their craftspeople may have changed where they collected their clay based on differences in plasticity or durability through firing.

There is a possibility that due to the Sand-Carbonate containing rounded to well-rounded grains, the calcite may or may not have been intentionally added as a temper. Rice (1987) notes how similar to quartz, calcite is also a major component of sand. While it is possible that the craftspeople that produced those vessels were collecting and storing unground sand to use as a temper, it is also possible that the calcite could have been found naturally in the clay, and little to no temper was needed in processing ceramics. In more recent ethnographic accounts, modern Maya potters collect and store sand or calcite to use as a temper (Deal, 1998).

It is difficult to make a definitive interpretation on whether the sand was intentionally added or was naturally included. The best argument for intentionality is the angularity of grains, which is missing in these samples. While angularity is a result of crushing inclusions for processing, rounded grains are caused naturally by weathering, most commonly by streams or

rivers transporting and then depositing the sand. Due to these factors, the sand could have been natural, added intentionally, or perhaps both.

As for the Carbonate fabric, there is a clear answer for the intentionality of craftspeople. For samples dominated by calcite (n=7), grains are all subangular to angular, suggesting that calcite was likely intentionally ground to be used as a temper for samples. As for samples dominated by dolomite (n=2), the grains are subangular to subrounded, suggesting the possibility that some grains, whether or not they were dolomite or calcite, were intentionally ground as temper, while others may have been natural within the vessel. While calcite and dolomite are both common in most carbonate clays, the presence or lack of dolomite has implications for the firing temperature of ceramics.

Among calcite, dolomite, quartz, and grog, muscovite mica (n=5) and hematite (n=23) also appear in small amounts. These grains are typically well rounded and not associated with any specific fabric, and as such, do not offer much to discussions of differences among producers.

As discussed above in the methodology section, the presence and absence of dolomite gives leads to determining the firing temperature of the samples. Just over 60% (n=14) of the samples contained calcite, but no dolomite, suggesting that an almost even split of ceramics were fired between 800-900°C, while the other half was fired below those temperatures.

The color of the clay matrix played almost no role in determining the firing temperature of ceramics. There was only one sample (HT14) with a tan matrix that was likely fired at a low temperature, whereas the others are almost impossible to distinguish, as they are all various but still similar shades of brown. This compliments the previous mention of the presence and absence of dolomite inclusions, as both produced similar results.

A total of almost 35% (n=8) of the samples contained dark cores. This suggests that the environment in which those ceramics were fired, failed to burn at high enough temperatures for long enough to burn out all organic materials, and likely did not have proper circulation to the ceramics. The black cores are not associated with any specific fabric, as there is an almost even split among the Sand-Carbonate and Carbonate fabrics.

By understanding the temperature at which the samples were fired, we can reconstruct how craftspeople at Hun Tun, or even another site if ceramics were imported were producing their ceramics. Since around 40% of the samples (n=9) contained dolomite, and 35% contained dark cores (n=8), it is safe to say that the ceramics were fired at moderate to high temperatures, likely with restricted airflows in some cases.

Conclusion

Based on the petrographic analysis, it seems likely that there were multiple producers of the ceramics found at Hun Tun. Whether or not they were produced locally is not able to be determined with the results of the study. Two main fabrics were identified. The Sand-Carbonate fabric is characterized by moderately sorted to well-sorted inclusions, rounded to well-rounded grains of calcite sand and less abundant voids. Whereas the Carbonate fabric is characterized by poor sorting, subangular to angular grains, and abundant voids. The two fabrics both contain

their own variation, with the Sand-Carbonate fabric showing the most signs of difference with two samples containing anisotropic clay and a lack of grog. Grog was not likely used as a temper in the majority of ceramics, as sample (HT4) was the only one that was likely intentionally tempered.

In short, the results of this pilot study show the validity of applying petrography to ceramics at hinterland sites that might be limited in variation. Even with such a small sample size and two fabrics, multiple producers and sources were revealed. These results would benefit from other forms of analysis, such as NAA and LA-ICP-MS, as well as a larger sample size and comparisons to other nearby sites.

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Panoramas and Personas: Setting and Subject in Rania Matar's Photographic Works

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Abstract

In this research paper, I have investigated photographer Rania Matar's usage of the physical landscape, natural and/or artificial, in combination with the physical bodies of her subjects, to create dialogue with the viewer concerning circumstances of identity, social pressures, and culture. Matar's work imparts a unique approach to commentary on issues that are important to her and her subjects; said commentary is achieved through the skillful merging of person and place to form the desired narrative, and the method of delivery to the audience (photography as medium) solidifies her approach's success. Here I provide an introduction to the artist, as well as to specific influential historical/contemporary contexts, and examine six images from published collections to illustrate the effect of Matar's merging of the outside world and the inner world within her photographs.

Panoramas and Personas: Setting and Subject in Rania Matar's Photographic Works

      Artists have used landscape and setting in combination with their own bodies or the bodies of others to talk about conflict, displacement, and issues related to the self within a larger construct (natural, societal, and other). This blending of self and place is common, but the effect of such blending is not as often addressed—by creating a combination of body and landscape, be it a natural landscape or a setting created in a manmade, manipulated environment, there is unbound capacity for the exploration of relationships between the human and the not, the inside and the outside, the familiar and the unfamiliar. These juxtapositions, some of which are more comparable than contrasting and vice versa, open up avenues of self-understanding within the confines (or safety nets) of broader society, as well as allowing artists and audience members alike the opportunity to put themselves into another person's 'place' (literal and metaphorical). To consider the ways in which an artist has created their work, especially in their combinations of body and place, is to consider the people and the world outside of yourself, and to open up to the conversation the artist (and subject) are wanting to convey. Artists from all over the world, and throughout the centuries, have used this technique in effort to achieve this level of universality and communication, but one contemporary artist who exemplifies the blending of setting and self to create a larger dialogue is Rania Matar.

      Rania Matar was born in Lebanon in 1964 and grew up in Beirut, before eventually moving to the US in 1984, where she has lived ever since (Matar, 2020). Matar studied architecture at the American University of Beirut and then continued her studies at Cornell University in New York once she arrived in the States (Liptrott, 2018). She developed her passion for photography over time and eventually went to the New England School of Photography and to the Maine Photograph Workshops (Liptrott 2018), moving from there to continue her photography and become an international success. Her photographs have been included in and accepted by many exhibitions and galleries in several museums, including "the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Carnegie Museum of Art, National Museum of Women in the Arts, and more" (Matar, 2020); Matar also had a recent retrospective of her work on view at the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Amon Carter Museum of American Art. Matar is a current Guggenheim Fellow (2018), the most recent of many awards and fellowships over her career, having also been a 2017 Mellon Foundation artist-in-residency at Kenyon College, and having received two Massachusetts Cultural Council artist fellowships in 2007 and 2011, respectively, along with other awards and accolades (Matar, 2020). She is an associate professor at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, and has published three photography books*: Ordinary Lives* in 2009, *A Girl and Her Room* in 2012, and *L'Enfant-Femme* in 2016, each of which focuses on one of her collections and includes essays written on the topics in her work and her work itself (Matar, 2020).

      Now in her late 50's, Matar has been creating work for several years and has been receiving awards and honors since before 2007 for her photography. One of her earlier exhibitions, *A Forgotten Population*, was shown at the Boston Public Library in Allston,

Massachusetts in 2006; this particular exhibition focused on images of Palestinians living in Lebanese refugee camps, some of the photographs then being collected for *Ordinary Lives*, and was met with highly positive reviews (Williamson, 2006, p. 28). One particular reviewer praised Matar's ability to illustrate "the larger design of human perseverance" through her art (Williamson, 2006, p. 28), meaning the people in the photos seem surrounded by difficulty and hardship but are framed within a lens of dignity and strength that Matar is so careful to include. This concept of highlighting a variety of social problems, but without using or manipulating her subjects to instill pity in the viewer, and instead creating images that act to put the viewer and the subject on an existential equal footing, is well-known in her work.

Another review from 2007 discusses some of Matar's photography which was selected for the New England Photography Biennial at the Danforth Museum of Art (Matar received the First and Purchase Prize for the contest involved in the Biennial, and her work was shown at the Danforth) (Hill, 2007, p. 11). Matar's works were chosen in part due to an interest in her methods of displaying the seemingly paradoxical—children playing among destroyed buildings, people having conversations amid chaos—and for the cultural, 'foreign' content. Shawn Hill, an instructor in Art History at the Montserrat College of Art, comments on the "current fascination with Islamic culture" of the time, especially among elements of the Middle East that were (and still are) deemed 'different' enough from US attitudes to warrant observation (Hill, 2007, p. 11). The photographs Matar submitted to the contest are also included in *Ordinary Lives* and are images of life in Lebanon, specifically Palestinian refugees. Combined with the uptick of interest that Hill points out, the contest judges were also taken with Matar's signature clarity, focusing on her subjects and using the surroundings as a means to inform the viewer and drum up awareness of crises of many kinds, without pandering or attempting to elicit pity (Hill, 2007, p. 11).

Matar has received recognition outside of the United States as well, with her work commented on by print/digital media such as Al-Raida, a peer-reviewed and feminist-based journal; this particular journal is published by the Arab Institute for Women at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, Lebanon (Al-Raida, 2020). Al-Raida (which translates to "The Pioneer") has been in print since 1976 as the Institute's primary journal. The mission of the Institute and of the journal itself is to "give voice to women in the Arab region by enhancing understanding between the region and the world; highlighting scholarship on and by women in the region; promoting research on women's rights and gender issues; and serving as a platform for young voices and activists across the region" (Al-Raida, 2020). Matar has not published in the journal herself, but her photography and exhibitions have been reviewed by others, and the various underlying contexts of her work have been discussed. Cheryl Toman, a professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, wrote an editorial for Al-Raida that included Matar's *The Forgotten People* collection. In Toman's article, she linked several artists with Middle Eastern backgrounds/content in their art and talked about the overarching theme of these artists who "channel their creativity… to develop tools of consciousness-raising and a means of actively participating in the history… of their own communities and countries as well as of the world in general" (Toman, 2009, p. 2). Toman goes into depth on Matar's *The Forgotten People*

as an example, reiterating Matar's inspiration found within the people she was photographing and their worldly situation, and the continual goal of Matar's work as a means to create awareness in others of the "obligation to right injustice." This includes her artist's statement, which explained her project was not necessarily political but instead meant to act as an image link for others so they would acknowledge the crises occurring (Toman, 2009, p. 2). Only from that point of acknowledgement can conversation move forward towards solutions.

Matar is not the only artist to create imagery that focuses on issues relating to the Middle East (and some that are also found in other countries like the US); Chad Elias, a professor of Art History at Duke University, published a book in 2018 analyzing contemporary art stemming from Lebanon that concentrates on "the contested memory of those years of civil strife and political upheaval" affecting the country between 1975-1990, during the Lebanese Civil War (Duke University Press, 2018). *Posthumous Images: Contemporary Art and Memory Politics in Post-Civil War Lebanon* includes content on multiple artists and stresses artworks that revolve around "Lebanon's disappeared," the people who have been 'lost' in some form or another during the various political, religious, and social disasters that have happened in the last century (Elias, 2018, p. 94). Elias stresses the idea that photography containing missing individuals has the ability to imply the constant possibility of return, that the person or persons within the image may be found again and become 'real', no longer only 2-D faces on print or digitized shadows. This factor is utilized by artists to "elicit acts of public witnessing and commemoration that bridge the disciplinary boundaries between aesthetic inquiry, political activism, and forensic investigation" (Elias, 2018, p. 94). Images of the missing are compelling because they are in a state of transition, a place of in-between existence, and in Matar's case the refugees she photographs are certainly displaced from their homes and in many senses are just as 'lost' as the initial thousands missing from 1975-1990. Some of Matar's subjects may know of family or friends who disappeared during that time, and Matar herself may have some similar experiences.

Living in Lebanon for 20 years, Matar would have been highly aware of the Lebanese Civil War and its disastrous influence on the country and people. The Lebanese Civil War was a "civil conflict in Lebanon emanating from the deterioration of the Lebanese state and the coalescence of militias that provided security where the state could not" (Kingston, 2020). Some of the core reasons for the political decay and "a growing crisis of insecurity" were issues surrounding the unsteady development of the country, religious conflict within the nation and others surrounding Lebanon, the devaluing of the Lebanese pound and subsequent economic collapse, and the rise of militant forces gaining immense power by threat of violence, all of which plummeted the country into chaos (Kingston, 2020). Chad Elias also noted the Amnesty Law passed in 1991 in his book, which essentially acted to erase previous and potential charges/investigation of "crimes against humanity and those which seriously infringe human dignity"; the idea was to create a blank slate, to allow the country to move forward and be reunified, but it also meant those who were killed, harmed, and 'gone' would never be found or receive justice (Elias 2018, p. 96). The Lebanese Civil War, and its continual effects, are just one

of many significant struggles that have affected Lebanon and its people, as well as surrounding nations.

These struggles are not all entirely historical, and bleed into the present. Matar's website includes a reference to the recent explosions in Beirut, which happened on August 4, 2020; the blast was initiated by a load of confiscated ammonium nitrate, stored by authorities at the port for the past six years before the current catastrophe that killed more than 200 people, injured over 6,500, and displaced 300,000 others (BBC News, 2020). Matar had set up an auction for some prints of her work to act as donations for relief organizations in Lebanon. The prints are sold out now, but through the brief descriptions attached to her webpage, and the overflowing amount of work that she has created over the past few decades relating to the Middle East, Matar's connections with her heritage and her concerns (and hopes) for a more harmonious, blended future are visible in every photo she takes.

Ordinary Lives is Matar's first photography book, consisting of both her images as well as essays written by her and Anthony Shadid and poetry excerpts by Lisa Majaj, and the main subjects of the work are women and children living in Beirut, in refugee camps, and other places within the borders of Lebanon (Matar, 2020). Many of these figures may be direct refugees from the Lebanese Civil War, or they may be descendants. The book was published in 2009, with the aim to focus on people living in a time and place that remains tenuous; Matar and others who have reviewed her book emphasize the careful efforts to portray the individuals in each photo with "strength, dignity, and humanity", especially considering the series of unstable situations that have affected the Middle East (Matar, 2020). Karen Hass, the Lane Collection Curator of Photographs for the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts, lauded the book and Matar's photography for its "rare intimacy and respect" towards its subjects, and Jill Medvedow, Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art (also in Boston, MA) praised Matar's skill to "reveal moments of order and domesticity amidst upheaval to capture the stability found within instability" (Matar, 2009). Those are just two of several reviews attached to the book, but they hold key aspects of the work, particularly the ideas of stability, intimacy, and dignity that Matar is able to portray in her photographs: the people, the women and children in her images, are surviving in a world that appears to be unraveling around them, but they continue to hold themselves together, and by doing so, hold their communities together as well.

Rania Matar states her intention in *Ordinary Lives* is to "focus on the universality of being human no matter what the circumstances are", while recognizing her unique placement as both an 'insider' and 'outsider'—being Lebanese and growing up in Beirut, she knows the language and the country, but she has also lived in the US long enough to be able to experience Lebanon and its culture from a Western perspective (Matar, 2009, p. 14). The book is an amalgamation of three different collections that each focused on slightly different areas, ranging from life in Lebanon after its several wars to the spread of Western ideas in commercial media and the growing interest in Islamic tradition; within all are images portraying the daily lives of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who were (and are) existing within an ambiguous landscape, literally and metaphorically. Interspersed among the photographs are

poems by Lisa Majaj that recount the struggles being faced by the people in Matar's work, such as in "Arguments":

> consider: beneath the din of explosions
> no voice can be heard
> no cry
> consider your own sky on fire
> your name erased
> your children's lives "a price worth paying" (Matar, 2009, p.10).

Elias's explanation of the Amnesty Law ties with Majaj's poetry (names erased, children disappeared, voices silenced, etc.). Matar reiterates her intent to remain unpolitical, but there is a challenge in portraying people and places that have been so thoroughly derailed through governmental decay. She does, however, intentionally frame the individuals she photographs with explicit and implicit clues into their self-identities and their larger social/cultural placement, especially focusing on the interior lives of women and children. Two images will be examined here, though there are over 100 to choose from.

Figure 1, titled *Rocking Horse*, is an upwards shot of the exterior of a house, with a sliver of the natural landscape present on the left-hand side of the image (Matar, 2009, p. 66). A young woman and child are visible in the window on the upper floor of the house; on the windowsill rests a large toy horse with wheels. In the extreme foreground, a man's face is partially visible on the left, out of focus due to proximity to the camera. The image itself is in black and white, like all the works in *Ordinary Lives*, and there is a variety of textural detail that combines with monochromatic elements to emphasize the photo's crispness. There are loose wires that crisscross the front of the house, which is pockmarked with holes and crumbling material, and the landscape beyond is strewn with rocks and boulders, creating a ragged visual surface; even the man's face is lined, his forehead wrinkled and his short-cropped hair wispy like some sort of sedge, part of the environment. The young woman holds the child as the child sits on the ledge of the window, while both stare directly into the camera. The photograph is one of Matar's less styled portraits, but the eyeline of the subjects links with the viewer, and the formality of their posing reads as a planned image (however, the man's blurry face in the corner suggests he was not aware of the shot being taken). Matar's attached explanation of the image states that "people moved back to their homes following the war of the summer of 2006, often living in badly damaged buildings" (Matar, 2009, p. 130); that reality is visible here, with the stark destruction of the home and its continued occupation nevertheless underlying its importance as a point of life, domesticity, and peace. Matar's photograph illuminates the value of normalcy, however small the amount, in the fact that these people are still present in their home (whatever is left), and the inclusion of the toy rocking horse (as the image is named after) puts focus on the elements of life continuing even with challenges, behind and ahead. The family has remained, the child still has a childhood, and things move on.

Figure 2, titled *Rocket Hole in the Kitchen*, is similar in scope to Figure 1 but provides an even more intimate glimpse into family life, accomplished with the blending of setting with the

actions of the people in the image (Matar, 2009, p. 38). A young woman sits in the center of the photo, most in focus compared to the three children around her; on her left is a stove, and on her right is a large hole, which is taller and wider than the young woman, filtering in light from the outside. None of the people in the photo are looking directly at the camera, all facing different directions and engaged in different activities: the children are all at play, each with their own toy or diversion, and the young woman's hands are obscured by the yarn-like hair of a doll in a child's grasp. There is a contrast between the hard smoothness of the broken concrete wall, the veneered pattern of the stove, and the soft textural qualities of the blanket that is wedged between the bars of a window in the upper left corner. This photograph is positioned from a closer, more even angle, providing the viewer with the sensation of having sat down in the kitchen with the rest of the family, and there is a general air of softness created by the diffused light and shadow within the room. As in Figure 1, the hole in the wall brings the aftermath of war and violence into the family home, but the stove and children's toys provide that essence of determination to thrive regardless of hardship. This is a family that, like the previous one, is attempting to recuperate some semblance of an ordinary life (as the title of the book suggests), and seems to be succeeding.

Published in 2012, *A Girl and Her Room* is Matar's second book, containing essays by Susan Minot and Anne Tucker, and part of its origins lie in Matar's experiences as a mother, watching her two girls grow up and become their own people (Matar, 2012); for the project, she had the young women being photographed chose their props, decide their poses, and many of the images are accompanied by quotes from the subjects, all in an attempt to allow for freedom of expression of the self (Liptrott, 2018). Like *Ordinary Lives*, there is a heavy element of 'place', in that the setting is linked to the people being photographed and that setting is used to create an emotional space for the viewer to respond to, as well as receiving information about the subject themselves. Several of the images are from the US, mostly from Massachusetts or other northeastern states, sometimes directly paired with images from Lebanon, including works taken in refugee camps. Susan Minot (a novelist) and Anne Tucker (a now retired curator from the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX) both recognize what Matar has done in this book; Tucker exclaims, "what a variety of expressions are captured here—not just facial expressions, but self-expression in the objects they collect and how they arrange them," in reference to the subjects of each photograph and their accumulated surroundings (Matar, 2012, p. 12). Mehrnoush Shafiei, a writer/editor who specializes in Middle Eastern politics and culture, is another critic of many who appreciates the photographer's artistic direction and intention.

Mehrnoush Shafiei wrote her review of Matar's *A Girl and Her Room* in 2013; in the review, Shafiei reiterates what the photography book is and how it is styled, but also points out the core goal of the work as she understands it, which is to create a complex 'portrait' of the girls through not only their physical selves, but also their surroundings. As Shafiei states, "one of the most interesting functions of the book is that it examines the highly complex relationship between object and self in the framing of identity and selfhood," and Matar's careful attention to the use of space in each photograph, along with the crucial input and guidance for design that

came directly from each of the models, is what helps create that object/person relationship (Shafiei, 2013, p. 80). The girls themselves, not Matar, formulated their individual settings for their portraits, allowing their bedrooms to speak for them and present who they are, as they wished to be seen. As already stated, *A Girl and Her Room* contains intermixed images from the US and Lebanon, and Shafiei makes note of how an anthropological interpretation of the photographs "reveals the high degree of overlap between the local and global in terms of self-representation and ideas of femininity," among other aspects of gendered culture that are also at play (Shafiei, 2013, p. 79). There are repeated objects, and therefore repeated ideas, that are found in both US and Middle Eastern images from the book, including traditional 'feminine' items such as makeup, mirrors, and specific color schemes of pinks and purples; these tokens of gender, including items signifying adulthood like the bras visible in some of the photos, act as bridges between seemingly disparate worlds.

