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editor's *welcome*

A couple of years ago I taught my department's Senior Thesis course. All of our majors designed and executed individual research projects, many of them ethnographies. The class was intense, filled with new data, and covering a range of anthropological and sociological topics. And then...all their papers ended up shelved under my desk. I began to imagine all of the wonderful projects sitting on shelves or gathering digital dust on hard drives. That is not the goal of academia. So what to do with these papers?

In his recent essay in the American Sociological Association's Community and Urban Sociology Section's newsletter, Jon Smajda smartly outlines a possible answer to the question. He writes, "Publishing early, often, and out in the open requires a change in our culture and attitude towards our writing, our research, and our image as scholars."

The *Journal for Undergraduate Ethnography* is such a place. This is an open-access, online journal. There are no subscriptions or paywall. The goal is to create an engaging set of new ethnographies. We hope to encourage current undergraduates.

This journal seeks to counter lingering skepticism towards online academic writing in the social sciences and humanities. We see our endeavor as part of a broader movement to create open-access content in the academy while maintaining peer-review practices. We use a board of undergraduates to staff our Student Board. These students conduct the initial rounds of reviews. Our Senior Board members then supplement with follow-up reviews.

We are thrilled with the international, multi-disciplinary response. We chose a set of papers that stake out a large territory covering consumption practices, identity navigation, and community recognition. Using a combination of methods – ethnography, interviews, content analysis, and historical records – these new scholars show a breadth of findings. Alfredo Aguirre interacts with the lives of international migrants as they develop a sense of identity and progress via consumerism. Mary-Lynn Allar conducts fieldwork in a small, rural cemetery to understand a community. Victoria C. Moré discovers an informal market premised on the non-monetary exchange of goods. Caroline Womer gives a nuanced account of the self-understandings undertaken by women in relationships with sex offenders. We conclude with Will Gossett's review of the new edition of Robert S. Carlsen's *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town*.

Thank you to the Student Board and Senior Board for your amazing work. Thank you to all the different contributors of ideas. Finally, if you are interested in contributing a paper or review please contact us.

Now, to the field!



The Journal for Undergraduate Ethnography

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“A dream for me”: Idioms of progress among Peruvian migrants in Madrid

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Abstract

In this article, I examine idioms of progress among Peruvian migrants in Madrid, Spain. Since the first waves of migration from Peru in the 1980s, Spain has represented for many Peruvians the possibility of realizing aspirations to socioeconomic betterment. Open-ended interviews and participant observation with Peruvians living in Madrid highlighted the importance of *superación* (overcoming, surmounting) in contextualizing migrants' desires for socioeconomic improvement. As an ideology of individual and collective progress intimately tied to Peruvian histories of violence, *superación* promises to benefit migrants' communities and overcome entrenched racial hierarchies that associate indigeneity with poverty. In Madrid, I observed that desires for *superación* among Peruvian migrants often buttressed a moral conduct toward their family, region, and nation. I discuss the ways by which gender and nationality become important lines of difference as migrants negotiate their own conceptions of progress in the face of Spain's decadent modernity and hostile racism. Lastly, I investigate the relationship between *superación* and another powerful narrative of progress in Spain: consumerism. Analyzing an excursion through a Madrid IKEA with Peruvian migrants, I suggest that consumerism's discourses of universalized access are in fact implicated in the same kind of class and racial exclusions that subtend *superación*. I conclude by pointing toward the myriad narratives and subjects of progress at play in transnational settings, and suggest that rather than subscribe to models of migrant assimilation, attention must be paid to the local contexts and articulations of progress by which migrants strive for better lives.

I: INTRODUCTION FROM IKEA TO PERU AND BACK AGAIN

Even for Madrid in the summertime, it was an unusually hot day—I had just finished eating a hearty meal of *arroz con pollo* (rice with chicken) and *papa a la huancaína* (Huancayo-style potatoes), two staples of Peruvian cuisine—and it was getting close to that time of day when even the heat in the shadows is unbearable.

Carmen and her mother, Julia, suggested going to the mall to entertain ourselves in fully air-conditioned space, and we agreed instantly.¹ Carmen had invited my roommate, Anita, and me over to her house that day for lunch, as she had promised many times ever since I arrived in Spain. Even though we had hardly spoken before, I felt like I knew Carmen well, perhaps because Anita talked about her frequently after coming back from work.

As Anita's coworker in the souvenir shop where she worked part-time, Carmen was a predominant character in the workplace gossip I became privy to while living with Anita. Whether Anita was narrating a near-robbery or an altercation with a coworker, Carmen was almost always on her side—as Anita explained to me, she was the only other Peruvian working in the same souvenir shop with her; and thus trusted her more than anyone else.

We eventually found relief from the heat in the climate-controlled shops and passages of La Gavia, a huge *centro comercial* (mall) in southeast Madrid. Although Carmen and Julia were not thinking of buying anything, we accompanied Anita as she searched for shoes, shirts, and jewelry. After a couple of hours of aimless wandering, Carmen and Julia suggested going to IKEA, which happened to be connected to the mall. As part of the IKEA experience, we all followed the prescribed path through their product repertoire. All of the women were taken by the sleek styles of home furnishing offered by the store as we passed first through their domestic templates and miniature reconstructions of real rooms: to the sofas, chairs, cooking supplies, and finally to the shelves of decorations and household gadgets. In the end, none of us bought anything besides ice cream, but Anita repeatedly expressed her desire to furnish her future home according to the IKEA style.

Our passage through IKEA, as I would come to see over the next few days, was a particularly apt location for the closing hours of a day devoted to commercial leisure. Although going to La Gavia was initially proposed in order

to “*pasearse*” (take a walk),² the kinds of attitudes and affective responses elicited by the company's products were not simply leisurely or recreational: walking through IKEA was intimately related to the economic aspirations and social imaginaries of these Peruvian migrant women. IKEA, in promising to deliver a certain kind of daily living, also dramatized the various tensions that Peruvians must negotiate in Madrid as immigrants in a new country.

After all, IKEA's guided tour of domesticity seems only possible at first through a linear progression from A to B. However, on closer inspection, you begin to notice several “alternate” paths that weave past and through each other. And just as the store is beginning to fill your head with ideas, templates, and products, you end up in the same place as you started. Progress, it seems, is an illusion, and the ice cream and Swedish meatballs offered near the store's exit are perhaps there to mitigate a rather rude awakening to reality: cash and credit.

