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“May the Force be with you.” “Never tell me the odds!” “These are not the droids you’re looking for.” All of these statements stem from the massively successful Star Wars film franchise, a series begun back in 1977, and are permanently ingrained in our society’s colloquial terms. While superficially a tale about spaceships and a hero with a lightsaber saving the stereotypical “damsel-in-distress”, the franchise actually makes references to a wide variety of topics. Some of these references can be sorted into some of the most widely acknowledged categories including:

1.) Religious Comparisons
2.) Political and Wartime Parallels
3.) Good vs. Evil

The Star Wars saga contains subtly stated historical references, ties to religious beliefs and the integration of science into a religious setting, and a firm embodiment of archetypal roles of good and evil while simultaneously awing viewers with the possibilities of the future and outer space, George Lucas’s Star Wars film franchise is seen as the original science fiction series and a hallmark in cinematic accomplishments.

Religious Comparisons

In today’s society there is often a conflict of interests between science and religion. It often seems as though science is trying to prove that most religious beliefs are nonsense and often slightly ridiculous. At the start of the Star Wars movies, the Jedi Order’s religion or “The Force” is an accepted practice and set of ideologies with little explanation given as to its origins. Towards the middle of the saga, the scientists of Star Wars start to look for new and more scientific ways of explaining the magical powers the Jedi Knights seem to control. The once-mystical force is given a scientific explanation in the way of “midichlorians”, which are given the definition of micro-organisms that clutter up the bloodstream of the Jedi and give them their telekinetic powers as an unintended side effect (Douthat, 2011). Conceptually, the supernatural flow of energy known as “The Force” is believed to have originated from the concept of prana, or chi, the all-pervading vital energy of the universe (Films Media Group, 1999).

There is also a connection between one of today’s biggest controversies and the Star Wars movies, the separation of church and state. Throughout the Clone Wars era of the series, this is reflected by the Galactic Senate’s, or the Star Wars League of Nations, progressive limitation of the authority of Jedi on various topics, ranging from military strategies to more political agendas; the Republic’s Senate progressively tries to force the more “religious” Jedi out of the government. This relates to the United States government’s confrontations with various groups about issues such as prayer during school hours, the inclusion of the phrase “under God” in the Pledge
of Allegiance, and the wearing of the hijab, the traditional head scarf worn by Muslim women.

George Lucas also stated that chivalry, knighthood, paladinism, and related “religious-like” institutions within feudal societies inspired the concepts behind the Jedi Knights. Other religions such as Hinduism, Qigong, Abrahamic religions, Confucianism, Shinto, and Taoism are also said to have inspired the “traditional” Jedi Knight (Films Media Group, 1999).

**Political and Wartime Parallels**

While not immediately noticeable to the casual observer, there are multiple political and wartime parallels scattered throughout the Star Wars sagas. These parallels can be seen from as far back as Julius Caesar and the Roman Empire all the way through today’s ongoing struggle in Iraq. When discussing political ties between some of his movie characters in an interview with Time magazine in 2002, George Lucas, the creator of Star Wars, explained:

> All democracies turn into dictatorships—but not by coup. The people give their democracy to a dictator, whether it’s Julius Caesar or Napoleon or Adolf Hitler. Ultimately, the general population goes along with the idea. What kinds of things push people and institutions in this direction? That’s the issue I’ve been exploring: how did the Republic turn into the Empire? ... How does a good person go bad, and how does a democracy become a dictatorship? (TIME Magazine, 2002)

There were two separate ideologies reflected by the Star War’s sagas, and they both reflected the disparate political contexts at the times of their production. The first trilogy George Lucas released appeared during Jimmy Carter’s presidency and the first Reagan administration. Therefore, they were considered reassurance types of film, because their political universe was ultimately one without failure, ambiguity, or nuance. Through individual heroic action there was hope for political and cultural vindication. This first trilogy put emphasis on the nuclear family, fear of fascism, and restoration in the order of the “father”. In comparison the newer, and often darker, episodes reflect the paranoia of the American society during the Bush administrations. They detailed a decline in democratic discourse, arrogant military strategies, and a rise of totalitarianism and globalism while disregarding individual civil rights. In addition, there were running themes of greed, power, and corruption (Levy, 2011).

Ties can be found between the various wars and skirmishes within the movies and historical events in real life. One such parallel is found between the “Clone Wars” and the American Civil War, including the secession of territories, the name “Confederacy of Independent Systems”, and the Republic’s army being called the Grand Army of the Republic. There are also numerous parallels between the movies and World War I and II. The mythical political figure Palpatine’s tactics reflect those of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany; both leaders used scapegoats...
and war to manipulate their society’s emotional state, subsequently providing the leadership with support and power. The stormtroopers from the movies also share a name with Hitler’s Nazi stormtroopers. Historical German army uniforms also resemble the Imperial officer’s uniforms within the movies, especially those of the Waffen-SS. Additionally, the Imperial officers are almost exclusively Caucasian males, reflecting the beliefs of racial superiority present in Nazi Germany society as well as the Great Jedi Purge alluding to the events of the Holocaust, the Great Purge, and the Night of the Long Knives. Lucas himself admitted that he modeled the character Palpatine and his rise in power after previous and historical dictators such as Julius Caesar, Adolf Hitler, and Napoleon Bonaparte, while some names and planets were based on terminology from World War II, such as the planet Hoth potentially being a reference to the German general Hermann Hoth (TIME Magazine, 2002). There are also, according to some historians, ties between the latest movies and the war in Iraq, although George Lucas has stated that these are simply coincidental. The primary influences for his political backdrops were the Watergate and Vietnam era, a time where leaders embraced corruption for what they though was the best course of action (Germain, 2005).

Good vs. Evil

Though we try to avoid comparing fact and fiction, our society tends to have a traditionally accepted image for the “good guys” and the “bad guys”. Star Wars has taken these ideal images and used their characters to continue portraying this image. The “good guys” or Jedi Knights are consistently portrayed as the simplistic and self-sacrificing underdogs throughout the movies, acting in a manner consistent with the traditionally accepted archetypal hero, as they consistently take the morally acceptable “high ground” and prefer to resolve conflicts through diplomacy and negotiation. However, the “bad guys”, or the Empire, are seen as a black-wearing neo-Nazi like regime out to take over the galaxy who embody the traditional violent, sadistic villain archetype, preferring to resort to torture, blackmail, and blatantly indifferent murder to accomplish their goals.

Given its subtly stated historical references, references to religious beliefs and the integration of science into a religious setting, and a firm embodiment of archetypal roles of good and evil while simultaneously awing viewers with the possibilities of the future and outer space, George Lucas’s Star Wars film franchise is seen as the original science fiction series and a hallmark in cinematic accomplishments. All of these things have combined to show us how the heroic epic concept and the influences of mythology and other motifs were important in making Star Wars the standard for movies and other series in the years to come; this has led to the Star Wars saga defining “modern mythology” of our time.
References


We Are Legion  
Civil Disobedience in the Cyber Age  

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Whether the objection be a “no” mumbled by a toddler to a parent, or the stubborn disregard of a teenager’s imposed curfew, or the dumping of crates of tea into a colonial harbor, or even a gathering of middle class intellectuals to pen the Rights of Man, the act of protest seems hard-wired in the human psyche. At the dawn of the Enlightenment, the right of the governed to protest the government has been a vital and inherent part of the modern world. The need for law and order, however, created the corresponding need for a new method of protest, and the concept of civil disobedience was born.

The definition of civil disobedience has been debated ever since Thoreau first conceived the term in his 1849 essay, On Civil Disobedience. The purpose of such protest, as generally understood, is to actively and publicly refuse to obey certain laws or societal norms as established by the government in order to draw attention to a perceived injustice. The Greensboro sit-ins, which began at a Woolworth’s lunch counter February 1, 1960, are a classic example of such protests. Four African American students sat at the “Whites Only” lunch counter and ordered coffee—the store refused to serve the students; the students refused to leave the counter, and a protest was born.

Eventually so many students clogged Woolworth’s lunch counters across the south, individual store owners and corporate headquarters had to listen to the protestors or suffer catastrophic profit loss and a public relations nightmare. On June 21, 1960 the Woolworth’s chain officially desegregated. For the most part, the protest had been peaceful, the outcome as desired, and the media exposure led to other, similar actions elsewhere in the country. The Civil Rights movement, the Women’s Liberation movement, the Yippies and Vietnam War protestors all exhibited the hallmarks of civil disobedience as traditionally understood—and the mode the protestors used to thus exercise their first amendment rights was the subject of furious debate on evening news shows and political podiums. The media succeeded in portraying protestors as less than desirable Americans as the protests died down, and with that, so too did the debate, at least for a moment. Then came the cyber-age and a renewed focus on what constitutes civil disobedience. In a time when a few nameless, faceless protestors altering a letter in a stream of computer code can crash a multimillion dollar corporation, or expose secret government documents in order to draw attention to a perceived injustice, or film police treatment of protestors and post the clip online as it is happening, the future course of civil disobedience can seem terrifying.
But before we can attempt to project where cyber-civil disobedience is headed, we need first to separate the protestors from the common cybercriminal or general rabble rouser, and second trace how cyber protest has evolved from the earliest days of the internet to the YouTube and Facebook generation.

In June of 1903 something shocking happened at the Royal Institution’s legendary lecture theatre in London. The physicist John Ambrose was about to demonstrate the newest wireless technological wonder by receiving a Morse code message sent from the radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi himself. But to the shock of Ambrose and the delight of the audience, the apparatus began typing out an apparent sender-less message just as Marconi’s carefully scripted message was scheduled to arrive—first, the word “Rats” repeated over and over, then a bawdy limerick “There was a young fellow of Italy, who diddled the public quite prettily…” then a steady flow of Shakespearean insults until the machine, and the stunned audience, fell silent. A music hall magician and sometimes inventor named John Nevil Maskelyne took credit for the action. It seems that Maskelyne had sent a wireless message between a ground station and hot air balloon in 1900, but who had been denied proper credit for his invention because of Marconi’s broad patents. He justified his actions by asserting that he had exposed security weaknesses in Marconi’s system, and assuring the public that it was just a happy coincidence that in his effort to defend their general privacy, he had also been able to wreak a certain amount of just revenge. And thus, hacking was born.

In the decades that followed, the ability to “hack” into technology became a matter of pride and generally hilarity in the nerdy quarters of science. Phone phreaking, using radio transmitters to break in to telephone conversations, became the thing to do in the early 1970s—and the phreakers then melded with the computer culture to form loosely woven organizations bent on general mayhem. With names like the Warelords or Chaos Computer, and members named Cap’N Crunch, Black Bart or Tennessee Tuxedo, they would successfully infiltrate The White House, Southwestern Bell “Ma Bell” Mainframe Systems, and large corporate providers of voice mail systems, as well as break codes, pirate the newest software, and create game cheats on the international level—all before 1981. The term hacker was first used to describe them in the media in a 1982 article in Newsweek magazine entitled “Careful, Hackers at Play,” and the 1983 blockbuster War Games made the term universally accepted as the descriptor to all those computer nerds bent on “playing” the system. The potential for criminal activity in all of this was, and is, obvious—and it was explored by certain elements of the hacker community. Criminal temptations collided with the public perception of all hackers as bored teenagers holed up their parent’s basements (an image propagated by pop culture) which forced a showdown amongst the computer clubs in the mid 1980’s. The ensuing debate would clearly and permanently divide the hacker culture into those who would use their power for good, and those drawn to dark side.

In his 1984 book According to Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution, the tech-
nology journalist guru Steven Levy outlined a code of ethics that has remained the standard by which the hacker-troubblemaker is separated from the hacker-protestor. The goal of the good guys, according to Levy, was fourfold:

1. To keep computer access unlimited
2. To keep information free
3. To promote decentralization of power
4. To use computers to change life for the better

For the sake of cyber-civil disobedience, Levy’s aims served as the perfect barometer. They neatly highlighted the difference between the internet criminal, the bored teen and the political protestor. Purveyors of computer viruses, peddlers of stolen identities and hackers bent on causing chaos for their own amusement were not included—though the skill set was the same. That is not to say that protestors, however nobly they perceived their intent, were not subject to media scrutiny or public condemnation—after all, one man’s perceived injustice is another man’s status quo. The classifications of hackers were defined thanks to Levy, but how the protest could be initiated was yet to be determined.

In 1987, a broad-based artist and activist troupe known as The Critical Art Ensemble was established. It was primarily theatrical in nature, using traditional arts to promote a mildly activist message, but in 1994 they broke in to the hacker universe with their series of essays collectively entitled Electronic Civil Disobedience. The fledgling phenomena then known as the World Wide Web had been used since its inception by protest organizations to transmit information and brainstorm methods through bulletin boards and email services like Peacenet, established in 1986. But the CAE was the first to argue that the web itself could be used as a mode of protest. The author, hacker-artist Stephen Wray wrote, “As hackers become politicized and as activists become computerized, we are going to see an increase in the number of cyber-activists who engage in what will become more widely known as Electronic Civil Disobedience. The same principals of traditional civil disobedience, like trespass and blockage, will still be applied, but more and more these acts will take place in electronic or digital form. The primary site for Electronic Civil Disobedience will be in cyberspace.” The die, Fray and the CAE argued, was cast, and the future of civil disobedience was clear—and it would involve computer skills and the anonymity that only cyberspace could offer.

A few years later this idea was cemented through the creation of the Electronic Frontier Foundation. It was formed in July of 1990 by John Perry Barlow (former lyricist for the Grateful Dead and vocal supporter of artistic freedom) and Mitch Kapor (founder of Lotus software and first chair of the Mozilla Foundation) in response to a series of actions by law enforcement agencies against hackers, which the two men agreed demonstrated a need to defend civil liberties on the internet. In their first action, the EFF would pay the legal fees associated with the defense of several computer hackers who had been the target of Secret Service raids for their
posts on a forum on a Harper’s Magazine website. The precedent established, the EFF continued to focus primarily on the defense of accused hackers and the free internet. However in 1996, in an effort to correct the general public’s perception of hackers as anarchist troublemakers, Barlow released A Declaration of Independence of Cyber Space, which further explained the new parameters that would contain cyber-civil disobedience. “We are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth. We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence or conformity” Barlow wrote. He further stated that as the founders of America had deemed it necessary to cast off the oppression of what they felt was an unjust system of governance, so the hacker community would cast off limitations and rules that attempted to unjustly limit the reaches of cyberspace. If the CAE chose the field for the future of civil disobedience, it was Barlow and the EFF that chose the battle…and it will be the oddly named Cult of the Dead Cow that would volunteer to be the first foot soldiers.

The Cult of the Dead Cow is familiar to those who support theatrical forms of protest made popular by the Yippies in the late 1960’s; that is, they are irreverent, ingenious, and assured of their own righteousness. They started out as a group of disenfranchised Lubbock Texas teenage hackers who met at a closed slaughterhouse (hence their name) where they would plot their next cyber prank. At first they busied themselves breaking in to a variety of sites just because they could. Members of the cDc claimed, in rather bad taste, to have given Ronald Reagan Alzheimer’s. They declared war on Scientology. They distributed pirated mp3s. In short, they were everything the public had come to view hackers as—bored ne’er-do-wells who could probably benefit from gainful employment. In the late1990s, however, they inadvertently made contact with a group of Chinese college students, nicknamed the Hong Kong Blondes, who had more than cyber amusements on their minds. To commemorate the anniversary of Tiananmen Square, the HKBs wanted to disrupt computer networks within the People’s Republic of China in order to allow citizens to access government-censored content online, they just weren’t sure how to go about it. Members of the cDc offered advice on encryption codes and hacking techniques with the HKBs—and the experience left its mark. Shortly thereafter, in a series of emails discussing ways the cDc could further the aims of the HKBs, the term “hacktivism” was first used to describe civil disobedience in the cyber age.