These girls may live across the globe from each other, but they are still affected and shaped by cultural concepts of womanhood and growing up that are universal. Shafiei sums this up nicely, stating the photography collection accurately displays the "set of associative expectations and tensions that accompany the very idea of being a 'girl'", and the accompanying quotations (taken directly from the young women in the pictures) illustrate that each girl, in each bedroom, is aware of the social roles and expectations placed upon them (Shafiei, 2013, p. 80). However, Shafiei also captures Matar's other main purpose with the work, that goes beyond any universalism—each girl, and each representation of the transformation into womanhood as displayed by the personalized setting of the bedroom, are entirely unique versions of femininity (Shafiei, 2013, p. 80). The girls are linked by the exterior forces acting upon them, but they are all one-of-a-kind in the creation of their self-identity, as shown through a space they most connect with and that has grown along with them. Matar states, "I was discovering a person on the cusp on becoming an adult, but desperately still holding on to the child she had barely outgrown, a person on the edge between two worlds, trying to come to terms with this transitional time in her life and to adjust to the person she was turning into;" this blending of setting and subject create a visual conversation for deeper messages relating to personal growth and challenges (Matar, 2012, p. 128).

All of the photographs from *A Girl and Her Room* show this compliment of place and person blurred together to form meaning, but only two will be discussed. Figure 3, titled *Lubna* (the name of the subject), is a color image of a young woman reclining on a day bed underneath a window (Matar 2012, p. 18-19). The angle of the shot is faintly lower than the young woman, creating an upwards tilt that is heightened by the young woman's pose, with her head slightly back and her eyes on the camera. The only substantial furniture present is the daybed, but surrounding the daybed is a variety of smaller items such as pillows, a backpack, a stuffed animal, and stacks of papers; the walls are painted a singular hue, but are also decorated with hanging pictures, more stuffed animals, and memorabilia. The colors in the image are vibrant: a deep robin's egg blue for the wall, rich wood tones in the window shutters and the daybed, and pinks of all shades in the young woman's clothes, bedding, and other objects around her. The

lighting is mostly artificial, directed from above and vaguely florescent, but sunlight weaves through the wicker screens in the window shutters, and the shadows of the room are soft. This image is a portrait, as are all the works in *A Girl and Her Room*, but the objects included with the young woman are what create a more complex, and more complete, picture of who she is. Many of the items, such as the stuffed animals and baby pictures, signify connections to childhood or adolescence that are still remembered and treasured (or else they would not be present); contrasted with the young woman's more mature appearance and the 'adult' nature of the room itself (the neutral furniture, the medium tone paint, etc.), there is a sense of time that fills the photograph, stretching from the past into the present. There are cultural contrasts as well, with Western imagery and ideas found nestled in with the young woman's Middle Eastern reality—the picture was taken in Beirut, and the girl (who is veiled) comments on her appreciation for her Muslim background and religiosity, but the items she has chosen to help represent herself include outside elements such as a Winnie the Pooh teddy bear, a Bart Simpson backpack, and images of Donald Duck and Betty Boop, among many other recognizable faces. The image, in total, has the sensation of a merging of time and space, with a subject who appears to be comfortable in the blended diffusion of aspects of her life that are visible to the audience, through her own manipulation of the setting to tell her story.

Figure 4, titled *Siena* (also named for the subject) depicts a young woman sitting on a bed, tucked into the corner of the room (Matar, 2012, p. 30-31). There are pictures of women on the wall behind her, and in the immediate foreground is a stuffed animal. The main colors in the photograph are pale creams and whites with dark flashes of black and red, distributed more across the top of the photograph and drawing the eye from the bottom of the image upwards. The angle here is at even height with the young woman, who had her head tilted slightly down and to the side, her arms half-crossed and legs folded. Like Figure 3, whose subject wears pink socks, a pink shirt, and has her eyebrows manicured and nails painted, there are elements of femininity to recognize; mostly this is found through the all the magazine clippings and cutouts of models and famous women, plastered on the wall behind the girl, who has dyed her hair with highlights and has also painted her nails. This photograph suggests the 'typical' struggles of being a girl and a teenager: social pressures concerning appearance, expectations to be met, and the open laptop on the left-hand side comments on how these challenges are no longer limited by location but are now digitized and globally spread. The young woman herself addresses her concerns, saying "when I was being photographed, what was running through my head was how the models on my wall are the people I strive to look like… Am I good enough?" (Matar, 2012, p. 30-31). The question 'am I good enough' is echoed throughout *A Girl and Her Room*, in more subtle or overt ways, but Figure 4's emphasis on the issue resides in its composition and the objects chosen by its subject to talk about her personal doubts.

Matar's third book, *L'Enfant Femme*, focuses again on young women, some barely into their tweens, as they are beginning to process their place in the world and how they will be perceived as they grow older. Matar worked on the project with Her Majesty Queen Noor Al-Hussein of Jordan, who provided the introduction to the book, and who mentions their similar

interests in multi-cultural examination and how they are both products of their experiences within two separate, but not exclusive, worlds (Matar 2020). Her Majesty comments how "Rania and I are two among millions for whom Western and Middle Eastern cultures do not constitute mutually exclusive worldviews destined for confrontation," instead believing that Matar's photography methods and choice of content act to create connection for all audiences across all backgrounds (Matar, 2016, p. 13). As Queen Noor states it, Matar "exposes the boundaries of American and Arab cultures in order to reconcile them," a continual theme in all her works in some form or another, and Matar's explicit request that the girls keep from smiling for their photographs has been singled out as a method used to "capture their developing self-awareness and individual personalities" in each shot (Liptrott, 2018). As with all her work, setting is still involved, though in a subtler vein than in her previous books; however, the sense of 'place' and its implementation as part of the portraiture in each photograph is unmistakable.

Kristen Gresh, an assistant curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, has a short essay in *L'Enfant Femme*, which puts emphasis on Matar's ability to "capture girls' developing identities at this key moment in their lives" and how Matar presents the "emerging sense of sexuality, femininity, and womanhood that girls this age begin to experience" (Matar, 2016, p. 143). Gresh reiterates how Matar's "close-up artistic investigation into the psychological world of women and girls promotes cross-cultural understanding between Arab and Western societies and a more sensitive perspective on girls coming of age," especially important now that so much of the world is linked through media and the stresses of growing up are more widespread than ever before, not to mention the challenges of combining thought processes and ways of being that stem from different cultures (Matar, 2016, p. 145). Lois Lowry has a short essay in the book as well; her background as a children's writer makes her suited for acknowledging the tenuous in-between world being captured by Matar's camera, and she makes comments on the startling consistency in many of the images where girls are attempting to appear older than they are, or end up seeming so based on their pose, their clothing, etc. (Mater, 2016, p. 16). She asks the question of where these ideas may stem from, then answers herself with "I think these girls have been schooled, as I was, by an age-old culture that teaches them to practice desirability" (Matar, 2016, p. 17), and notices Matar's usage of surroundings—"messy bedrooms, cluttered street scenes, graffiti-sprinkled walls"—to establish a setting for this inward exploration each girl is experiencing, and that the audience is privy to (Matar, 2016, p. 18).

Again, only two images will be looked at here, but the entirety of images in *L'Enfant Femme* could be examined. Figure 5, titled *Madi 10*, shows a girl standing slightly off-center from the middle of the image, with a dresser behind her and a mirror reflecting the back of her head and the room in reverse (Matar, 2016, p. 36-37). A bathrobe hangs on the back of a closed door, and figurines rest on the surface of the dresser; besides the figurines and a candle, there is nothing else present. The girl's clothing is the first focus of the image, the bright red of her sweater and the neon pinks and greens in her short skirt drawing the viewer's eye, while the neutrals of the background and natural sunlight form a softened haze behind her. The girl's pose is provocative: standing at an angle, her hand on her hip and elbow thrust out while she gazes at

the camera, an attitude is given off that suggests an attempt at maturity. The bright red of her sweater is mimicked in the shade of her lips, natural or not, and the curls in her hair appear artificial, all acting as additional trademarks of adulthood. While the girl is clearly young, the room is not a child's room, the furniture dark and bulky and the reflection in the mirror showing the headboard of a four-poster bed; everything looks too large for the subject, even the bathrobe on the door. However, at the same time, there are elements that feel child-like, including the soft pink tone of the bathrobe and the pastel porcelain of the figurines visible. Whether the photograph was taken in the girl's room or more likely her parents' room, there is a disconnect between the youth of the model and the physical world around her, as if she has to grow into her new reality (metaphorically and literally).

Figure 6, titled *Reem 11*, has a girl standing off-center as well, with her back to a wall that is entirely covered with a fashion ad (Matar, 2016, p. 94-95). The camera has focused on the girl, leaving the majority of the fashion ad cut out of the image, only showing the model from the waist down. The girl is dressed in jeans, with the floral pattern on her shirt mirroring the floral pattern of the outfit the model is wearing behind her. Facing the camera directly, the subject's hands are pressed to the wall, resting on the model's thighs; the image appears to be taken outside due to lighting and shadow, and the angle is fairly head-on. The attitude visible in Figure 5 is missing here, instead replaced with a feeling of want—the girl's pose is similar to the model's, and the placing of her hands over the model's thighs almost seems to say, "I want to be like this," enhanced by the girl's intent stare. The roses on her shirt are small compared to the flowers on the model's clothing, barely bloomed; the model's painted nails are copied in miniature on the girl's hands, but chipped and worn down. Blue is the first color the viewer sees, immediately attracting attention to the girl, while the rest of the image is pale peach tones and muted pinks. The girl is the only source of blue, making her isolated in the image and highlighting her small frame compared to the woman in the ad behind her. While not incorporating traditional landscape or setting like some of Matar's other works, the use of the fashion ad as a backdrop accentuates the enormity of the subject's future obstacles as she begins to navigate new avenues of life as a woman that will be both expected and unavoidable.

Beyond Matar's three photography books and the examples provided here, her website contains a vast assemblage of her work and a variety of collections she has built over the years, some finished and some still growing. The six images examined here are only a glimpse into the world as Matar sees it through her lens—each of her collections showcases new perspectives on problems both widespread and localized, as well as offering a chance for contemplating solutions created in solidarity, and all in her signature style of landscape and setting as extension of the self, of place as a conduit for furthering the humanity of a subject and meeting the audience with unwavering gaze.

Figures

Figure 1: *Rocking Horse*. Aintaroun, Southern Lebanon, 2006. People moved back to their homes following the war of the summer of 2006, often living in badly damaged buildings. (Matar 66)

Figure 2: *Rocket Hole in the Kitchen*. Aita El Chaab, Southern Lebanon, 2006. A family hangs out in the kitchen. The wall behind them has been blown up by a rocket. (Matar 38)

Figure 3: *Lubna*, Beirut, Lebanon 2010. "Because I was taught religion in school at an early age, religion is engraved in my mind. In everything I do. Once I turned seventeen and I started understanding things better, I drifted away from Islam as I had learned it. I came to realize that Islam is a way of life for me and doesn't exist to make my life complicated—on the contrary. I am now comfortable with who I am and my veil is clear evidence that I am a Muslim. It has become part of me that I cherish at 99.9% of times." (Matar 18-19)

Figure 4: *Siena*, Brookline, Massachusetts 2009. "When I was being photographed, what was running through my head was how the models on my wall are the people I strive to look like. I was wondering how we define beauty and where I am on the scale of beauty in relation to the pictures on my wall. Am I good enough?" (Matar 30-31)

Figure 5: *Madi 10*, Watertown, Massachusetts, 2013.

Figure 6: *Reem 11*, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014.

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Monstrous: The Grotesque, Abject, and Monstrous in "The Husband Stitch"

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Abstract

This literary analysis of Carmen Maria Machado's "The Husband Stitch" reinterprets women who exist outside patriarchal prescripts. The bildungsroman narrative follows an unnamed woman who struggles with the slow decline of her autonomy, which includes her husband and her obstetrician mutilating her vagina with the eponymous husband stitch. The Narrator presents her unreliability and evasiveness through a metanarrative cast of voices that identifies males as evolving beings while women remain in stasis. Machado describes the Narrator's sexuality with grotesque and abject terms, separating her from the patriarch's preferred sexual and domestic compliances. To this end, I align the Narrator with Medusa through secondary research, marking her as an archetypal monster through her overt sexuality, pregnancy, and green ribbon. My interpretation ends in the finale as, like Medusa, the Narrator's husband beheads her, resulting in the satirical conclusion that the perfect patriarchal woman dies as soon as she is created.

Monstrous: The Grotesque, Abject, and Monstrous in "The Husband Stitch"

Presented in the first-person, "The Husband Stitch" traces the heteronormative narrative of an unnamed woman who meets and marries her husband and bears a child before passing in an unexpected manner. The author, Carmen Maria Machado, guides her character through a bildungsroman horror maze filled with patriarchal gender constructs and castration anxiety, which results in the husband beheading the Narrator in the finale. The Narrator takes the form of a monstrous-feminine, placing her firmly in the company of other engendered monsters, such as Medusa, particularly through her overt sexuality. By aligning the unreliable Narrator with a classical monster and employing elements such as the grotesque in describing her sexual appetite and notorious green ribbon, Machado creates a fragmented postmodern horror story that satirizes the loss of a woman's autonomy under the patriarchal thumb.

Machado opens "The Husband Stitch," the first in her collection of short stories entitled *Her Body and Other Parties* with a cast of voices that reads, "(If you read this story out loud, please use the following voices)" and proceeds to describe the Narrator, her eventual spouse, her father, her son, and other women. The postmodern metanarrative quality of the cast of voices breaks the fourth wall and complicates the Narrator's reliability as her descriptions of the other characters reflect her biased point-of-view, which is compounded further with her continued evasiveness, suggesting she has something to hide. Throughout the story, she carefully skirts over topics that threaten to disrupt the "goodness" of her life, such as her husband and her obstetrician conspiring to mutilate her vagina with the eponymous husband stitch. Her evasiveness can be read in her own description of herself, "as a child high-pitched, forgettable; as a woman, the same" (Machado 3). She is careful not to describe herself fully; however, the narrative unpacks a character riddled with trauma and stripped of everything: her mind, her sexuality, her body, and finally, her life.

Conversely, "The Boy Who Will Grow Into a Man and Be [Narrator's] Spouse" is described as "robust with serendipity" (Machado 3). Machado draws a clear distinction in movement and growth between the "Boy" who will grow and move toward being "A Man" and the Narrator who is "forgettable" and "the same" (3). While he is "robust," meaning strong, healthy, and vibrant, the Narrator is "high-pitched," carrying a negative, shrill connotation, very similar to a crying child (Machado 3). To this end, the Narrator is static while the men evolve, the only sign of movement reflected in her sexuality, which also defines her as a symbolic monster; the idea of the story's women as fixtures rather than growing beings is compounded further by the casting of the voices of "All Other Women" as "interchangeable with [The Narrator] own" (Machado 3).

From Eve in the Garden of Eden to Greece's Lamia, engendered monsters are common across many centuries as various patriarchal societies developed creative means of demonizing the female form. Even Sigmund Freud contributed through his identification of Medusa's head as a representation of the female genitals. In *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*, Barbare Creed uses the term "monstrous-feminine" to describe female monsters and to identify the "shocking, terrifying, abject" elements of women (1). The monstrous-

feminine concept, however, relates to sexual difference and castration (Creed 31). While Creed's analysis focuses on the film format, her theories are equally applicable to literature, as depictions of women in various art forms were largely driven by male creators. In support of her argument, Creed calls on Laura Mulvey, a feminist cinema theorist who first introduced "the male gaze"— film production methods that replicate an assumed heterosexual male protagonist and the associated perspective. However, the ubiquitous "male gaze" supersedes any one art form, as the all-seeing eye is evident in literature as well. Mulvey's "male gaze" assumes men as subjects and women as objects. I further abstract the male gaze to include the roles women are meant to play under specific male gazes. Under her father's watchful eye, the Narrator plays the part of a "good girl." However, once "[her] father doesn't notice [her]" during the party, she gains her autonomy, enabling her to seek out her future husband, as well as take him outside and kiss him (Machado 3). Reminiscent of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the Narrator consummates a newfound love and awakened sexual desire out of her father's sight, relinquishing her from his control. In reality, she merely transitions from one male gaze to another. Building on this, Stephen Neale states in his book, *Genre and Hollywood*, that "it is a woman's sexuality, that which renders them desirable—but also threatening to men, which constitutes…ultimately that which is really monstrous" (61). When combined, Creed and Neale suggest that it is the female form and her utilization of it that creates a monster. For Machado's Narrator, her overt sexuality creates a grotesque template for a monstrous-feminine that supersedes the physical body.

The grotesque is multifaceted, and no two uses are necessarily the same. As a literary element, Kenneth Burke finds the grotesque "comes to the fore when confusion in the forensic pattern gives more prominence to the subjective elements of imagery than to the objective, or public, elements" (59-60). Also, when speaking on James Joyce's writings and the grotesque, Burke writes, "The maker of gargoyles who put man's-head on bird's-body was offering combinations which were completely rational as judged by his logic of essences" (112). The sculptures that designed and created gargoyles did not create "man" or "bird"; they took existing ideas, images, and perceptions, and blended them to create something new. When considering Machado's Narrator, Burke's perspective on the grotesque emerges in her independence as a teenager ("It isn't that I don't have choices"), her sexuality that leads to her "rutting" outside in the dirt like an animal, and her green ribbon that absurdly keeps her whole (Machado 3).

In his work *Attitudes Toward History*, Burke identifies the grotesque further as a "mystical reversal of the customary meanings of dark and light" (59). While Burke's words are in reference to day and night, the quote translates to a multidimensional idea that infers humanity's avoidance, distrust, or fear regarding things it cannot fully understand or control. The sun will always rise; night will always come. The Narrator's grotesque behavior represents an uncontrollable force, and, as the story concludes, her green ribbon remains an unanswered question to her husband and the reader. Moreover, Machado's "The Husband Stitch" questions the extent to which women's bodies and conduct are under their control, with the female grotesque employed as a pivotal component in a horror story about the patriarchal culture and the woman who are sacrificed to it.

Machado's key use of the grotesque predominantly appears through language designed to denigrate sexual autonomy and pregnancy. Despite the opening cast of voices, the teenaged Narrator demonstrates a moderate level of autonomy, as she states, "I know I want him before he does. This isn't how things are done, but this is how I am going to do them" (Machado 3). The Narrator's declarative voice identifies hers as a strong voice, and her observation that "it isn't that I don't have choices," circumvents the readers expectations (Machado 3). However, Machado redirects toward systemic patriarchy as the narrator states, "I am beautiful. I have a pretty mouth. I have breasts that heave out of my dresses in a way that seems innocent and perverse at the same time" (3). The diametric opposition of "innocent" and "perverse" alludes to the common Madonna/Whore dichotomy, which demotes a patriarchal perspective identifying women as either good (chaste) or bad (promiscuous). Despite her assertions that she is "a good girl, from a good family," the Narrator and her boyfriend engage in pre-marital sex in public, even going so far as to copulate outside in the dirt (Machado 3). In this regard, the Narrator becomes Eve, an accepted progenitor of female sexuality and viewed as the Virgin Mary's opposite; however, in keeping with the grotesque, the Narrator also resembles an alternative female sexuality symbol: Medusa (Tumanov 507).

When speaking specifically of Medusa, Freud identifies the mythological create as a "symbol of horror" who is "unapproachable and repels all sexual desire"; however, Freud's analysis is limited by his male perspective and fails to address Medusa's eyes that, according to Susan R. Bowers in *Medusa and the Female Gaze*, watch "with all the force of a powerful subjectivity" (Freud 105-106; Bowers 219). By staring men in the eyes, Medusa does more than turn them to stone; she takes their autonomy and renders them static fixtures, much like the Narrator and all the "other women" in her story (Machado 3). In fact, it is the Narrator's gaze that first challenges the male hegemony, as she states, "In the beginning, I know I want him before he does" Machado (3). With a nod to Genesis, by starting the story with "In the beginning," Machado sets her characters up as Adam and Eve; however, in this version, Eve is introduced first and tasked with shaping the world through her experiences, her gaze (Machado 3). She symbolically creates her husband through her eyes, as she "[sees] the muscles of his neck and upper back, how he fairly strains out of his button-down shirt, like a day laborer dressed up for a dance, and [she runs] slick" (Machado 3). Here, Machado takes a Horatian satirical approach to religion by juxtaposing the sexually adventurous Narrator with her meek soon-to-be-husband, which inverts the biblical narrative of Adam as active and Eve as passive. The sexual role reversal turns the Narrator into a hunter and predator, while the teen boy "seems sweet, flustered," (Machado 4). Once "the boy notices [her]," he is trapped in her gaze and unable to free himself, similar to Medusa's victims (Machado 4). This allows the Narrator to "choose her moment" and strike (Machado 4).

While this self-sexualization can positively empower women, Machado's Narrator demonstrates sexual autonomy as grotesque, particularly in the stories she shares about other women. Specifically, she recounts a story about "a girl who requested something so vile from her paramour that he told her family and they had her hauled off to a sanatorium," and the Narrator

admits that "[she doesn't] know what deviant pleasure [the girl] asked for, though [she] desperately [wished she] did" (Machado 4). These urban legends become parables that dictate how a woman should behave. After having sex with her boyfriend for the first time, the Narrator invokes the image of a hook-handed man, associated with a popular urban myth regarding a man with a fishing hook for a hand killing a young couple in a car. There is a particular iteration of the story that has the young man leave the car only to return and find the young woman brutally murdered. When considering these parables as reflections of the status quo, the urban legends featured in "The Husband Stitch" create a darker, misogynistic, and satiric set of commandments, fleshing out the foundation on which the story's patriarchal society is built. These indirect rules emulate Juvenalian satire, which is appropriate considering Juvenal's Satire VI frequently criticizes the decline in feminine virtue. A key figure of Juvenalian satire is its universal target, as opposed to Horatian that is topical. By creating misogynistic rules of engagement through these urban legends, Machado criticizes a society that creates fantasies of killing women who violate the rules.