In this article, I propose to explore the idioms and cultural logics of progress of Peruvian migrants that emerged over the course of my fieldwork in Madrid. I first address the complex interrelations between migration and social mobility, situating migrants' understandings of progress within Peruvian histories of race, class, and poverty. In the next section, I discuss the importance of gender and nationality in migrants' conceptualizations of Spanish modernity. Finally, I discuss consumerism and Spanish narratives of modernity, which invoke migrants' local articulations of progress while simultaneously casting them as part of the universalized consumer

¹In this article, I have changed the names of people I mention in order to protect their confidentiality.

²This article is based on field notes I wrote while in Madrid. I recorded none of the conversations, interviews, and events I describe here, so when I place words in quotation marks, I had written them down in my notes exactly as I remembered them. On the other hand, other quotes I do not enclose in quotation marks I only recorded in my notes as best as I could. In either case, my notes are approximations of the things that were actually spoken.

...migration is fraught with challenges, ambiguities, and contradictions that cast into doubt ideas of linear socioeconomic mobility...

publics of global exchange. As they strive for a better life in Spain, Peruvian migrants must negotiate not only these multiple discourses of progress, but also their relationship to their hometown communities, broader national and global contexts, and lines of difference, such as race, class, nationality, and gender.

MIGRATION AND IDIOMS OF PROGRESS

As I became aware during my first days in Madrid, the primary driving force to migrate cited by the majority of the Peruvians I spoke with was the need to improve their socioeconomic conditions. Some migrants left Peru during the political and economic crises of the 1980s and 90s, others because of the poor pay or lack of prospects in Peru, while some had connections to family members abroad who facilitated the process. These desires for social betterment must be situated within the transnational patterns of inequality that made immigration to Spain a viable option for Peruvians. As Karsten Paerregaard explains, the wave of Peruvian migration was precipitated by the need for cheap domestic workers and caretakers in Spain in the 1980s (Paerregaard 2008, 65). This coincided with the tightened immigration policies of the US and the economic and political crises in Peru beginning with Alan García's government in the mid-1980s (Paerregaard 2008, 46). As Jason Pribilsky indicates in his use of the word "transmigration," the circulations characteristic of immigration are powerful strategies to "negotiate the insecurities of the global economy" by "keeping multiple options open" (Pribilsky 2007, 10).

Many migrants I spoke with frequently compared their experiences of lack in Peru to their sense of socioeconomic security in Spain. For many Peruvians, narratives of migration were intimately tied to notions of individual progress. However, I wish to avoid viewing progress solely as a material process of accumulation enacted by rational agents of consumption. Rather, as many of the Peruvian migrants intimated, migration is fraught with challenges, ambiguities, and contradictions that cast into doubt ideas of linear socioeconomic mobility and migrant assimilation into First World nations. More importantly, any representation of migrant subjectivities must take into account the symbolic dimensions of progress that at once frame and are constituted by material concerns. In my research, this meant attending to what migrants said about progress, what narratives were invoked in its articulation, and what perspectives for understanding one's place in society were conjured when talking about social and economic betterment.

Progress not only refers to material and symbolic registers, but it also implicates a multitude of "subjects" of social and economic advancement—from the individual to the regional, national, and global. These complexities were compounded by the multiplicity of progress narratives I encountered in Spain. For Peruvian migrants, local discourses of social betterment from Peru overlap with broader discourses of Spanish modernity and consumerism in Madrid. Consequently, in this article, idioms of progress—which include the discourses, narratives, and tropes of social and economic improvement—will be referred to by a variety of terms,



Also, in designating a “Peruvian migrant,” I do not wish to homogenize a very diverse set of people; as I will discuss below, Peru is divided along racial, class, and regional lines.

including *superación* (overcoming, surmounting), and will also implicate other important concepts, such as modernity. Progress can have many different meanings depending on the perspective from which one approaches the term. For instance, in this article, I critique linear models of social betterment from my point of view as a researcher; but at the same time, many of the Peruvian migrants I befriended subscribed to similar notions of linear progress. However, I chose to view these instances of tension as opportunities to interrogate the protean nature of “progress” and illuminate the contingencies upon which progress depends for its articulation in a particular context.

METHODS

This article is based on observations collected through participant observation and open-ended interviews with Peruvian migrants in Madrid from July to August 2009. My advisor during the research, Jessaca Leinaweaver, provided me with an initial network of participants, which later grew through the use of a snowball sampling methodology. Adhering to guidelines for research in human subjects, I conducted participant observation with eighteen Peruvian migrants, eventually interviewing six of them. Over the course of the summer, I did everything from attend Peruvian Independence Day festivities to cook Peruvian food with my roommate, Anita. Interviews consisted of open-ended questions about life in Spain, experiences of migration, and identity. I also interviewed a range of individuals—both Spaniards

and foreigners—with a stake in immigration, including health providers, NGO aid workers, and state officials.

Nevertheless, I will be discussing the cultural politics of progress with the acknowledgement that I am presenting a partial perspective on Peruvian migration. Most of the migrants I will be invoking in this article were young women who left Peru to search for better prospects or to improve their family’s socioeconomic position. Also, in designating a “Peruvian migrant,” I do not wish to homogenize a very diverse set of people; as I will discuss below, Peru is divided along racial, class, and regional lines. Some of the migrants I spoke with were from the coast, others from the *sierra* (highlands). Following Pribilsky, though, I will preferentially use the term “migrants” over immigrants in order to signal the ongoing, transient, and contingent processes of migration (Pribilsky 2007, 7). As I soon found out after arriving in Madrid, many of the Peruvians I met either wanted to return to Peru or had plans to do so. This was especially apparent during my stay as Spain was experiencing an economic crisis and rising unemployment rates.

In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Arjun Appadurai suggests that we are all potentially implicated in the global projects of modernity. Just as I myself am invested in modernity’s narratives of progress, as a research assistant in Spain, I was also deeply implicated in the lives of the Peruvian migrants I befriended. In many cases, I was cast into certain roles intimately related to their experiences of migration. For instance, one woman from Trujillo named Lupe repeatedly

told me that I reminded her of Carlos, a son she left back in Peru. Not only a simple research assistant, I became part of the journey she undertook to support her children. In addition, this research resonated powerfully with my own family's histories of migration, which have spanned Peru, Japan, and the US. Raised in America by Peruvian parents, transnational mobility has profoundly influenced the identities I have been exposed to and which I have claimed as my own. Investigating Peruvian migration was thus an endeavor imbued with my experiences of migration, identity, and belonging.