To mark the separation between their cDc days and their new mission, members of the cDc announced the creation of Hacktivismo, in 1999. This new group would focus on exploring ways to prevent internet censorship. Of particular interest to the group— creating hacks that could defy, thwart and otherwise confound firewalls and/or censoring mechanisms of national governments. The Hacktivismo declaration asserted that its existence was necessary to assure United Nation members’ compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political
Rights because: “...member states continue to willfully suppress wide-ranging access to lawfully published information on the Internet, despite the clear language of the ICCPR that freedom of expression exists in all media; ...transnational corporations continue to sell information technologies to the world’s most repressive regimes knowing full well that they will be used to track and control an already harried citizenry; in some countries it is a crime to demand the right to access lawfully published information, and of other basic human rights” and finally, “...that denying access to information could lead to spiritual, intellectual, and economic decline, the promotion of xenophobia and destabilization of international order.” Subsequently, the definition for hacktivism, based on the Hacktivismo declaration and legal argument, came to mean using technology to foster human rights and the open exchange of information; and persons or organizations that access corporate, government or other institutional records in order to expose human rights violations, unethical actions or hidden agendas became known in the media as hacktivists.

While the cDc and Hacktivismo gave cyber-civil disobedience its nomenclature, it was WikiLeaks that brought the incredible power of this mode of protest to the front page. Registered as wikileaks.org in 2006, the mission statement of the site claimed it would “publish fact-based stories without fear or favor.” Following the guidelines established by their predecessors, the main focus of WikiLeaks is the transmission of information—opinions, suspicions and theories are not included. It is not meant to indoctrinate, just to provide. The site is run by volunteers who do nothing but fact-check anonymous submissions from hackers and post the factually correct information on the WikiLeaks site. As of this date, only the names of two members are known: Julian Assange and Kristinn Hrafnsson, both of whom have stepped forward to act as spokespeople for the group during times when their posts have generated controversy. And there have plenty of those times. WikiLeaks has released hundreds of thousands of documents since their founding—ranging from breaking political scandals to documents dealing with private organizations. Some have garnered more media attention in the United States than others.

In 2008 WikiLeaks made the news in the United States when they released emails sent by then political candidate Sarah Palin through her private account, in violation of governmental regulations. That same year, again in 2009, the site posted the members roster of a far-right British political party with extremist views. Several members where active politicians and business leaders, and many where paying the British National Party to peddle their radical stances, particularly in regard to immigration, in an effort to garner political power. In July of 2009 WikiLeaks released documents that would make the organization the center of a debate that rages to the present day: 92,000 pages relating to the war in Afghanistan between 2004 and 2009, as well as a series of interdepartmental emails from various diplomatic offices. The documents were sent to The Guardian, the New York Times and Der Spiegel, as well as released on the site under the title The Afghan War Diary and The Iraq War Logs. The official papers revealed numerous friendly fire incidents, civilian casualties, prison abuses and other incidents.
that directly contradicted statements made by the US and British politicians regarding the war, as well as potentially embarrassing emails sent between foreign diplomats and heads of state. After allegations of treason and/or endangering the troops were leveled at the organization, WikiLeaks publically requested the Pentagon and other human-rights groups assist in removing sensitive information from unreleased documents—an offer that, as of yet, has been ignored. The BBC quoted The Pentagon as referring to the Iraq War Logs as “the largest leak of classified documents in its history,” while media coverage of the leaked documents focused on claims that the U.S. government had ignored reports of torture by the Iraqi authorities during the period after the 2003 war. Despite the obvious controversy the organization has generated, the public reception has also been surprisingly positive. WikiLeaks has received several awards ranging from the 2008 Economist Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression award, the 2009 Amnesty International human rights reporting award and in 2010 Julian Assange was voted the Reader’s choice for Times Magazine’s person of the year. The court challenges have thus far been decided in WikiLeaks favor—thanks to that pesky First Amendment and the Freedom of Information Act.

But WikiLeaks, as previously explained, is just the venue by which information is passed on to the general public. It is the bulletin board of cyber-civil disobedience—but whom then are the people posting the information? Because of the covert nature of hacking, and the desire to instigate real political and social change as opposed to self-aggrandizement, little is known about the hackers themselves. There is one group that has captured media attention as of late. Armed with the power of the internet, a computer generated voice and a Guy Fawkes mask they have captured the imagination of news reporters, cyber protestors and alarmed citizens alike. And they are called Anonymous.

While the members of Anonymous remain, well, anonymous, how the group originated is a matter of public record. Online bulletin boards are commonplace, and it takes a particularly unique dynamic to rise above the fray. Enter 4chan.org, founded in October of 2003. At its inception, it was designed to be a board for lovers of anime and other Japanese based arts, and for all intents and purposes, it still is. But it is also the domain of the notorious “/b/” board—an anything goes random image board with minimal rules and a fondness for memes. The posters on /b/ are responsible for the notorious “Rick-Roll,” “Lol Catz,” and “Chocolate Rain,” to name but a few of the memes that have become the stuff of internet legend. Given the general fondness for tomfoolery and out-and-out raunchiness contributors to /b/ display, many of the posts are authorless, and are thus listed as authored by “anonymous.” Among these anonymous postings were several politically charged images, including a Guy Fawkes mask, and a suit without a head, meant to represent the leaderless organization and anonymity of the internet. There is no home-base for Anonymous, online or, as far as anyone has thus far been able to determine, in the “real world.” While there are several message boards (4chan, Encyclopædia Dramatica,
various wikis, internet relay chats etc.) that play host to Anonymous, none are directly tied to the organization itself. There exists no membership roster, no website (other than those that are briefly put up to promote an idea or cause only to disappear a short time later), and no rules. From that nondescript beginning grew a disorganized organization—a protest collective typified by a truly democratic process of choosing what, when and how to protest a perceived injustice. Anyone who wishes to can post a protest request, explaining what injustice they believe should be targeted, or what operation they believe should be exposed. If enough anonymous contributors support the cause, ideas for protest will be discussed. The ideas will float from board to board, appearing and disappearing, until consensus is reached. The only requirement in any of these actions is that participants remain anonymous; this is political protest in its truest form—this is not about bravado or bragging rights, it is about information and change. Tools are available online through unaffiliated sites that guarantee anonymity—multi-hop ad-hoc mesh networks, anonymous email servers and open source communication systems and the like. Actions credited to Anonymous are undertaken by unidentified individuals who apply the Anonymous label to themselves as attribution.

In the earliest stages of the movement, the most common response to a call for protest was a physical “traditional” picket protest by Guy Fawkes mask wearing protesters. Most notoriously, masked protestors began haunting Scientology centers after it was revealed that high ranking members of that organization had been suing various websites in an attempt to censor information. But by 2010, the Anonymous collective had become increasingly associated with collaborative, international hacktivism. To date, there have been numerous actions taken in the name of Anonymous that garnered substantial media attention. Protesters launched the 2010 “Operation Avenge Assange” by hacking into and shutting down websites for Visa, Mastercard and Paypal services, after those agencies froze donation payments to the WikiLeaks defense fund. Anonymous has attacked government sites worldwide—including Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Iran, Chile, Colombia and New Zealand.

In January of 2012 in response to the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), Anonymous attacked and shut down websites for the Department of Justice, FBI, Universal Music Group, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and Broadcast Music, Inc websites, in what has been called the “single largest Internet attack” in history, with over 5,000 anonymous hackers participating nationwide. During the protests in the Middle East collectively known as the Arab Spring, Anonymous provided a crucial link between protesters, keeping lines of communication open and attacking government sites that threatened to shut down wireless communications. On youtube, facebook and other media outlets, Anonymous videos appeared encouraging and supporting participation in the Occupy Wall Street movement, and airing footage of police using excessive force in dealing with protesters—footage that later aired on major media networks. And this is no small scale opera-
tion—in their actions against SOPA, it is estimated that over 5,000 hackers worldwide were working on the carefully coordinated hack which shut down the government websites. Arrests of hackers accused of working with Anonymous have been made in Turkey, Spain, England, Wales, Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States. Even NATO has weighed in on the effectiveness of the organization, calling this group of hackers “a threat to national security.” Despite the obvious risks and recent spate of arrests, videos and hacks in the name of Anonymous continue to appear.

The protest collective model created by Anonymous seems to be the most relevant indication of where the future of cyber-civil disobedience lies. Limitless membership means limitless possibilities, and the internet provides a venue for political protest on the global scale. In American history, the founding fathers envisioned a new world order, where governments were led by the decisions of an altruistic population—where the lives, liberties and happiness of the common man became the measure of a successful political system. To achieve that goal, they utilized protest—they disrupted the operations of government, they burned officials in effigy, they destroyed property, they used the media available to spread their ideas and explain their actions and they did it anonymously. They used costumes, secret meeting and pennames—not only to conceal their identity from authorities, but also to lend purity to their ideas. Their vision for their country was for all persons, regardless of race, religion or country of origin. Anonymity removed prejudices and judgments that may have detracted from their aim.

The right to protest was so dear to the revolutionary generation that it was worked, without argument, into our Bill of Rights in the very first amendment. With the possibilities inherent within cyber civil disobedience—the ability to act in concert across oceans, regardless of national borders, ancestral prejudices or government controls, that vision of a world based on the will of the people may actually yet prevail. Once people realize and embrace the power of cyber protest, we might truly see democracy on the grand scale. As the slogan for Anonymous avows:

“We are Anonymous.
We are Legion.
We do not forgive.
We do not forget.
Expect us.”
Works Cited


On February 15, 2005, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim registered youtube.com. The first video was uploaded by the team on April 23, 2005. It was a video of Karim in front of elephants at the San Diego Zoo, and the video was only 19 seconds long. There was now a place where users could upload and share their videos, and watch other videos uploaded by other users. It was quickly becoming an online community where one could have a sense of belonging, a sense of authenticity, and build relationships through video blogs (also known as vlogs). Just a few years ago no one had even heard of Youtube, but in its short fast rise Youtube has become the first place to go for people wanting to watch video on the internet (Rushe & Durman, 2006). Before Youtube was created, if one wanted to watch the news or a part of a television episode, they would have to wait for that episode or news story to come on again, but not anymore. Youtube has influenced and helped shape and share public opinion, news reports, television shows, politics, home video, and education; in that way, it is one of today’s pop culture phenomenons.

When someone wants to look up a document or web page on the internet, they google it, and when they want to look up a video, they look it up on Youtube. According to Cone-ally (2010) Youtube announced that they stream 2 billion videos every day, which is enough for every person in the United States to watch six and a half videos per day. The average youtuber spends around fifteen minutes per day watching video. When I first saw this statistic error here I was shocked. “How could this be?” I asked myself, and then later that day I found myself on Youtube for about half an hour watching music videos and funny videos. Youtube has replaced MTV for the place to watch newly released music videos, because it gives the user the option to pick what they want to watch. Each individual has control over what they watch and when rather than the industry. Google, a cultural phenomenon of itself, had about 7.8 million people watch video on their website, while 23.7 million people (4 times as many) chose to watch video on Youtube (Rushe & Durman, 2006). Those statistics were from 2006 when Youtube was only one year old. Imagine how much that margin has changed in the past five years. The reason is clear now why Google bought Youtube for 1.65 billion dollars.

Youtube has affected our culture by changing the way we work. Pop Culture is the commercial products reflecting, suited to, or aimed at the tastes of the general masses of people. This commercial product being sold to us is advertisement by Youtube. Making videos is now a way
to make a living (Stelter, 2008). After Google bought Youtube, they implemented advertisements as a way to make money to support the 1 million dollar costs of storing its content per month (Rushe & Durman, 2006). Youtube now allows users to generate revenue from ads on their videos based on the number of times viewed (Stelter, 2008). The more popular the video, the more income it brings in for the person who uploaded it. For example, “Mr. Buckley,” a well-known youtuber, quit his day job in September of 2008 when his income from youtube surpassed the salary he made from his job as an administrative assistant (Stelter, 2008). His three times a week “silly” videos have pulled in over $100,000 dollars from advertisements (Stelter, 2008).

“We wanted to turn these hobbies into businesses,” said Hunter Walk, a director of product management for the site, who called popular users like Mr. Buckley “unintentional media companies (qtd. in Stelter, 2008).” If Youtube can create businesses out of hobbies, then it should be labeled as a cultural phenomenon.

**YouTube: Changing the Way We Do Politics and News**

In 1948, ABC was the third largest television network station. After 60 years the network has continually produced approximately 1.5 million hours of programming. Youtube produced more than 1.5 million hours of content in the first six months of the year 2008 than the third largest television network could produce in 60 years (Frey, 2008). About 9,232 hours of video are uploaded to the site every hour. This is good because it gives the user the option to search and choose for what they want to watch. Every day news clips are put onto the site making the availability of that news program available anytime, which is important for making the news available to anyone anywhere. During the rebellion in Egypt many of the news stations were not able to get into the action and get footage for fear of being harmed, so they used clips from Youtube that were uploaded by people that were in the middle of the action. Youtube has become the place to get fair and balanced news. Eight of the twelve presidential candidates, in 2008, announced their campaign on Youtube. The cultural phenomenon of Youtube allows the distribution of information faster and wider than that of a regular news station.

**YouTube: Changing the Way We Communicate**

“Youtube is a cultural phenomenon: one of a new wave of websites that rely on their community of users to create their account” (Rushe & Durman, 2008). Youtube started as a site for video bloggers and viral videos, and has evolved to a global platform that supports HD and 3D, broadcasts entire sports seasons live to 200 plus countries (Coneally, 2010). Youtube said on its official Blog that they “bring feature films from Hollywood studios and independent filmmakers to far-flung audiences. Activists document social unrest seeking to transform societies, and leading civic and political figures stream interviews to the world” (Coneally, 2010). Youtube changed the way we communicate. When something changes the way we live our day to day lives, it is a cultural phenomenon. Most videos on Youtube are under three minutes and not intended
for audiences of more than 100 (Frey, 2008). When a family makes a home video and wants to share it with long distance family members, the easiest thing to do would be to upload the video to Youtube and send the link to the family members, rather than send that video individually by email. Media is not content, and not tools of communication, but media mediates human relationships: when media changes, human relationships change. Almost 10,000 videos are addressed specifically to Youtube users every day (Frey, 2008). In this way Youtube has built up a community affecting the way the members communicate to each other.

**YouTube: Changing the Way We Learn**

Youtube has changed the way we learn. When you don't know how to do something or something needs to be done, you can read a book about it or look at the instruction, but the best way to learn to do something is through a video demonstration. I got through my Calculus classes by reviewing on Youtube, getting different perspectives on the same problem. When my Xbox was broken, instead of paying money to have it repaired I watched a video on Youtube on how to fix it. Video is one of the more important types of information on the web. With greater bandwidth, better devices, video is going to be even more important for people looking for information. Helping people find information, that’s what our mission is all about (Creators of Youtube qtd. in Rushe & Durman, 2006). Whether we learn from an instructional video, the news, or a recorded speech, Youtube has greatly changed and enhanced the way we do that.