Hazel Barnes builds on Bowers' argument regarding Medusa's gaze in *The Meddling Gods*, finding it is not Medusa herself "which destroyed the victim but the fact that his eyes met those of Medusa looking at him" (13). Within her research, Barnes aligns her thoughts with Jean-Paul Sartre, who believes, "…when another person looks at me, his look may make me feel that my free subjectivity has been paralyzed, this is as if I had been turned to stone" (22). The "look" addressed by Barnes and Sartre is therefore correlated with a fear of losing one's identity to the subjectivity of the Other. Patriarchal males, Bowers finds, have had to make Medusa—and by extension, all women—the object of the male gaze as protection against being objectified themselves by Medusa's female gaze" (220). Machado's Narrator unveils the "otherness" of female sexuality as her future-husband "pulls away" and "seems startled" when she moans as they kiss (4). Almost as if he is afraid, he avoids her gaze as "his eyes dart around for a moment," indicating her arousal disturbs him (Machado 4). The couple's next sexual experience is different, as the Narrator describes that after they have sex, and he "breaks" her, she "runs [her] hand over [her vagina] and feels strains of pleasure from somewhere far off," and his response is "[his] breathing becomes quieter," and he watches her (Machado 5). This scene strikes a blow against male hegemony as the Narrator is the chief architect of her boyfriend's satisfaction, as well as her own, bringing him to climax before finishing herself with her own hands, usurping his position. In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger writes, "men do not simply look; their gaze carries with it the power of actions and of possession" (217). This idea makes the future husband's actions ironic. Despite his claim that he "needs more," he "does not rise to do anything," identifying him as a passive participant (Machado 5). The Narrator's masturbation gives her power and aligns her Medusa, as her future husband is incapable of movement or action. Moreover, much like the gorgon, the grotesque visage of the Narrator's sexual autonomy petrifies the man and renders him impotent.

Machado takes great care to make the sex scenes in "The Husband Stitch" grotesque through careful word choice. Despite repeated assertions that the Narrator's significant other is

"good" and "nice," once he and the Narrator are alone, she sacrificially "[offers] herself to him," and the two "find a patch of clear group," like a pornographic Adam and Eve tableau (Machado 7). Machado's wording complicates the love, caring, and tenderness between the couple as the Narrator begs him for sex, or as she describes it, "[rutting] in the clearing" (7). She degrades herself by saying she has "heard all the stories about girls like [her]" and aligns female self-gratification with filth, as she starts "to touch [herself], but [her] fingers, which had been curling in the dirt beneath [her], are filthy" (Machado 7). The scene closes with Machado requesting the reader simulate sex noises:

> (If you read this story out loud, the sounds of the clearing can be best reproduced by taking a deep breath and holding it for a long moment. Then release the air all at once, permitting your chest to collapse like a block tower knocked to the ground. Do this again, and again, shortening the time between the held breath and the release. (7)

The Narrator identifies that her sexual experience is taboo, stating that "It is not normal that a girl teaches her boy, but [she is] the one showing him what [she wants]," which reflects the phallocentric society within which she lives (Machado 9). More importantly, the Narrator's eroticism is born from the same world that prioritizes male sexuality and satisfaction in human sexual discourse. Much like Medusa, the Narrator is a victim of sexual assault, as she admits that her teacher forced her to touch his penis as a child. The horror of this act changes the dynamic between the Narrator and her boyfriend, especially since she recounts scrubbing her hands with a steel wool pad until they bled. By circumventing the teacher's role and instructing her significant other, the Narrator relives the trauma; the legitimacy of this claim being further substantiated by her revelation that "the memory strikes such a chord of anger and shame that [after she shares] this [she has] nightmares for a month" (Machado 9). Jungian scholar Marion Woodman finds the patriarchy originated from the hero's journey archetype, with the dragon or serpent traditionally related to the feminine lunar cycle (19). However, it is ironic that this act of violence and subjugation at the hands of an adult male contributed to the Narrator's sexuality. According to several theory studies, including "The Sexuality of Childhood Sexual Abuse Survivors," childhood sexual abuse victims are more likely to exhibit long-term and frequent behavioral problems, specifically inappropriate sexual behaviors (Roller 48). Considering this, the teacher's sexual behavior has shaped the Narrator, making her sexuality grotesque. In this regard, the patriarchal society first creates monstrous females and then punishes them.

By the time the Narrator marries her significant other, she has accepted herself as an object for her husband's pleasure, as "[she tells] him that [she wants] him to use [her] body as he sees fit" (Machado 11). In answer to this, "He pushes [her] against the wall and puts his hand against the tile near [her throat]" (Machado 11). Once again, Machado describes the sex scene in a relatively violent manner, injecting disgust as the Narrator ponders, "if [she is] the first woman to walk up the aisle of St. George's with semen leaking down her leg" (11). It bears mentioning that St. George is the Patron Saint of many individuals, particularly plague sufferers, furthering the connection between the grotesque and women's sexuality. The Narrator aligns herself with sickness and a disease that killed millions in Europe. More important here is the symbolism

behind the Narrator carrying proof of her sexuality into the church, one of the key representations of the patriarchy and purity. In this scene, the Narrator desecrates this patriarchal temple with her sexuality, with each drop of semen articulating her defiance like sexual punctuation.

The Narrator's heteronormative narrative further unfolds; months after her honeymoon, she is pregnant with a child that swims "fiercely, kicking and pushing and clawing," transforming her behavior to that of an animal, "hissing through [her] teeth" (Machado 14). When discussing the concept of grotesque realism in *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin describes the grotesque's philosophy with "womb," which translates well to "The Husband Stitch" (21). The Narrator's pregnancy and delivery paint a grotesque picture, and her animalistic behavior align with Bakhtin, who comments, "[the] combination of human and animal traits, is…one of the most ancient grotesque forms" (316). He aligns degradation with the lower extremities, "the life of the belly and the reproductive organs…relates to acts of defecation and copulation, conception, pregnancy, and birth. […grotesque realism] knows no other level" (Bakhtin 21). Building on this idea, Julia Kristeva offers an additional perspective on the maternal body in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, referring to it as "abject" and associating it with the feeling that occurs when mother-child bodies separate from each other (Kristeva 3). This feeling is also associated when a body separates from its own wastes (Kristeva 20). In "The Husband Stitch," Machado straddles the trauma associated with childbearing through the two conditions of the grotesque and the abject.

Abjection, Kristeva finds, is common within everyday life and includes negative responses to blood, vomit, and corpses (71). As these examples suggest, Kristeva theorizes abjection in phenomenological terms that associate abject with repulsion and fascination with unsettling bodily experiences, such as death, decay, orifices, illness, pregnancy, and childbirth. Machado brings this level of grotesque and abject in "The Husband Stitch" through the Narrator's body that "changes in ways [she does] not expect—[her] breasts are large and hot, [her] stomach lines with pale marks, the inverse of a tiger's" (14). At this point, the Narrator truly sees herself, claiming, "I feel monstrous" (Machado 15). Through the phenomenological lens, Machado enables the reader to experience the grotesque through the first-person perspective, as the Narrator describes her labor and delivery:

> I go into labor in the middle of the night, every inch of my insides twisting in an obscene knot before release. I scream like I have not screamed since the night by the lake, but for contrary reasons. Now, the pleasure of my knowledge that my child is coming is dismantled by the unyielding agony.
> I am in labor for twenty hours. I nearly wrench off my husband's hand, howling obscenities that do not seem to shock the nurse. (15)

The Narrator is an animal once again, describing a painted, writhing creature screaming and howling. Moreover, Machado builds on the grotesque and abject by instructing the reader, "(If you are reading this story out loud, give a paring knife to the listeners and ask them to cut the tender flap between your index finger and thumb. Afterward, thank them)" (16). The

visualization of cutting a person's skin and spilling blood is horrific; however, Machado raises the grotesque by moving to the second voice, forcing the reader to visualize cutting their own skin. Moreover, in her article, "The Body of Signification," Elizabeth Gross examines Kristeva's views on the body and corporeality in humans, particularly those involving pregnancy and motherhood. Gross proclaims that motherhood erases a woman's autonomy and transforms her from subject to object, "blurring yet producing one identity and another" (95). Machado reflects this as the Narrator's husband treats her as an object by claiming her bodily autonomy for his own, discussing "that extra stitch" with her obstetrician:

> "Please," I say to him. But it comes out slurred and twisted and possibly no more than a small moan. Neither man turns his head toward me.
> The doctor chuckles, "You aren't the first—"
> I slide down a long tunnel, and then surface again, but covered in something heavy and dark, like oil. I feel I am going to vomit.
> "—the rumor is something like—"
> "—like a vir—" (17).

This scene offers a horrifying glimpse into the multiple unnecessary and non-consensual procedures, after which this story is named. The "husband stitch" or "daddy stitch" is an unnecessary procedure where the obstetrician sews a post-partum woman's vagina with an extra stitch to make her "tight." It is often accompanied by discomfort, trauma, and even extreme pain for the women who receive it. While often described as an urban legend, irrational fear, or even a joke, the stitch marks a serious intersection between the objectification of women's bodies and healthcare. Regardless of the Narrator's refusal, she is ignored by her husband and the obstetrician. However, this medically based assault offers an alternative psychoanalytical meaning that adds a further dynamic to the idea of the grotesque.

As Susan Lurie discusses in her article, "The Construction of the 'Castrated Woman' in Psychoanalysis and Cinema," men fear women subconsciously because a woman is physically whole, intact, and in possession of all her sexual powers. This theory aligns closely with Freud's interpretation of Medusa. Specifically, though, Lurie finds the men fear that women will castrate them psychically and physically (52). It is no surprise that Machado's Narrator cannot bear children after giving birth to her son and receiving the extra stitch. Freud finds that decapitation is tantamount to castration, and the visage of a decapitated Medusa, with which the Narrator is aligned, indicates the castrated female (273-274). By conspiring with her obstetrician to mutilate her vagina, the Narrator's husband participates in two acts of castration. In "The Medusa Complex: Matricide and the Fantasy of Castration," Jessica Elbert Mayock finds two forms of castration relevant to girls: they have no agency and do not control birth (171). By requesting "that extra stitch" and disregarding the Narrator's protests, the husband castrates his wife by eliminating her agency and bodily autonomy.

Despite the loss of her agency and bodily autonomy, the Narrator retains a small semblance of control in the form of the green ribbon that encircles her neck, which attracts her husband's attention during their first meeting:

"What's that?" he asks.

"Oh, this?" I touch the ribbon at the back of my neck. "It's just my ribbon." I run my fingers halfway around its green and glossy length, and bring them to rest on the tight bow that sits in the front. He reaches out his hand, and I seize it and press it away.

"You shouldn't touch it," I say. "You can't touch it" (Machado 4).

Regardless of its innocuous appearance, the ribbon grows conspicuous as the Narrator expresses significant fear and dread as her future husband tries multiple times to touch it:

His eyes drift over the water and then return to me.

"Tell me about your ribbon," he says.

"There's nothing to tell. It's my ribbon."

"May I touch it?"

"No."

"I want to touch it," he says. His fingers twitch a little, and I close my legs and sit up straighter.

"No." (Machado 4)

The Narrator's ribbon represents a transgression, which Justin Edwards and Rune Grauland identify in *Grotesque* as an "infringement on the boundaries of an aesthetic, ethical, or established form of behavior" (66). Within the confines of Machado's story, "a wife should have no secrets from her husband," to which the Narrator responds, "I've given you everything you have ever asked for. …Am I not allowed this one thing" (20-21). According to Edwards and Grauland's expansion of "transgression" identifies the Narrator's ribbon as more than a simple rule violation; it is a vital component in defining the rule. To the husband, the ribbon is *contra naturam*, against nature, eliciting hostility in him as the ribbon becomes a thin line he is forbidden from crossing. While Edwards and Grauland find three modes of expression of disharmony and transgression—exaggeration, extravagance, and excess—I find the Narrator's green ribbon highlights a fourth area: obscurity.

The negative attention the ribbon evokes, as well as the Narrator's continued evasiveness and refusal to divulge its purpose or history, make it obscure. This form of the grotesque matches and contrasts exaggeration. While the ribbon is not exaggerated in its appearance, its obscurity draws the reader's eye and distorts perception in a manner similar to intentionally exaggerated forms. Its presence is so offensive to the Narrator's husband that it inspires anger, as well as pertinent questions, such as "Why is it green?" It is nevertheless ironic that the same ribbon that spells death for the Narrator carries the color associated with vitality. A deeper understanding of the color green's wide associations delivers additional horror. In ancient Greek, the word closely matched with "green" is χλωρός, which translates to "pale" or "greenish," indicating an illness (OED 2020). The classical Latin *virdis* connotes a greenish complexion that suggests illness or an excess of bile" (OED 2020). In "Green," an analysis on the color green, Stephanie LeMenager and Teresa Shewry report that "green points to the in-between psychological space of existential nausea. …Green is slime, the monster" (128). On the medical front, green indicates infection, closely related to gangrene that occurs when blood flow to a large bodily area stops, causing the

tissue to break down and die. In keeping with the Greek and Latin words, gangrene relates to a gnawing sore or decaying tissue. Speaking symbolically, the Narrator's green ribbon is merely a symptom of what lies beneath the silken green ornament. There is a festering wound that divides the Narrator's mind and her body, and she only manages to keep herself whole by maintaining her last line of defense. The ribbon is symbolic of the final frontier of her mind, the last little bit of herself that she feels belongs to her.

In keeping with this mythological metaphor, the Narrator eventually unties the green ribbon and "[her] weight shifts, and with it, gravity seizes [her]" as her head falls from her shoulders and rolls across the floor (Machado 31). According to the myth, Perseus beheads Medusa while she slept, using a reflective shield to avoid her gaze ("Perseus"). Comparable, the Narrator's husband uses time to subdue her until "resolve runs out of [her]" and she submits the last of "her" self to him (Machado 30). Mento Carmela and Settineri Salvatore report in "The Medusa Complex: The Head Separated from the Body in the Psychopathology of Negative Affects" that the severed head "separates into two directions the spirit (wisdom, consciousness) and the corporeal (ego, sexuality)" (3). Up until she takes off the green ribbon, the husband has achieved dominion of the Narrator's sexuality; however, by "beheading" her, he destroys her spirit and with it her consciousness. In "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers: Notes toward a Preliterary History of Women's Archetypes," Annis Pratt finds the classical hero who conquers dragons, serpents, and gorgons are, in reality, "stories of 'riddance" (168). These narratives transform "powerful women of the pre-Hellenic religions…to seem horrific and then raped, decapitated, or destroyed" (Pratt 168).

The years the Narrator's husband has spent demanding knowledge of the ribbon have worn her down, meaning her consent to remove the ribbon resulted from coercion. Like Perseus, her husband is a willful intruder who seeks to destroy her for his own gain, distracting her with the reflection while he seeks to circumvent her autonomy. In this regard, the Narrator is raped symbolically, representing her husband's final domination of her. Machado punctuates the story with classic grotesque, as the Narrator returns to the second person and requests, "If you are reading this story out loud, you may be wondering if that place my ribbon protected was wet with blood and openings, or smooth and neutered like the nexus between the legs of a doll" (31). This re-direction drives the reader to imagine the ribbon "wet with blood and openings" like a gangrenous wound, or "smooth and neutered" like a pretty object, much like a blow-up doll, to which her husband has systematically reduced her (Machado 31). Once again, Machado's careful word choice adds further depth to the narrative, as the Narrator uses the word "neutered" to describe the relationship between the ribbon and her body. Moreover, "neutered" is a synonym for castration, indicating her husband has not only decapitated her, but he has also castrated her, the final proof of her subjugation.

Despite the severity of the Narrator's outcome and the depressive and horrifying ending to the story, "The Husband Stitch" carries an undercurrent of humor indicative of satire. The notion that a woman's head is held in place by a thin green ribbon is absurd. Much like Sisyphus and his stone, the husband has spent their entire relationship attempting to uncover the meaning

of the green ribbon, and once he achieves this, he is right back where he started. The Narrator's head rolls across the floor as the boulder rolled back down the hill for Sisyphus, and the husband can only stand there and watch as all his patriarchal work amounts to nothing. The absurdity transcends the mere image of his headless wife, though; it highlights the wife as a parody of the patriarchal and heteronormative ideal: sexually and domestically compliant. In this way, "The Husband Stitch" reflects the way the husband stitches the perfect woman, cutting away unnecessary bits such as her agency, making her incapable of existing without him. The satirical aspect emerges as the husband's Stepford ideal dies once she is "perfect."

Regardless of its absurdity, Carmen Maria Machado's "The Husband Stitch" delivers a postmodern horror story that satirizes the patriarchal "good" husband and what it means to be a "good" wife. The Narrator's overt sexuality as a teenager and her pregnancy are turned into something grotesque as she is systematically stripped of her agency, ultimately resulting in her death. Her husband symbolically and literally beheads her, furthering her connection to Medusa, the classical monster who is also accepted as a symbol for female sexuality and castration anxiety. Much like Medusa, sitting alone in her cave on an island, the Narrator lies in stasis, unevolving and "the same" as she is as a teenager, while her husband is "robust with serendipity" and grows into a man. Despite this, the Narrator demonstrates overt sexuality and assertiveness, enabling her to take the form of a monstrous-feminine, furthering aligning her with Medusa. This alignment, combined with the grotesque and abject elements, results in a fragmented satirical narrative, with a keen goal of criticizing women's sacrifice to the altar of patriarchal heteronormativity.

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African Identity and the African Diaspora: The Genetic Impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

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Abstract

Africans enslaved during the transatlantic slave trade not only lost their families, their friends, their homes, they also lost their identity. Forced onto ships in tight quarters, these men and women of Africa were stripped of their clothes, their belongings, and their existence as Africans and taken to a foreign land and sold as slaves. They were forced to create a new identity in a new world, shaping their new lives through a collective memory of all that they lost. This article looks at the way DNA is helping the descendants of enslaved Africans reconnect to a lost past and contribute to the African Diaspora.

African Identity and the African Diaspora: The Genetic Impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Teresa Bowman. A name. A first and last name that connotes a sense of belonging. A name with ancestry tracing back over hundreds of years. Names contribute to an identity built from a cultural heritage composed of languages, customs, traditions, and values. Many Americans, perhaps most, are unaware of their family's origin. There is presently a trend across the world to trace one's ancestry. People want to know more about the past and about those who have gone before us. The transatlantic slave trade extinguished the past for millions of African Americans some 300 years ago. It is as if the roots of their family trees end on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. The middle passage stripped the identities of over 400,000 survivors of the transatlantic slave trade that came to the United States. "They ceased to be Mende or Igbo or Kpelle and became Negro slaves, thrown together with people of other ethnicities without any consideration."[1] Perhaps there is a bridge built to provide some answers, a possibility of connecting to the African past to restore a lost identity. Analyzing DNA through genetic testing provides an opportunity for African Americans to reclaim their African identity, bringing understanding to a forgotten heritage, while providing new insights into the transatlantic slave trade and the African Diaspora in the United States. Understanding one's DNA can perhaps give a voice to those silenced by the middle passage.

What follows is a discussion of current DNA trends and genetic research centered around the transatlantic slave trade. What can it tell us about the Africans captured during the transatlantic slave trade? Genetic testing fuels a desire to understand human mobility throughout history. This research can be a powerful tool to learn more about the impact of the transatlantic slave trade on the African Diaspora in the United States. What has research uncovered so far, and is there more to glean? Understanding DNA trends and genetic origins across the Americas can reconnect African Americans to their African roots, enriching their sense of identity. Presented below is a case study of one man's quest to connect to his deep familial roots using AncestryDNA and the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database. Also considered are concerns around this emerging trend in genetic testing and the transatlantic slave trade.

Twelve and a half million Africans were forcibly removed from their homes between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, sent to the Americas, and enslaved.[2] Far from their origins, these people attempted to hang on to their African roots and identity in a completely alien world. Africans tried to hold on to their customs and culture despite pressure by slave owners to conform to American life. Forced to assimilate to new names, many shed their African monikers. Cudjo Lewis, a survivor of the slave ship Clotilda, highlights this disconnect. When Zora Neale Hurston visited him one afternoon:

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[1] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *In Search of Our Roots: How 19 Extraordinary African Americans Reclaimed Their Past* (New York: Random House, Inc., 2009), Prefatory Notes on the African Slave Trade, Kindle.

[2] David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, (London: Yale University Press, 2015), xvii. See also Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, (London: J. Phillips, 1788), 12-18., for a first-hand account of the slave trade.

> Oh Lor', I know it you call my name. Nobody don't callee me my name from cross de water but you. You always callee me Kossula, jus' lak I in de Affica soil!... My name is not Cudjo Lewis. It Kossula. When I gittee in Americky soil, Mr. Jim Meaher he try callee my name, but it too long, you unnerstan me, so I say, 'Well, I yo' property?' He say, 'Yeah.' Den I say, 'You callee me Cudjo. Dat do.' But in Afficky soil my mama she name me Kossula.[3]

We can only blame slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for this loss of identity. We see customs, cultures, and values passing from one generation to the next since the end of the slave trade two centuries ago. Handed down are shards and shreds of ephemera and narratives to the next family historian that become worn and weathered over time. Holes in the fabric of familial history emerge as ancestral lines die out. African Americans suffer an added level of disconnectedness. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. verbalizes this so well:

> For us, for those of us descended from the 455,000 Africans who arrived in this country directly from Africa and indirectly from the Caribbean as slaves…it was this "trace-ability," as it were, that the evil genius of slavery sought to take away from us on both sides of the Atlantic, making us fragmented and not whole, isolated, discrete parts, not pieces of fabric stitched together in a grand pattern, like some living, breathing, mocha-colored quilt.[4]

This disconnectedness can contribute to a loss of ancestral identity for descendants of enslaved people. The survivors of the transatlantic slave trade account for as many as 48 distinct ethnolinguistic groups across Atlantic Africa.[5] The language, customs, and culture across these 48 distinct groups could be vastly different. Knowing one's specific genetic home can contribute to a more authentic identity. African identity throughout the Americas contributes to regional cultures and to a new African American identity and the African Diaspora. Slaves brought to America through the slave trade had to create their own Africa on American soil. On the outskirts of Mobile, Alabama, Africa Town is one place dedicated to rebuilding an African identity.

> Once free again, they regrouped and put their energy into finding a way to go back to their families in Africa… When their plan failed, they decided to do the next best thing: recreate Africa where they were… Within this African enclave, they raised their children, teaching them the languages and values they had learned from their families and brought from the homelands they cherished.[6]

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[3] Hurston, Zora Neale, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2018), 17-19. Kindle.