INTEGRATION AND LOCALITY

From my perspective, migration emerged over the course of the summer as a process steeped in ambiguity. However, there were dominant narratives that seemed to have particular power in Spanish discourses of immigration. A predominant narrative that I frequently came across was the notion of *integración* (integration). Spaniards tended to share the opinion that immigration would not be successful unless migrants integrated themselves socially, economically, and politically into the Spanish nation. For instance, one Spanish physician I spoke to suggested that a failure of integration could give rise to bodily ailments, which he categorized as a *patología de integración* (pathology of integration). Arguments for migrant civil participation ranged from this medical perspective to economic rationalizations and humanitarian justifications. In some cases, integration provided an opportunity to perform intercultural cooperation and unity. One evening, I attended an event

in Madrid called *Perú Fusión*, a state-sponsored celebration of Spanish-Peruvian relations in commemoration of Peru's Independence Day. In a particularly interesting moment in the ceremony, a Peruvian chef and a Spanish chef prepared a dish in front of the audience that combined the recipes of the Peruvian *ceviche* (citrus-marinated fish) with the Spanish *pulpo a la gallega* (Galician-style octopus), both traditional dishes and sources of national pride. *Perú Fusión* effectively rendered the ideals of social integration a gastronomic reality.

In investigating migration and progress, I turn to Appadurai's notion of locality. Locality as a domain of social life is a "phenomenological quality" constituted by "the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and relativity of contexts" (Appadurai 1996, 178). For Appadurai, producing locality refers to the continuous project of socialization, made possible through material processes such as house building and cooking, but also inseparable from the "particular valuation" accorded to these aspects of social life (Appadurai 1996, 180). Producing locality is thus a contingent enterprise in which we are all actively engaged, and of which the stakes are the very foundations of "agency, sociality, and reproducibility" (Appadurai 1996, 178). Although *Perú Fusión* cleverly makes social integration a physical possibility through the hybridization of cuisines, discourses of integration fail to take into account and in fact gloss over the diverse localities that migrants must redefine and challenge in their attempt to construct a viable version of the social. Locality becomes an especially useful rubric because narratives of progress also have the ability to modulate

the relationships between migrant subjects and the multiple contexts Peruvians must negotiate in Spain.

My excursion through IKEA's winding paths with Carmen, Julia, and Anita allowed me to experience something of the contradictions, challenges, and harmonies of producing locality as a migrant in Spain. But my transnational IKEA experience also threw into relief the multitudinous narratives of progress Peruvian migrants must contend with—both the local articulations of *superación* in Peruvian contexts and broader discourses of Spanish modernity. By turns linear and circular, real and illusory, progress is rife with ambiguities as migrants wish for a better life and individual, familial, and national betterment. As Pribilsky argues, getting ahead is not simply a monetary calculation: progress, rather, is the articulation “of a new standard of living” that negotiates claims to difference (national, regional, racial) and aspirations of modernity (Pribilsky 2007, 115). And as I elaborate below, these myriad discourses of progress have significant effects on migrant subjectivities—not simply inducing a complete assimilation of Spanish culture, but also strengthening a sense of Peruvian identity intimately intertwined with narratives of morality and family.

II: 100 YEARS APART: *SUPERACIÓN*, RACE, AND MORAL PROGRESS

During the course of my fieldwork, I began to notice that Anita, my roommate, was recounting not a singular narrative of migration, but multiple narratives that sometimes seemed to contradict one another. For instance, when I first arrived in Madrid, Anita explained

that one of the major reasons she chose to come to Spain was the possibility of working and studying at the same time, an opportunity she did not have in Peru. Other migrants shared this sentiment, and indeed working and studying was possible. When I arrived, Anita was doing just this, going to school in the mornings and working in the afternoons; Anita also occasionally expressed her desire to become some kind of health provider, such as a nurse. However, as time went on, Anita ran up against a variety of difficulties, including failing one of her tests in school, and by the time I left, things no longer seemed to be so simple. Anita took on the full-time shift at the souvenir shop and explained that she did not see the sense in taking high school classes and getting her diploma in Spain when she could easily be taking more practical courses that would teach her job-related skills.

Anita's decision to take the full-time shift was interesting because it seemed to contradict her initial ideas of Spanish opportunities for progress, which included gainful employment, education, and professionalization. In her article on Ecuadorian migrants in Spain, Gioconda Mosquera resists linear conceptions of socioeconomic progress and points to the highly contingent nature of experiences of social mobility. One of her informants, Matilde, boasted that through employment as a domestic worker, she was able to relocate her five children to Spain from Ecuador. Matilde's goal of reuniting her family abroad allowed her “to work in jobs which she was overqualified for and where the working conditions have not always been easy. After ten years of having immigrated, Matilde

Indeed, in many of my conversations with Peruvian migrants, the importance of education was repeatedly stressed, whether it was in the context of migrants' own education or the education of their kin.

had not improved her social status, but she had achieved economic independence” (Mosquera 2008, 81).³ Unlike Matilde, though, her younger daughter experienced migration rather negatively: instead of dedicating her time to her education as she did in Ecuador, she was forced to work as a caretaker in Spain, which she found to be “extremely unpleasant” (Mosquera 2008, 81).⁴ In this account, Mosquera questions the modes by which we judge social progress in contexts of transnational mobility. Matilde’s experiences of autonomy in Spain (despite having worked as an accounting assistant in Ecuador) suggest that the social trajectories of migrant subjects cannot simply be reduced to the terms of remuneration or employment. In addition, the disjuncture between the experiences of Matilde and her daughter highlight the context-dependent values that migrants assign to migration and its associated socioeconomic changes. Taking a job in domestic work in Spain was beneficial for Matilde because the integrity of her family was at stake; whereas, for her daughter, migration meant renouncing opportunities for education.