**Reasoning**

Youtube is a cultural phenomenon because it changes the way we live our day to day lives; whether, by changing the way we watch, learn, communicate, or work. Youtube is a new culture that includes all cultures of the world. “You” (referring to Youtube) was named person of the year in 2006 (Hilderbrand, 2007). This goes to show how our culture personifies the website as one of us making it a sign of our time. Youtube contains the history of today’s popular culture by having a user created, user generated, and user distributed content (Hilderbrand, 2010). Youtube has and will continue to be a sign of our time.
References


Canine-Anxiety Reduction Theory of Communication

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Introduction

Research suggests anxiety reduction and improved concentration are results of canine interaction with children. “Studies show that benefits can be achieved in brief periods of contact with canines,” (Meyer, 1997, 38-9). A recent study performed at Kent State reveals interest in bringing a pet to campus among freshman students. Even though college freshmen are generally healthy, going away to college is a major life transition. The students that participated did indicate that they were interested in a pet therapy program as part of their orientation to college life (Adamle, Riley, and Carleson, 2009, 545-8). This study examines effects of having a canine present among college students with test anxiety during an exam. A contrast was examined between students who own dogs and non-dog owning students. Also contrasted are the personalities of the dogs, and how the breed or size of the dogs may have been a factor in the results of the experiment.

Nancy Sarvis hypothesizes test anxiety is significantly decreased for college students, during academic examinations, if a canine is present in the room. Students were asked to rate their stress level during their last examination. The survey also ascertained if the student is a dog owner and if they had a fear of dogs, prior to the experiment. The students then rated their stress level during an examination with a canine in the room. I hypothesize having a canine in the room will be beneficial to most students, regardless of whether the student is a dog owner or not. Here, I explore the results of this experiment and information about how differing canine personalities, and breeds, affect canine-human communication. I incorporate pertinent information for potential canine handlers who are interested in animal-assisted therapy (AAT).

Stanley Coren is a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia, recognized for his research on dog-human interactions. In his book, Why Does My Dog Act that Way?: A Complete Guide to Your Dog’s Personality, Coren (2006), writes about five personality traits of canines that were determined based on a statistical procedure known as factor analysis. Coren’s research suggests that some testable personality traits are Intelligence/Learning Ability, Sociability, Energy Level, Emotional Reactivity, and Dominance/Territoriality (78-83).

As Coren suggests, this information is vital for choosing breeds and characteristics necessary for the particular work the dog will be required to do (68-9). Much time and effort is expended in training dogs for their jobs before they are placed in their positions; therefore, it is common to assess the temperament and mentality of dogs before attempting to train them for
various types of work. This can make it more probable that the necessary personality traits will be prominent in the specific dog being trained. For instance, you would want a breed high in intelligence, such as a Labrador retriever, to train as a guide dog for a blind person, as this dog must have the ability to make decisions for their human, such as when to cross the street. Another example would be having a German shepherd trained to work as a police dog, due to their Dominance personality trait (92-3). Coren lists most breeds, as grouped by the American Kennel Club (AKC) for the function of the breed, in the appendix of his book (257-2).

While no one dog, even a pure-bred dog, can be determined to have the exact personality traits that Coren’s research suggests, I found it interesting to compare the traits listed in Coren’s book to the dogs used in the experiment. Johnson is a male Great Pyrenees mix owned by Nancy Sarvis. Coren rates the Dominance/Territoriality trait of this breed as moderately high (259). The owner sees this trait exhibited in the home environment, while in his yard, but does not feel that he exhibits the Dominance/Territoriality trait in public. This is probably due to the fact that he has never been placed in a position in public where he felt his owner was threatened in any way. The Intelligence/Learning Ability for this breed is considered moderately low (259). Johnson went through a group obedience class when his owner first adopted him. She, and the group’s instructor, found Johnson quite capable of learning obedience requirements, although the instructor did comment on his great willingness to work, (something she had not previously noted as predominate in her work with other dogs of this breed).

Johnson is usually slow in regards to his processing of the requested command. He is not exhibiting reluctance to comply but his slow reaction is most likely an exhibition of his personality and that of his breed. The breed is rated as having very low Emotional Reactivity and very low Energy personality characteristics (259). These could be determining factors in his performance during obedience classes. The owner does state that while most of the other dogs in the obedience class were generally excited to perform faster by a change in the tone of the owners voice—to one of excitement—this had little or no effect on Johnson in training sessions.

Johnson is well-suited for the task of assisting students in lowering their test anxiety because he is a very low-energy dog that would be content to lay quietly during exams. He has low Emotional Reactivity, which is also consistent with Coren’s assessment of this breed (259). This trait allowed Johnson to remain calm, even though the students were anxious when they came into the room to take the tests. Coren rates this breed as moderately high in Sociability. The owner agrees with this rating, as Johnson loves to be around people of any age. This trait contributes to his allowing people to pet him for long periods, and he is very content to be handled by new people. These traits are vital in the visits Johnson makes with his owner to local nursing homes.
The other dog in the experiment is a female Shih Tzu named Pebbles, owned by Kathryn Starnes, who assisted with this experiment. Coren's research rates the Shih Tzu very low on Dominance/Territorial personality traits, moderately low on Intelligence/Learning Ability, very low on Emotional Reactivity, moderately high on Sociability, and moderately low on Energy (261). The owner of Pebbles indicates her personality traits as Dominance/Territorial: moderately high, Intelligence/Learning Ability: very high, Emotional Reactivity: moderately high, Sociability: moderately high, and Energy: moderately high. The owner of Pebbles states emphatically that Pebbles does not rate on the lower end of any of the personality traits listed. Breeders have designed the Shih Tzu to be perfect companion animals (Coren, 2006, 75). It is not surprising that Pebbles would receive these ratings from her owner. Nor is it surprising that Pebbles was able to act as a temporary companion to the subjects during their examination.

These evaluations about breeds and personalities are useful to gauge the personalities of Johnson and Pebbles against the standards that Coren has statistically given the breeds. People who have owned or worked with these two breeds may have knowledge about these breed-specific personality traits. It is important to note that these traits were not communicated beforehand to any of the subjects. Please note that some of the subjects do not own dogs, and therefore their knowledge of dog-breed personalities was most likely very limited.

While the subjects, researchers, and current readers would recognize the symbolic meanings attributed to the words assigned in the personality profiles likely found for these dogs, only the owner would have knowledge of their dog’s personality. How would these subjects assign meaning to their own “symbols” of the dogs invited to their exam?

Symbolic Interactionism is a communication theory that is included in Em Griffin’s (2009) book, A First Look at Communication Theory. The book references Herbert Blumer’s theory of communication which starts with the core principle that “…humans act toward people or things on the basis of the meanings they assign to those people or things.” In words that apply to this experiment, without prior knowledge of the personality traits of dog breeds in general, and without knowledge about the personalities of the two dogs involved in the study, how did the subjects assign meaning to the animals that would account for their being rated as beneficial in lowering test anxiety? It is plausible to consider if the canines involved in the experiment helped assign “symbols” for themselves in the minds of the subjects.

David Goode (2007) reports an ethnomethodological (EM), study of dog-human interaction in his book, Playing with Katie. Goode studied how he plays with his dog, Katie, in an effort to understand their playing through the fields of animal-human interaction and animal studies, as well from the viewpoint of a sociologist interested in EM. Goode explains EM as analyzing the everyday “lived order” of ordinary events, such as playing with one’s dog (10). This
produces qualitative data, as the researcher immerses themselves in interaction with others doing common actions usually employed by the participant being studied. One classic EM study that Goode presents in his book … “demonstrated that the meaning one finds in interaction does not rest on an understanding of the intended meanings of the other…” (13). This point is evident in our study. While the human participants may have been able to categorize the canines used as “beneficial,” the dogs certainly had no concept of being a student or taking an exam.

Goode addresses the fact that dogs are linguistically disabled—unable to utilize symbolic interaction, for the most part—and so by this definition, are unable to engage in organized interaction. Goode brings up the point that dog guardians usually actively construct—for ourselves and others—the identity of the dog. He shares an example of his dog, Jack, introducing himself to an archeology class at work on their excavation site. Goode proceeded to tell the students that Jack was sweet and harmless, while Jack proceeded to establish his own identity with the group. Jack was able, in the events of interacting with the group of students over the six-week period of the excavation, to establish his identity without symbolic interaction. Goode defines dog guardians as talking for their pet to define the dog, often ignoring what contribution the dog is making during the interaction (133-4).

Goode references a book by C.R. Sanders, Understanding Dogs: Living and Working with Canine Companions, to invite us to see dogs as communicators that do not use symbols as a way to interact with humans. Sanders describes dogs as “sensitive readers of situations and actions.” Goode references Sanders’s writing about social interaction: At its most elemental, social interaction involves conscious beings who are co-present. For successful interactions to take place, these actors must possess certain basic abilities and share fundamental understandings. The foundation of this exchange is the mutual definition of the situation in which the interaction is taking place (135).

To reiterate, Johnson and Pebbles do not have a symbolic meaning for exams. The students who were being tested had no prior exposure to dogs being present during their examinations. The ability of these two dogs to contribute beneficially to the student test anxiety is not rational, if viewed from a symbolic interaction theory of communication. However, the evidence supports that the dogs were beneficial in this setting.

Cynthia Chandler (2001) writes about the use of animals to assist in therapy sessions to reduce anxiety and increase participation. She gives the following guidelines for people interested in AAT.

Mental health and educational professionals who engage in AAT should demonstrate knowledge and skill in the following areas: 1) social skill development and obedience
knowledge and skill in the following areas: 1) social skill development and obedience training for the pet, 2) therapy or activity skill training for the pet and handler, 3) establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with counseling and educational facility staff, 4) assessing the appropriateness of AAT with a particular client or student, 5) the basics of zoonoses (transmittable diseases) and risk management, 6) establishing and applying counseling or educational goals and interventions, and 7) assessing therapeutic or educational progress (3). Not all pets, even those with great social skills, and those that have undergone obedience training, are suitable for this type of work. It is of paramount importance that the personality of the dog and the dog’s willingness to work in this capacity be carefully evaluated.

The future of AAT depends on the ability/willingness of handlers to screen their own pets for potential problems. This requires the ability to communicate effectively with one’s dog. This relates to how commands are processed to the canine, but it also requires one to understand how the dog feels about their role in AAT. Education on the subject of dog-human interaction should be part of the training of individuals interested in having a career in AAT. This will require more research to develop curriculums in this area.

**Methodology**

Students were selected for this study by completing a purposive sample survey to determine which members of the population experienced test anxiety on their last exam. They were asked to rate their anxiety level from their last exam on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being no anxiety to 10 being high anxiety. The survey also asked them if they own a dog and if they had a fear of dogs. The population consisted of three classes of students due for exams in Marriage and Family classes at Northeast State Community College. Students who denied having test anxiety and students with a fear of dogs were not included in the study. Students participating in the study were taken to a separate room for testing. A dog was present in the room while they took the exam. The students were asked to complete surveys after their exam. The students rated their anxiety level during the test, the level of benefit the dog contributed to lowering their anxiety during the exam, and their distraction level during the exam. These questions were rated on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being low and 10 being high.

Two dogs were used in this study. The first dog, Johnson is a canine that has experience in visiting nursing homes. He is a Great Pyrenees mix, approximately six years of age. Johnson was present during the first two exams. Pebbles is an eighteen-month-old female purebred Shi Tzu used in the third exam. Pebbles is a canine that has experience around a diverse variety of people, and tends to do exceptionally well with new crowds. Having two different dogs allowed for a contrast of the differences, if any, between the sizes and breeds of the dogs being a factor during the study.
Results

Results show that both Johnson and Pebbles had the expected effect of lowering test anxiety for college students in the study. In this study, Pebbles lowered test anxiety more than Johnson did. The majority of the students rated the benefit level of the dogs at six or higher. Overall, Pebbles rated as eliciting the highest level of benefit to students. One student—a non-dog owner, gave Pebbles a 10 on benefit level, and rated her overall test anxiety with a canine present during the exam at a two. This student noted she cried, due to test anxiety, after taking the previous test prior to the canine experiment; her previous test anxiety level was rated a 10. Moreover, only one student—a non-dog owner—rated an increase in anxiety level with a dog present. These results indicate a promising lead to a finding that canines can be beneficial to students suffering from the extremes of test anxiety. On distraction level, Johnson received some higher ratings. However, the majority of students who tested with Johnson gave him a one in this area. Student survey results revealed that Pebbles scored the lowest score—a one—on a rating scale, for distraction. Student and canine body language during the study was observable, and researchers noted its appearance as relaxed.

The difference between the sizes of the canines used in the study do not emphatically prove that smaller dogs would always prove to be more beneficial. Differences in the rooms used and the fact that the test with Pebbles was postponed for a few days—which allowed more time to study for the exam—should be noted as variables. Due to Johnson’s size and the layout of the classroom, this canine was stationed in the back of the room to one side. Pebbles was stationed on the conference table among the participants. Toward the end of the exam involving Pebbles, she took a nap, which in turn elicited an observable calming effect in and of itself.

Both canines used in the study cooperated alike; therefore the tranquility of the dogs served their purpose in the classroom setting. All research participants tested in a room other than his or her normal classroom setting. The group of test participants with Johnson were tested in a classroom with computers at desks. The group with Pebbles tested in a small conference room. The rooms used were a definite variable to be considered.

Conclusions

This study provides reasoning for the theory that dogs help relieve anxiety. The dogs were effective in helping most of the college students reduce test anxiety during exams. We were able to learn, through this study, the perceived amount of student benefits with canines present during an exam. This information may be useful in determining that specific breeds of dogs, with differing personalities and physical traits, may be more beneficial in this type of setting than others. I conclude that dogs contribute in ways we are attempting to understand. Results suggest dogs are able to interact with humans in a manner as to contribute to stress reduction, whether they do or do not have symbolic interaction with humans. This was included so we might look
to other communication theories for a much broader understanding of dog-human interactions. The importance of safe dog-human interaction in clinical or educational settings should be evaluated and considered. Canine-Anxiety Reduction Theory of Communication shows there is meaning and purpose in interactions between humans and canines. This study contributes to unraveling the mysteries of the abilities of dogs to reduce anxiety.
References


Today’s Culture in MMOGs  
An Analysis of Today’s Culture  
through Online Multiplayer Video Games  

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The MMOG (Massively Multiplayer Online Game), is a genre of video game that uses the internet to connect massive amounts players. These games can be huge, and well-designed MMOGs can be described as a virtual world. These worlds can be anything the game creators want them to be, from a medieval world of knights and dragons to a science fiction world were spaceships and laser guns rule. Several MMOGs give the user the option to create their own content, and add it to the game were spelling other players can interact with it. This allows one to see the popular ideas and trends of the day, and brings the real world into the virtual world of the game. Other aspects of the game, such as it’s theme and content, are also reflective of modern culture.

This research paper analyzes today’s culture through MMOGs by addressing the following questions:
1. Which themes in MMOGs are the most predominant?
2. Why do people play MMOGs?
3. What kind of content do MMOG players upload?
Understanding how today’s culture affects an industry as infantile as that of the MMOG reveals the pervasiveness of the culture, whereas understanding who plays MMOGs and why brings to light the human desire to escape reality.

Which MMOG Themes Are the Most Predominant?

MMOGs come in a variety of themes, including fantasy, science fiction and reality-simulating social “hangouts”. The theme of the game predetermines the activities players participate in while playing the game. For example, the game Runescape is a fantasy MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) in which the players take on the role of a knight or a wizard, and can do such things as slay monsters, duel other players, and cast spells.

In contrast, Second Life, a “real life” RPG simply allows its players to live a “second life” in the game, and do such things as get a job, go to school, and build a business. So what do people play the most? What does today’s culture want to do when given the choice to do anything they want, possible or impossible? The answer is in the chart below, courtesy of mmogchart.com: Obviously, fantasy RPGs, such as the games Runescape and Word of Warcraft are the most
popular, accounting for over ninety-four percent of all active MMOG subscriptions. This implies that today’s society, when given the choice to do anything, is the most attracted toward the fantasy world of dragons and goblins.