[4] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *In Search of Our Roots*, Introduction: Family Matters.

[5] Steven J. Micheletti et. al., "Genetic Consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Americas," *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 107, (August 2020): 265, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajhg.2020.06.012.

[6] Sylviane A. Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2007), 2-3. Kindle.

Today, genetic research can bring African Americans one step closer to reconnecting with their lost heritage.

Genetic research and DNA analysis for ancestral research is a global trend, with the first tests for ancestry research administered by Family Tree DNA in 2000.[7] Utilizing DNA research for understanding the identities and origins of the individuals displaced by slavery and the middle passage came about during a conference in Copenhagen in 2003. The conference attended by historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, and geneticists hotly debated the topic:

> On the one side, a group of "genetic skeptics" highlighted concerns about how molecular data might be used to create deterministic classifications of human groups, and questioned the validity of applying biological data to questions of social identity. On the other side, a group of "genetic advocates" drew attention to the rigor and precision of molecular studies, suggesting that genetic analyses were capable of providing insights of a heretofore unparalleled resolution into the history of slavery.[8]

The actual usage of DNA to "investigate the origins of human individuals displaced by the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans" began in 1990 through the New York African Burial Ground project.[9] This project analyzed the DNA of 419 skeletons interred in a Blacks-only cemetery in downtown New York. The results compare 45 skeletal remains of inhabitants of West and West Central Africa to those of the New York remains. The results returned 1,800 mtDNA sequences[10] with 849 connected to people currently living in African cities, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone. Not included were other cities that were key to the transatlantic slave trade. That number would be much higher if it included Ghana, Gabon, Angola, Congo, or Liberia. Since the study in 1990, similar studies continue to emerge throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. As the science behind genetic testing develops, the results become more precise and enlightening. In 2003 the company African Ancestry, Inc. was formed to offer DNA testing, resources, and products to the African American public. The company was not without its critics, who developed their own testing databases and rival companies.[11] The results of these emerging technologies, research, testing, and database

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[7] "Moneymakers: Bennett Greenspan: DNA Testing Crosses Paths with Genealogy," Chron.com, last modified July 30, 2011, https://www.chron.com/business/article/Moneymakers-Bennett-Greenspan-1657195.php.

[8] Sarah Abel and Marcela Sandoval-Velasco, "Crossing Disciplinary Lines: Reconciling Social and Genomic Perspectives on the Histories and Legacies of the Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved Africans," *New Genetics and Society* 35, no. 2 (2016): 149-150, https://doi.org/10.1080/14636778.2016.1197109.

[9] Ibid. 153.

[10] mtDNA analyzes genetics sequence through the maternal line. See note 20 for a more detailed explanation on the types of DNA testing.

[11] Abel and Sandoval-Velasco, "Crossing Disciplinary Lines," 153-165 and passim.

developments give African Americans a chance to connect to their origins despite their displacement due to the transatlantic slave trade.

  Andre Johnson[12] provides an example of how DNA can help trace one's ancestry to the transatlantic slave trade. This case study uses AncestryDNA and the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database to narrow down the African origin of Andre Johnson. Andre grew up identifying as bi-racial. His mother is of French ancestry, and his father an African American. He had never questioned his heritage until, as a young man, Andre lost both of his parents. Before his mother passed, Andre discovered his original birth certificate and found that he is an adoptee. Andre became curious to understand his familial roots. Who was he, and what was his ancestry? Through Ancestry.com, Andre took a DNA test and awaited his results. He was matched to a close cousin on his birth mother's side and learned that he is primarily Scots Irish which stems from his maternal line. He has located his birth mother and is beginning to piece together one half of his heritage. His birth father's side remains a mystery, but perhaps DNA can begin to gather the pieces of what seems an impossible puzzle.

  On Andre's paternal side, AncestryDNA estimates that he is 13% Nigerian and 11% from Cameroon, Congo & Western Bantu Peoples.[13] In terms of the transatlantic slave trade, we can conclude that Andre's ancestors likely came from ports along the Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra, and West Central Africa, three of the largest coastal regions in the slave trade (See Figure 1 in Appendix). According to the *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, the likeliest destinations of Africans from the Nigerian and West Central African ports would be the islands of the Caribbean and the ports of southern United States[14] (See Figure 2 in Appendix). Utilizing the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database, a search for voyages that include the Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra, and West Central Africa returns 17,458 possible voyages.[15] This result narrows down about half of the entirety of the voyages included in the database from 36,000.

  We can then compare Andre's DNA to his closest paternal match through AncestryDNA's estimated matches. Andre Johnson and Evan Richardson[16] share 255 centimorgans (cM).[17] Using the Share cM Project Chart, we can assess their connection as a first

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[12] The name Andre Johnson is an amalgamation of this person's current legal name and name assigned at birth.

[13] Andre's DNA also includes a small percent from Mali and Senegal at 2% and 1% respectively, but for this case study we will concentrate on the two larger percentage regions.

[14] David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 18-19.

[15] Calculated from David Eltis, Stephen Behrendt, David Richardson, and Manolo Florentino, "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database," SlaveVoyages, http://www.slavevoyages.com, [hereafter TSTD2] link to results, https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyages/L5NDiRHd.

[16] The name Evan Richardson is an alias.

[17] A unit of genetic testing measuring genetic distance between humans. See figure 4 in the Appendix. Chart can be found at DNA Painter, "The Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4," accessed May 6, 2021, https://dnapainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4.

cousin once or twice removed or second cousins (See Figure 3 in Appendix). Their shared ancestor would be Andre's paternal great-grandparents. In comparing their shared ethnicity, Evan's African ancestry mirrors Andre's, Nigeria and the West African Coast being the two largest regions within his DNA (See Figure 4 in Appendix). We can then utilize AncestryDNA's estimated "United States Shared Communities" to get an idea of where Andre and Evan's ancestors settled once they arrived in North America (See Figure 5 in Appendix). Ancestry strongly suggests that the primary area in which their ancestors settled is the central eastern coast of the country, from Maryland to South Carolina and more specifically Virginia (See Figure 6 in Appendix). Once again, we return to the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database to try and narrow down voyages between Nigeria and the West Coast of Africa that disembarked in the central eastern coast of the United States. Selecting the Bights of Benin and Biafra and West Central Africa as embarkation ports and selecting Virginia as the disembarkation port, the database returns 162 vessels that sailed these routes.[18] Further information from the Transatlantic Slave Database can tell us that Andre and Evan's ancestors were part of 43,563 Africans who embarked among these 162 vessels and one of 35,091 Africans who survived the middle passage (See Figure 7 in Appendix).

While this simple case study does not narrow down the exact ship(s) Andre's ancestors arrived on in the U.S., we can certainly get a good idea of what those voyages looked like. The results narrow from 36,000 possible voyages to just 162 with a quick comparison. If we were to continue to compare Andre's DNA results with those of other matches, carefully reviewing several together, we could likely shrink the number of voyages down even further. The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database allows the researcher to glean important clues into the lives of one's ancestors and their experience along the middle passage. We know that of these 162 voyages, six embarked at the Bight of Benin, 122 from the Bight of Biafra, and 34 from the West African Coast (See Figure 8 in Appendix). Since the most significant percentage comes from the Bight of Biafra, we can estimate that Andre's ancestors were part of the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, or Igbo ethnic groups. We also have to assume that Andre had multiple African ancestors, and they were one of approximately 35,091 survivors of the middle passage. This scaled-down test case represents information gleaned using genetic testing and the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database to connect an African American to their disconnected past in Africa. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is a champion for using DNA analysis and primary resources around the transatlantic slave trade to estimate African heritage. His research leads to many cases with much more specific results.[19]

While Andre Johnson's case study is small and simplistic, one should consider caveats that shed light on the controversy in using DNA to connect African Americans, and indeed all

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[18] David Eltis, Stephen Behrendt, David Richardson, and Manolo Florentino, TSTD2, https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyages/xUFdGvA4.

[19] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *In Search of Our Roots*, Introduction: Family Matters and passim.

Africans, worldwide. The most significant caveat is the size of genetic databases. Although DNA testing is becoming more and more popular, many countries with remote locations will have little to no representation in source databases. There are efforts to test DNA among Africans specifically for research connected to slavery and the slave trade, but the sampling is still small. As more testing occurs, the databases and results will grow and expand. Companies like Ancestry, Family Tree DNA, and 23andMe will continue to update individual DNA results for tested clients who will see more specific results as the databases expand. Changes in the mobility of African Americans due to events like the Great Migration can skew migratory paths of the descendants of slaves and create a regional discordance. Disruption in these paths can complicate patterns of shared communities that could help narrow down disembarkation points. Besides the concern of regional discordance, a 23andMe Research Team points out in their article on "Genetic Consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Americas" concerning ancestral sex bias whereby unequal sex contributions to the gene pool skews results.[20] One should consider utilizing multiple DNA tests that review samples of mtDNA, Y-DNA, and autosomal chromosomal markers and sequences to review results from maternal and paternal lines.[21] These are just a few of the concerns and caveats brought to light through genetic research to connect Africans with their displaced descendants.

What we do see here through somewhat limited testing so far is the emergence of an African identity. For some, the impact of connecting to African origins through DNA can be prophetic. On December 12, 2017, Questlove, drummer of the band The Roots, was featured on the popular genealogy documentary show "Finding Your Roots" hosted by historian Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. During the show, Questlove, whose full name is Ahmir Thompson, learned that he was a direct decedent of a survivor of the slave ship Clotilda, connecting the drummer to a specific slave port in Africa. It had a profound effect on him: "how weird the even i'm connected to #Alabama. this moment changed my life. LITERALLY. literally here....on a WAGER. watch!!!!"[22]

Understanding one's ethnic origins are not wholly an African problem. In the twenty-first century, the world has become a giant melting pot. Immigration and emigration between countries contribute to mixed regional culture and multiracial peoples. Today, when we consider identity, we think more in terms of the intersectional view of ourselves. Understanding DNA and genetics can contribute to a new idea of ethnic identity and diversity, and it also contributes to

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[20] Micheletti et. al., "Genetic Consequence," 269-270.

[21] "Y-DNA, mtDNA, and Autosomal DNA Tests," Ancestry.com, accessed May 6, 2021, https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Y-DNA-mtDNA-and-Autosomal-DNA-Tests, provides an explanation of the different types of DNA tests.

[22] "PBS Show Reveals Questlove Descended From Last Known Slave Ship, Which Landed In Alabama," AL.com, accessed May 6, 2021, https://www.al.com/news/mobile/2017/12/pbs_special_reveals_questlove.html. Quote from Questlove @questlove, 2017, "how weird," Twitter, December 12, 2017, https://bit.ly/3h223mf.

pride in one's family, ancestors, and origins. Whether it is an Irish American whose ancestor came to the United States due to the potato famine, a Jewish American whose family fled the Holocaust in 1940, or an African American whose ancestor was forcibly removed from their home country to endure the tragedy of slavery, one's origin is unique to their identity. "Regardless, however, of how they were enslaved in Africa, still they spoke their languages and knew their names. But here, on this side of the Atlantic, they soon lost those names."[23]

As I sit here putting the final words to this project, I am in the inevitable position of facing the end of my family identity. My sister, who is my only sibling, having just passed and my parents before her leave me as the final leaf on our family tree. Unable to have my own biological children, I face what many others face throughout time, the end of familial identity. The explosion of genetic testing used to fill in familial gaps by people of all backgrounds indicates that there is a global personal need to understand one's heritage. Filling in these gaps allows a person to add new facets and understanding of self-identity and pride in one's deep familial roots. I cannot fathom what hundreds of thousands of Africans endured being torn from their homes, away from their families and heritage. Slave traders stripped them of their clothes, belongings, ancestry, names, and identities. Those that survived the middle passage had to create a new sense of self and secretly hold dear their African heritage in an unforgiving country. They had to make a new Africa in the Americas built on their remembered past. The legacy that was the transatlantic slave trade did not, could not, wholly extinguish an African identity for the over 400,000 people who survived the middle passage. It merely diminished for a time to boldly reignite as the African Diaspora.

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[23] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *In Search of Our Roots*, Prefactory Notes.

Appendix
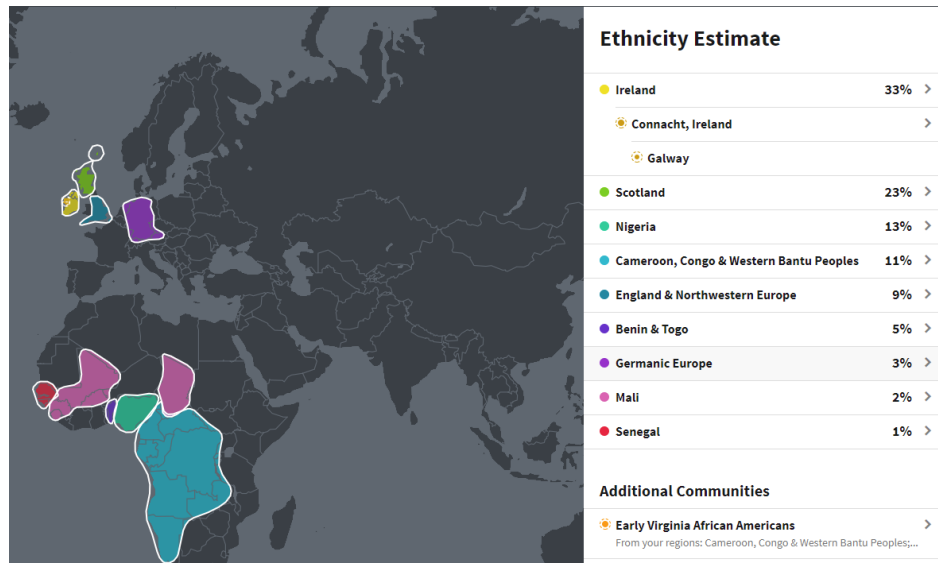
Figure 1

Ethnicity Estimate for Andre Johnson
From Author's Personal Ancestry Account. Data courtesy of Ancestry.com

Figure 2

Map 7: Major coastal regions from which captives left Africa, all years. JPEG. SlaveVoyages. https://slavevoyages.org/voyage/maps (accessed September 29, 2021). Source: David Eltis and David Richardson, Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), reproduced with the permission of Yale University Press. © 2021 Yale University Press. All Rights Reserved.

Figure 3

The Shared cM Project Chart – Chart courtesy of DNA Painter. Licensed under the Creative Common License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/
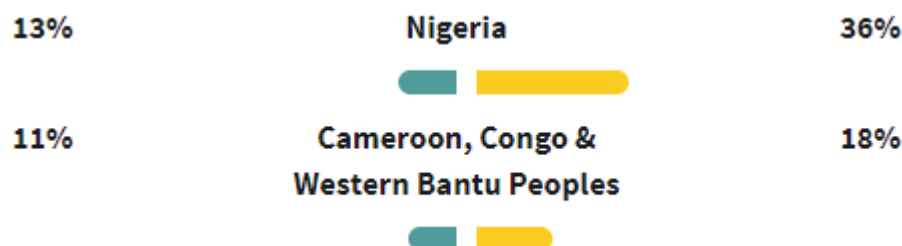
Figure 4

Shared DNA Estimated Ethnicity between Andre Johnson and Evan Richardson
From Author's Personal Ancestry Account. Data courtesy of Ancestry.com
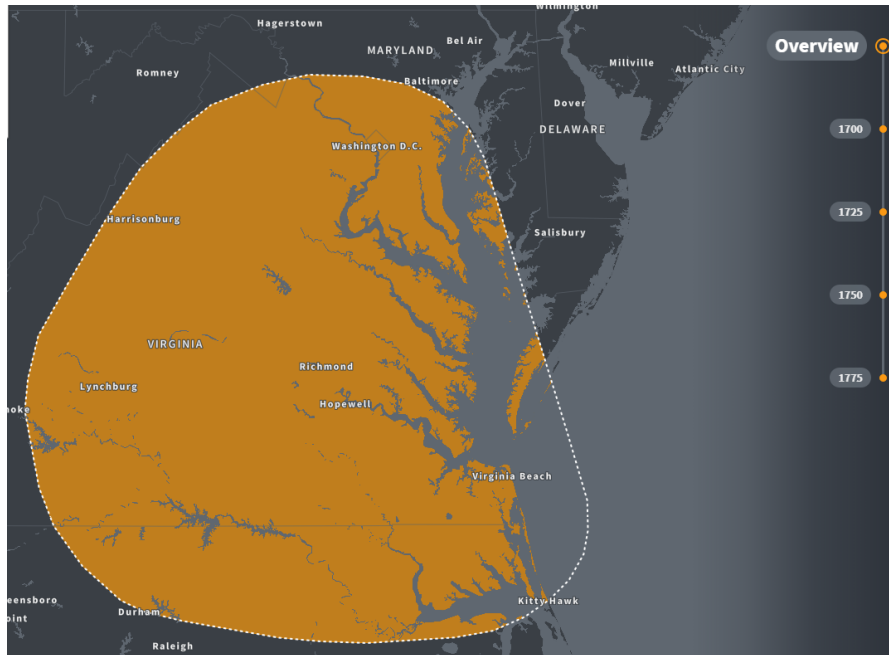
Figure 5

AncestryDNA Estimated Shared U. S. Communities
From Author's Personal Ancestry Account. Data courtesy of Ancestry.com

Figure 6

Map 9: Volume and direction of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from all African to all American regions. JPEG. SlaveVoyages. https://slavevoyages.org/voyage/maps (accessed September 29, 2021). Source: David Eltis and David Richardson, Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), reproduced with the permission of Yale University Press. © 2021 Yale University Press. All Rights Reserved.

	Total slaves
Slaves embarked (IMP)	43,563
Slaves disembarked (IMP)	35,091

Figure 7

Slaves Embarked and Disembarked. Data courtesy of SlaveVoyages. Licensed under the Creative Common License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/

Year Range	Africa		
	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea islands	West Central Africa and St. Helena
1651-1675	0	1	1
1676-1700	1	6	0
1701-1725	1	44	4
1726-1750	1	51	15
1751-1775	3	20	14
Totals	6	122	34

Figure 8

Number of Vessels from Embarkation Points. Data courtesy of SlaveVoyages. Licensed under the Creative Common License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/

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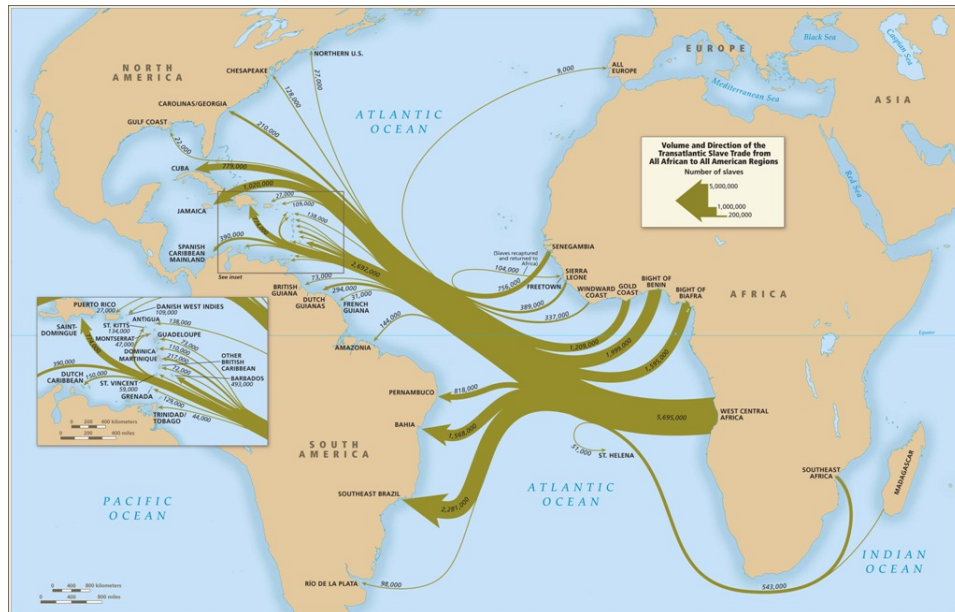Eltis, David, Stephen Behrendt, David Richardson, and Manolo Florentino. "Map 9: Volume and direction of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from all African to all American regions." JPEG. SlaveVoyages. https://slavevoyages.org/voyage/maps (accessed September 29, 2021).

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Technological Reshaping of Traditional Museum Roles: Digitization and the Emergence of Virtual Museums in the Age of COVID-19

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Abstract

Museums constantly conduct research to learn how they can become more efficient educators and increase engagement with their visitors. These institutions have adapted and many have created ways in which visitors can use technology to make their experience more interactive. Over the past few decades, museum professionals have been digitizing their collections and a roaring debate over the creation of digital museums has ensued. Completely digital museums have very recently emerged, completely changing the way the public interacts with these institutions. This paper will explore how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected museums, the creation of completely digital museums and the debates concerning the role of technology in these institutions and the increased role of technology within them.

Technological Reshaping of Traditional Museum Roles: Digitization and the Emergence of
Virtual Museums in the Age of COVID-19

In the twenty-first century, many professions have adapted to new advances in technology. Especially in education, teachers and students now have access to newly created online databases which make international research more accessible. Technology has undoubtedly made our lives easier, however in some industries technology is making various professions obsolete: including museum professionals. In the field of museum studies, museum professionals are tasked with balancing visitor's engagement, enjoyment and achieving their set education goals when they design exhibits. While a curator may be enthusiastic about a particular exhibit, the public may not even notice its installation if it fails to grab their attention. With the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, museums have had to adapt fast to create virtual museums and this drastic change will impact how museums will be created and curated moving forward, post-pandemic.

This research project will explore the ways museums have learned to adapt to the increasing use of technology. Museums are not able to maintain interest of the public without adopting trends. These trends vary but those related to culture and technology shape exhibits and how museums have to cater to the visitor's experience. Additionally, this paper will examine how much technology museums have begun to integrate into their exhibits and explore debates on the inclusion of technology. How museums have adapted to technological advances has pushed the digitization process which some museum goers and museum professionals predict will change the industry for the worse. With technology constantly updating, museums are faced with the challenge of keeping up-to-date while combating the potential of being completely digitized, thus erasing the need for the storage and display for historic artifacts. This paper will show that technology is not a new phenomenon in the museum industry, however the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digitization and initiated the creation of completely digital museums.