In order to better understand migrants’ representations of socioeconomic change, experiences of migration and progress must be situated within the diverse idioms for describing social betterment, hierarchy, and difference in Peru. In her book, *The Circulation of Children: Kinship, Adoption, and Morality in Andean Peru*, Jessaca Leinaweaver analyzes progress through the ideology of “*superación*” (overcoming, surmounting) which not only means getting ahead socially and economically, but also overcoming one’s constraints. *Superación* is a cultural

logic that only makes sense in light of Peru’s extreme inequalities and racial divisions. As Leinaweaver explains, poverty and Indian-ness have been tightly linked in Peru’s history, and so references to poverty or indigenous people often imply one another (Leinaweaver 2008, 10-11). *Superación* becomes such a powerful ideology because it promises to both overcome poverty and break free of markers of indigeneity that are disparaged in Peru’s dominant cultural climate. This could mean anything from dressing in a more Western style, to abandoning Quechua in favor of Spanish, and living in the city instead of the rural countryside (Leinaweaver 2008, 110).

While in the field in the highland city of Ayacucho, Leinaweaver noticed that talk of *superación* often referred to education as a way out of poverty. Indeed, in many of my conversations with Peruvian migrants, the importance of education was repeatedly stressed, whether it was in the context of migrants’ own education or the education of their kin. For Anita, it was a grave disappointment not to be able to continue her studies: she often lamented that she would have been able to study had she had family to support her financially. As Leinaweaver argues, “In a context in which ‘peasants’ is officially code for ‘Indians,’ education is a technique for divesting oneself of certain ethnic markers” (Leinaweaver 2008, 118). Education as a technology of socialization has the potent ability to align the indigenous subject with broader discourses of cultural literacy, professionalization, and modernity—but at the expense of subordinating and marginalizing indigeneity.

^{3,4} My translation

Mari's sense of responsibility to her employment and household effectively situates her as a viable subject of transnational *superación* in Spain.

Anita's desires for education not only invoke the racial hierarchies of Ayacucho, the city in which she grew up, but also a moral dimension of progress that will be indispensable to understanding Peruvian migration to Spain. Although Anita and many other migrants were unable to study and work at the same time in Spain, they were profoundly invested in the qualities of industriousness and honesty characteristic of the disciplining space of the school. In an interview, for instance, Mari, a migrant from Piura, and Teresa, a migrant from Ayacucho, both described how some of their coworkers would become mistresses of their Spanish bosses. Once, after noticing her boss's pleasure with Mari's work, a coworker asked her what she had done to him ("¿qué le has hecho al viejo?"), insinuating that Mari had become the boss's lover. However, Mari simply responded that she was just doing her job. For Mari, the integrity of her work spoke for itself: she was experiencing success through honest industriousness, not by selling her body.

In her discussion of child circulation in Ayacucho, Leinaweaver argues that *superación* as an "individual effort—overcoming one's own conditions—is a moral act: it occurs within a social web of relations who will, ideally, benefit as well" (Leinaweaver 2008, 128). Even though getting ahead was often described as a personal endeavor, as in Mari's account, migrants framed their *superación* in the broader terms of family, region, and the Peruvian nation. As Mari once explained to me, she and her older brother were the only ones in her family to leave their small village outside of Piura. She explained that she had to "*superarse*" (get ahead, overcome) in order

to support her siblings and parents back home. Indeed, most migrants I spoke with regularly sent remittances back to their relatives in Peru, sometimes contributing a major source of revenue for these family members. A scrupulous work ethic thus allowed Mari to re-articulate a variety of interpretations of *superación* that not only emphasized her disciplined behavior in the workplace, but also underscored the moral valences of aiding her family. Mari's sense of responsibility to her employment and household effectively situates her as a viable subject of transnational *superación* in Spain.

Mari recalled once that Spain was always "*un sueño para mí*" (a dream for me). The realization of this dream has had a significant impact on her family, but for Mari, her migration to Spain has also had a positive influence on broader communities her household is a part of. During an interview, Mari affirmed that she always wanted to help her "*pueblo*" (village, hometown). Similar sentiments of regional loyalty were expressed by other migrants I spoke with. As Pribilsky observed in his fieldwork in Ecuador and New York, cash flow from migrants can have profound consequences on the social hierarchies and material economies of hometowns. Pribilsky's informants in Jatundeleg agreed that remittances had led to regional development, such as annual road repairs (Pribilsky 2007, 74). However, Mari's use of the word *pueblo* could also mean larger contexts in which her town is situated—including the Northern region of Peru or the country itself. In fact, the progress of individual Peruvians often paralleled their discussions of national advancement as well. For instance, when I interviewed Javier, a migrant

from the Northern city of Trujillo, he expressed his wish that Peru modernize: he explained that Peru and Spain are about 100 years apart in social and economic development.

Despite these wishes, the *superación* of individual Peruvians did not always match up with Peru's progress. As Javier recounted, he left Trujillo precisely because his country was in bad shape, politically and economically. It was because he migrated that he rose from a condition of poverty to a social class he described as "normal." And just as the national, regional, and individual trajectories of progress are not synchronized with each other, they are also subject to the vagaries of the global economy. Javier confessed to me during an interview that he fears falling from his socioeconomic position to even lower rungs on the social ladder: you turn into an animal, he added. Such comments invoked the uncertainties of a global order that could at any moment disadvantage Peru's population on individual, regional, and national scales.

Javier's fear of turning into an "animal" also points to the persistence of racial and class hierarchies among Peruvian migrants in Spain. When Javier explained that Peru and Spain are 100 years apart in development, the idiom of the nation conjured the entangled logics of poverty and indigeneity. The success or failure of the individual or the nation could impact not only your assets, but also what kind of human you are—whiter by virtue of social betterment or more like the racially-marked, backwards "animal" of the lower classes.

III: COMPLETE "PERDICIÓN": GENDERED MORALITIES OF PROGRESS AND NATIONAL DIFFERENCE

Articulating certain lines of difference, in particular nationality and gender, became for many migrants important ways by which to produce locality as they struggled to overcome in Spain. As Pribilsky and Leinweaver argue in their ethnographies, narratives of progress are gendered, establishing different expectations for men and women. In Pribilsky's study of male migrants to America from the Azuayo-Cañari region in Ecuador, he observes that many of his informants held the belief that experiences of migration were crucial steps in becoming a man (Pribilsky 2007, 11). Migration enabled men to accumulate some wealth, which they could use to acquire land, establish independent households, and start a family. Migration to Spain, however, must be seen in a different light because of the prominence of women in initiating transnational social networks: after all, immigration to Spain was precipitated by a growing demand for domestic workers and caretakers, labor historically conceived as women's work.