Why do People Play MMOGs?
Most fantasy MMORPGs allow players to perform some sort of sorcery, like incinerating an opponent with a fireball, or electrocuting them with lightning. As can be imagined, this gives the player a great sense of power and superiority, which is one reason why people are drawn by the millions to these games. In addition, players also like the way MMORPGs allow them to be and do anything they want, the RPG (role playing game) style of the game, and the social aspect that comes from 2,000 players being online simultaneously.

The MMORPG Free Realms is the best example of a MMORPG that allows players to do anything they want. In Free Realms, players can be a chef, a racecar driver, a ninja, and more. Although the game has a chat filter that prevents users from using profanity while conversing with other players, it is marketed as a virtual “realm” where there are no rules, and the player can do anything he wants. This marketing tactic has apparently been successful, because Free Realms has accumulated more than 12,000,000 users since its release in 2008 (Ivan, 2010). This is a clear indicator that today’s culture has a desire to be free of all rules.

A trademark characteristic of all RPGs, multiplayer or not, is their ability to keep the player busy completing “quests” and “leveling up”. “Quests” are more or less chores or scavenger
hunts the player completes in a MMORPG to acquire a higher status. A player will be given a quest by a character that is not controlled by human players, then the player completes the quest and returns to the character who assigned the quest. In most instances, players take up quests to get some special in-game item, or to complete the game’s orientation tutorial. For example, to unlock the ninja “job” in the game Free Realms, the player must locate ninja master Ty, and run several errands for him. Another example is the “vampire slayer” quest in Runescape. This quest starts in a small village with a man who has witnessed a vampire massacre many of the village’s citizens. Once the player takes up this quest, he must go to the vampire’s castle, slay him, and return to the man who gave him the quest to receive payment for saving the village.

“Leveling up” is a bit different. When one is playing an RPG, one will find that the majority of the activities in the game are “locked” because one of the player’s levels is not high enough. Also, players usually have twenty levels or more to max out. In Runescape, players have a health level, stamina level, attack level, strength level, archery level … the list is enormous, and keeps growing as the game developers continue adding activities to the game. Some players make it their main objective while playing Runescape to just simply “level up” by doing such tasks as killing goblins, or mining ore repeatedly. Both “quests” and “leveling up” can give the player a false sense of accomplishment, and are used to keep players on the game, and gives RPGs in particular an addictive quality, although an outside observer might find them boring (Kurapati, 2004, Seay, 2006).

One other reason people play MMOGs is for the social outlet they can provide. MMOGs can support thousands of players at once, allowing friends to find each other in the game and work together on quests, and battle monsters together. Players can also meet new “friends” in MMOGs who might share the same interests. People that are socially challenged can use MMOGs to find friends and even acquire a position of great popularity, even if they are rejected in the real world (Kurapati, 2004, Yee, 2006).

What Kind of Content Do MMOG Players Upload?

Today’s culture enters the world of the MMOG conspicuously through user generated content. One game that is almost completely composed of user generated content is Second Life. As mentioned before, Second Life mimics real life by allowing players to engage in real life activities that are not normally part of a MMOG, like having a career and going to school. The game also allows players to construct their own buildings, vehicles and weapons. The content users upload on Second Life is also completely uncensored, so players can, quite literally, create or upload anything they want. So what do Second Life users do with this freedom? Some build brothels and upload pornographic images. To mitigate this problem, Linden Labs, the creators of Second Life, have added the option for players to turn off mature content, which means they cannot enter the mature area of the game were the “red light district” is located. Even with the
choice to turn off mature content, Second Life still reflects a tendency in today’s culture toward pornography (Hindman, 2011).

Another MMOG that allows players to add their own content is Roblox. In the strictest sense of the term, Roblox is not technically an MMOG, because it is not one continuous “world”, neither can one Roblox server support thousands of players at once. Roblox is actually a website-based community, but it does allow its users to create and upload games to the site that can support up to about thirty players at once. Because a user-generated Roblox game can support such a volume of players, the author classifies it as a type of MMOG. Unlike Second Life, Roblox is censored, because it is designed to be a child-friendly website. From experience as a Roblox user, the author can testify that the most popular games on Roblox tend to be war games or paintball simulators.

This has the implication that today’s juvenile culture has a tendency towards violence. Users also can add their own content indirectly to MMOGs through registering for Beta, while the game is still in development. All video games have what is called a “Beta” testing period, were a select few individuals, or “beta testers”, are allowed to play the game before its official release. Game developers do this to make sure all of the game’s programming errors and glitches are gone before the game is released, and to make sure the targeted audience approves of the game. In MMOG Beta testing, the beta testers get to play the game before it is overrun with other users, and can make suggestions to the game developers about how they think the game can be improved. This allows the Beta testers to add their ideas to the game indirectly and, in a way, reflects the democratic nature of modern American society.

Through gaming experience and research, today’s culture can be clearly seen in several aspects through MMOGs. Through the percentage of active fantasy MMORPG subscriptions, it can be concluded that today’s culture favors the imaginary world of knights and dragons over worlds that more closely resemble reality. Through examining the reasons players play MMOGs, the conclusion can be drawn that today’s culture would rather escape into the fantasy world of the MMORPG than live in reality. Tendencies toward pornography and violence, both of which are major real-life issues, are seen in the content players upload in games such as Second Life and Roblox. Beta Testing reflects the democratic side of American culture, showing that today’s culture influences MMOGs in every aspect.
References


“MAD MEN”:
Opportunities for Critical
Thinking and Research

Jim Kelly
Associate Professor of History and Humanities

“That is the true myth of America. She starts old, old, wrinkled and writhing in an old skin. And there is a gradual sloughing off of the old skin, towards a new youth. It is the myth of America”

--From D.H. Lawrence, Studies in Classical American Literature

The recipient of 15 Emmy Awards and 4 Golden Globes, the popular and much-discussed AMC TV series “Mad Men,” which premiered on July 19, 2007, is an ideal vehicle for scholarly research and critical thinking. With its fifth season in production (at the time of this writing), the show has already been the subject of three anthologies of scholarly essays plus numerous articles, websites, “mashups,” blogs, tweets, lifestyle guides, and books devoted to the series and its time period. In addition, the series has also generated some interesting marketing campaigns, most notably a “Mad Men” fashion line from Banana Republic, as well as films and other TV series—i.e. “PanAm”—that attempt, with various degrees of success, to recreate the ambiance of the 1960s. The series has also attracted its share of accolades that pronounce it one of the best, and most historically accurate, shows ever produced for television.

With all this attention being focused on a series based on the lives and intrigues of the people who work at a New York City advertising agency during the 1960s, the time has come to ask how students can use the show to engage in some interesting and worthwhile research, all the while honing their critical thinking skills. Following are four reasons why the series merits serious scholarly attention.

First, the series provides us with some refreshing and provocative ways to think about history. All too often, students of history have been subjected to the unpleasant experience of having to memorize “facts and dates” and to visualize history as a series of “bullet points” that seem to have no relevance to their lives. “Mad Men,” with its almost obsessive-compulsive attention to historical detail, invites us to explore the 1960s in ways most history textbooks fail to convey. Studying the series as history highlights three approaches that have been increasingly valuable to our understanding of the historical process—“lived experience,” “mindsets,” and “sensory history”.


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David McCullough, author of the popular biography of John Adams and other works, challenges us to consider that “no one ever lived in the past,” and to understand that history is really a record of “lived experience” rather than merely a decade-by-decade textbook narrative of what happened. In their stimulating interpretation of American History from the 1880s to the present, The Mindset Lists Of American History, Beloit College Mindsets creators Ron Nief and Tom McBride invite us to visualize history as consisting of “mindsets” that profile generations of Americans and their concerns. By understanding this process, we are able to see a given time period from the perspective of those who experienced it. And, in his pathbreaking new book Sensing The Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History, Mark M. Smith, shows how the burgeoning new field of “sensory history” can give us new tools for critically thinking about the past. “Mad Men,” by presenting history as lived experience, filled with sensory information, and shaped by generational mindsets, offers students and teachers some refreshing new perspectives for research and critical thinking.

Second, “Mad Men” gives us occasion to examine and question our tendency to view the past nostalgically rather than realistically. “Mad Men” is one of the few TV series about the past that doesn’t filter events through rose-colored glasses, distorting facts along the way. Think of popular shows like “The Waltons,” “Little House On The Prairie,” “Happy Days” and “The Wonder Years” and consider how they offer us a visions of the past that are based on fantasy and wishful thinking rather than on factual evidence. The 1950s and 1960s have been the subject of much of this nostalgia, and “Mad Men” offers a valuable corrective to this nemesis of critical thinking.

As some commentators have pointed out, “Mad Men,” by attempting to be as historically accurate as possible, avoids the “nostalgia trap” (a term used by Stephanie Coontz in her book on American families during the 1950s and 1960s, cited below) while at the same time reminding us that we should always be aware that we inevitably view the past from the perspective of the present. Rather than longing for a long-lost “golden age,” however, we should use this insight to draw legitimate connections between “then” and “now.” While we can never fully understand the past without the unavoidable perspective of the present—even if we lived during the era in question—we can at least make the effort to critically think about the damaging effects of nostalgia.

As Christine Sprengler reminds us (in her essay, “Complicating Camelot: Surface Realism and Deliberate Archaism,” from the Analyzing Mad Men anthology, cited below), the historical references and objects that receive emphasis in “Mad Men” episodes “have the capacity to function as conduits to the age that produced them and to the later eras and impulses that recontextualized them.” Watching episodes of “Mad Men” can heighten our awareness that “recontextualizing” the past is not the same thing as distorting it by longing for the wonder years.
In a suggestive passage from the fourth season, “Mad Men” protagonist Don Draper (portrayed by Jon Hamm) observes, “We’re flawed because we want so much more. We’re ruined because we get these things and wish for what we had,” thereby summing up the true and misleading nature of nostalgia. Interestingly, Draper’s mindset was formed during the waning years of the Great Depression, a time when he was suffering from a less-than-ideal family life. In the series, Don Draper is the personification of the anti-nostalgic sentiment expressed in the D. H. Lawrence quote above—he is always looking toward the future, hoping to slough off his old skin and be reborn as a new person.

Third, “Mad Men” offers many opportunities for engaging students in research projects and class discussions. The issues presented and the questions raised by the series are truly interdisciplinary in scope. For example, students of psychology can explore a wide range of interpersonal issues, and can benefit from books like Dr. Stephanie Newman’s Madmen On The Couch: Analyzing the Minds of the Men and Women of the Hit TV Show, an insightful application of psychological theories and methodologies to the behavior of the show’s characters. As mentioned above, students of history can find many ways to study the 1960s by studying the series’ many references to events and attitudes of the era and by using the many historical documentaries that accompany the DVD series sets.

With its setting in the “mad” world of postwar Madison Avenue, the show is a primer of business and advertising practices during that very formative period in America and should be studied by students of accounting and marketing. The field of women’s studies has already produced a rich harvest of scholarly work on gender roles in the much-mythologized 1960s. Two recent books, for example, The Real Mad Men: The Renegades of Madison Avenue And The Golden Age of Advertising, by Andrew Cracknell and Mad Women: The Other Side of Life on Madison Avenue in the 60s and Beyond, by Jane Maas offer interesting historical perspectives about the series from Sixties-era advertising executives. Several essays about the series, most notably “We’ll start over like Adam and Eve’: The Subversion of Classic American Mythology,” by Melanie Hernandez and David Thomas Holmberg (found in the Analyzing Mad Men anthology, cited below), offer literary perspectives on the show, comparing characters like Don Draper to Jay Gatsby and Huck Finn. The growing body of scholarly analyses of “Mad Men” is providing ample source material for scholarship ranging from freshman research papers to doctoral dissertations.

Fourth, “Mad Men” offers students interested in the technical aspects of movie and television production some very interesting topics to explore. Several analysts have commented about the production values of the show and have compared series creator and producer Matthew Weiner to masterful motion picture producers and directors like Billy Wilder, Nunnally Johnson, and Jean Negulesco, whose films “The Apartment” (1960), “The Man In the Gray Flan-
nel Suit” (1956, from the novel by Sloan Wilson), and “The Best Of Everything (1959) were models for many of the sets and themes of his show. Jeremy G. Butler’s essay “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes: Historicizing Visual Style in Mad Men” (included in the Mad Men anthology cited below), for example, is a suggestive examination of the meticulous detail paid to the sets and music of the series, highlighting the unusually high production standards set by Weiner and his crew. A good argument can indeed be made that “Mad Men” has earned its place in a film studies course, alongside such classics as “Citizen Kane” and “The Godfather.”

In summary, I hope “Mad Men” and its impressive output of scholarly interest will be used to stimulate research, critical thinking, and discussion in classrooms across our nation. From what we have seen so far, this is a series that will produce fruit for some time to come, and we should encourage teachers and students to engage in this productive dialogue.


For well-written and enlightening studies of the emergence of advertising in America, see Susan Strasser’s Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989) and Lawrence R. Samuel’s Brought To You By: Postwar Television Advertising And The American Dream (University of Texas Press, 2001), both of which provide essential context for understanding the world of “Mad Men.”

The D.H. Lawrence quote that introduced this essay is from R.W.B. Lewis’ classic study The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (The University of Chicago Press, 1955), a still vital and relevant study of the traditions and the mythology that gives us a perspective from which to view the meaning and symbolism of Don Draper and his colleagues; Lewis’ concluding chapter, which brings his story into the 20th century, “Adam As Hero In the Age Of Containment,” should be read by anyone trying to find links between Madison Avenue (m)ad men and their nineteenth and early twentieth century literary predecessors.

If you are intrigued by the possibilities offered by understanding history in terms of lived experience, mindsets, and sensory stimulation, start by reading Ron Nief and Tom McBride’s imaginative The Mindset Lists Of American History: From Typewriters to Text Messages, What Ten Generations of Americans Think Is Normal (Wiley, 2011) and Mark M. Smith’s
Sensing The Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History (University of California Press, 2007), both of which present a truly exhilarating framework for conceptualizing the human experience in a way that transcends the usual “facts and dates” approach—“Mad Men,” in so many ways, interprets history in terms of mindsets and sensory, lived experience.

For researchers who want to think more deeply about the influence of nostalgia in history, much and be learned from the many works of Michael Kammen, most notably his study of the often convoluted ways Americans “invent” tradition, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (Knopf, 1993). With Kammen as a starting point, move on to Stephanie Coontz's The Way We Never Were: American Families And The Nostalgia Trap (Basic Books, 2000), a provocative study that focuses on the 1950s an 1960s, Vera Dika's Recycled Culture in Contemporary Art and Film: The Uses of Nostalgia (Cambridge University Press, 2003), an essential guide to the way movies deal with nostalgia, and Alison Landsberg's Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture (Columbia University Press, 2004), an unforgettable journey into the many, and often unexpected ways that nostalgia shapes our memories, both real and imagined. Another book that might at first glance seem peripheral to this study is Laurel Thayer Ulrich’s The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth (Knopf, 2001), a work that upon closer inspection becomes central to any study of nostalgia and tradition—this piece of impressive scholarship and imagination recreates the world of the 18th century in much the same way as Matthew Weiner recreates the world of the mid-twentieth century.

For a very entertaining and insightful study of the role played by women in the era of Mad Men (and women), see Katherine J. Lehman's Those Girls: Single Women in Sixties and Seventies Popular Culture (University Press of Kansas, 2011), a work that sets new standards for media studies.