While technology appears in every aspect of life in the twenty-first century, earlier generations had limited access to top of the line technology. However, museums made an effort to integrate much of this technology into their visitor's experience. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, debate about the use of technology in museums erupted as science museums were becoming more popular in the United States. While science and technology museums grew in popularity, many critics felt that they could not be classified as museums at all because of their non-traditional subject focus. In hindsight, these early science and technology museums pioneered the use of technologically involved exhibits. In the 1970s, the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago opened a new exhibit displaying the nutritional and caloric values of food in a top-of-the-line computerized exhibit, as seen below in Figure 1. As these new technology-centered museums developed, they emphasized that science principals and applications can be more effectively shown in technological and interactive exhibits rather than a stationary display of artifacts or models.[1]

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[1] Victor J. Danilov, "Museums are Coming Alive: Innovative Approaches of Science Centers." *The American Biology Teacher* 38, no. 9 (1976), 526.

Figure 1
Exhibit at Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago ca. 1970s
Photo Courtesy of Victor J. Danilov

Despite the increasing popularity of interactive technology-based exhibits, many museum professionals questioned the use of technology in more traditional, artifact-based museums. As technology is becoming more readily available to the general public, museums face the challenge of presenting a new experience to patrons. The New York Museum of Modern Art conducted a study in 2013 which found that 74 percent of their visitors attended the museum with a mobile device already on their person.[2] If this is a tool which is easily accessible to most visitors, then why not take advantage of that? Museums have found ways for visitors to utilize their mobile devices to bring exhibits to life which ensures that their experience is more interactive.

The emergence of new information technologies has cultivated a growing demand to make collections more accessible by increasing the digitization of artifacts.[3] The role of museums has traditionally been to create an environment where people can go to learn by examining historic artifacts and artwork. With thoughtful interior design, museums guide visitors through exhibits which demand their attention and compel them to engage with the art or artifact. Some consider

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[2] Christine Nolan, "The Role of Technology in Museums." *AMT Lab @ CMU*, AMT Lab @ CMU, 14 July 2016, amt-lab.org/blog/2016/4/the-role-of-technology-in-museums

[3] Jeonghyun, Kim, "Building Rapport Between LIS and Museum Studies." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 53, no. 2 (2012): 151.

being in the physical presence of the object important because the "aura of the object" affects how one interacts with it and how one thinks about it.[4] Without being able to share space with the object, some critiques of digital museums feel that the experience will be less meaningful.

In his article "The Development of Virtual Museums," Werner Schweibenz hypothesizes about the possibility of the creation of completely virtual museums. Digital museums, according to Schweibenz, is a collection of digital objects in a variety of media and is unique in that it can be accessed through various means. While these virtual institutions became a necessity during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Schweibenz's article reflects the trend in museum studies which suggests a need to completely digitize collections. This was something only a few museum professionals advocated for before the COVID-19 pandemic. After the pandemic, however, the value and necessity of digitization is undeniable. Schweibenz notes that a major aspect in the debate about digitization revolves around a fear it would eventually lead to a democratization of art and artifacts, which many encourage as it enables more people to access the knowledge once belonging only to museums. However, Schweibenz argues that democratization of artifacts questions the authority of museums and could possibly take away their traditional purpose which was to house and exhibit their collections to the public. As a critic of digital museums, Schweibenz believes no amount of digitization could replace the traditional role museums provide for their communities.

Critics of digital museums see a danger in overusing technology; they fear increased use of technology in general could bring negative side effects to developing youth such as shrinking attention spans, delayed social skill development and drops in fundamental literacy skills. Museums are critical to diversifying an educator's tools and helping students who may not thrive in traditional classroom settings and allow for students to exercise other parts of their brain. Museums offer spaces for students to interact with exhibits which engaging them in innovative ways not possible in the classroom. Since museums have historically offered physical experiences where visitors can fully interact with artifacts, critics are concerned that incorporating digital elements will compromise the integrity of the museum experience.

Aside from the adverse effects technology can have on the learning capabilities of younger children, technology is quickly advancing at an unprecedented rate. As technology continues to push the boundaries, museums that attempt to implement modern technology in their exhibits will have to increase spending in order to fund these projects. As quickly as technology develops, yesterday's innovations are obsolete. Curators risk installing expensive, interactive activities which could be outdated in a few short years.

While critics of digitization in museum studies offer a multitude of valid arguments, there seems to be more support for the inclusion of technology. Emerging new information technologies have put museums on the path to total or near complete digitization of their collections.[5] Support

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[4] Werner Schweibenz. "The Virtual Museum: An Overview of Its Origins, Concepts and Terminology." *The Museum Review*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2019): 5.

[5] Jeonghyun Kim, "Building Rapport Between LIS and Museum Studies." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 53, no. 2 (2012), 151.

of digitization is not exclusive to the twenty-first century. In 1976, an article was published titled "Museums are Coming Alive: Innovative Approaches of Science Centers" which was essentially a roundtable discussion of digitization in the museum industry. Specifically, this article discussed opinions in the field concerning the use of technology to form technology-based museums, which was entirely new at the time. The author, Victor J. Danilov, stated that "science and technology centers have broadened the educational and cultural roles of museums. They have made educational programming an integral part of museum operations."[6] This article was written at a time when American applied science museums were gradually moving away from historic artifacts and operation models were central to developing new concepts in presentation. According to the article, while the exhibits may be non-traditional, the technology applications can be more effective than displaying artifacts or static models.

The appeal of technology in museums stems from the countless possibilities for curating interactive exhibits. Andy Lloyd, the special projects manager at the International Centre for Life in the United Kingdom, has said that the question is "not just about technology, but also what we wish to accomplish and the human aspect in the equation."[7] Understanding how the visitors will interact with the exhibits is an equally important part of the decision to include any technology. Recently, Rik Panganiban, senior manager of digital learning at the California Academy of Sciences, spoke on the new reality of science centers. He noted that "it is not about having the *most* technology in your science center or museums; it's about having the *right* technology to engage learners while they are in your institution, and to give them something to remember, or even engage with, once they have left your institution."[8] The emphasis, according to Panganiban, is to ensure that the technology is used properly and not overused for the sake of having modern or technology-based exhibits.

Trends of the twenty-first century point towards creating virtual museums where all artifacts and exhibits can be viewed from an online database. The rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus expedited this process when more than 85,000 museums closed in March 2020, leaving museum professionals scurrying to find solutions.[9] To combat the profit loss associated with closing museums for an unknown period of time, many found ways to bring the museum and its artifacts online for all to enjoy. According to the Network of European Museums Organizations' COVID-19 report, more than 70 percent of European museums increased their online presence with virtual tours and events. The report also states that two out of five museums reported an

[6] Victor J. Danilov "Museums Are Coming Alive: Innovative Approaches of Science Centers." *The American Biology Teacher* 38, no. 9 (1976), 525.

[7] "How Much Is Too Much Technology in a Science Center or Museum, or Is the Sky the Limit? Does It Engage or Distract?" *Association of Science and Technology Centers*, 29 May 2020.

[8] How Much Is Too Much Technology in a Science Center or Museum, or Is the Sky the Limit? Does It Engage or Distract?" *Association of Science and Technology Centers*, 29 May 2020. Emphasis added.

[9] Kayla Voigt, "How Museums Went Digital in Response to COVID-19." *Lendio*, 30 Sept. 2020.

increase in visits to their websites, ranging between 10 to 150 percent during the reporting time.[10] Museums across the United States also increased the number of digital services in order to accommodate the government's stay-at-home orders. Below, Figure 2 illustrates the increase of digital services across all United States museums.

This data represents the amount of digital services which has increased since the first pandemic lockdown in March 2020. Online contests and quizzes, social media posts and online exhibitions have increased the most and draw more online activity from online visitors. [11] Marc Gilmcher, CEO of Pace Gallery, spoke on his institution's decision to move online in an interview with *The Guardian* in April 2020. He explained that their "hope for these exhibitions is to use the voices of our dealers and curatorial team to create multi-media environments …this is just the beginning of experiencing art through digital realms."[12]
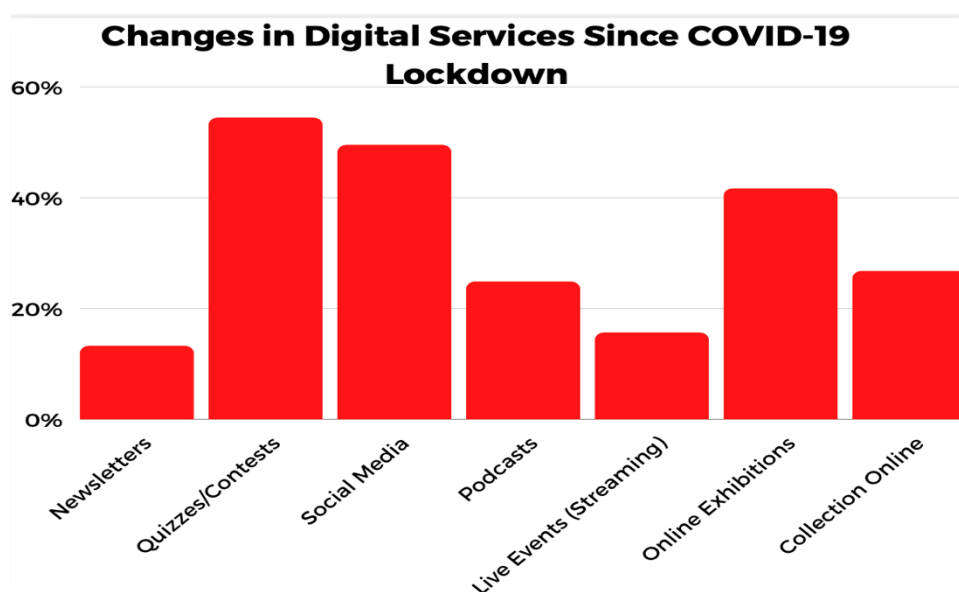
Figure 2

The creation of fully interactive online exhibitions marks a new era for museums as people are now able to experience what these institutions have to offer from anywhere, mainly free of charge. However, museums still need to generate income to maintain their educational programs

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[10] 2020, *Survey on the Impact of the COVID-19 Situation on Museums in Europe Final Report*. Network of European Museum Organizations

[11] Figure 2. *Changes in Digital Services in COVID-19 Lockdown*. Created by author.

[12] Kayla Voigt, "How Museums Went Digital in Response to COVID-19." *Lendio*, 30 Sept. 2020.

and care for their artifacts. According to the studies conducted by UNESCO and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), of the more than 85,000 museums which had to close in March 2020, 13 percent are at risk of never reopening their doors again due to the heavy financial losses incurred during this time.[13] According to the same study, it has been projected that the museum industry revenue will decrease 17.5 percent in 2020 as a result of travel bans and temporary closures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.[14] The Metropolitan Museum of Art offers exclusive access to tours facilitated by curators and art historians for $300 per tour. The digital services which museums are able to offer may help limit the financial losses from the initial COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, but as the spikes in this viral outbreak prove to be unpredictable, the frequency of in person visitors may not be enough to warrant the costs of keeping their doors open to the public. Smaller museums will have to consider continuing completely virtual until they have the appropriate finances and staff to reopen to the public.

Museums have had to be creative with the online services they provide the public to stimulate interest as well as to continue to provide sufficient educational tools to students and educators alike. According to the National Survey of COVID-19 Impact on U.S. Museums, online educational resources for children, parents and teachers has increased 75 percent and resources designed for college students and adults has increased 54 percent.[15] The online resources and most virtual tours are offered free to the public which has allowed low-income school districts to utilize the magnitude of educational benefits museums offer without spending money on travel or admission. These resources are of great help to the millions of students who have had to adapt to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Offering extra educational resources during such a challenging time is only one of the methods museums have used to help their communities during this unprecedented pandemic. Museums across the United States have also made their grounds available for COVID-19 relief related sites and have made their Wi-Fi available to community members. Since early March 2020, 14 percent of museums have taken efforts to help in the COVID-19 relief process and 7 percent have opened the Wi-Fi up to the public for free to aid students and adults alike who have to work remotely.[16] The services museums provide to their communities make them irreplaceable institutions. When museums' collections become completely digital, it does not erase the need to maintain a physical building with curated exhibits that the community can enjoy when they feel comfortable to do so.

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[13] Ibid.

[14] American Alliance of Museums. "National Snapshot of COVID-19 Impact on United States Museums (October 2020)." *American Alliance of Museums*, 30 Nov. 2020.

[15] *National Survey Of COVID-19 Impact on United States Museums.* International Council of Museums.

[16] Ibid.

Looking towards the future, virtual museums are now a reality due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and the public holds the power to decide the fate of many museums across the United States. While many may not think to attend a museum tour in the middle of a public health crisis, whether it be virtual or in person, museums are relying on public interest to draw visitors to the institution. The field of museum studies will have to adapt to this new reality and education for future museum professionals will need to incorporate new lessons including the art of virtual curation. As the use of technology is becoming more popular, proficiency in using information technology has become an imperative skill for museum field positions and it will demand a new type of museum professional.[17] Very few museum professionals would have imagined completely virtual museums to be a reality by 2020. Regardless, we are now in the age of virtual museums and how we will move forward into this new era will determine how museums will look in the next five, ten or twenty years.

The role of technology in museums has historically prompted a lot of debate between museum professionals and museum patrons. To some, museums should be free from technology and the visitor should focus their experience around the aura of the artifacts. That, arguably, is the traditional role of museums; to bring the public close to these historic artifacts, and exhibits to educate them about their historical importance. Now that technology is more prominent than ever, many institutions feel that including technology will only increase the interaction between the exhibit and the visitor. Where the ideal balance lies is the cause for the ongoing debate. Regardless of their hesitation of complete digitization, no critic of virtual museums argues that digitization has not rescued thousands of museums from closure during the COVID-19 pandemic. The creation of virtual museums has saved countless institutions from closing their doors permanently. They now are responsible for deciding how they, and the future of museums, will move forward, permanently reshaping traditional museum roles.

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[17] Jeonghyun Kim, "Building Rapport Between LIS and Museum Studies." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 53, no. 2 (2012): 151.

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La educación en la comunidad hispana durante el COVID-19

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Resumen

En este trabajo se exponen datos cualitativos sobre la educación en la comunidad hispana en San Antonio, Texas durante el COVID-19. El enfoque se entorna en las experiencias vividas de los profesores y alumnos durante la educación virtual a través del texto y el contexto de las conversaciones que se dieron en las historias orales. Las historias orales proporcionaron un discurso que se pudo analizar a través del análisis del discurso. Dicho estudio del discurso dejo ver las fallas que existen en la educación virtual durante la pandemia. Estas fallas en la educación virtual causaron que el rendimiento académico bajara. Además, se descubrió que tanto profesor como alumnos prefieren la educación presencial porque es el mejor método para la colaboración y conexión social, emocional y académica de profesores y estudiantes.

Palabras Claves: Las historias orales, entrevistas, el análisis del discurso, educación durante COVID-19.

La educación en la comunidad hispana durante el COVID-19

Introducción

Al inicio de la pandemia causada por el COVID-19, el sector educativo, en todos los niveles se vio afectado. Por causas del virus miles de estudiantes, personal educativo y administrativo se vieron forzados a vivir la vida laboral y estudiantil de una manera diferente. A partir del mes de marzo del 2020, todas las clases de educación básica y superior fueron virtuales. Es decir, las clases se comenzaron a enseñar en línea y de diferentes plataformas educativas. Por otra parte, los estudiantes se quedaron en casa con el objetivo de revisar sus correos electrónicos y hacer sus tareas.

En esta sección se explica cómo la educación cambió a raíz de la pandemia; y cuáles fueron las medidas de precaución que tomó la *Agencia de Educación en el Estado de Texas* - TEA por sus siglas en inglés, para prevenir la propagación del virus. Se menciona cuál fue la nueva forma de enseñanza que se empleó durante la pandemia. Los resultados revelaron que la educación virtual sirvió para evitar la propagación del virus, pero no para evitar los nuevos retos de la nueva forma educativa.

Las secuelas del COVID-19 en el aula

Tanto profesores como alumnos tuvieron que adaptarse a una nueva forma de enseñanza. El cambio fue de una enseñanza presencial tradicional a una nueva aula en plataforma virtual. Así los menciono De Vincenzi (2020) quien aseguró que el aula virtual requiere mucho más conocimiento tecnológico para poder impartir una clase. El uso de la tecnología representa un reto mayor para aquellos estudiantes y profesores que nunca han utilizado una computadora, y mucho menos plataformas de internet para enseñar o aprender una clase. De Vincenzi (2020) también mencionó que los estudiantes se mostraron preocupados al ver la variedad de tecnología que los profesores proponen en sus clases. Además, los alumnos tienen que hacer sus actividades asincrónicas de manera individual que atribuyen al resultado del aprendizaje esperado (p.68). El salón de clases dejó de ser aquel en el que se veía un pizarrón, un maestro, unas butacas y la presencia de varios estudiantes. La pandemia del COVID-19 vino a cambiar drásticamente no solo los salones de clases, sino la manera de la enseñanza educativa, aprenden de manera asincrónica desde casa.

Es evidente que la pandemia del COVID- 19 se volvió una amenaza latente para la salud de todo el mundo. Por lo que sugirieron las preguntas y estrategias por parte de TEA de: ¿Cómo la comunidad estudiantil y docentes enfrentarían la pandemia en cuanto al sistema educativo? Al principio de la pandemia, la organización educativa se enfrentó a dos retos. El primer reto se basaba en mantener las escuelas protegidas durante el COVID-19, teniendo en cuenta los siguientes aspectos: el reglamento de la salud pública, las consideraciones sobre la asistencia a la instrucción remota y las consideraciones sobre el calendario educativo. El segundo reto, fue rediseñar la experiencia escolar para que los estudiantes alcanzaran un resultado alto de nivel académico con el mismo o mejor rendimiento y competencia, como lo fue cuando apenas empezó el COVID-19. Estos hechos condujeron a que TEA optara por una instrucción remota. El

16 de mayo del 2020 TEA expuso que el COVID-19 es una gran ruptura, que ocasionó el ajuste de operaciones educativas. Declaró que se crearía un ambiente donde el estudiante pudiera aprender con seguridad en casa sin propagar el virus. El objetivo era de maximizar las oportunidades educativas para los estudiantes. Aunque se tenía claro que la instrucción en el salón de clase es la mejor opción para todo estudiante.

Con esto en mente, se retoma que a través del análisis del discurso y con las historias orales, se propone demostrar que la educación virtual sirvió para evitar la propagación de la pandemia del COVID-19 dentro de la comunidad educativa de San Antonio, TX. Sin embargo, no puedo evitar las deficiencias que la educación virtual trajo a los alumnos y maestros. Estas deficiencias se pudieron observar mediante las historias orales que se obtuvieron en este estudio.

Las historias orales

Uno de los métodos para obtener historias orales son las entrevistas; que es un método básico que constituye la historia oral. González- Monteagudo (2010) definió a la entrevista como una interacción lingüística entre dos personas que manifiestan un discurso que puede ser analizado como discurso con las teorías del análisis del discurso (p.11). Existen otras posibilidades secundarias, en donde se pueden obtener testimonios de personas; como la mesa redonda, las conferencias, los monólogos espontáneos, las interpretaciones musicales improvisadas y los corridos populares (p.378). Sin embargo, las entrevistas son un método de investigación que más se utiliza para obtener información de sucesos. Por lo tanto, las investigadoras también se enfocaron en realizar entrevistas, para buscar dentro del análisis del discurso como fue la educación virtual durante la pandemia y cómo los profesores y alumnos se tuvieron que adaptar en el campo de la educación durante la pandemia.

En este estudio, las historias orales tienen un papel importante, ya que es gracias a los testimonios obtenidos en ellas que se obtuvo información sobre las deficiencias en la educación virtual. Meyer y De Bonfil (1971) definieron las historias orales como un conjunto de entrevistas con personajes o individuos que fueron testigos de hechos fundamentales (p. 373). Para Meyer y De Bonfil (1971) las historias orales son importantes porque ayudan a conocer mejor la historia y el por qué ciertos sucesos ocurrieron (p. 372). Otro de los beneficios que se pueden obtener de las historias orales es que se obtiene información de las experiencias vividas, experiencias que no están escritas en los libros de historia. García Rodríguez, Luque Pérez y Navas Sánchez (2014) mencionaron que uno de los beneficios del uso de las historias orales es que se puede obtener información que aún no está escrita en los libros de historia (p. 195).

Obtener información a través de las historias orales no es algo nuevo, ya que es un método que tiene muchos años en el campo de la investigación. De acuerdo con Iturmendi (2008), proporcionó algunos ejemplos que demuestran cómo es que las historias orales han sido utilizadas por investigadores para conocer más sobre algún suceso. Por ejemplo, Herodoto se apoyó en este tipo de fuentes para saber más sobre las Guerras Médicas (p. 227). Por medio de las historias orales se investigan hechos que sucedieron en la historia del mundo, para poder comprender por qué la sociedad se comporta de cierta manera. Iturmendi (2008) mencionó que

"no solo los historiadores utilizan las historias orales como fuentes de información, sino también se utiliza en otras disciplinas como la sociología, la antropología o la lingüística" (p. 228).

En este proyecto, las investigadoras realizaron las entrevistas para obtener datos sobre la educación durante la pandemia. Las entrevistas se realizaron de forma estructurada con respuestas abiertas para el narrador. De acuerdo con López (2012) propuso la creación de esquemas de trabajo. Uno de los esquemas que propuso es un cuestionario de preguntas que permite que la entrevista sea dirigida por el entrevistador (p.186). Puesto que la entrevista es un discurso que se da entre el narrador y las entrevistadoras, en la siguiente sección se explica qué es el análisis del discurso, cómo se detalla y por qué es útil para este proyecto.