The gendered expectations of progress became apparent to me through a rather awkward scenario that implicated my own gender identity. Soon after I arrived in Madrid, Anita and I both began to notice frequent insinuations made by her coworkers and friends about our living situation: many of them suggested that Anita take advantage of my proximity by dating me! Anita and I were at first scandalized, but over the next few weeks, we would become accustomed to these innuendos.

When I asked her about it, she explained that in Spain, people are more risqué (“*la gente son más atrevidas*”), engaging in casual sexual relationships with ease. Anita compared this to her experiences in Ayacucho, where people were more socially conservative. She explained that the concept of a *compañero de piso* (roommate) with someone of the other sex did not exist—it was simply assumed that you were “*conviviendo*” (living together) with a romantic partner. As I would come to realize, other migrant women also framed their experiences of migration in terms of gender norms that were divided along lines of national difference.

Anita explained that in her view, her ideal relationship would proceed “*paso por paso*” (step by step), rather than moving straight into a boyfriend’s residence as many Spaniards do. As Leinaweaver describes in relation to the kind of education young girls receive in Ayacucho, “the placement of a moral compass in young adult bodies is a gendered act, designed partly to prolong a girl’s unmarried and childless state...so that she has a better chance of achieving professionalization and *superación*” (Leinaweaver 2008, 125). In the case of Leinaweaver’s informants and Anita’s notions of appropriate sexual behavior, getting ahead in society requires women to adhere to ideals of feminine purity organized around marriage or enduring affective relationships. As Anita explained, women are more at risk of being rendered “*sucias*” (dirty) by men, referring to the material consequences of pregnancy and the symbolic registers of gendered morality.

For Anita and other Peruvian women in Madrid, articulating the differences between these cultural norms was essential to producing a sense of transnational locality. In describing the “loose” sexuality of Spanish women, Peruvian migrant women were inoculating themselves against the insidious effects of Spanish modernity by adhering to ideals of social continuity and tradition. Even though these Peruvians had migrated to Spain in order to seek social betterment, I encountered this notion that modern society was a decadent one in other contexts as well. One night as we were walking in our neighborhood, Usera, Anita and I got caught in a lightning storm. She confessed that thunder frightens her and recalled being scared to death of stories of the end of the world she used to hear as a child in Ayacucho. She still believes in apocalypse, she added, citing gangs and growing violence worldwide. In this moment, Anita expressed the sense that things are getting worse in the world and suggested that modernity, rather than reforming society, was the symptom or even cause of encroaching evils.

Sentiments of global decline were also articulated in terms of a collapse of moral codes. For instance, in Javier’s model of global development, societies proceed through successive phases linearly, starting with the primitive and eventually passing through the “*liberal*” (liberal) to arrive at “*libertinaje*” (libertinage). When I asked him what this latter one meant, he answered, complete “*perdición*” (perdition). According to Javier and Anita, modernity does not simply result in social betterment, but also has the potential to release an excess of vice and sin.

A general consensus among the migrants I spoke with was the notion that Peruvian *trato* (social conduct) was better than the *trato* in Spain.

Javier also reminded me that this succession was a global one: even Peru would eventually reach the end stage of perdition.

Pribilsky discussed this notion of “progress at a price” in his analysis of home construction in Jatundeleg, Ecuador. Beginning in the 1990s, houses began being constructed according to North American designs, which, among other changes, did away with the open courtyards and patios of older designs. Despite these architectural trappings of modernity, Pribilsky’s informants seemed to agree that something of domesticity was lost in these constructions. Some described this type of house as “*chiri wasi*,” or “cold house,” which lacked signs of warm family life (Pribilsky 2007, 110). Something of these pejorative changes accompanying modernity was evoked in my conversations with Peruvians in Madrid. Warm, affective relationships seemed to come under threat in the context of a modernity characterized by sex without emotion, public violence, and moral corruption.

National difference was a site not only for the critique of modernity but also for a critique of Spanish society more generally. Shortly after arriving in Spain, I began to notice repeated references to another kind of morality concerning the state of everyday social relations in Spain. A general consensus among the migrants I spoke with was the notion that Peruvian *trato* (social conduct) was better than the *trato* in Spain. *Trato* often referred to the tact and amiability of an individual or collective, and was frequently invoked by migrants when comparing their social faculties to those of Spaniards. On one of

my first days in Madrid, Anita interestingly attributed her trust in me to my Peruvian-ness: she explained that she almost always gets along with and confides in other Peruvians. Other migrants shared her view that the *trato* of Spaniards was by turns unfriendly, “*seco*” (dry), or “*tosco*” (brusque). From my conversations with these Peruvians, the characterization of Spanish *trato* seemed to suggest a paucity of hospitality in Spain more generally. Indeed, it was commonplace for me to hear of the uninviting attitude of the Spaniards, sometimes discussed in accounts of racism. In an interview, Teresa asserted that despite the “*encuestas*” (polls) that declare Spain non-racist, Spaniards *are* in fact racist. Mari added that this was true “*tanto en la calle como el en trabajo*” (as much on the streets as in the workplace). This idiom of *trato* thus emerged as a powerful way to critique Spain’s attitudes toward immigrants and to buttress a particular kind of Peruvian distinctiveness premised on a polite, friendly, and welcoming social conduct.

Peruvian migrants’ accounts of gender and national difference illuminate a certain rejection of modernity: despite the tremendous advantages progress can afford, modernity can also endanger the foundation of the family and quotidian social conduct more generally. The seemingly contradictory opposition of *superación* as moral advancement and global change as decadence points to the conflicts posed by a modernity that perpetuates social ills. Criticisms of Spanish gender relations and *trato* were also a powerful means by which Peruvian migrants denounced Spanish society as both needing immigration and rejecting immigrants from broader social, cultural,



During my stay in Madrid, I noticed that a major pastime of Anita and other Peruvian migrants was shopping, or simply window-shopping.

and political arenas. By posing the Peruvian as moral and industrious, and by critiquing Spanish modernity, migrants are both poised to overcome racial and class hierarchies in Peru and also in Spain. *Superación* thus becomes articulated by Peruvian migrants in ways that both maintain a critical stance toward Spanish society and allow for social betterment in Spain. An emerging theme here will be the tension between the impulse to establish a Peruvian distinctiveness (with its moral genealogies, racial histories, and gendered dimensions) and the need to adopt the cultural codes, logics, and discourses of Spanish modernity.