The Mad Men bookshelf is growing larger every day, and the following list is but a sampling of the best so far, and essential for inclusion in any bibliography about the series—and the following list does not include the many online blogs and websites devoted to the series. Three anthologies of scholarly essays examining all aspects of the series are truly indispensable: Mad Men and Philosophy: Nothing Is As It Seems, edited by Rod Carveth and James B. South (Wiley, 2010), Mad Men: Dream Come True TV, edited by Gary R. Edgerton (I. B. Taurus, 2011), and Analyzing Mad Men: Critical Essays On The Television Series, edited by Scott F. Stoddart (McFarland and Company, 2011).

Two other books, containing episode synopses and essays about historical aspects of the series are The Ultimate Guide To Mad Men, edited by Will Dean (Guardian Books, 2010) and Kings of Madison Avenue: The Unofficial Guide To Mad Men, edited by Jesse McLean (ECW
Press, 2009). Works focusing on specific aspects of the series are beginning to appear, most notably Dr. Stephanie Newman’s Madmen On The Couch: Analyzing the Minds of the Men and Women of the Hit TV Show (Thomas Dunne Books, 2012), a perspective from a working psychologist, and Andrew Cracknell’s The Real Mad Men: The Renegades of Madison Avenue and the Golden Age of Advertising (Running Press, 2012) and Jane Maas’s Mad Women: The Other Side of Life on Madison Avenue in the ‘60s and Beyond (Thomas Dunne Books, 2012), both which offer perspectives from former advertising executives who worked during the “Mad Men” era. A recent issue of Newsweek magazine (“Mad Men Goes Back to the Office,” March 26 and April 2, 2012) was devoted to the 5th season premier of the series and contained several essays about the show, as well as modern advertisements presented in the style of the Mad Men era.

Of course, the very best source about the series is the series itself, the first four seasons of which are available from Lions Gate in both standard and high definition versions; highlighted by a host of special features, including period retrospectives, documentaries, and cast commentaries on each episode, these DVDs are outstanding examples of how a TV series can be presented in an effective and informative way. Selected episodes are also available on services like Netflix and On Demand. I recommend the Blu-Ray versions because of their stunning video and audio qualities. This should be a series you are proud to own—think of it as a “Great Books Of The Western World” collection for the 21st century.
The Effects of Advanced Technology on Society

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“So one begins to wonder what is going to happen to the human race. Technology keeps on advancing with greater and greater power, either for good or for destruction” -David Bohm (qtd. in Symonds, 2010). Our society is growing and advancing more and more each day, and technology plays a huge part in how and why we are advancing. However, with every stride we make in advancing, we are faced with problems and hard choices that never even existed before technology. It is almost as if we are simultaneously excelling and deteriorating.

To illustrate this point, think for a moment about life without technology, using the elementary example of a caveman. He is ignorant and lives a very primitive lifestyle, but he’s happy; he doesn’t know what he’s missing. Then technology comes along and complicates everything. For example, take a look at one aspect of life without technology: we have a very healthy environment not lacking in trees. The only problem is we have no paper. So, technology brings us paper, and with paper come jobs such as newspaper companies and such. However, all this is at the expense of the trees. So technology solves this problem by bringing us the internet. Now that books, photos and information can be accessed online, the amount of trees we harvest is greatly diminished, thus strengthening our environment.

However, this new improvement causes reduction of the paper-related jobs. All of this is simply an example of how technology can complicate things. Writer Elle Kamino asks mankind, “In many ways, of course, technology has made our lives simpler but I ask you now, has life become too simple? I also have to ask why in the simplicity then, do things tend to seem even more complex?” (Kamino, 2008) With every benefit of technology comes a detriment, and when that problem is resolved, another one takes its place. All of this causes us to wonder if we are even advancing at all, for it seems that every time we take strides, we are forced back by the consequences of our actions.

The Internet

The internet is an amazing source of information and entertainment, but like with all technology, each positive effect has a negative effect. For instance, information is so accessible on the internet; with just a few clicks we can learn anything we want to know. Before the internet, it was not that simple, but now we literally have the world at our fingertips. However, because information is constantly available, we do not apply ourselves to reach our full potentials. Because of the fact that we have knowledge readily available, we do not have the same hunger for knowledge as the great minds of the past such as Einstein, Da Vinci, or Socrates.
Another benefit of the internet is social interaction. Websites like Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter allow us to communicate with other people through photos and different games and activities. However, sometimes we tend to use online social networking as our only means of communication and interaction. Each time we replace a face-to-face interaction with a cyberspace interaction, we distance ourselves from society. Also, people are bolder when they are behind a computer screen. It is easy for a person to say something that he or she does not mean.

These are just a few aspects of the mixed effects of the internet. The internet has benefited us in so many ways, but there are dangers that come with it as well, making us wonder if it is such a good thing or not. There are minor dangers such as becoming lazy through so many different forms of entertainment, but there is a greater, sometimes life-threatening danger that comes with the benefits of the internet. The next section is an example of the consequences of not fully heeding these dangers.

**The Story of Ashleigh Hall**

In 2009, 17-year-old Ashleigh Hall met Pete Cartwright, age 16, on the social network Facebook. They eventually developed a romance and soon set a date to meet. The arrangements were that Pete’s father would pick Ashleigh up from her house and take her to meet Pete. On the night of the date, Ashleigh told her mother that she was spending the night with a friend. Unsuspectingly, her mother agreed, and just as planned, a car drove up at their house.

The man then drove Ashleigh to a deserted area where he bound her hands and covered her mouth and nose with duct tape, proceeding to rape her. Ashleigh, unable to breathe, suffocated to death and her body was later found in a ditch. It turns out that “Pete Cartwright” did not exist, and Ashleigh’s murderer was Peter Chapman, creator of the fake Facebook profile. Technology made it so simple for Chapman to gain the trust of his victim (Parks, 2011).

Again, technology is very beneficial, but as displayed by this story, there are great dangers that come with it as well. There are ways to avoid these dangers, however. If Ashleigh had not agreed to meet Pete, she would still be alive today. It is in our power to avoid the negative influences of technology, but the fact still stands that technology has complicated our lives forever. Not only are there dangers that come with technology, but there are hard choices as well. The next section will discuss some of these hard choices.

**Benefits of Advanced Technology Vs. Resulting Hard Choices**

The choices that we face today are choices that didn’t even exist before the wonders of advanced technology, but now they play a huge part in our everyday lives. With each benefit of technology comes a hard choice. One benefit of technology is life-support, which sustains a person’s life while they are critically ill or injured. However, now that we have this option, we
are often faced with choices such as how long to support the life of a brain-dead patient.

Treatments such as chemotherapy, radiation and kidney dialysis have saved so many lives, but all of these and so many more have placed difficult choices into the hands of doctors, friends and family. How does a family choose whether or not to put a person through a terrible treatment, when it may only extend their life by a few months?

Also, now that we have amazing abilities to perform previously impossible surgeries, we are often faced with problems like the issue of finance. For example, we spend a quarter of a million dollars on each liver transplant performed. If we organize insurance programs to provide funding for liver transplants for children, can we deny these same funds to alcoholics with self-induced cirrhosis of the liver (Colen, 1986, p. 24)? These choices make up only a small portion of the wide range of complications caused by technology. The next section is a true account of the difficulty of these technological choices.

The Short Life of Justin Micha Fleisher

Justin was born on August 28, 1979, to parents Jeff and Ellen. At six months old, Justin had not developed the skills normal for a baby of his age, and only a month before his first birthday, he was diagnosed with infantile Tay-Sachs disease, or TSD. TSD is a disorder caused by an inherited genetic defect, and children born with this disease usually die before reaching the age of five. After being informed that their son’s disease was fatal, Jeff and Ellen tried to cope with this fact and live their lives, clinging to the time they had left with Justin.

Justin’s health declined rapidly during the seven months spent at home after the diagnosis, and it was soon time to implant a feeding tube. In February of 1981, Jeff and Ellen made the difficult decision to place Justin the care of an institution. His medical needs had now increased beyond their capability. Jeff and Ellen were devastated that their son could no longer live with them. Ellen visited Justin daily, but by this time, the disease had blinded him. To cope with the coming loss of Justin, Jeff and Ellen decided to have another baby. They knew it could still be several years before Justin died and they still wanted to have a family, so this wasn’t necessarily a “replacement” for Justin.

When Ellen became pregnant, both she and Jeff were prepared to face an abortion if test results showed any defects. Thankfully, the test results showed that everything was fine. On August 31, 1981, a perfectly healthy baby boy, Brent, was born to Jeff and Ellen. Only 13 months later, Jeff and Ellen had another baby, Adam.

By this time Justin was three years old and his health was still deteriorating. He was drifting in and out of a coma, and his symptoms were worsening. Justin was also very sensitive
to touch; Jeff and Ellen couldn’t even hold him. Finally, the dreaded call reached the Fleisher home. Justin had taken a turn for the worse. So, Jeff and Ellen visited the institution to spend the last hours with their son.

Justin died on January 11, 1983. He was three-and-a-half years old. After his death, Ellen and Jeff were relieved that their son’s suffering was over. They mourned his death, of course, but to them he had really died the day of his diagnosis.

In April of 1984, Ellen became pregnant again. After being tested with a new prenatal diagnostic test, chorionic villus sampling, Jeff and Ellen received a phone call with the results. This was another Tay-Sachs baby. As with their two previous pregnancies, Jeff and Ellen were prepared to face what lay before them. They chose to abort the diseased baby. Ellen commentsthat they never found out about the sex of that last pregnancy.

In his book, Hard Choices: Mixed Blessing of Modern Medical Technology, author B.D. Colen sums it all up:

What price, then, do we want to put on life? What must be the quality of the life we preserve and extend? These are questions most of us would rather not ask, much less attempt to answer. . . .If we don’t face up to these hard choices now, and give them some serious thought, we will wake up in a few short years and find that the questions we never asked were answered—in ways that we may not like at all (Colen, 1986, p. 25-26).

We must grasp the extent of the effects of our technological abilities so that we can answer these questions that never even existed before advanced technology.

Our lives have been made so easy through the complexity of technology, and because of that, life has ironically turned complicated. This complicated simplicity could eventually lead to our destruction. Technology has opened many doors for our society and we have greatly benefited from that. However, we must understand that there are many risks that come with the wonders of advancing technology, and it is up to us to notice these dangers and decide how to react. Our lives are rapidly, yet unsuspectingly changing possibly for the worse, whether we want to admit it or not. We can easily place the full blame on advancing technology, yet we have the power to resist these changes. It is up to us to decide how profound of an effect we will allow upon ourselves.
References


This study sought to examine relationships between childhood maltreatment (including physical, sexual and emotional abuse) and adult depression and the differences between the sexes on relevant variables. The World Health Organization categorized depression as one of the most disabling clinical disorders in the world, estimating it to affect approximately 340 million people worldwide, including 18 million in the United States (Murray & Lopez, 1996). According to Leahy (2010), the estimated cost of depression, including loss of productivity and increases in medical expenses, is $83 billion annually. The onset of depression before the age of 21 has been of particular concern as it may predict higher rates of reoccurrence, longer hospitalizations and higher rates of co-morbid disorders (Fletcher, 2009). Depression may also correspond to a higher risk of disruptive behaviors, anxiety, and substance abuse for adolescents and young adults. According to Bifulco, Brown, and Alder (1991), maltreatment in childhood, particularly sexual abuse, is one of the most significant causes of depression.

Approximately 950,000 children were reported to be victims of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. in 2006 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, USDHHS, 2006). Of course, many such incidents go unreported. Although states are responsible for providing their own definitions of child abuse and neglect, the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act stipulates that child abuse and neglect “…at a minimum, refers to: Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm” (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009, ¶3). The four major subtypes of maltreatment are neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009).

The effects of neglect can be harmful and long-lasting for victims and its impact can become more severe as a child grows older. In general, neglect is defined as failure to provide for a child’s basic needs which may include: physical neglect (e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision); medical neglect (e.g., failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment); educational neglect (e.g., failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs); and, emotional neglect (e.g., inattention to a child’s emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care) (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009). Ne-
neglect may lead to cognitive delays or psychological problems, which may manifest as social and behavioral problems. Malnutrition, a form of physical neglect, may lead to reduced brain growth and can also result in cognitive, social, and behavioral deficits. Child neglect can be so severe as to cause a medical condition known as ‘failure to thrive’, where growth is stunted significantly below the norm for a child’s age and sex (DePanfilis, 2006). Neglect can often be found in situations in which abuse is also present.

Physical abuse can be defined as physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result of deliberate aggressive behavior toward a child, as would include such acts as kicking, shaking, hitting (with a hand or object), burning, or otherwise intentionally harming a child. According to a longitudinal study by Johnson et al., (2002), children who have been physically abused or witnessed such violence had a higher rate of outcomes of depression, anger, anger and anxiety in childhood. Sexual abuse amounts to any sexual activity perpetuated by adults with children, and includes such acts as fondling, penetration, indecent exposure, and exploitation in terms of pornography or prostitution (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009).

According to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, 9.3% of confirmed child abuse and neglect cases involved sexual abuse (USDHHS, 2007). This roughly translated to 83,800 confirmed childhood sexual abuse victims in 2005 alone. According to Weiss, Longhurst, and Mazure (1999), research indicates that childhood sexual abuse is associated with adult-onset depression in both men and women. Teicher, Samson, Polcari, and Andersen (2009) claimed that depression is the most common adult outcome of exposure to childhood sexual abuse. Also, Fergusson, Boden, and Horwood (2008), suggested exposure to childhood sexual and physical abuse was associated with increased risks of later developing a variety of mental disorders, including depression.

Further, studies have shown that 37% of people experienced some form of emotional abuse, either alone or in conjunction with physical or sexual abuse during childhood (Hart, Brassard, Binggeli, & Davidson, 2002). According to Allen (2008), childhood emotional abuse is an understudied topic compared with other forms of abuse and lacks a universal definition. Emotional abuse has been defined as a pattern of behavior that impairs a child’s emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats, or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009). According to Hart, Brassard, Binggeli, and Davidson (2002), psychological maltreatment is associated with more negative outcomes, including depression, than any other form of abuse.

**Sex Differences**

Weiss, Longhurst and Mazure (1999) suggested a history of major depression may be
more common in women, with a rate of 13 females to 5 males, reporting such a history on average. Additionally, there may be a difference in how childhood maltreatment impacts females in adulthood, as compared to males. Most epidemiological studies find that childhood sexual abuse is reported by at least 20% of women and between 5% and 10% of men (Finkelhor, 1994). According to Weiss, Longhurst and Mazure (1999), childhood sexual abuse is associated with adult depression more often for women than men. Bagley and McDonald (1984) reported that women with histories of childhood sexual abuse had more depressive symptoms than males.

Similarly, Bushnell, Wells, and Oakley-Brown (1999), reported that 20.7% of women with a history of childhood sexual abuse met lifetime diagnostic criteria for an adult psychiatric disorder; represented mostly by depression. In a longitudinal study of adolescents from the United States, Fletcher (2009) replicated previous research that showed childhood maltreatment to be a key link to adulthood depression for females, and further suggested the effects of childhood maltreatment on depression may increase with age. According to Heim and colleagues (2000), a victim’s perception of the seriousness of the abuse may also differ by sex.