Análisis del discurso

Antes de llevar a cabo el análisis del discurso es importante definirlo. El análisis del discurso es un método o técnica utilizada en estudios de investigación. Generalmente, se enfoca en estudios del discurso escrito o hablado que forman parte de la comunicación interactiva. De estas interacciones, se desglosa la atención en otras subcategorías enfocadas a representar la categoría de los participantes en el estudio. Así mismo, el tono de la conversación y la importancia que se le ha dado a un tema específico que refleja la realidad y además revela otros aspectos contextuales. Por ejemplo, en este proyecto las investigadoras analizaron las conversaciones de los entrevistados. Los discursos proporcionaron información específica sobre el tiempo y espacio en el que ocurrieron. Con el texto del discurso, es decir el uso del lenguaje, se observa cómo los narradores de las entrevistas utilizan los verbos, los pronombres y el tono de voz que indican la actitud o incertidumbre dada a cierta situación. Además, el estudio del discurso tiene como objetivo el análisis de un conjunto específico de circunstancias en la vida social, política, económica, cultural e histórica. (Ruiz, 2009; Sayago, 2014).

Cabe resaltar que se tiene en cuenta subdivisiones precisas para amplificar el análisis del discurso. Cada análisis contribuye a una explicación y análisis conciso que conlleva a la más mínima particularidad no verbal o expresiva que la persona muestra (Ruiz, 2009). De Cabeza (2001) expuso que un análisis del discurso debe tener en cuenta las formas lingüísticas, una de las más importantes es el léxico porque se puede considerar la puerta de entrada que conduce a la estructura mental del emisor. Es decir, los temas permiten identificar las prácticas discursivas y sociales a las cuales el emisor acude para responder adecuadamente con palabras claves para transmitir su mensaje (p. 17).

Con base al análisis del discurso y sus aspectos a analizar, se hace una conexión sobresaliente al objetivo de analizar la verbalización de los profesores y los estudiantes. Este análisis del lenguaje va en conjunto con actividades, rituales, distribución de espacios y tiempos concentrando en las interrelaciones frente a otras prácticas y a los momentos de vida que la sociedad enfrenta. Cros (2002) mencionó que el análisis del discurso en el sector académico se caracteriza por la posibilidad de que exista una interacción entre los participantes. Esta opinión de Cros (2002) es importante porque resalta que en el sector educativo debe de existir la interacción entre los maestros y estudiantes para promover una buena enseñanza.

Metodología

Este estudio empleó métodos cualitativos del análisis del discurso y las historias orales para llevar a cabo este proyecto. El enfoque principal de este estudio es analizar las experiencias vividas de los profesores y alumnos durante la educación virtual a través del texto y el contexto de las conversaciones. Las entrevistas formales se llevaron a cabo por medio de la plataforma de Zoom. Las entrevistas tienen una duración de una hora, aproximadamente, en donde se les hicieron preguntas abiertas a los participantes sobre su vida personal, trabajo y cómo la pandemia del COVID-19 cambió su vida profesional y personal. También se les preguntó a los participantes sobre los cambios que vieron en su comunidad escolar en la que estudian o trabajan.

A través de las entrevistas, se analizaron las historias orales, las cuales proporcionaron un discurso testimonial que es estudiado con el análisis del discurso. Se observó el contexto de la entrevista, el ambiente en que se da la historia oral. Así como también se analizó el texto, el uso del lenguaje que el narrador usa, para interpretar qué es lo que el narrador en realidad vivió durante la pandemia en la educación virtual. Después de haber realizado las entrevistas, se llevó a cabo la transcripción de cada una de ellas. Después, se escogieron los temas que más importancia tuvieron para los maestros y alumnos con respecto a la educación virtual.

Los participantes

Se escogieron a los participantes que pudieron proporcionar un testimonio importante a esta investigación. Dichos testimonios tenían que proporcionar información sobre las desventajas de la educación virtual durante la pandemia de COVID-19. Se realizaron 30 entrevistas, las cuales quince (15) participantes son maestros docentes del sector educacional público y universitario. Los otros quince (15) participantes son estudiantes universitarios. Los participantes están en un rango de 20-50 años de edad. Las entrevistas fueron grabadas por medio de la plataforma Zoom.

Los retos de la educación virtual durante la pandemia

Los profesores expresaron que el mayor reto durante esta pandemia fue crear una conexión directa con el estudiante. Durante las entrevistas, varios profesores de diversos niveles académicos comentaron que los alumnos dejaron de conectarse a sus clases virtuales con los profesores por vía Zoom. Al no asistir a clases, el rendimiento académico disminuyó. Así lo expresó Rosa Saavedra de 26 años, maestra bilingüe del distrito escolar independiente del noroeste de San Antonio, quien desde que comenzó la pandemia, enfrenta retos laborales. En su discurso comparte cómo se siente al impartir sus clases en línea:

> … Como maestra preescolar el mayor reto laboral fue no poder tener esa conexión presencial con los estudiantes de 3 y 5 años. Es decir, no poder abrazarlos y guiarlos presencialmente en sus actividades manuales; puesto que debido a esta falta de conexión las clases pre-escolares disminuyeron de cinco clases a tres, y como pre kínder es opcional muchos padres no enviaron a sus hijos a la escuela el siguiente año y por lo tanto, no había una conexión de estudiantes y maestros.

El contexto de este discurso de clases virtuales a los niños pequeños, se observó claramente que el narrador menciona el problema de las clases virtuales en los niños en etapas de preescolar y kínder no funcionan, ya que existe una inquietud por explorar el mundo en los niños pequeños, más que ver a su profesor a través de la computadora. A su vez, los niños de preescolar aún no están preparados para tomar clases virtuales; pues su desarrollo intelectual y pre-operacional consiste en aprender jugando. Dicha situación tal vez no fue prevista por TEA, quien consideró que todos los niños de preescolar y kínder podrían aprender a través del computador. La preocupación de la maestra por la distancia social se notó durante la entrevista porque el tono de voz y la expresión facial cambió. Hizo suspiros largos y habló actuando lo que administración le dijo cuando la cambiaron. Todo esto a causa de la pandemia que provocó el aislamiento social y la falta de conexión de los estudiantes causó que se afectara el área laboral. El estrés de la narradora también se notó en el siguiente discurso:

> … Todo el equipo de pre kínder estaba estresado, toda la escuela también tratando de ver que íbamos a hacer en cuanto a nuestro trabajo. Los niños decían cuando íbamos a regresar a ver en persona a nuestra maestra y a sus amiguitos. Todo esto nos ponía triste. A mí me tuvieron que cambiar de escuela tres veces, empecé enseñando en pre kínder, después quitó grado en la misma escuela y pasó lo mismo cancelaron clases, bajo el número de estudiantes y finalmente me trasladaron a otra escuela monolingüe en el mismo distrito que es donde estoy ahora. (Rosa Saavedra, 26 años, maestra bilingüe del distrito escolar independiente del noroeste de San Antonio).

Las investigadoras se preguntaron si la falta de interés por conectarse a las clases virtuales era solo un problema de los estudiantes pequeños. Sin embargo, el mismo problema surge en los niveles educativos de primaria, secundaria, preparatoria o universitario. Los maestros trataban de hacer que los alumnos se conectaran o prendieran sus cámaras durante las clases virtuales. Así lo señaló Samuel Rodríguez de 44 años, maestro de español del distrito escolar independiente de San Antonio, quien desde que comenzó la pandemia, imparte sus clases en diferentes plataformas educativas, con el fin de captar la atención de los estudiantes y mantenerlos activos. En su discurso comparte cómo se siente al impartir sus clases en línea:

> … Es difícil tener una conexión directa por Zoom con niños de 14 y 16 años. En Zoom esto no existe, porque no están contigo, si le preguntas algo al muchacho y no te contesta, pues no puedes hacer nada, no lo puedes obligar porque se va, le pica a un botón. Ellos saben que el salón es un lugar donde no se va a juzgar y además se van a sentir cómodos y relajados para relacionarse entre sí.

En el contexto de este discurso se observó que tanto en los niños de pre-kínder, escuela primaria de quinto año y preparatoria de noveno grado, hay una falta de conexión entre el maestro y el estudiante. La preocupación de los maestros es que los alumnos no prenden las cámaras y cuando se les pide participar en las clases el alumno no contesta; puede ser que no esté del otro lado de la cámara. Si se analiza el texto se puede ver que el maestro se mostró preocupado por sus expresiones y gestos al hablar.

Otras de las razones por las cuales los estudiantes no asisten a sus clases virtuales son estrés, depresión, frustración o porque simplemente el aprendizaje virtual no les gusta. Los estudiantes no se sienten motivados a asistir a sus clases desde la comodidad de su casa porque el estilo de vida y de aprendizaje que conocían tuvo un giro de 180 grados debido al COVID-19. Así lo expresa Perla Tsakalos de 46 años, quien es madre de un niño de séptimo grado y estudiante universitaria. En su discurso compartió su experiencia con la educación virtual, al ver que sus clases y las de su hijo se cambiaron.

… Francamente durante sus clases, yo tenía que estar a lado de él.. eh...ayudarlo a motivarlo...eeeh, pero gracias a Dios tiene unas excelentes maestras y tenía manera de poderme comunicar con ellas en privado… y asistir a mi hijo en las cosas que él necesitara ayuda, pero tenía que estar constantemente al lado de él, porque batalle mucho para que él se sintiera motivado y darme cuenta en verdad que él estaba aprendiendo.

En el texto de la narración, se puede ver que la participante enfatiza, que como madre de un niño en séptimo grado de secundaria, tenía que estar al lado de su hijo para ayudarlo en lo que necesitará. La preocupación de la narradora por ver al hijo motivado para seguir estudiando en línea es notoria, ya que al hablar hizo pausa para buscar las palabras que expresan su inquietud. Dentro del contexto del discurso, se observó que la participante sabe que esta nueva forma de enseñanza no es algo beneficioso para su hijo, pues lo veía desanimado y sin ganas de aprender. Sin embargo, como madre ella sabe que es importante que continúe su educación, aunque sea en casa. No solo la conexión directa entre el maestro con el estudiante se vio afectada, sino también se afectó la interacción social.

La falta de integración social

Ahora bien, en cuanto al ámbito personal tanto los docentes como los estudiantes prefieren la interacción social. Ya sea entre profesores y alumnos, y entre los mismos profesores. En este contexto, los maestros de escuela pública y universitaria mencionaron la necesidad de la interacción social. Así lo destacó el profesor Rey Armando Estrada de 49 años, profesor de actuación e idiomas en una universidad de Australia, quien reside en la comunidad de San Antonio Texas. El profesor Estrada compartió su experiencia de cómo fue dar clases en línea durante la pandemia del COVID-19:

…. Además de ser comediante doy clases de actuación a actores y universitarios en Australia, es difícil dar una presentación de actuación durante esta pandemia, no tenemos esa interacción social. Mis estudiantes quieren regresar al escenario e interactuar entre ellos, quieren el contacto social.

En el contexto de esta historia oral, se puede ver que hay clases que simplemente no se pueden dar en línea. Para los profesores y alumnos que están cursando y enseñando clases de actuación, la interacción social es de vital importancia. Es la interacción social que les indica si una actuación gusta al público o no. Dentro del texto de esta narración, se observó que los estudiantes universitarios buscan la interacción que existía entre el profesor y el alumno y entre los mismos estudiantes. El profesor mencionó que varios de sus estudiantes comentaron que la educación virtual no era igual. Los estudiantes extrañan el poder ir al salón escuchar la clase y

expresar sus dudas sobre el tema directamente. De hecho, consideraban triste y aburrida la rutina de ir a las clases en la computadora y cambiar de un lugar a otro dentro de la casa. Otro maestro de preparatoria atribuyó la importancia de la interacción social en clase entre el alumno y el maestro. Luis Enrique Ángel de 26 años de edad, maestro de español en preparatoria, compartió su experiencia dando clases virtuales de español a los alumnos nivel preparatoria.

> … Como maestro de español no es el mismo sabor esta enseñanza virtual. Anteriormente tenía a mis alumnos constantemente activos interactuando entre ellos: antes de la pandemia mis estudiantes aprendieron a comunicarse en español por medio de constante interacción social, ya sea hablando, cantando y actuando para expresar sus emociones. Es importante que ellos regresen porque no solamente aprenden un segundo idioma, sino también platicaban y se desahogaban de sus problemas personales.

En el texto del discurso, se analizó que el maestro menciona que no solo la escuela presencial servía como aula educativa, sino también como un escape a los problemas que algunos estudiantes tienen en casa. Dentro del contexto, se observa que el maestro está preocupado por la estabilidad social y emocional de sus estudiantes. Al examinar este discurso, las investigadoras se dan cuenta que a los maestros no solo les preocupa la interacción social de sus alumnos, sino también les preocupa el vacío que deje la distancia social. Así lo afirmó otro maestro, Alejandro un participante quien mencionó,

> … El estudiante va a resentir un efecto secundario en cuanto a la educación y a la interacción social. Es mejor que los estudiantes regresen a clases, todos los maestros de mi escuela quieren que eso sea posible (Alejandro Bustamante de 43, maestro de español a nivel secundaria).

Como se puede observar en el texto de esta narración el maestro expresa la preocupación que tienen los maestros por volver a ver a sus estudiantes juntos dentro del aula porque él cree que la interacción social se va a ver afectada debido a la pandemia. En el contexto de este discurso se observó la nostalgia que siente el personal docente al ver las aulas vacías. Para analizar la experiencia de los estudiantes que tuvieron que tomar clases virtuales durante la pandemia, se entrevistó a Bianca Guzmán, de 29 años, estudiante universitaria, futura maestra de preparatoria. La participante compartió su opinión sobre las observaciones virtuales a las que tiene que asistir durante la pandemia.

> ... Pienso que en persona existen como conexiones más profundas, ósea puedes ayudar a tus estudiantes. A lo que he visto en la escuela virtualmente, los niños, pues a veces se conectan. No sabes si están ahí. Apagan sus cámaras, los maestros veo se estresan mucho porque pues no saben si están ahí, no les pueden enseñar como lo hacía en persona, pienso que en persona está mejor.

Dentro del contexto de la conversación, se puede ver que se da en un ambiente en donde la narradora compara cómo eran sus prácticas de observación presenciales con las prácticas de observación virtuales. Al analizar el texto de la narración se observó que la narradora, aun siendo estudiante practicante, observa la importancia de las clases presenciales. El tono de su voz se

hizo más fuerte y entonado cuando mencionó que al tener clases presenciales los maestros podían ayudar más a sus alumnos.

No solo los maestros y profesores mencionaron que la interacción social es importante, sino también los estudiantes consideran que es importante tener la interacción social en el salón de clases. Así lo expresó Matilde Herrera estudiante universitaria de nuevo ingreso, quien desde que comenzó la universidad, su aprendizaje ha sido en línea. Ella desea poder estar en el aula de clases para poder disipar ciertas dudas sobre las tareas y trabajos, haciendo preguntas al profesor o a los compañeros de clase. En su narración Matilde compartió cómo es que ella se sintió al iniciar sus clases universitarias por línea:

> … Me costó trabajo porque cuando empecé, entre apenas y ya había cosas que ya estaban empezadas, o maestros que ya habían empezado y yo apenas iba entrando. Fue hacer todo sobre la marcha. En ese momento ni siquiera me había dado cuenta que había un curso de Blackboard para saber que hay y cómo usarlo. Me falta ir a la universidad, a la biblioteca y preguntarle a alguien: cómo hago esto o cómo hago lo otro; porque es difícil hacer todas esas cosas cuando estás online.

Analizando el contexto de la historia, uno se da cuenta que Matilde representa a todos aquellos estudiantes que tenían la ilusión de comenzar el año en el aula de la escuela. Estando en la escuela, los estudiantes tienen la oportunidad de tener interacción social con el profesor o algún compañero de clases. Es gracias a la interacción social que los alumnos tienen la oportunidad de aclarar ciertas dudas. Lamentablemente, miles estudiantes no tuvieron la oportunidad interactuar con sus compañeros y profesores debido a la pandemia del COVID- 19. Dentro del análisis del texto de esta narración, se observó que Matilde se sentía estresada por tomar clases virtuales; ya que es algo que le cuesta trabajo entrar a la sección de clase virtuales. Pues se ve claramente que, aunque ella hacía todo para estar puntual en las clases virtuales, ella entraba tarde a las clases por algún problema técnico. Hay otros aspectos que afectaron la educación virtual que hicieron que el rendimiento académico bajará durante el año escolar 2020-2021.

En cuanto al rendimiento académico estudiantil. Los maestros presentaron que el rendimiento académico bajo debido a varias causas. Entre ellas, la distracción del internet, el poco conocimiento tecnológico y el estrés o la depresión que tanto maestros como estudiantes sufrieron durante la pandemia. La mayor causa del bajo rendimiento académico es la distracción del internet. Durante las entrevistas, varios maestros comentaron que los estudiantes tenían dos o tres páginas de internet abiertas, mientras los estudiantes estaban en clases. Esta es una de las causas que hace que el aprendizaje virtual sea difícil. Así lo compartió Rosa Saavedra, maestra bilingüe, quien mencionó que los estudiantes se distraían mucho en las redes sociales durante clase:

> … Hay unos estudiantes que están muy bajos académicamente, y es muy estresante tratar de ayudar a estos estudiantes virtuales, cuando hay distracciones en casa. Un estudiante se conectaba y a la misma vez abría otra red social y estaba dos páginas de internet cuando estaban en clase.

Al analizar el contexto del discurso se observó que la distracción del internet que se dio durante la educación virtual es un problema de distracción para los estudiantes. Las investigadoras observaron que tanto los maestros como los estudiantes sufrieron ante el boom tecnológico que implementaron las organizaciones educativas y distritos escolares. El texto del discurso de Rosa Saavedra mencionó que tener el acceso a internet abre la puerta a explorar otras redes sociales durante la conexión de las clases. Esto crea una distracción al aprendizaje de los alumnos. La preocupación de la maestra se reflejó en sus movimientos corporales porque su rostro reflejaba la decepción y la frustración de cómo era posible que los alumnos tuvieran tantas ventanas abiertas en su computadora durante clases. La narradora miraba al techo como para buscar las palabras adecuadas y narrar esa experiencia que vivió con los alumnos.

Por otra parte, Verónica Macías de 40 años, quien trabaja en el distrito escolar de San Antonio impartiendo clase de español en una academia, compartió su experiencia de cómo es que los estudiantes saben navegar en las redes sociales, pero no saben hacer trabajos académicos. Ella mencionó:

> … Es interesante cómo los estudiantes a pesar de que saben navegar en redes sociales como *Tik-Tok* y todo eso, no sabían cómo navegar, mandar un trabajo, no podían hacer una presentación en *PowerPoint* o *Google Slides*. No te voy a mentir, aunque hacía videos de cómo hacer o enviar los trabajos paso a paso, ni aun así lo podían hacer. Me fastidiaba y les decía cómo es que ustedes saben los videojuegos y todas las redes sociales y no pueden enviar el trabajo.

Al analizar el contexto de la conversación se puede decir que el discurso se da dentro de un ambiente de frustración, en donde los maestros observan que los alumnos saben navegar en otras redes sociales, pero no pueden o no quieren navegar en las plataformas educativas, aunque se les presenten videos de instrucciones para realizar el trabajo paso a paso. Al analizar el texto de la narración se observó que la participante utilizó un tono sarcástico para resaltar la actitud de los estudiantes al ver que los estudiantes saben utilizar otras redes sociales, pero no veían sus trabajos. El desinterés de los estudiantes por las clases virtuales es causado por el cambio drástico que trajo la pandemia a la vida. Por lo que ambos se vieron afectados es su salud emocional y mental.

El estrés o depresión de maestros y estudiantes

Durante el proceso de las entrevistas observó que tanto los estudiantes como los maestros sufrieron alteraciones de desequilibrio psicológico o mental. Estos trastornos son: la ansiedad, el estrés y la depresión. La causa de estos trastornos fue ocasionada por el alto nivel de estrés que surgió debido al cambio de trabajo o estudio presencial a ser totalmente en línea como resultante por la pandemia del COVID-19. Así lo confirmó Verónica Macías de 40 años quien ejerce la profesión de enseñanza en un distrito escolar, discutió que a causa del COVID-19 fue diagnosticada con fatiga crónica.

> … En agosto me diagnosticaron con chronic fatigue, estaba demasiado cansada   unos pueden decir que era burnout pero mi mente no se cerraba, era puro pensar, pensar y pensar, más que nada como te digo los trabajos, el estudio, los hijos, todo en la mente,

estaba cansada pero mi mente seguía, un poco de depresión, ansiedad y por lo mismo por todo lo que tenía que hacer, porque me gusta hacer mi trabajo bien yo sola me ponía presión. Depresión por todo lo que pasa en el mundo, de oír el COVID y lo que le pasa a mis estudiantes.

Al analizar el contexto del discurso de la participante manifestó un marco laboral perjudicial en la salud porque ella estaba muy inquieta. Aunque ha sido tratada por profesionales de la salud, dentro del texto del discurso se observó que por medio del lenguaje corporal su ansiedad, frustración y cansancio físico y mental porque utiliza palabras como *burnout* que manifiestan su fatiga.

Por otro lado, los estudiantes también mencionaron que tuvieron ansiedad o depresión durante la pandemia. La pandemia limitó las distracciones sociales a las que estaban expuestos antes. Al limitar las distracciones es normal que las personas entren en depresión o ansiedad. Así lo expresó Génesis Hernández estudiante universitaria de 21 años. Su vida cambió debido a la pandemia porque sintió estrés y frustración al ver que sus amigos llevaban una vida normal durante la pandemia del COVID-19. Mientras que ella se tenía que quedar en casa para no contagiar del virus a sus papás. Génesis compartió cómo fue vivir esa experiencia.

...Francamente ha sido mucha frustración porque yo veo que mis amigos están haciendo su vida normal. Ha sido muy cansado mentalmente. Yo he salido cinco veces a comer, con una persona o dos desde que empezó la pandemia. ¡Ósea un año ya! Ha sido muy cansado mentalmente, tener ese miedo de que yo salga un día y enfermar a mis papas, y yo ser responsable.