IV: "¡LAS ETIQUETAS!": CONSUMERISM, RACE, AND PARODIES OF PROGRESS

Although repudiated by Peruvians in the domain of social conduct, Spanish modernity was met by migrants with a very different reception in Madrid's contexts of commodification. Indeed, as I suggested in the introduction, my meanderings through IKEA with Anita, Julia, and Carmen gave physical form to opportunities for consumption in Spain that seem to promise not only new products, but better lives. In *La Chulla Vida: Gender, Migration, and the Family in Andean Ecuador and New York City*, Pribilsky quotes Daniel Miller in describing consumption as "the main arena in which and through which people have to struggle toward control over the definition of themselves and their values" (Miller 1995, 277, cited in Pribilsky 2007, 206). Consumption thus has the curious ability to open up those avenues of Spanish modernity that allow the active construction of new

identities and the undoing of limiting social categories.

During my stay in Madrid, I noticed that a major pastime of Anita and other Peruvian migrants was shopping, or simply window-shopping. For instance, I accompanied Anita countless times along the streets of Madrid's busy center as she shopped for shoes, blouses, jeans, or shirts. Although migrants rarely spoke about consumption and identity directly, I began to notice that Anita and the other migrants only bought clothes and accessories that were sold in trendy Spanish stores, which lacked any "markers" of ethnicity. Returning to Leinaweaver's discussion of race and poverty, clothes are one of many ways by which people in Ayacucho "read" class and locate individuals in racial and ethnic categories. After all, *superación* in Peruvian contexts seems to be only possible by becoming "whiter" and shedding an "Indian way of life" (Leinaweaver 2008, 110). Viewed from the perspective of *superación*, Anita's impulse to shop was thus not simply a side expenditure—her purchase of "Spanish"-type clothes was a crucial part of overcoming her constraints and getting ahead. As Appadurai argues, "consumption creates time and does not simply respond to it" (Appadurai 1996, 70). Seen in this light, consumption has the power to constitute the time frames by which migrants register their own trajectories of transnational *superación*.

In the context of shopping, race also rarely cropped up as a relevant topic of conversation in my interactions with migrants. Indeed, it seems as though the function of a brand is to market products to a universalized consumer

pool. Seen in this perspective, commodification effectively homogenizes potential customers into rational agents of consumption, eliding racial, class, and gender differences. For instance, in my passage through IKEA, it seemed as though anyone and everyone could have access to the products on display. IKEA invites consumers to enter into its domestic templates—tableaus of living rooms, bedrooms, and dining rooms—and temporarily inhabit those spaces. Anita, Carmen, Julia, or I could potentially become the next “real” residents of these domestic scenes. In addition, IKEA is structured so that the store itself acts as a “blueprint” of a home, inviting the agency of the consumer to construct and give life to his or her future abode.

Observing the dynamics of consumption, Appadurai suggests that the imagination is increasingly the dominant domain through which globalized circulations occur: “The work of consumption is as fully social as it is symbolic, no less work for involving the discipline of the imagination” (Appadurai 1996, 83). IKEA is thus particularly suited to selling its home furnishings in the 21st century, when even a walk through a store can enact the imaginary narratives and exchanges of consumption.

The hold of commodities on the imagination became evident in these migrants’ expressions of pleasure during our stroll through the mall. One of Anita’s favorite pastimes—and vices, she assured me—was shopping for new clothes. Our trip through IKEA was also filled with gasps and other expressions of delight: its products were truly pleasurable for the women as they stumbled upon

some convenient household tool or attractive piece of furniture. As Pribilsky argues, a key strategy that migrant households used in Ecuador to combat the negative effects of migration was engaging in events and actions that claim modernity through a “celebration of family life” (Pribilsky 2007, 113). Similarly, these pleasures of consumption were oriented toward the construction of a home, invoking the centrality of the family in the narratives of Peruvian *superación*. The pleasure of spending an afternoon at IKEA thus in a sense synthesized desires for modernity with obligations to the family, negotiating consumption along moral lines.

Despite the seriousness with which Anita, Carmen, and Julia spoke to me of their desires for an IKEA home, the character of our stroll soon became rather playful. During our walk, they would stop at a particular template and take pictures of themselves in domestic poses, enacting the kind of living the scenes seemed to be inviting. I myself became a participant, and in one picture, I am in the middle of a imitation kitchen, pretending to be peering into an empty pot as though I were cooking; behind me, a price tag reads, 4,867€. The women would crack up after taking these pictures and seeing the results on the screens of their digital cameras: they repeatedly screamed, “¡las etiquetas!” (the tags!), referring to the price tags on all the items in these domestic scenes that gave away the photographs’ illusory nature. Carmen, Julia, and Anita caused quite a ruckus in the store that day, but our lively tinkering of IKEA’s templates spoke volumes about the ambiguities and ironies of progress.

In our ridiculous photo shoot through IKEA, Julia, Carmen, Anita, and I became cast as actors in a kind of parody of *superación*. There was nothing “real” about these household scenes: in fact, our poses of everyday living were completely fake. In one picture, I am sitting with Anita on a couch in a living room simulacrum: we are smiling at the camera as though someone were taking our picture in our own house. In our performances of domesticity, the dimension of *superación* that takes place on Appadurai’s plane of the “imagination” here meets the illusory unreality of our parody, two registers of the imagined that do not wholly cancel each other out, but neither map onto each other as equal terms. In these hilarious pictures, there is the sense that *superación* inhabits those spheres of the imagination that threaten to cross over into the unreal, the farce.

Superación borders on the absurd here in part because our excursion through IKEA pointed to the ironies of consumption and moral progress. On the one hand, IKEA depends on a narrative of universal access and a homogenized subject of consumption. For instance, in the photograph in which I am peering into the pot, it is as though I am already the owner of my new kitchen setting: all I need to do is to purchase it. However, as the price tags behind me reveal, constructing a home is expensive, and only possible through the monetary exchanges of capitalism. *Superación* is not solely achieved through hard work and industriousness, but also bought with no-nonsense currency. This parody of *superación* also exposes the intimate relation between consumerism and its promises of universalization. The symbols and tropes

that accompany the global flow of commodities seem to convey the potential of erasing the differences of those who choose to engage the materials of exchange. In the encounter with an IKEA commodity, for instance, subjects of consumption become stripped of their past identities as they confront the possibility of remaking their homes and themselves. Consumerism thus resembles discourses of integration in that it has the ability to elide the diverse localities and contingencies through which migrants must construct viable and meaningful lives.