Statement of the Problem

To summarize, experience of childhood emotional abuse is relatively common (Hart, Brassard, Binggeli, & Davidson, 2002), and it and other forms of abuse and maltreatment have been associated with depression in adulthood (e.g., Bifulco, Brown, & Alder, 1991; Fergusson, Boden, & Horwood, 2008). It has also been shown that women and men differ in terms of their rates of depression, as well as in the type of childhood maltreatment they are likely to have experienced, and their perceptions of the seriousness of that maltreatment (e.g., Heim, et al., 2000; Fletcher, 2009; Weiss, Longhurst & Mazure, 1999). Further, onset of depression before 21 years of age has been associated with a number of additional problems (Fletcher, 2009).

Therefore, it was deemed that a college sample with adequate female representation would be appropriate to look at differential relationships between various types of childhood maltreatment and depression in young adulthood. It was hypothesized there would be a significant, positive relationships between scores on scales measuring self-reported experiences of various types of childhood maltreatment and scores on a measure of depression. It was also hypothesized that females would have significantly higher depression scores than males.

Method Participants

Participants were recruited utilizing a convenience sample from various psychology classes from a local Southeastern university in the U.S., via an online participant management system. Within the system, participants are assigned ID codes to ensure anonymity. Participation was voluntary and yielded course credit. The current study included 207 participants. A total of 55 (26.6%) were male, 152 (73.4%) were female. Ages ranged from 17 to 62 (M = 21.86, SD =
In regards to race/ethnicity, 86.5% of participants reported being Caucasian /White, and 5% reported being African-American/Black.

**Materials and Procedure**

The Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) short-form was used to measure reported childhood maltreatment. The CTQ includes 28 items that measure 5 types of maltreatment: emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, and emotional and physical neglect. A 5-point Likert scale was used, which ranged from “Never True” to “Very Often True,” as regards experiences one recalls from childhood (Bernstein, et.al, 1997). Instrument reliability has reported to be quite high, where subscale alpha coefficients ranged from a low of .60 (Physical Neglect to a high of .92 (Emotional Neglect) in a sample of college undergraduates (Bernstein & Fink, 1998). The current study showed $x = .92$ for the CTQ total scale.

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), a short 20-item self-report designed to measure depressive symptoms, was used to measure depression. Participants responded to items by choosing: “Rarely or none of the time” (less than 1 day), “some or little of the time” (1-2 days), “occasionally or a moderate amount of time” (3-4 days) or “most or all of the time” (5-7 days). Internal consistency was reported for a general sample, where $x = .85$ (Radloff, 1977), and more recently for a hospital sample, with $x = .87$, and a clinic sample where $x = .77$ (Nishiyama, Ozaki, & Iwata, 2009). The current study showed an alpha of .91.

**Results**

An independent samples t-test was calculated to assess differences in reporting of childhood maltreatment and depression between females and males. There were no significant sex differences on any study variables for means on any scale scores. Means for the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) Scales were as follows: $M = 9.03$ (SD = 4.89) for Emotional Abuse; $M = 7.42$ (SD = 3.35) for Physical Abuse; $M = 6.45$ (SD = 4.10) for Sexual Abuse; $M = 9.35$ (SD = 4.71) for Emotional Neglect; $M = 7.83$ (SD = 2.86) for Physical Neglect; $M = 9.93$ (SD = 3.67) for Minimization and Denial; and, $M = 39.31$ (SD = 14.77) for the Total Score. For the Center for Epidemiologic Studies -Depression Scale (CES-D), the mean score was 9.03 with a standard deviation of 4.89. The hypothesis that females would have significantly higher depression scores than males was not supported as results showed no significant differences between females and males on the CES-D.

The hypothesis that there would be a significant, positive relationship between scores on measures of various types of childhood maltreatment and scores on a measure of depression was supported as scores on every CTQ scale were significantly related to the CES-D scores. Results indicated a moderate significant relationship between all forms of childhood maltreatment and depression. See Table 1 below for a correlation matrix of all study variables.
Table 1. Correlations between Study Variables

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Note: ** = p < .01; CTQ = Childhood Trauma Questionnaire; A = Abuse, N = Neglect; Emotional = Emotional; P = Physical; S = Sexual; MD = Minimization/Denial; TOT = Total Score; CESD = Center for Epidemiologic Studies -Depression Scale.

Discussion

Relationships between the variables of interest were solidly related to one another as predicted. The results may in fact be underestimates of the true strength of the relationships between childhood maltreatment and adulthood depression as individuals often consciously suppress or censor their reports of traumatic events, due to feelings of shame or fear of the consequences of disclosure (Allen, 1995; Rogers, 1995). Also, unconscious processes, such as dissociation or denial, can lead to the inability to recall traumatic experiences (Allen, 1995; Davis, 1996; Davis & Frawley, 1994; Herman, 1992; Rogers, 1995). Whatever the cause of lower levels of reporting for childhood maltreatment, the assertion that these events tend to be underreported is at least partially supported by the moderately strong and negative relationships between all of the CTQ maltreatment scales and the CTQ Minimization and Denial scale, where the latter scale measures a pervasive tendency to downplay childhood maltreatment experiences. Thus, it is possible that the effects of childhood maltreatment on adulthood depression are greater than may be indicated by the current numbers.

Confirmed was the fact that childhood maltreatment of all types are in fact related to adulthood depression, as reported in previous literature (e.g., Fergusson, Boden, & Horwood, 2008). The idea asserted by Hart, Brassard, Binggeli, and Davidson (2002) that psychological maltreatment predicts the most severe effects in adulthood, was partially confirmed in the pres-
ent sample, as the CTQ Emotional Neglect (r = .46) and Emotional Abuse (r = .40) scales had high correlations with the CES-D measure. However, the CTQ Physical Neglect (r = .45) scale also had a moderately strong relationship with CES-D scores, though physical neglect may go hand-in-hand with emotional abuse and neglect.

Interestingly, the weakest relationships between depression and childhood maltreatment were shown in the correlations between the CES-D and the CTQ Sexual Abuse (r = .31) and Physical Abuse (r = .22) scales. The findings that childhood experiences of sexual abuse and physical abuse have the least impact on later depression, may be unique as the existing literature would seem to suggest that such experiences of maltreatment should be strong predictors of adulthood depression (e.g., Teicher, Samson, Polcari, & Andersen, 2009). This is an area ripe for further investigation, as future studies might seek to determine more precisely the relative contributions of specific types of childhood abuse and neglect on later mental health issues.

Previous research indicates there are substantial differences between males and females in terms of how they perceive childhood maltreatment (e.g., Heim, et al., 2000), in rates of sex abuse victimization (e.g., Finkelhor, 1994), and in effects of maltreatment on later mental health (Bagley & McDonald, 1984). This would seem to suggest that males and females might score differently on the various CTQ scales, for a variety of possible reasons. However, there were no significant differences between males and females on any of the CTQ scales. Further, and contrary to expectations based on the literature (Weiss, Longhurst & Mazure, 1999), there was no significant difference between males and females on depression scores. This is a difficult finding to explain, in that results did not turn out as might be solidly predicted by prior literature.

One possible explanation is that the present study was conducted in the first three weeks of the semester, and the sample is predominantly female (roughly 3 female participants to every male participant) where the male portion of the sample was relatively small overall (n = 55). It is possible that people who take advantage of research opportunities for course credit at the first of the semester, have characteristics that make them unique on the variables being measured. It may also be that the relatively low number of males compared to females did not provide enough statistical power to detect significant differences that actually exist. Thus, future research with college samples should undertake to collect data across the semester to see if the findings hold when people who delay participation for course credit are included in the sample. Additionally, it would be good to collect data from a larger sample of males to increase statistical power to detect potential group differences.

**Limitations**

Though it is plausible that childhood maltreatment causes adulthood depression, the nature of correlational research prohibits making such a statement. Additionally, the sample was
relatively homogenous with regard to race/ethnicity, age, and education, meaning caution must be used in generalizing results. As mentioned above, there may have been issues that limited the abilities of researchers to detect findings that would be predicted from the literature, namely that data were collect very early in the semester and that there was a relatively small number of males who participated. Finally, there are several well-know limitations inherent in all self-reported data, including issues with socially desirable responding, fatigue effects, response sets, and/or a lack of interest in completing surveys in a legitimate manner.

**Future Research**

Addressing issues of time of data collection during the semester and obtaining a greater number of male participants should be of interest to future researchers, as should further study of the impact of specific types of childhood maltreatment on adulthood depression and other mental health conditions. In addition, future studies might also examine the effects of other variables such as family conflict, parental substance abuse, and other environmental issues, on adulthood psychopathology. Researchers may also consider the Diathesis-Stress Model, which posits a relationship between genetic predispositions toward developing various types of mental disorders and life stressors (e.g., maltreatment, trauma victimization) that may trigger such disorders (Schumm et al., 2005).
References


BEYOND HEGEL: THE PROBLEM OF THE MODERN-DAY RABBLE

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1. Introduction

Hegel presents a unique version of poverty and its ties to capitalism in The Philosophy of Right. According to Hegel, capitalism creates not only a division of classes, but essentially requires a class of impoverished, unemployed persons in order to function. This class is made of people who have been excluded from civil society due to the market structure of capitalism and thus, have been denied their subjective freedom. Before presenting this argument, though, it is important to understand the difference between objective and subjective freedom. One is objectively free when one has the same rights granted to every other person. Subjective freedom, though, goes further and requires not only that one has the same rights as others, but that one is able to freely choose how to take advantage of those rights. So while I have the objective right to liberty, if I do not have the means to choose how best to pursue that liberty, I have been denied my subjective freedom. This is how the rabble class is created. Objectively, they have the exact same rights as everyone who is in civil society; however, the market structure ensures that they are excluded from participation in civil society and thus, they do not have the means to take advantage of their rights.

Hegel argued that the rabble class has suffered a wrong at the hands of civil society because he believes that every person should be able to achieve their subjective freedom but he is unable to locate a solution to this problem. This is one of the issues that I wish to address with this paper; the first sections are dedicated to explaining and solving the rabble problem in Hegel. I do so by utilizing the Rawlsian difference principle as a way of ensuring that the rabble class cannot be formed. I argue that the redistribution of social primary goods lends them the opportunity to gain their subjective freedom. For both Hegel and Rawls, this is sufficient; however, when we turn to the modern-day rabble in the next sections, this redistribution is not enough to ensure subjective freedom for all.

In order to introduce the new rabble problem, I present arguments by contemporary thinkers John Gray and Slavoj Zizek. By linking Gray’s argument that an incessant stream of innovation has revolutionized not just the market structure but civil society as a whole, Zizek’s claims that we have been plunged into a state of worldlessness can be understood more clearly. Innovation and worldlessness work in harmony to place civil society in a precarious position where traditional bourgeois norms (understood here as norms of delayed gratification, money-
saving, and the need to contribute to the workforce) have been rendered useless (if not harmful) so that even those who are not in poverty have joined the ranks of the rabble class where they are unable to achieve their subjective freedom. In order to solve this new problem, I suggest a two-fold solution. Socially, I argue for emerging norms of adaptation and spontaneity that bring stability to civil society in an environment of constant upheaval. Economically, I present a new form of redistribution in the form of a basic citizens’ income. This new form of redistribution ensures that no matter the state of the market, each person is provided with an unconditional income that does not depend on their productivity or social status. Both solutions work together to promote subjective freedom for each and every person in civil society.

The point of this entire project is to move beyond the bourgeois world of Hegel and Rawls and to re-conceive of subjective freedom as being achieved absent the traditional bourgeois norms and values. The most feasible way of doing this is to remove the bourgeois lens and accept that the current market structure requires adaptation and spontaneity that cannot be found in Hegel or Rawls.

2. Hegel: The ‘Old’ Rabble Problem

In Philosophy of Right Hegel outlines for us his argument concerning subjective freedom and civil society. This argument has four main parts. First, that subjective freedom, understood as the determination of one’s status by choice, effort, and good fortune, emerges only in the context of a civil society founded on the institution of private property (Hegel §46, §185R, §206R). Thus, it is only when one is a citizen of a capitalist state and can take part in civil society that one can obtain one’s subjective freedom. Second, that everyone has the right to hold some amount of property and occupy an estate (§49A). Third, that everyone has a right against civil society to an estate in which labor is rewarded with a decent livelihood and an honorable and fulfilling life (§238). This means that every person is entitled to compensation for one’s labor that is high enough that each person can live an honorable life as defined by social standards. Last, anyone who is denied such an estate suffers a wrong at the hands of civil society (§236A). In other words, you have suffered a wrong if you are denied adequate compensation for labor and cannot take part in civil society.

However, it is also important to note that Hegel does not include every class of people when he speaks of civil society. Indeed, females are excluded from civil society but according to Hegel, they have suffered no wrong because females have a certain ethical disposition in which their devotion goes solely to the family; therefore, they have no need to participate in civil society (Hegel §166 H,G). Similarly, the rural population, both of nobles and peasants, suffers no wrong despite the fact that they are also excluded from participation in civil society because the rural population lives an unreflective life and relies on an unchanging relation to nature i.e. through farming (§250). Now, it can obviously be argued that this argument is completely ill-
conceived and has no place in the modern world; I would agree. However, it is still important, I think, to see the difference between those that Hegel considers wronged and those that he does not consider wronged. These people are excluded from civil society because, according to Hegel, they have no need to be a part of it. They were born outside of civil society and have no need to participate within it in order to achieve fulfillment of their lives. Their lack of civil participation does not render them unable to achieve their subjective freedom and thus, no wrong is committed against them. The urban poor, though, are another matter entirely.

How did the urban poor become excluded from civil society when you consider that they are in civil society? According to Hegel, the capitalist system is at the root of the problem here. Mass production leads to “individualization and limitation” of labor. This system leads to large profits because it is unskilled work in which a high wage is unnecessary and wages are kept low by unemployment, which is built into the capitalist system. In other words, in order for capitalism to work, there has to be, at all times, a group of unemployed people that are excluded from the market structure as well as from society. Their exclusion is built into the capitalist structure; without them, the market could not function as it is intended because wages would undoubtedly rise. This structure prevents workers from complaining about low wages because after all, there is always someone willing to take their job and possibly at a lower wage. Therefore, the wealth in civil society is accumulated only by those at the top, i.e. the landowners, who benefit from the tremendous profits generated from the sale of the goods produced by the urban poor while the urban population grows larger and larger and becomes impoverished.

The growing urban poor, then, is technically in civil society, but they are not of civil society. They do not have the ability to actually participate in civil society despite the fact that they are a part of it. Hegel argues that this is indeed a wrong because their right against civil society in which labor is rewarded with a decent livelihood and an honorable and fulfilling life has been violated. Furthermore, each of these violations renders them unable to achieve their subjective freedom which means they are unable to determine their own social status despite any effort they may make.

How can this be fixed? According to Hegel, it can't. He argues that the impoverished urban population is a “structural consequence” of capitalism and cannot be solved without dismantling the structure of capitalism (Hegel §245). If this is the case, then why do the urban poor not move to bring down the structure to correct the wrong done to them by civil society? According to Hegel, the lack of a threat from the urban poor is because they are “reduced to a rabble” (§244). They acquire “a disposition [of mind] coupled with poverty, an inner indignation against the rich, against society, the government, etc.” (§244). This means that the urban poor after being reduced to a rabble becomes indolent due to self-loathing at their failure to achieve their subjective freedom as promised by the first tenet of civil society. They passively rage against
those who have achieved their subjective freedom but do nothing to act on their feelings. Would the urban poor be justified in attempting to bring down the system? Absolutely; it threatens their well-being and thus they have a right of necessity to bring it down. However, they have been so demoralized by their perceived failure from both themselves and society at large that they are incapable of acting against the system.