Al analizar el contexto en esta historia oral, se observó un ambiente en el que la narradora tomó la responsabilidad de cuidar a su familia al no salir de casa para no contagiarse del virus del COVID-19. Dentro del texto se observó que la narradora cambió el tono de su voz al decir las palabras de: frustración y cansancio. Pues enfatiza que el encierro debido a la pandemia le ocasionó estrés.

Resultados

Durante la pandemia del COVID-19, la educación virtual sirvió para evitar el contacto social entre los profesores y estudiantes, también evitó la propagación del virus en las escuelas de todos los niveles educativos. La educación virtual no previno las fallas en el aprendizaje por parte de los estudiantes y profesores, ya que a través de las entrevistas se pudo ver que: Los profesores presentaron que el mayor reto durante esta pandemia fue crear una conexión directa con el estudiante. En el ámbito personal prefieren la interacción social que se da entre profesores y alumnos. El rendimiento estudiantil académico bajó debido a varias causas como el estrés o la depresión causados por el aislamiento social. Otras causas pueden ser: tener un ser querido o amigo contagiado del virus o en el peor de los casos estar contagiado del virus.

Discusión

Los hallazgos que se dieron en esta investigación hacen que cambie la opinión sobre las ventajas de la educación virtual durante la pandemia del COVID-19. En los estudios previos se demostró que tanto maestros como alumnos tuvieron que prepararse para una educación virtual,

la cual requería más conocimiento tecnológico y entrenamiento para poder llevar a cabo las clases virtuales. Sayago (2014) mencionó que a través del análisis del discurso se puede demostrar los problemas políticos, sociales, económicos, culturales e históricos que acontecen en un grupo social. En base a la teoría de Sayago (2014), este estudio demuestra que la enseñanza virtual trajo consigo nuevos desafíos que tanto el alumno como el maestro tuvieron que enfrentar durante la pandemia. Por medio del análisis del discurso, que se obtuvo de las historias orales, se descubrió que el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes bajo debido al poco interés por los estudiantes para cursar las clases en línea. Este dato lo confirmaron los maestros que dieron clases en línea durante la pandemia. Además, la falta de interacción social es un factor necesario para la enseñanza. Ambos maestros y estudiantes declararon por medio de las entrevistas que extrañaban la manera tradicional de aprender. Por último, este estudio demostró que la pandemia cambió no solo la vida de todas las personas, sino también causó la depresión, el estrés y la frustración que sufrieron algunos estudiantes y maestros. Todas esas fallas acarreadas a la educación virtual hacen que no sea tan factible para aprender. Este ensayo ayuda para que TEA, el personal educativo, los alumnos, y los padres de familia sepan que la educación virtual requiere de más conocimiento tecnológico. Además, los padres deben de estar más involucrados en la educación de sus hijos para mantener el rendimiento académico e impedir las distracciones que hay en el internet cuando sus hijos toman clases virtuales. Los cambios que traen consigo la educación virtual al campo educativo es que la educación presencial ya no será la única opción para asistir a clases. Ahora hay más opciones para asistir a las clases, las opciones son las clases sincrónicas, asincrónicas y presenciales.

Conclusión

Al ver todos los retos que la educación virtual produjo en el ámbito educativo, se puede concluir que tanto profesores como alumnos prefieren la educación presencial porque a través de la educación virtual sienten que no están aprendiendo cómo anteriormente lo hacían. Es gracias a la interacción social que los profesores podían ver cuál alumno necesitaba ayuda, mientras que los alumnos podían contestar las dudas de otro compañero de clase. Estas actividades que se mencionaron anteriormente se pueden hacer a través de la educación virtual, pero con menos éxito. Además, la falta de interacción social y el aislamiento derivan otros padecimientos emocionales como lo son: la ansiedad, estrés, frustración y depresión por lo que se concluye que el aprendizaje en persona es el mejor método para la gran mayoría de los estudiantes; no solo en el entorno académico sino también en lo social y emocional.

Futuras investigaciones

Existen algunas limitaciones en el estudio, ya que solo se entrevistaron a 30 participantes del área de San Antonio Texas. Como futuro estudio es necesario investigar el impacto que ocasionó el regreso a clases presenciales con el objetivo de detectar las experiencias y sensaciones de los profesores y estudiantes al estar nuevamente en el aula escolar. Se espera que este enfoque presente una investigación en torno a la educación sincrónica, asincrónica y presencial.

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Revolutionary Lexicon: A Pragmatics Study and Discourse Analysis of Two Riot Grrrl Manifestos

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Abstract

Although the United States public and mainstream media scrutinized and oversimplified the music and iconography of the Riot Grrrl movement, there is much to be desired concerning linguistics analyses of two notable Riot Grrrl manifestos. Do the two noteworthy Riot grrrl manifestos contain distinct linguistic features? If so, how do their linguistic features function to characterize the exceptional revolutionary lexicon of the Riot Grrrl movement? This paper will discuss concepts concerning manifestos, what makes feminist manifestos distinct, and introduce the two Riot grrrl manifestos my research concerns. I will present the broad premise of the Riot Grrrl movement and provide a general overview of the third-wave feminist movement to provide more context. This paper proposes to enrich academic research by contributing a two-fold linguistic analysis of two Riot grrrl manifestos to support the research of students and academics interested in linguistics and other subjects that may benefit from this research.

Revolutionary Lexicon: A Pragmatics Study and Discourse Analysis of Two Riot Grrrl Manifestos

The lexica and discourse used in manifestos exemplify the concept that context informs the significance of language. Two Riot Grrrl manifestos authored by musicians and artists involved in the Riot Grrrl movement, a subset of the third-wave feminist movement, reveal the significance of the lexicon and discourse used in manifestos. A pragmatics study and Discourse Analysis may deduce the significance of the lexicon and discourse that exemplify these Riot grrrl manifestos. Applying a pragmatics study to two significant Riot grrrl manifestos using Birner's and Ward's (2006) Information Structure theory demonstrates linguistic features that function to provide information in an organized, strategic manner throughout these manifestos. Conducting a Discourse Analysis of Gee's (2011) seven-building tasks questions theory to the two notable Riot Grrrl manifestos demonstrates the interwoven nexus between language, action, and identity in these manifestos.

Introduction

Manifestos started as evidence in courts of law (Parent, 2011) to make public declarations presented by royalty, individual people, or groups. Parent states, "A manifesto is generally, by mode and form, an exhortation to a whole way of thinking and being rather than a simple command or a definition" (p. xxvii). Some conventional manifestos have evolved to expound the shared concerns of particular groups of people, sometimes in historical contexts, by interweaving an articulated awareness with political and philosophical abstractions that critically examine the socio-political and socio-economic events that generally lead to the experiences that the manifesto concerns. Firstly, conventional manifestos do this by creating group consciousness among individuals who may have perceived their experiences and concerns as solitary and unique beforehand; these individuals may be considered the rank and file. Secondly, these manifestos enlighten individuals who do not share similar experiences of the rank and file, and who may have been oblivious to the rank-and-file's concerns thereby gaining expansive legitimacy and support for the cause the premise the particular manifesto prioritizes. In a culmination of recruiting the rank-and-file group and the latter group, these manifestos serve to, (1) inspire solidarity and create group identity among the aforementioned groups and the manifestos' authors to (2) establish a fortified coalition and (3) foment momentum with the objective of fueling cohesive socio-political movements to promote and achieve desired societal/global changes and outcomes. Colman's (2010) description of conventional manifestos speaks to this process:

> There is a situation of history and a rejection that is enacted in the manifesto — it is a mode of practice that considers its own rhetoric as a political strategy or political philosophy — and, as such, manifestos are produced in the same way as any aesthetic forms. (p. 377)

Manifestos sometimes function to reject traditional ways of thinking and living, taking a contrarian stance. Lusty (2017) explains the conventional manifesto form:

The manifesto is traditionally a genre of repudiation, of the bourgeois public sphere and of liberal democracy with its conflicted valorisation of individualism and universalism. In forging its oppositional voice within the radical public sphere the manifesto imagines a complete break with history whilst also identifying itself as history-in-the-making. Through its fervid declarative force, the manifesto takes on its peculiarly performative charge, converting mere words into action-oriented resolutions. (p. 222)

In some instances, manifestos are authored by sociopolitical intellectuals, and on other occasions, manifestos are authored by the avant-garde such as artists and poets. The Dada Art manifestos are examples of this in that according to the article, "The Anti-War Movement" (n.d.) on arthistoryarchive.com, the manifestos of this movement were authored by poet Tristan Tzara. What follows is an excerpt from Tzara's (1918) 2nd Dada Manifesto:

Thus, DADA was born1, out of a need for independence, out of mistrust for the community. People who join us keep their freedom. We don't accept any theories. We've had enough of the cubist and futurist academies: laboratories of formal ideas. Do we make art in order to earn money and keep the dear bourgeoisie happy? Rhymes have the smack of money, and inflexion slides along the line of the stomach in profile. Every group of artists has ended up at this bank, straddling various comets. Leaving the door open to the possibility of wallowing in comfort and food. (The 2nd Dada manifesto section, para. 5)

One way in which feminist manifestos are distinct is that the patriarchal, commodifying, heteronormative language of conventional manifestos becomes obsolete in two consequential ways: (1) the manifesto form is equally important as the message, (2) the objectification directed at readers is shifted by creating an interdependent relationship between readers and authors. Colman (2010) articulates:

In the manifesto process, the attributions of the determining system are revealed as manipulators of the homogeneous and the heterosexual. Under this system, interactions between people are often sexualized through historical roles and institutions. But under the feminist manifesto composition, where the medium itself is taken into account and is as much a part of the tale as the story itself, the bodies of you, the reader, and you, the author, are made into task-oriented subjects whose "objectness" is highlighted through the manifesto's implicit positioning statements. For example, two aspects of the feminist manifesto common to many feminist projects involve the critical appraisal of language and a staunch anti-consumerism. (p. 382)

Some feminist manifestos stress the notion that the personal is political, the political is personal, and to treat them as separate is unrealistic and futile. Feminist manifestos sometimes address and challenge intersecting themes; those that are common concern patriarchal, capitalist, racist, heteronormative, authoritarian, imperialist asymmetrical hegemonic systems. Some make it known that women and girls confront battles and wars when they step outside of their homes as well as when they are inside the walls of their "homes." Some posit that capitalism, and religious institutions, in conjunction with conservatism and heteronormativity perceive, and treat

women's bodies and sexualities as means of production to ensure posterity for capitalism and patriarchy. Some feminist manifestos craft artistry as in Haraway's (2006) manifesto:

> By the late 20th century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized, and fabricated hybrids of machines and organisms; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics. The cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centers structuring any possibility of historical transformation. (p. 118)

Some of these manifestos fundamentally resist the nomenclature of woman as an anomaly known as the "other": the non-human prototype, the muse who is adored and desired but not respected. Some feminist manifestos' topics touch on the virgin-whore dichotomy, how it is used to control women by stigmatizing and vilifying women's bodies, sexualities, creating another status dimension within caste structures; as well as justifying the eroticization, exoticization, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, commodification, prostitution, sex trafficking, and acts of rape inflicted particularly on women of color, indigent and working-class women, immigrant and refugee women, LGBTQ people, fomenting segregation between women, and ultimately deterring true female solidarity and liberation.

Some feminist manifestos speak to the topic of gender binaries, how it serves to give males and the concept of "masculinity" authority and supremacy, and functions to control females, and infantilize, debase, and subjugate people and qualities perceived as "feminine." Examples of such manifestos are the Female Revolt 1970 Manifesto, Adelaide Women's Liberation 1971 Manifesto, and Radicalqueens 1973 Manifesto #2 which are included in *Feminist Manifestos: A Global Documentary Reader* (Weiss, 2018). Some feminist manifestos interrogate sophisms that equate human physiological and anatomical differences to deep-seated dichotomies that legitimize and reinforce prescribed gender norms that convenience some individuals at the expense of marginalized people.

Feminist manifestos do not simply discuss the simplistic identities that have been assigned to women, namely those of mother, wife, daughter, virgin, spinster, lover, and whore. Nor do they confront the abhorrent perspective and treatment of women, and girls, as ornamental vessels for human propagation. Neither do they ruminate solely over the theory of the public sphere versus the private sphere, how the idea of public spaces has been designated the dominion of men, and how the notion of private spaces has been assigned to women as women are assumed to be innately domestic. Nor do they theorize ivory tower ideals of how feminist utopias would look, and how they should logistically function. Feminist manifestos speak to a plethora of topics, and they go well beyond by using philosophical inquiries and/or political frameworks to address quotidian problems, and these manifestos assert that the dogmata of superiority, hegemonic structures, and hierarchies must be overthrown. These manifestos present a critical universal worldview in favor of the principle that people from all walks of life should be perceived, approached, and treated as complete, authentic, complex human beings worthy of dignity and respect, and proposing alternative solutions for a metamorphic world that is equitable, just, and inclusive for everyone.

Feminist manifestos articulate women's longings for autonomy over their bodies and the course of their lives in pursuit of self-determination, to shape their own priorities, cravings to craft their own multidimensional identities, yearnings to practice their own ethics, moral compasses, and modes of spiritualities; all of these proposed endeavors separate from biological families, social norms and mores, capitalism and consumerism, state institutions, theology, and science. Feminist manifestos promulgate emancipated living rooted in a humane humanity. In summary, in ample and at times unequivocal terms, feminist manifestos elucidate critical discourse that people and societies should collaborate and cooperate to practice an equitable distribution of labor, that all people should live wholeheartedly and safely, that they may apply their intellectual faculties and experience their bodily senses, engage in curiosity, discovery, human development, relationships, and communities in accordance by their principles and wishes as complete, authentic, complex, dignified and fully included global citizens.

Two manifestos known as Riot Grrrl manifestos were written by and for young women involved in the arts and punk music. Riot grrrl manifestos challenged everyday sexism and misogyny, as well as the disregard, exclusion, dehumanization of women, in both mainstream music and the subversive, punk music scene. These manifestos were included in zines Riot Grrrl artists and musicians distributed freely at different venues. Kathleen Hanna, one of the founders of the feminist punk band, Bikini Kill, founding member of the band, The Julie Ruin, and member of the electroclash band, Le Tigre, is credited with authoring one of the manifestos included in this study. In an interview for the documentary, *The Punk Singer: A documentary film about Kathleen Hanna* (Anderson, 2013), Hanna explains the premise and purpose of the manifesto she authored:

> I actually wrote a Riot Grrrl manifesto in the Bikini Kill fanzine called *Grrrl Power*. And I wrote what I dreamed Riot Grrrl could be and encouraged other girls and women to write their manifestos of what they wanted Riot Grrrl to be. The idea was that any woman anywhere could take that name and use it and create anything she wanted. We didn't brand it or copyright it or anything like that. It belonged to everybody. (0:26:32 – 0:26:55)

The objectives of the Riot Grrrl movement were distinct from those of the first and second-wave feminist movements in that it wanted to go beyond liberal feminist goals. The first two waves of feminism agitated for legislative and judicial policy changes thus they were reformist movements that sought progress via governmental interventions and institutions. The Riot Grrrl movement's objectives were a call for radical changes and progress in everyday life. Riot grrrls incited and fueled their movement by (1) promoting camaraderie and solidarity between young women to validate and support each other to create agency in the worlds of art, music, writing, and filmmaking, (2) creating resistance against sexism and misogyny in music and prosaic interactions, (3) speaking out against the sociopolitical misogyny and gender violence that was taking place across the United States. Wright (2016) articulates some of the motives that incited Riot Grrrls to write these manifestos:

In an effort to give nonconforming women a voice in society, Riot Grrrls vocally opposed power structures that perpetuated limiting ideals of heterosexuality and traditional gender roles. Kathleen Hanna, the front woman of the Riot Grrrl band Bikini Kill, explicitly defined the mindsets and characteristics of a Riot Grrrl in her "Riot Grrrl Manifesto," published in 1991 in Bikini Kill Zine 2, one of the short, homemade publications used to promote Riot Grrrl ideology. (p. 53)

Riot grrrls endeavored to create authentic, supportive, safe spaces to make and practice art, music, writing, and filmmaking as activism in quotidian life. They also gathered in women-only spaces to discuss various issues, to build camaraderie and community. Downes (2007) articulates three fundamental points about the Riot Grrrl movement:

Riot grrrl rewrote feminism and activism into a punk rock rebellion and youth-centred voice that was felt to be missing from forms of feminism available in the 1990's. Feminism was seen to be addressing the concerns of older, middle-class, heterosexual and educated women and riot grrrl was seen to be a re-working of feminism to work through the needs, desires and issues in the situations specific to young girls and women in 1990s America; (p. 26)

Riot grrrl also proposed a different way of conceptualizing feminist activism, to move away from traditional state-focused protests like marches, rallies and petitions, towards an idea of cultural activism which incorporated everyday cultural subversions like creating art, film, zines, music and communities as part of feminist activism. … This ethos of re-writing and re-working politicized ideas also applied to riot grrrl itself which was intended to remain a loose philosophy, made in such a way so people could take it on for their own identity and kind of change it by fleshing it out with their own ideas. (p.27)

The Riot Grrrl movement embraced three core principles: (1) girlhood legitimacy, (2) female camaraderie and solidarity, (3) do-it-yourself ethic. These principles are evident from illustrations, doodles, and handwritten messages common in the zines Riot grrrls distributed at music shows and other forums. These are reminiscent of scrawls in the scholastic book covers, notebooks, folders, binders, personal journals, and diaries which some women can recall from their own childhood and adolescence. Riot Grrrls asserted the idea that revolution equals violence is part of macho gun culture, and proposed liberation as an everyday, girl style of revolution. The impact of this movement is evident from the rise of bands such as Bratmobile, Bikini Kill, The Butchies, and Sleater-Kinney in the U. S., and Huggy Bear and Heavenly in the U.K., from the creation of Mr. Lady Records, and the Ladyfests that transpired in the U.S. and the U.K. in the 2000's (Downes, 168-173).

The movement known as "third-wave feminism" was the larger feminist movement that the Riot grrrl movement was a component of. The objectives of third-wave feminism are difficult to pinpoint as is the beginning of the movement. As Evans and Bobel (2007) explain, some researchers credit the label to Rebecca Walker who used the term in a Ms. Magazine (1992) piece:

There appears no consensus regarding the coining of the term 'Third Wave.' Some accounts, like Lorber, point to Rebecca Walker, daughter of legendary feminist writer and activist Alice Walker, who boldly asserted in a 1992 Ms. Magazine: "I am not a postfeminism feminist. I am the Third Wave." (p. 208)

Evans and Bobel (2007) articulate they agree with Rory Dicker's and Alison Piepmeier's description of third wave feminism:

Further, they characterize Third Wave "as a movement that contains elements of Second Wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures." … For them, the Third Wave consists of those of us who have developed our sense of identity in a world shaped by technology, global capitalism, multiple models of sexuality, changing national demographics, declining economic vitality. (p. 210)

One activist group that surfaced during the third wave feminist movement which inspired the Riot Grrrl movement was a group of women in the visual arts known as the Guerrilla Girls (Corrigan, 160). The Guerilla Girls' activism centered on the struggle for true representation, inclusion, and dignity in the world of aesthetics. Their activism possessed a confrontational style that was similar to Riot Grrrl activists' praxis. Moreover, their activism was a crucial influence on the Riot Grrrl movement because it challenged the exclusion of women's agency and worth, and male chauvinism in the arts, a subject and realm that would be a component of the Riot Grrrl movement and revolution.

Literature Review

I will use two theoretical frameworks to guide my linguistic analysis of the two Riot Grrrl manifestos, a pragmatics approach by applying Betty J. Birner's and Gregory Ward's (2006) Information Structure, and through the lens of Discourse Analysis by using James Paul Gee's (2011) seven building tasks questions. To begin, the information-status matrix component of Birner's and Ward's (2006) Information Structure theory may analyze the particular noncanonical structure evident throughout these two Riot Grrrl manifestos. They explained "noncanonical constructions in English are used in consistent and characteristic ways to structure information in discourse, and significant cross-construction generalizations apply to families of related constructions" (Birner & Ward, 2006, pp. 303-304). I will apply a borrowed subcomponent of Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix, known as Assumed Familiarity, to my pragmatics study. Birner and Ward (2006) articulated:

Prince 1981a adopts the term ASSUMED FAMILIARITY to reflect the fact that only an omniscient observer can know what knowledge exists in the interlocutors' discourse models, while actual language users must operate on the basis of what they *assume* constitutes shared knowledge between them and their interlocutors (or can be accommodated as such by a cooperative hearer). (p. 304)

Another subcomponent of Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix I will use correlates to the borrowed subcomponent of Assumed Familiarity, and it is the role of hearer-

status and discourse-status in the order in which information is presented in a sentence/utterance, a concept they explained was also borrowed from Ellen Prince (1992):

> Discourse-old information is that which has been evoked in the prior discourse, whereas discourse-new information is that which has not been previously evoked. Hearer-old information is that which, regardless of whether it has been evoked in the current discourse, is assumed to be known to the hearer, while hearer-new information is assumed to be new to the hearer. (p.304)

Using Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis seven building tasks questions theory presents another dimension to my linguistic analysis as it demonstrates the interconnected relationship between language, action, and identity. Gee (2011) articulated:

> Many people think language exists so that we can "say things" in the sense of communicating information. However, language serves a great many functions in our lives. Giving and getting information is by no means the only one. … Language allows us to do things. It allows us to engage in actions and activities. … Language allows us to be things. It allows us to take on different socially significant identities. We can speak as experts – as doctors, lawyers, anime aficionados, or carpenters – or as "everyday people." To take on any identity at a given time and place we have to "talk the talk," not just "walk the walk." … In language, there are important connections among saying (informing), doing (action), and being (identity). (p. 2)

According to Gee, (2011) whenever we speak or write we "construct or build seven things or seven areas of 'reality'" (p. 17).