However, the sheer amusement elicited among Julia, Carmen, and Anita by our reconstructions of IKEA living was made possible in part because of our incomplete and unsuccessful appropriation of the templates covered in price tags. In their parody, there is the sense that the kitchens, bedrooms, and bathrooms on sale belong not to us, but to another. Indeed, on IKEA’s Madrid website, a slideshow of families in their IKEA-furnished homes is displayed on the main page, and interestingly, feature predominantly white, middle to upper class individuals. Even though it seems as though IKEA advertises to a homogenized consumer public, its templates, products, and accessories market a sleek, modern style that is intersected with the racial and class histories of European modernity. The Peruvian women’s parody of progress in this sense signaled the ways by which commodities not only convey the narratives and symbols of consumerism, but also the subtle racial, ethnic, and class differences with which they are inscribed.

After all, both *superación* and consumerism implicate trajectories of social betterment within contexts of racial, ethnic, and class subjugation and domination.

The clean, simple motifs of IKEA's products are undoubtedly part of the company's success. As many authors have argued, poverty, indigeneity, and dirt are often linked together in powerful ways in the Andes (Gandolpho 2009, Leinaweaver 2008, Weismantel 2001). When I interviewed Javier, he asserted that in Peru, *no hemos andado sucios* (we haven't been dirty). In his conception, even the poorest of the Peruvian population are poor with dignity—that is, *limpios* (clean), as he described them. Javier's comments gesture toward the terrible entanglement of race and poverty that associates the indigenous poor with filth. Mary Weismantel discusses these associations in the context of indigenous market women in Ecuador: as public figures in non-Indian spaces, market women were frequently cast as "dirty Indians" (Weismantel 2001, 24).

My walk through IKEA with Carmen, Julia, and Anita made manifest the complex relationship between the capitalist logic of consumption and the morality of *superación* dictated by Andean idioms of progress. The guffaws from Anita, Julia, and Carmen you could hear in the passageways of IKEA in response to our photographs hinted toward a singular tension between these narratives of progress. On one hand, there is the sense that migrants are not able to escape the kinds of racial and class exclusions inscribed in commodities and intertwined in notions of *superación*. After all, both *superación* and consumerism implicate trajectories of social betterment within contexts of racial, ethnic, and class subjugation and domination. On the other hand, however, both idioms of progress invite the subject of social betterment to

redefine his or her identities and embark on better lives, whether achieved through consumption or the assimilation of "Western" modes of conduct. The insight and hilarity of these Peruvian women's parody is engendered in the paradoxical space between the social hierarchies that subtend *superación* and consumerism, and the possibilities of new, better ways of living promised by these same narratives of progress.

Our "paseo" (stroll) through IKEA shed light on the multiplicity of narratives—some contradictory, others compatible—that Peruvian migrants must negotiate and inhabit in Spain. For the migrants I befriended, "progress" was a contentious site where Peruvian histories of *superación* met narratives of modernity's decadence, Spanish discourses of consumerism, and accounts of global social and economic change. In addition, the kind of "individual" and the kind of "society" at play on the global stages of progress are manifold. The collectives invoked by migrants in our conversations could refer to a single family, a small town in Northern Peru, or even the totality of the modern world. The individuals conjured by notions of progress could similarly range from the independent subject of consumption to the working mother trying to support her children back home. It seems that progress, whether understood from the perspective of *superación* or globalized consumerism, teeters delicately between local needs and global hierarchies, individual actors and regional communities, universal imperatives and exclusions marked by race, class, and nationality.

Perhaps resolving the “immigrant problem” involves reconfiguring the localities and communities we include in our conceptions of the social world.

V: RETHINKING INTEGRATION

The ambiguities of *superación* in a transnational context point to the simplified models of social interaction that underpin discourses of integration. Rather, we in the First World must ask ourselves: what is at stake in the assimilation of immigrants, and what are the limits of integration? How are we to accommodate the myriad localities migrants are forging a life within, and how are we to provide more inclusive conditions for their flourishing and recognition? These questions are more pressing now than ever given the increasingly tightened immigration policies of the United States and Spain.

Perhaps resolving the “immigrant problem” involves reconfiguring the localities and communities we include in our conceptions of the social world. For Appadurai, locality is primarily “relational and contextual,” rather than spatial (Appadurai 1996, 178). Viewing immigration in this “relational and contextual” perspective, I believe, is key to elaborating alternative and more just modes of living—locality is not rooted simply in space, but can be modulated in our interactions with others around us. Perhaps it is in this spirit of concern for the localities around us that we may strive for collective social betterment—and even find new and unexpected neighbors.

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An Ethnographic Study of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to learn about the past life of the small, rural community of Astor, located along the Saint John's River in central Florida, through an ethnographic study of the original, historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery.¹ The data presented in this paper comes from a survey of the area's history, area maps, several personal visits to the cemetery, a study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history, and a review of historical documents such as censuses, death records, and military records. As a result of this study, a great deal about the ethnic and racial make-up of this population is revealed in addition to other interesting demographic factors regarding the past population of the Astor/Astor Park area.²

¹The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is made up of multiple acres and many different burial sections.

This study only focused on the original Astor area cemetery. None of the additional, contemporary sections were considered.

²I would like to thank Stetson University, especially the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, for their guidance and support, the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery's Board of Directors for providing me access to the cemetery and allowing me an interview, and I would especially like to thank Dr. Kimberly Flint-Hamilton for encouraging me to do this study and for her continued guidance and support throughout this journey.

INTRODUCTION

Florida is a fascinating place due to its unique demographics. A highly diverse population exists that is comprised of local people whose families have been in the area for many generations, northerners who move down as part time residents to enjoy the warm weather during the winter months, retirees, and international immigrants. The state is also known for its agricultural products—

especially citrus. The extensive coastline and abundance of beaches draws numerous tourists each year.