So, if the urban poor cannot save themselves, why does someone who is functioning within civil society not attempt to correct the problem and save the rabble from the injustices done to them? Those who are both in and of civil society are unable to help because doing so would in turn harm their own class. If they attempt to assist the urban population, they would undermine the capitalist structure that allowed them to succeed in the first place. Thus, while they see the wrong suffered by the urban poor, they see no way of fixing it without condemning themselves to a life of poverty. Therefore, in Hegel’s estimation there is no solution to the problem of the rabble because one cannot simply dismantle capitalism and the system of private property because he argues that private property is what leads to an individual’s awareness of the self and is also the means by which we gain recognition for other people (§260). As a child, when our parents give us our own toy, we start to become aware of ourselves as separate entities from the world. We become aware that the toy is not us, but that it belongs to us. Similarly, we recognize that another child’s toy is not ours and by recognizing the property of another, we recognize the person to whom the object belongs. In other words, Hegel believes that we cannot gain subjective freedom without the private property system because this is how we develop subjectivity and personhood.

Obviously, then, Hegel could not support the Marxist solution of dismantling the private property system as a means to correct the problem of the rabble. If such a thing were to happen we would lose our way of becoming conscious both of ourselves and of others. Further, Hegel thinks that if you were to collapse the state, freedom itself would be destroyed. This is because Hegel takes the position that freedom emerges through mutual recognition stemming from private property which would of course be undermined if the private property system was to be dismantled. Later in this paper, I will be reexamining the concept of subjective freedom through a Marxian lens to capture an alternative sense of subjective freedom that will work with the modern-day (or ‘new) rabble problem. However, I do believe that there is a modern solution to the problem of the Hegelian rabble problem. By utilizing the Rawlsian difference principle, it may be possible, at least theoretically, to escape the problems associated with solving the rabble problem.

3. Rawls: A Solution to the Problem of the ‘Old’ Rabble

First, in order to see how we can look to Rawls to solve the problem of the rabble, we must understand the principle formulated by him. The difference principle states that any in-
equalities in the distribution of social primary goods (liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and the basis of self-respect between persons) must be justified according to how they benefit the least advantaged (Rawls 68). This means that those who have been gifted with natural talents will receive an unequal (but fair) share of social primary goods to develop those talents that will provide a benefit to the remainder of society. In other words, inequality of social primary goods may exist but only insofar as the least advantaged may actually benefit from this inequality. For example, it is to the benefit of the least advantaged for some people to receive the primary good of higher education in order to acquire the competence and expertise necessary to become doctors and practice medicine.

However, I would make one change to Rawls' principle. Instead of providing only for the 'least advantaged' (for the purposes of this paper, I conceive of the least advantaged as the rabble class), inequality should also benefit the lesser advantaged of society which includes those at risk of joining the rabble class by losing their subjective freedom. This change is, I think, a necessary one in order to ensure that the problem of the rabble is completely resolved. By formulating the principle to ensure that the lesser advantaged of society receives the benefits of inequality, we can assure ourselves that it is not only the property-less that are given aid, but those who are at risk of being reduced to a rabble. In this way, it may be possible to altogether stop the process of people being reduced to a rabble. This solution presupposes a stable life that can be planned based on the bourgeois virtues of delayed gratification and saving for the future. In Hegel's time, the pace of capitalism allows for the success of bourgeois norms in the marketplace. People were capable of participating in the market structure while at the same time embracing the value of delayed gratification and money-saving. As we will see later, such solutions may not be sufficient to solve the new rabble problems due to problems stemming from the new ideals linked to innovation that force us away from bourgeois values. For the old rabble problem, though, it is possible to integrate the rabble into civil society so they are able to participate and gain their subjective freedom this way.

Theoretically, this principle could help us to solve the problem of the rabble. If we were to restructure the system according to the (amended) difference principle, it would essentially wipe out the class of impoverished people or would, at least, provide a mechanism by which they could get out of poverty and contribute to society. In this way, the rabble would become not just in, but of civil society and could achieve their subjective freedom. Rawls stresses the importance of societal contribution in his work and by stressing it here, the contribution of the former-rabble class would pull them up the social ladder until they could effectively participate in civil society and claim their own subjective freedom. This would work by allowing for a redistribution of goods, thereby eliminating the problem of stratification while at the same time rewarding those “overachievers” who would be granted more of the social primary goods when such an inequality
would benefit those lower on the ladder of stratification, i.e. the lesser advantaged.

The next question that should be asked is a practical one: why would people accept the implementation of the difference principle? This could be achieved by using the veil of ignorance presented by Rawls. The veil of ignorance is a figurative veil that we are to use in the “original position” (a position that is pre-society/pre-political) to determine the rules of society (119). The veil covers all knowledge of who we are or who we could be in the society. We do not know our race, gender, social standing, mental capacity, whether or not we are disabled, etc. It is from this position that we could all agree to the fairest rules for society and that the fairest rules would be those that provide for the least advantaged within the society (17). Behind the veil of ignorance, the most rational choice is to choose subjective freedom for all; this is what the difference principle achieves. It assures us that no matter our standing in the world, we will have a way of being a part of society and ensuring that we are not impoverished, a member of the army of the unemployed, or a member of the rabble. Therefore, it seems that any rational person would accept the difference principle as the best thing for society. Another way to look at the justification of the difference principle would be this: None of us had any control over the circumstances into which we were born. That means that we do not deserve either the lack or abundance of resources available to us upon our birth. Therefore, a redistribution of goods seems to be the only fair way of living in a condition of abundance. The only way to solve the problem of the rabble is to create a condition in which people are considered equal.

By utilizing the difference principle, it is not automatically necessary that we completely lose the system of private property. In fact, private property would be guaranteed to all because of the difference principle. We could also maintain a form of capitalism with the difference principle; however, it would be a system based on fairness and equality in which the landowners would not be permitted to control such a large percentage of the social primary goods. They would still be able to keep more resources than the wage laborer but only because doing so ensures that the laborer can keep his job. If the owner were to lose his profits, the laborer would most definitely lose his job; therefore, it is to the benefit of the lesser advantaged that an unequal distribution of goods occurs. The only difference, then, is that the wage laborer is given a wage which would enable him to have “a decent livelihood and an honorable and fulfilling life” to quote Hegel (Hegel §238). Thus, by applying the difference principle, subjective freedom according to bourgeois life has been saved and extends security against becoming a member of the rabble class to those who may be at risk; everyone gains the ability to achieve subjective freedom regardless of their natural talents and abilities.

This is a solution that I believe Hegel would be able to endorse because his goal was for every person to be subjectively free. Obviously, Hegel would appreciate that the private property system remains in place and is, in fact, expanded. Because every person is guaranteed some
of property, every person is guaranteed to be able to develop a sense of self and would be able to take part in the mutual recognition that is necessary for freedom. In fact, I see no part of my solution as being contradictory to Hegel’s theories. If we, as children, become aware of ourselves when our parents give us a toy, then as adults, our sense of self would be reaffirmed even through state redistribution of goods where those goods can then be used as a way to participate in civil society. Therefore, Hegel should have no issue with using the difference principle to solve the problem of the rabble.

The next problem emerges when we turn from Hegel’s rabble problem to the rabble problem of our time. While there are common themes running through both rabble populations, there are differences which require new solutions. In what follows, I show how Hegel’s rabble has been transformed in modern-day society and pursue new solutions to this problem.

4. The ‘New’ Rabble

While the difference principle would feasibly solve the problem of the Old Rabble (that is presented directly by Hegel), it may not be adequate to address the modern problem of the rabble; that is, the new rabble. The new rabble is multi-faceted and much more complicated that the original problem because it encompasses almost all of society. One section of the new rabble closely resembles the Hegelian rabble in that they are impoverished and all but without property. They are jobless, have little hope of finding a job, and are rejected by society at large. They can look in upon members of civil society and see what is expected of them, but they are unable to actually follow through. Another section may not, upon first glance, seem to have anything in common with the Hegelian rabble. This section is made of people who do not live in poverty, have jobs, are socially accepted, but have amassed massive amounts of debt in order to do so. In doing so, they have been forced to abandon the traditional values of the middle class which leaves them in an unstable position both socially and economically. In what follows, I will examine each section and show how this problem came to be.

In order to explain the problem of the new rabble, I turn to arguments presented by John Gray and Slavoj Zizek who function to redefine the rabble problem. In his work, Gray points to an “incessant stream of innovation” furthered by the relentless demands of a capitalist system as the source of the disappearing values of the middle class that plunges them “into something like the precarious existence of the hard-pressed workers” of Marx’s time (“Point of View”). Gray explains that in a “highly mobile” labor market such as the one we currently have, “it’s not those who stick dutifully to their task that succeed, it’s people who are always ready to try something new that looks more promising” (“Point of View”). He claims that the only way to prosper in such a market is to borrow heavily and not be afraid to declare bankruptcy; in short, it is the person with the complete opposite of the bourgeois virtues who is able to succeed (“Point of View”). Worse, he claims that this “state of perpetual unrest is the permanent revolution of capi-
Zizek suggests this is because of “one of the main dangers of capitalism” – worldlessness (“Shoplifters”). Zizek borrows the term ‘worldless’ from Alain Badiou and uses it to describe the rioters as victims of this worldless space where “the only form protest can take is meaningless violence” (“Shoplifters”). He argues that because capitalism has taken on a global scale, “it sustains a ‘worldless’ ideological constellation in which people are deprived of their ways of locating meaning” and that it “represents truth without meaning” (“Shoplifters”). The truth is that there is no stable meaning on which to plan a life. This, coupled with the innovation of modern capitalism function to create a complete instability of social norms. The idea of worldlessness and how it links to innovation is a key concept to my project. The fact that bourgeois norms are no longer functioning to assist in the achievement of subjective freedom means that we can no longer utilize the same strategies that were used in solving the old rabble problem. At this point, I move to give a fuller explication of the new rabble problem.

The first section of the new rabble that I will discuss includes those that could still be considered the urban poor. In this way, they are similar to the old rabble problem in Hegel, but their disposition of mind has changed in such a way that they are able to act out against the system but do so in ways that are not actually helpful to them. Current examples of members of this section include the UK Rioters and even some of the ‘Occupy’ Protesters. These are relatively unorganized groups who realize they have suffered a wrong at the hands of civil society. While they are acting out against the system, they are not necessarily doing so in a productive manner. For example, the UK Rioters complain that society demands that they be consumers in order to keep the economy afloat but gives them no way to earn enough money to be able to survive, much less to have a disposable income. Therefore, they become ironic shoplifters who loot and cause general chaos out of their frustration and anger. What sets this section apart from Hegel’s rabble is that despite liberal redistribution strategies such as welfare they are still unable to gain their subjective freedom. Their ability to survive is provided through welfare strategies, but this allows them only those things that are strictly necessary for survival. However, the fact remains that they are able to attain some amount of property unlike the Hegelian rabble. This is due to the structural changes of capitalism that have resulted in the problems of innovation and worldlessness. Thus, the new rabble is not property-less, rather, they are worldless.

Zizek’s article “Shoplifters of the World Unite” gives us an interesting take on the new rabble by examining the UK riots of 2010–11. He describes the average rioter as a “young man in a poor, racially mixed area” that is not just unemployed “but often unemployable with no hope of a future” (“Shoplifters”). Zizek states that the rioters fit the “Hegelian notion of the ‘rabble’, those outside organized social space, who can express their discontent only through ‘irrational’ outbursts and destructive violence – what Hegel called ‘abstract negativity’” (“Shoplifters”). He
points out that the protesters, while “underprivileged and de facto socially excluded, weren’t living on the edge of starvation” (“Shoplifters”). They were not shoplifting merely because they saw something they wanted to possess; rather, their actions were motivated by a need to express their frustration with a system that demands they consume without providing them with the mechanisms by which they can legally consume – thus, they become ironic shoplifters (“Shoplifters”). He argues that this combined with their lack of agenda points to “a society which celebrates choice but in which the only available alternative to enforced democratic consensus is blind acting out” (“Shoplifters”). The rioters have no interest in trying to ‘fix’ the system. They have no grandiose ideas about somehow altering the capitalist system so that it can meet their needs; they know the system is broken and they do not have enough faith to attempt to put it back together. It is important to note that this class of rabble clearly fits in with the Hegel’s definition as is evident through their own ideas and lack of hope that they could ever succeed as part of the capitalist system. It is also important to see how the impoverishment and inability to join civil society denies this entire group of people their subjective freedom as the term is currently understood.

The Occupy movement can also be seen as part of this class. This movement consists of members from a variety of backgrounds coming together to protest various forms of corruption within both capitalism and government. While more organized than the UK rioters, they still suffer from some of the same problems including a lack of leadership, the absence of a feasible agenda with a list of demands that can be easily met, and a sense of worldlessness. Members range from the unemployed impoverished to students with insurmountable loans to middle class families that can no longer ignore the economic problems we face. They call themselves the 99%. This is in response to statistics that show that 1% of Americans own the vast majority of the wealth in the country while the other 99% must split what is left over. Because this group bridges the economic and social gap between the impoverished and indebted rabble, it shows how both groups share a common bond – they are indeed members of the modern-day rabble.

This does not mean, however, that they do not have differences. The middle class rabble has suffered in a way that is very different from their impoverished counterparts. Their traditional values have been compromised because they are unable to live without going into debt whereas the traditional values state that they should not go into debt. However, at this point in order to succeed in our society, we must first go to college. For most, the only way to pay for college is to take out student loans and then there is no guarantee that they will find a well-paying job. There are huge disconnects, then, between the values of the traditional middle class and the limits of today’s middle class.

Some may think that the situation of the middle class is in no way comparable to that of the Hegelian rabble. However, I argue that their disposition of mind places them firmly in the
category of the New Rabble. If you remember, Hegel defines the rabble as a class of people with an inward rebellion against the rich, against society, the government, etc. (Hegel §244). Hegel explicitly states that it is not poverty which reduces men to a rabble, but it is the disposition of mind that accompanies it. The new middle class may not be impoverished, but I believe they have the disposition of mind referred to by Hegel. Perhaps this point will be best illustrated using John Gray’s article “A Point of View: The Revolution of Capitalism.”

In this article regarding the effects of capitalism on the middle class, Gray writes that in the 19th Century, “the settled middle class that owned capital […] had a reasonable level of security and freedom in their lives” (“Point of View”). Defenders of capitalism in that time period argued that “[n]o more will people struggle from month to month to live on an insecure wage” and[ protected by savings, a house they own and a decent pension, they will be able to plan their lives without fear” (“Point of View”). This is no longer the case. With massive home foreclosures and rising unemployment, not even the middle class is safe from a dwindling economy. Gray argues that “the free market works to undermine the virtues that maintain the bourgeois life” by rendering traditional values such as delayed gratification dysfunctional (“Point of View”). He states that we now find ourselves in a world where “everyone’s life is experimental and provisional, and sudden ruin can happen at any time” and “has returned most people to a new version of the precarious existence of Marx’s proles (“Point of View”). The overall affect, according to Gray is that we now have “very little effective control over the course of our lives” (“Point of View”).

If constant innovation is the new face of capitalism, and if that leads to a rejection of middle class values, it should be easy to see how the middle class would develop the disposition of mind explained by Hegel. Society has forced them to reject their values of stability and has pushed them into a situation of unreliable practices that have no guarantees. However, they feel as if there is no way for them to push back against the system and continue amassing large amounts of debt in order to live the lives they were promised were told to live. These people, like the impoverished rabble, have been denied their subjective freedom because they are literally unable to choose the course of their lives regardless of their choices. Even when they follow the guidelines promoted by society and the government, they cannot achieve true freedom due to debt and the instability produced by innovation.