These are known as the "seven building tasks", and these (Gee, 2011, pp. 17-20) and their respective Discourse Analysis questions are:

1. Significance: How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?
2. Practices (Activities): What practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?
3. Identities: What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as operative)? What identity or identities is this piece of language attributing to others and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or her own identity?
4. Relationships: What sort of relationship or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?
5. Politics (the distribution of social goods): What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as to what is taken to be "normal," "right," "good," "correct," "proper, "appropriate," "valuable," "the ways things are," "the way things ought to be," "high status or low status," "like me or not like me," and so forth)?
6. Connections: How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?

7. Sign Systems and Knowledge: How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief (e.g., science vs. the Humanities, science vs. "common sense," biology vs. "creation science")?

Methodology

To conduct my linguistic analysis of the two Riot Grrrl manifestos, I read the manifestos on pages 143 and 168 of *The Riot Grrrl Collection* (Darms & Fateman, 2016) book. I initiated my linguistic analysis by reading the manifesto printed on page 143. Firstly, through the perspective of Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix, I examined this manifesto's general noncanonical syntactic construction. Secondly, I applied Birner's, and Ward's (2006) borrowed subcomponent of Assumed Familiarity to determine if there was evidence of an assumption of shared knowledge between the authors and the readers. Thirdly, I used the borrowed subcomponent of Birner's and Ward's (2006) role of hearer-status and discourse-status to decipher the order of the information presented in the sentences contained in this manifesto. Fourthly, I used Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis seven building tasks questions to determine if and how the relationship between language, action, and identity is articulated within this manifesto.

I continued my linguistic analysis by reading the Riot grrrl manifesto on page 168 of the aforementioned book by following the same order. I used Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix to decipher the overall noncanonical syntactic construction of this manifesto. Next, I applied Birner's and Ward's (2006) discussion of Assumed Familiarity to determine if there was evidence of an assumption of shared knowledge between the authors and their readers. Then, I used the subcomponent of Birner's and Ward's (2006) discussion of the role of hearer-status and discourse-status to decipher the order of information presented in the sentences that compose this manifesto. Afterward, I used Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis seven building tasks questions to determine if and how the relationship between language, action, and identity is expressed within this manifesto. Lastly, I compared the linguistic similarities and differences between the two manifestos with particular emphasis on their shared patterns.

Results

One of the most salient linguistic features is the use of the lexical unit *because*, entirely in uppercase, as the first lexical unit of each sentence or grouped sentences throughout both manifestos. Anderson (2018) explains that while the reader may have learned words such as *because* are a type of conjunction, "Their behaviour is more similar to a category of words we label as **complementizers.** Complementizers are function words that introduce a clause, which is a sentence embedded inside a larger sentence…" (p. 145). Given this explanation, a major question is, what critical function does the complementizer, *because,* serve as the onset of the syntactic constructions or as the onset of grouped syntactic constructions contained in these two Riot Grrrl manifestos?

Another striking linguistic feature is the creative use of certain lexical units written entirely in uppercase throughout both manifestos. I have listed these lexical units in the order in which they first appear in each manifesto in the *Riot Grrrl Collection* (Darms & Fateman, 2016): (1) BECAUSE (2) US (3) WE (4) DISRUPTS (5) AND THUS (6) WE KNOW (7) AND (p. 143); (1) BECAUSE (2) BOY (3) US (4) ARE (p. 168). What are possible reasons for presenting these lexical units entirely in uppercase?

Although these manifestos differ in the number of the complementizer, *because*, and there is a difference in the number of select lexical units that are written entirely in uppercase, and they do not share all the same lexical units written in uppercase, the use of both of these linguistic features throughout both manifestos demonstrate a consistent quality between these Riot Grrrl manifestos. The use of the complementizer, *because*, as the lexical unit that opens each syntactic construction or grouped syntactic constructions, and the use of some lexical units written entirely in uppercase, are not random, haphazard, or chaotic language use. On the contrary, the use of these features in both manifestos exhibits an organized, strategic use of language.

Applying a pragmatics study using Birner's, and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix component of their Information Structure theory demonstrates noncanonical use of the complementizer, *because*, functioning as the onset of syntactic constructions or as the onset of grouped syntactic constructions throughout these Riot Grrrl manifestos. In addition, Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix applies due to the use of precisely the same lexical unit, *because,* as either the onset of each sentence or as the onset of grouped sentences. Lastly, the information-status matrix theory is evident throughout these manifestos in that the forms which constitute the lexical unit, *BECAUSE,* are written entirely in uppercase every time this lexical unit appears in both manifestos. The noncanonical use of precisely the same complementizer with all its forms in uppercase is evidence of a consistent manner of providing information.

Using Birner's and Ward's (2006) borrowed subcomponent of Assumed Familiarity demonstrates an implicit assumed familiarity the authors of these two Riot Grrrl manifestos make about their readers' knowledge or that the information they are sharing can be accommodated by cooperative readers that may not share that knowledge. Both of these Riot grrrl manifestos are declarations of mutual experiences between the writers and their ideal readers. However, these manifestos lend themselves to be receptive to cooperative readers that may not share similar experiences. Therefore, both of these manifestos exemplify the use of Assumed Familiarity.

Birner's and Ward's (2006) borrowed subcomponent of the role of hearer-status and discourse-status suggests the possibility of these Riot Grrrl manifestos' discourse as Hearer-old and Discourse-old, and Hearer-old and Discourse-new. Given that the statements throughout these manifestos connect the writers with the ideal readers through mutually shared experiences, it is possible the majority of the discourse may be categorized as Hearer-old and Discourse-old, and Hearer-old and Discourse-new. Furthermore, due to the manifestos' use of discourse that demonstrates implicitly assumed familiarity which may be accommodated by nonideal

cooperative readers, the category of Hearer-new, and Discourse-new exists. Both Riot grrrl manifestos are declarations of shared experiences between the authors and their ideal readers. This implies an assumed familiarity with the information and topics the authors present to their readers. For example, the first manifesto printed in *The Riot Grrrl Collection* (Darms & Fateman, 2016) opens with:

> Riot Grrrl is…….
> BECAUSE us girls crave records and books and fanzines that speak to US, that
> WE feel included in and can understand it our own ways.
> BECAUSE we wanna make it easier for girls to see/hear each other's work so that we can
> share strategies and criticize-applaud each other. (p. 143)

In this example, the use of the complementizer, *BECAUSE,* as the onset of each syntactic construction functions to introduce the relevance and timeliness of the information which is about to be presented in each sentence. Presenting this complementizer with its forms entirely in uppercase seems to serve another purpose. It introduces the message with conviction and fortitude. The lexical units, *US,* and *WE,* with their forms entirely in uppercase, serve to emphatically demonstrate the shared identity and bond between the authors and their ideal readers.

In the same manifesto and near the center, the paired lexical units, *AND THUS*, make a connection with the complementizer, *BECAUSE*, by introducing proposed solutions which the complementizer, *BECAUSE*, introduced , "BECAUSE we don't wanna assimulate to someone else's (Boy) standards of what is or isn't "good" music or punk rock or "good" writing AND THUS need to create forums where we can recreate, destroy and define our own visions" (Darms & Fateman, 2016, p. 143). In so doing, these paired lexical units assist in solving the concerns addressed in the prior statements.

The second manifesto included in *The Riot Grrrl Collection* (Darms & Fateman, 2016) starts with:

> What IS RIOT GRRRL?
> riot grrrl is……
> BECAUSE we will never meet the hierarchical
> BOY standards of talented, or cool, or smart.
> They are created to keep us out, and if we
> ever meet them they will change, or we will
> become tokens. (p. 168)

Here, as in the previous manifesto, the use of the complementizer, *because,* as the onset of the first sentence functions to introduce the relevance and timeliness of the message which is about to be presented. By organizing the entirety of its forms in uppercase, once again, it prepares the readers for the message with conviction and fortitude. The use of the lexical unit, *BOY*, arranged with the entirety of its forms in uppercase emphatically points out a particular group identity which contrasts the group identity of the manifestos' authors and ideal readers.

Conducting a Discourse Analysis by answering Gee's (2011) seven building tasks questions demonstrates that these Riot Grrrl manifestos exemplify the relationship between language, action, and identity. For conciseness, and given that these Riot Grrrl manifestos contain overlapping themes, the answers provided for each building task question concern both manifestos. What follows are the seven-building tasks answers:

1. The language implemented in these texts function to present as significant the intersecting issues that harm girls'/young women's daily lives, the harmful ideas about and toxic behaviors directed at girls/young women by mainstream society and the subversive punk scene, the abusive/exploitative imagery of girls/young women in mainstream media and refuting the normalization and legitimization of all of these in an everyday language manner.

2. This piece of language is enacting girls/young women to recognize themselves and other ordinary girls/young women as Riot Grrrls.

3. This language is being used to get audience readers and others to recognize the Riot grrrl movement as operative. This is attributing riot grrrl identity to the reader audience it is intended for, and this helps the authors enact their significant identities as riot grrrls.

4. This seeks to enact relationships of female camaraderie and solidarity across geography, labels, and philosophy with its ideal readers.

5. This is communicating the repudiation of societal normalization and legitimization of demeaning, exploitative, abusive, violating behavior directed at girls/young women, as well as refuting and challenging machismo, misogyny, homophobia, racism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, capitalism, ageism, ableism, speciesism, and the like, and cultivating communities that foment female camaraderie and solidarity, respects and values girls/young women and their creative aspirations as distributions of social goods as virtuous, righteous, and ethical.

6. This makes a connection between machismo, misogyny, homophobia, racism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, capitalism, ageism, ableism, and speciesism. This also connects riot grrrl feminism theory to non-commercial modes of creating girl-centric publications, art, music, and communities as praxis.

7. This privileges everyday language by utilizing some unconventional syntax and creative grammar. It also privileges girls'/young women's perspectives by rejecting harmful, demeaning, exploitative, abusive, violent attitudes, and behaviors directed at girls/young women, holding accountable and challenging the status-quo and their enablers for their roles in these attitudes and behaviors, as well as by promoting philosophy and praxis founded on girlhood, female camaraderie and solidarity, do-it-yourself ethic, and validation for girls'/young women's creative and musical aspirations, and value, dignity, and respect for girls'/young women's lives.

Conclusion

The lexica and discourse used in manifestos exemplify the concept that context informs the significance of language. Manifestos convey extraordinary and commanding notions, declarations, and aspirations. As is the case with feminist manifestos, the manifesto form may be equally important as the message. "The manifesto is an act of *démesure*, going past what is thought of as proper, sane, and literary. Its outreach demands an extravagant self-assurance. At its peak performance, its form creates its meaning" (Parent, 2001, p. xx).

By applying Birner's and Ward's (2006) information-status matrix component of their Information Structure theory we observe the use of two major pragmatics features throughout these two Riot Grrrl manifestos. The first pragmatics feature that stands out is the noncanonical use of the complementizer, *because*. The complementizer, *because*, is used noncanonically to organize information emphatically and succinctly to articulate the significance and relevance of the Riot grrrl movement. The second pragmatics feature is the use of Assumed Familiarity which may be categorized as Hearer-old and Discourse-old, and Hearer-old and Discourse-new, as well as the possibility of Hearer-new and Discourse-new. The use of Assumed Familiarity demonstrates the authors of these two Riot Grrrl manifestos assume a shared knowledge with their ideal readers. Additionally, it is possible the information they share may be accommodated by nonideal cooperative readers.

The discourse of these two Riot Grrrl manifestos exemplifies the interwoven relationship between language, action, and identity that Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis theory postulates. My research demonstrates this relationship by answering Gee's (2011) seven building tasks questions. These two Riot Grrrl manifestos exemplify the critical link between language, action, and identity by using language to hold U.S. society accountable for sexist and misogynistic actions it allows and promotes, by informing young women that their creative and musical aspirations are valid, and by linking these to a particular way of being in the world in a specific context: their particular identity in a specific moment as Riot grrrls. It may be argued that the activities proposed in these Riot Grrrl manifestos are the action component of the language-action-identity nexus which serves as praxis to the Riot grrrl theory and identity the language serves to promulgate.

This research demonstrates that these two Riot Grrrl manifestos contain distinct and significant linguistic features which function in an informative, organized, and strategic manner. This research also demonstrates that these two Riot grrrl manifestos exemplify the critical relationship between language, action, and identity. I included the two Riot grrrl manifestos that I used for my research as images with permission from *The Riot Grrrl Collection* (Darms & Fateman, 2016) book publisher. I labeled the manifesto on page 143, as Figure 1 on page 27, and the manifesto on page 168, as Figure 2 on page 28 of this paper. I provided these for readers and researchers to have another dimension of context concerning my research.

The research presented in this linguistic analysis is limited by time constraints, the allowed word count, and its shared focus on two branches of linguistics rather than an ample linguistic analysis that concentrates on one branch of linguistics. For future prospects, I will

build on this research by developing the use of Gee's (2011) Discourse Analysis seven building tasks questions component. I will expand the application of Birner's and Ward's (2006) Information Structure discussion of the Assumed Familiarity subcategory. I will also expand on the discussion concerning feminist manifestos by presenting more examples of feminist manifestos. I propose students and academics use this paper to support their research concerning Riot Grrrl manifestos, feminist manifestos, and manifestos in general. "Language is about saying, doing, and being" (Langman, 2020, slide 5). It has been stated that the pen is mightier than the sword, and the revolutionary lexicon of these two Riot Grrrl manifestos exemplifies this adage.
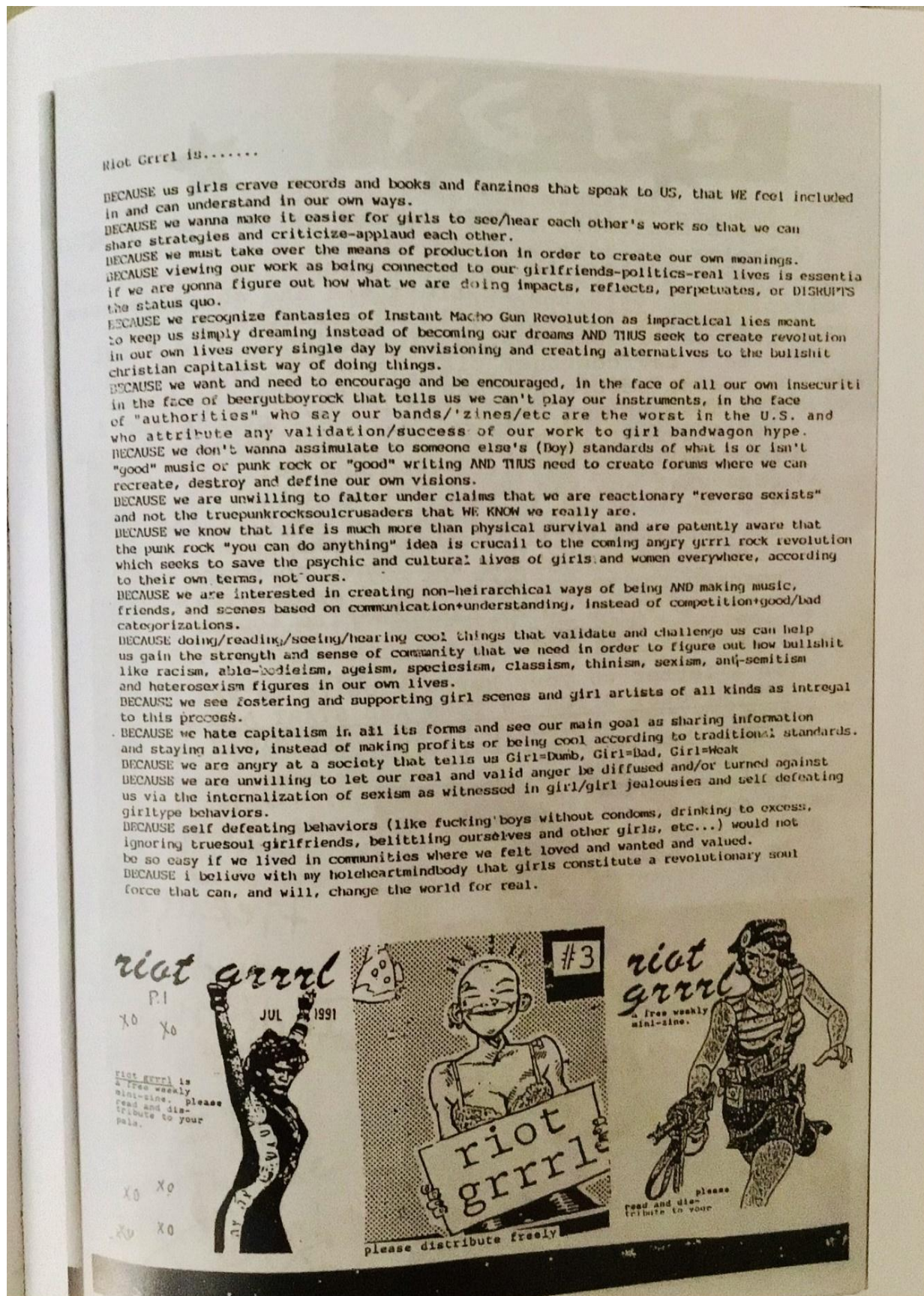
Figure 1

Riot Grrrl is.......

BECAUSE us girls crave records and books and fanzines that speak to US, that WE feel included in and can understand in our own ways.

BECAUSE we wanna make it easier for girls to see/hear each other's work so that we can share strategies and criticize-applaud each other.

BECAUSE we must take over the means of production in order to create our own meanings.

BECAUSE viewing our work as being connected to our girlfriends-politics-real lives is essentia if we are gonna figure out how what we are doing impacts, reflects, perpetuates, or DISRUPTS the status quo.

BECAUSE we recognize fantasies of Instant Macho Gun Revolution as impractical lies meant to keep us simply dreaming instead of becoming our dreams AND THUS seek to create revolution in our own lives every single day by envisioning and creating alternatives to the bullshit christian capitalist way of doing things.

BECAUSE we want and need to encourage and be encouraged, in the face of all our own insecuriti in the face of beergutboyrock that tells us we can't play our instruments, in the face of "authorities" who say our bands/'zines/etc are the worst in the U.S. and who attribute any validation/success of our work to girl bandwagon hype.

BECAUSE we don't wanna assimilate to someone else's (boy) standards of what is or isn't "good" music or punk rock or "good" writing AND THUS need to create forums where we can recreate, destroy and define our own visions.

BECAUSE we are unwilling to falter under claims that we are reactionary "reverse sexists" and not the truepunkrocksoulcrusaders that WE KNOW we really are.

BECAUSE we know that life is much more than physical survival and are patently aware that the punk rock "you can do anything" idea is crucail to the coming angry grrrl rock revolution which seeks to save the psychic and cultural lives of girls and women everywhere, according to their own terms, not ours.

BECAUSE we are interested in creating non-heirarchical ways of being AND making music, friends, and scenes based on communication+understanding, instead of competition+good/bad categorizations.

BECAUSE doing/reading/seeing/hearing cool things that validate and challenge us can help us gain the strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how bullshit like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, anti-semitism and heterosexism figures in our own lives.

BECAUSE we see fostering and supporting girl scenes and girl artists of all kinds as intregal to this process.

BECAUSE we hate capitalism in all its forms and see our main goal as sharing information and staying alive, instead of making profits or being cool according to traditional standards.

BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl=Dumb, Girl=Bad, Girl=Weak

BECAUSE we are unwilling to let our real and valid anger be diffused and/or turned against us via the internalization of sexism as witnessed in girl/girl jealousies and self defeating girltype behaviors.

BECAUSE self defeating behaviors (like fucking boys without condoms, drinking to excess, ignoring truesoul girlfriends, belittling ourselves and other girls, etc...) would not be so easy if we lived in communities where we felt loved and wanted and valued.

BECAUSE i believe with my holeheartmindbody that girls constitute a revolutionary soul force that can, and will, change the world for real.

Figure 2

WhAt IS RIOT GRRRL?

riot grrrl is: ....

BECAUSE we will never meet the hierarchical BOY standards of talented, or cool, or smart. They are created to keep us out, and if we ever meet them they will change, or we will become tokens.
BECAUSE I need laughter and I need girl love. We need to build lines of communication so we can be more open and accessible to each other.

BECAUSE we are being divided by our labels and philosophies, and we need to accept and support each other as girls; acknowledging our different approaches to life and accepting all of them as valid.

BECAUSE in every form of media I see us/myself slapped, decapitated, laughed at, objectified, raped, trivialized, pushed, ignored, stereo-typed, kicked, scorned, molested, silenced, invalidated, knifed, shot, choCked, and killed

BECAUSE I see the connectedness of all forms of oppression and I believe we need to fight them with this awareness.

BECAUSE a safe space needs to be created for girls where we can open our eyes and reach out to each other without being threatened by this sexist society and our day to day bullshit.
BECAUSE we need to acknowledge that our blood is being spilt; that right now a girl is being raped or battered and it might be me or you or your mom or the girl you sat next to on the bus last Tuesday, and she might be dead by the time you finish reading this. I am not making this up.

BECAUSE I can't smile when my girlfriends are dying inside. We are dying inside and we never even touch each other; we are supposed to hate each other.

BECAUSE I am still fucked up, I am still deal-ing with internalized racism, sexism, classism homophobia, etc.. and I don't want to do it alone. BECAUSE we need to talk to each other. Commun ication/inclusion is key. We will never know if we don't break the code of silence.

BECAUSE we girls want to create mediums that speak to US. We are tired of boy band after boy band, boy zine after boy zine, boy punk after boy punk after boy.

BECAUSE I am tired of these things happening to me; I'm not a fuck toy. I'm not a punching bag, I'm not a joke.

No we are not paranoid.
No we are not manhaters.
No we are not worrying too much.
No we are not taking it too seriously.

BECAUSE every time we pick up a pen, or an instrument, or get anything done, we are creating the revolution. We ARE the revolution.

riot ♥

start a ♥ Fuckin HELP ME HELP ME

Riot Grrrl
P.O. Box 5533
IrVine, CA. 92716-5533
PLEASE SEND A STAMP
(FOR easy reply)

FOR MORE INFO:

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