Both sections also suffer from worldlessness which we can connect with the constant stream of innovation. Because innovation leads to the upheaval of traditional values, we can see that this could be the cause of a feeling of worldlessness for not just the middle class, but for the impoverished as well. Both have little hope of being able to succeed in a society where the only way to succeed appears to be risking everything. For those who have nothing to risk, they have no chance at all of moving beyond their current place in society. For those who have avoided poverty by going into tremendous amounts of debt, dare they risk everything in the hope of
joining the 1%? These are problems that do not have simple answers. Gray writes that it is not only economics that are affected by the ‘incessant stream of innovation. He claims that “human relationships are dissolved and reinvented in novel forms” which leads me to conclude that not only do we face unstable economics, but an unstable way of life where ideas, beliefs, and relationships are constantly being innovated (“Point of View”).

In order to have a true chance at succeeding in an unstable society based on innovation and constant change, we must find something that is unchanging in order to provide a social basis for integrating the rabble into society. In the next section, I propose that if all of society is indeed faced with a constant stream of innovation, then perhaps the only stable norms are adaptation to innovation and constant upheaval as well as norms of spontaneity and constant self-reinvention that are necessary in order to achieve one’s subjective freedom.

5. Solutions to the New Rabble Problem

The new rabble faces both an economic and a social problem. Socially, they are unable to adapt to the constant stream of innovation and the worldless ideology that follows which affects every aspect of their lives. Economically, they are disadvantaged either because they are in poverty and thus excluded from participation in civil society or because they have managed to exist and participate in society by using the new socially acceptable consumerist norm of amassing vast amounts of debt to acquire both necessary and unnecessary goods. Thus, in order to truly help the new rabble, both sides of the problem must be adequately addressed for either to succeed. Socially, in order to have an actual chance at succeeding in an unstable society based on innovation and constant change, we must embrace new norms of adaptation to constant change as well as realizing the value in a life of spontaneity. Economically, we must go beyond Rawlsian redistribution in order to accommodate these new norms and turn instead to a basic citizens’ income as argued for by Van Parijs that can help us to realize subjective freedom conceived through the lens of the new social norms. In what follows, I argue for both of these claims separately and then show how the combination of these solutions could solve the new rabble problem.

5.1 Social Solution

With Gray’s argument that the new face of capitalism consists of an incessant stream of innovation and upgrades coupled with Zizek’s commentary on the feeling of worldlessness, it leaves us in a rather hopeless state of regaining the social stability necessary to solve the new rabble problem. However, it seems that Zizek may have overstated his position. Claiming that we are all in a state of utter worldlessness where there is a complete instability of social norms would mean that no one could formulate a reasonable plan of life. This is obviously false. Plans of life are made and carried out, though perhaps not in the traditional bourgeois fashion. What seems to be true, however, is that we are in a period of transition where new norms are emerging
among the constant change and upheaval created by the modern capitalist system. Determining the extent or specifics of these new norms is not possible at this time (as we are still in a transition period), but drawing from previous work from Zizek I will show that even he would not agree with his sweeping statement on worldlessness and show that he has identified some of the new norms that are emerging. I will also consider other possibilities for emergent norms that can be drawn upon in the search for social stability.

In an earlier lecture, First as Tragedy, Then as Farce, Zizek argues for an emerging norm of ‘ethical consumerism’ (something he finds counterproductive) which points to the truth in my argument that we are in a period of transition for our social norms. He argues that this new norm takes the form of: “It’s not just what you are buying; it’s what you are buying into” (“First as Tragedy”). He uses the example of the Starbucks Shared Planet Program slogan which says, “When you buy Starbucks, whether you realize it or not, you are buying into something bigger than a cup of coffee. You are buying into a coffee ethics” (“First as Tragedy”). This Starbucks program announces that they buy more fair trade coffee than any other company in the world which ensures that farmers receive fair pay for their work which they claim leads to improved coffee growing practices and communities. For Zizek, this gives us “good coffee karma” (“First as Tragedy”). He uses other examples such as Tom’s Shoes and organic produce to illustrate that we fulfill a series of ethical duties through buying redemption from being pure consumerists; he calls this cultural capitalism (“First as Tragedy”). By buying products we perceive as being ethically superior, he claims, we get a feeling of warmth for doing something for the Earth or fellow humans and that the act of consumption includes the “price of its opposite” (“First as Tragedy”).

Because Zizek formulates this argument according to emerging norms, it can be said that while there is some truth to his statements concerning worldlessness, that there is still some stability to be found within social norms. In order for this ethical consumerist norm to emerge, there must have been a shared ideology between those that adopted this norm. This ability to formulate and share an ideology shows us that worldlessness has not produced an environment where new norms cannot be formulated. Drawing from this, other norms can begin to be formulated and shared. Specifically, I can now introduce the norms that are necessary if we are to solve the problem of the new rabble. The most important of these norms is going to be a norm of adaptation that will begin to allow the indebted rabble to achieve subjective freedom by locating meaning in their lives.

A norm of adaptation will emerge as a result of the incessant stream of innovation that Gray has pointed to. In order to prosper in a market that thrives on instability, those who wish to function within the market structure must be able to adapt. They must be willing and able to not only file for bankruptcy, but to reinvent themselves in accordance with the demands of the ever-changing capitalist system. Only by embracing a norm of adaptation will they be able to
keep up with those changes. It may seem to some that looking for stability in change is oxymoronic, however, if one wishes to function in such a market, the only way to do so is to accept that constant change is a part of that system and be prepared to do what is necessary in response to whatever changes develop. By being prepared to adapt, a certain kind of stability can be found so that we have a basis on which to develop a new way of achieving our subjective freedom.

The other thing that must happen as a part of the social solution rests on an idea found in Marx’s The German Ideology. In this work, Marx discusses the dangers of alienation that occur within the capitalist system due to the division of labor. He states that “…as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape” (Marx 185). He is forced into dedicating his life to one particular activity and has no choice but to be either “a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic” and cannot cross from his activity into another if he wishes to maintain his livelihood (185). In a communist society, though, he argues that such a thing does not occur because “… nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes” (185). Because of this, it becomes possible to “… hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, [and] criticize after dinner […] without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, cowherd, or critic” (185). While Marx leaves this argument rather vague, we can extrapolate more from it in the next section when I turn to Van Parijs.

For now, though, it should be possible to see that this life of spontaneity or immediate gratification avoids the problem of alienation and gives each person the ability to achieve an alternate account of subjective freedom that does not rest on a well-planned life. Thus, if we are to take subjective freedom seriously, we must accept that the fall of traditional bourgeois norms leaves us with the ability to redefine how we achieve subjective freedom. By allowing for a life of spontaneity to hold value, we avoid the issues that other attempts to solve the rabble problem have faced. It is no longer necessary that the rabble be both in and of civil society if a spontaneous life can lead to subjective freedom. Further, the spontaneous life may be more desirable than the well-planned life because it inherently embraces the incessant stream of innovation that cannot be escaped. These social solutions, though, are not enough. There is still an economic component that must be addressed; otherwise, the rabble problem still cannot be overcome.

5.2 Economic Solutions

While the difference principle solves the problem of the old rabble in Hegel, it cannot be applied here. Because Rawls intends to have each person be both in and of civil society, he presupposes bourgeois virtues of delayed gratification and the formulation of a stable plan of life when he devises the difference principle. Because those virtues are no longer functioning to fulfill the obligations of subjective freedom, any redistribution mechanism utilized cannot depend
on them; thus, the difference principle is insufficient when applied to the problem of the new rabble. The economic problem can, however, be solved by a non-Rawlsian distribution mechanism that does not presuppose bourgeois virtues and does not depend on each person joining civil society. Van Parijs offers such a mechanism with what is called a basic citizen’s income.

I want to go back now to Zizek’s First as Tragedy, Then as Farce in order to show the necessity of the basic income. Here Zizek lays out the argument by Philippe Van Parijs for a basic citizens’ income. This plan is derived partially from Rawls and provides redistribution by the state to those who are jobless. With Zizek’s claim that the global economy will eventually render 80% of the population useless in the work force, the idea of a basic income is certainly appealing (“First as Tragedy”). With potentially 80% of the population unemployed, there is a need for a way for those people to survive. Further, it is becoming increasingly apparent that not only have the bourgeois norms been invalidated, but also it is next to impossible for a person to simply stay at home or start their own business. Because of this, combined with the developing global economy, it should be obvious that we absolutely need more than a vague safety net for the jobless. There are an ever-increasing number of people who are unemployed or will soon be unemployed and it is through no fault of their own. They also have little to no hope of creating their own work as was done in the past. Several countries have adopted similar plans including Brazil and South Africa with the European Union currently working out their own plan (“First as Tragedy”).

To better understand this proposed solution, I am going to go over the argument presented directly from Van Parijs. Van Parijs defines a basic income as “an income paid by the government to each full member of society (1) even if she is not willing to work, (2) irrespective of her being rich or poor, (3) whoever she lives with, and (4) no matter which part of the country she lives in” (Real Freedom 35). For many, the concept of a basic income provided regardless of whether or not a person has or desires to have a job may be difficult to accept; therefore, I will spend some time better explaining Van Parijs’s position so it can be made clear that such stipulations are absolutely necessary if we are to solve the problem of the rabble.

According to Van Parijs, one can be considered “really free” (subjectively free) and not only “formally free” (objectively free) when “one possesses the means, not just the right, to do whatever one might want to do” (such as hunting in the morning, fishing in the afternoon, etc.) (Real Freedom 32-33). For a Rawlsian, this may mean that one has the means to not just plan her life, but to follow through on that plan – such as using the income for education purposes. For others, that may mean using the basic income to pay for surfing lessons and forego making a formal plan of life, replacing the well-planned life with a spontaneous life of surfing. He goes on to say that the freedom to concern ourselves with is “the real freedom to choose among the various lives one might wish to lead” which makes it “crucially important that the income should be
given unconditionally to each citizen” (33). By unconditional, he means that there should be no restraint placed upon what one may buy or what one does with one’s time or income. In other words, both the surfer and the future doctor are given the means and opportunity to choose the kind of life they wish to lead. At no point will there be a government official stopping by to make sure that one is spending their money in a particular way because any attempt to do so would violate the real freedom Van Parijs is pursuing.

In an earlier book, Van Parijs states that providing a basic income “to every permanent inhabitant,” gives everyone “the real possibility of creating, alone or with others, her/his own job” because “creating one’s own job […] no longer requires an amount of capital out of proportion to what the vast majority can afford” (Marxism 130). Why does this matter? Because it “offers the unemployed (and ‘poorly employed’) movement a way of attempting to systematically reduce the privilege conferred by job assets while expanding […] the circle of those with access to a job” (130). When considering the earlier statistics presented by Slavoj Zizek (that 80% of the world’s workers may be unnecessary), it should be fairly obvious how important it is that one will have the ability to either (1) not work at all or (2) create their own job. Without these options, it would seem that we would be left with 80% of the world reduced to a rabble.

There are many practical questions that may arise regarding a basic income with the most obvious being: Where does this money come from? The short answer is: taxes. Luckily, Van Parijs provides a more detailed answer that will answer even more in his section on the sustainability of the basic income. He states that in order to sustain the highest unconditional income possible, “for any given type of socio-economic regime, one should select the structure of […] taxation that can durably generate the highest yield […] that can be durably generated under this type of regime” (Real Freedom 38). This means that in order to maintain a high basic income, we must select a tax structure that will provide the largest amount of money possible for the longest amount of time possible.

Of course, this is something that will take time to formulate, but Van Parijs has the following suggestions for where and how to start:

1. In order to offset any population growth that may occur as a response to a basic income, provide a (relatively high) universal pension as well as (relatively low) child benefits. The first will function to “reduce the need for children as a form of old age insurance” and the second will “increase the net cost of having children” (Real Freedom 39). Both of these are deemed necessary because an increase in population growth would lead to a lower sustainable basic income.

2. In order to keep the basic income high, features that affect socio-economic regimes other than tax rates and age differentiation should be carefully monitored with appropriate reactions taken immediately. For example, Van Parijs suggests that the “productive potential” or “productivity of human labor” should not be allowed to shrink (Real Freedom 39). One way to do
this is to curb or slow the depletion of natural resources that would lead to an overall decrease in productivity which has the bonus of being a “criterion of intergenerational justice” (39).

Imagine for a moment what a UK rioter may have looked like if something like Van Parijs’s basic income existed at the time. They simply would not exist. Instead of being forced in shoplifting, they would have been provided the means to enter into consumerist activity if they so desired and there would be no need for the ironic shoplifting we saw in the riots. In other words, they would have had the freedom and means to choose, rather than feel trapped and angry as they so obviously did. A basic income gives each person, from child to senior the opportunity to pursue a life of their choosing. One may remark at this point that it is more acceptable or valuable for one to have a well-planned life and a career rather than a life of surfing and spontaneity; this misses the point. The well-planned life has more value only when one is looking through the lens of bourgeois virtues, virtues that we know to be deficient in modern society. Instead, we must embrace the Marxist value of spontaneity and see how this life leads to an alternate conception of subjective freedom that is just as (if not more) desirable than the subjective freedom achieved through the well-planned life.

Through the implementation of the basic citizens’ income, the economic problem of the new rabble can be at least partially resolved. By no means would anyone get rich from this income, it would provide a steady influx of funds that would allow for survival and a stable life, even if that stability is found through the rejection of all traditional norms in favor of a life of spontaneity. For those who wish to keep up with the incessant stream of innovation and with society, however, it would provide them with the groundwork to plan their life and carry out that plan of life. For these people, though, a basic income is not enough. It must also be supplemented with offsets to the amassing of debt. I suggest that, for instance, greatly reducing the cost of education would assist those trying to keep up by reducing their initial debt. The reduction or elimination of education costs would relieve much of the pressure felt by future members of the middle class. By not beginning their working lives with massive debt, it gives them the opportunity to succeed in their well-planned life.

5.3 Combined Solution
The combination of the above solutions leads us to the eradication of the rabble population. Each and every person has the opportunity to achieve their subjective freedom whether it is through ‘keeping up’ with innovation and societal changes or by living spontaneously in a way that is the epitome of innovation. The new norms of adaptation and spontaneity give value to each life, no matter how it is lived and the basic income makes it possible to choose freely which life to lead. While I have stated that it seems the spontaneous life seems to be more desirable than the well-planned, this does not mean that I do not see value in both. The point here is that each life has its own value because each life is subjectively free and it is important that we sup-
port both forms of living through by utilizing the redistribution techniques outlined by Van Parijs.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, I have argued here that the Hegelian rabble problem can be understood as the inability to realize one’s subjective freedom and that this problem can be solved by utilizing the Rawlsian difference principle. I have also shown that the capitalist structure of today has complicated and expanded the rabble classes due especially to innovation and worldlessness which work to deny one’s ability to achieve subjective freedom. I then proposed that this new rabble problem could be solved through a combination of emerging social norms and a basic income that would function as a way of recapturing the idea of subjective freedom in a world where traditional values have ceased to provide subjective freedom for anyone. The point here is that if we are to take the idea of subjective freedom seriously, we must remove the lens of bourgeois values and accept non-traditional lives so that they may have meaning and value within civil society.

My hope is that further research can be done to more closely examine the societal structure as it continues to change so that we can gain a better insight into what norms may be necessary to fully eradicate the possibility of the rabble class. Only the passage of time can tell us what changes are going to occur and how we need to adapt to these changes in order to ensure subjective freedom for all. So, while this research cannot be considered complete, it is my hope that it will allow for a close examination of the structural changes of the capitalist system in order to constantly adapt to the needs of those who are either in or at risk of joining the rabble classes.
Works Cited