In particular, small communities along the St. John's River are culturally rich. Residents often support themselves with fishing, hunting, farming, and by working in other local industries such as stores and businesses owned by families living right in the community. Astor is one of these communities. Founded and created in 1874

by William Astor and his business partners, Astor has had its share of struggles³, but the community has tenaciously survived and still thrives today (Wass de Czege 1982, 23). A window into the lives, experiences, and pasts of the residents of this area can be viewed through a study of the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery.

Cemeteries can be viewed as a culturally rich glimpse into the lives and experiences of a society. Researchers use cemeteries in a wide variety of ways. Essentially, four popular research foci regarding death include: (1) an analysis of the psychological state of people who are dying, (2) the experience of those who survive a friend or loved one and the grieving process they go through, (3) treatment given to the dead and dying by health facilities and personnel, and (4) "archaeological research which focuses on cemetery populations, tombstone rubbings and architecture as artifacts of previous religious symbolism, folk art, carving technology, and genealogical patterns" (Trevino-Richard 1984, 323). This study falls into the fourth focus group.

The purpose of this study is to learn about the Astor community through an ethnographic study of the historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. This work is important because not much is known or published about the area and this study adds to the limited knowledge base that already exists. In addition, a study such as this is necessary because as the world becomes more globalized, small, rural communities are dying out, and their histories need to be preserved.

This study is not a standard ethnography; however ethnographic methods are used. The American Anthropological Association website states, "Ethnographic methods can be employed in non-traditional ways in interdisciplinary projects that bridge the sciences and humanities" (2006). Although unusual, this study is not unique. Lynn Meskell, the author of "Falling Walls and Mending Fences: Archaeological Ethnography of the Limpopo," uses a hybrid form of investigation. In her article, Meskell writes, "It [Archaeological ethnography] can encompass a mosaic of traditional disciplinary forms including archaeological practice, museum or representational analysis, studies of heritage, as well as long term involvement, participant observation, interviewing, and archival work" (Meskell 2007, 384). Although she delves further into the ethnographical realm in her study, her discussion of archaeological ethnography applies to this study as well.

The first section of this paper is a brief history of the Astor area and the cemetery. Next, tombstone design and epitaph folklore are discussed. Data collected from studying the cemetery population is presented and followed by a section of further analysis. Finally, a conclusion section followed by suggestions for further research brings the paper to a close.

³A destructive crop freeze during the winter of 1894-1895 caused financial hardship for those who invested in citrus and banana crops, and later the Great Depression forced many to leave the area (Wass de Czege 1982, 28-33).

An ethnographic study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history was conducted, and the discussions on tombstone design and epitaph folklore were developed as a result.

METHODS

Histories of the area were reviewed for the historical discussion on Astor and the cemetery. Cemetery details were discovered through multiple visits to the cemetery. During these visits, pictures were taken of the headstones and a digital-audio recorder was used for 'note-taking' purposes. Photos of tombstones that had deteriorated over time required additional visits to the cemetery so they could be studied physically. If the words and images were not clear, the sense of touch was employed and the engravings were felt with the hands and fingers to obtain a better understanding. Eventually, pictures of each and every headstone were printed and arranged chronologically. The pictures were studied to see if any patterns existed. In addition, a map was sketched on location and edited based on a comparison with official maps of the area. Certain history and cemetery information was provided through an interview with a member of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery's Board of Directors. An ethnographic study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history was conducted, and the discussions on tombstone design and epitaph folklore were developed as a result. Birth and death dates provided on the headstones and supplemented by cemetery records were used in finding demographic information such as the age distribution throughout the cemetery and the death timing of spouses in relation to one another. Personal information on the deceased individuals was discovered through an examination of historical documents such as death records, marriage records, census data, and military records provided by the website Ancestry.com.

In addition, literature regarding immigration into the United States was reviewed. This information was used to explore these people's races, ethnicities, occupations, and socioeconomic statuses.

ETHICS

This study does not elicit ethical concerns because it contains information from public records and headstones. The American Anthropological Association website lists four categories which are exempt from review by an Institutional Review Board and states, "The exempt categories include research 'involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, [and] records' if these sources are public..." (2006). Review by an Institutional Review Board is unnecessary because this study falls into this exempt category.

LOCATION INFORMATION

HISTORY OF ASTOR/ASTOR PARK

In 1982, Albert Wass de Czege published a monograph entitled *The History of Astor on the St. Johns: Astor Park and the Surrounding Area*. Since so little information is published about the Astor area, the historical information presented in this paper relies heavily on Wass de Czege's history.

William Astor, grandson of the famous, self-made millionaire John Jacob Astor, purchased 12,905.93 acres of land in March of 1874. William Astor, along with his business partners, constructed a town on that same land, and they originally named it Manhattan. Astor built a non-denominational church, schoolhouse, and general store

for the town, and also donated land in Astor Park for a free cemetery.⁴ In addition, he built two hotels: the Astor House and the Palmetto. In 1878, William Astor used the services of James E. Drake to build a railroad from Astor Landing to Lake Eustis. This development launched the tiny, parochial Manhattan into the realm of “a booming town.” By 1884, Manhattan began to be called Astor (Wass de Czege 1982, 23-26).

William Astor died in 1894, and the land was passed down to his son John Jacob Astor IV, who died 18 years later with the sinking of the Titanic on April 15, 1912. The land was then passed on to William Vincent Astor, son of John Jacob Astor IV, who sold the land to the Duluth Land Company in 1916; however, “Astor and Astor Park were permanently engraved into the Florida landscape, with three churches, two school-houses, railroad terminal, steamboat, [sic] landing, hotels and restaurants” (Wass de Czege 1982, 28).

Finnish immigrants bought up much of the land as a result of advertisements by the Duluth Land Company that stated Astor had “...the best climate and richest farmland in the country...” (Wass de Czege 1982, 29). The immigrants purchased most of the land without seeing it beforehand and moved down from the north “to retire and build the farms they were dreaming about” (Wass de Czege 1982, 30). Unfortunately, the advertisements were not entirely true. For example, even though most of the trees were cut down and removed from the land, the stumps and roots were left behind for the immigrants to deal with on their own. However, the immigrants were able to overcome these adversities and succeeded

in making Astor their home. (Wass de Czege 1982, 30).

In 1931, many Astorians had to leave their homes because of the Great Depression. Those who stayed had to face hard times in order to survive. Astor began to prosper again after the end of World War II, and northerners began to move into the area to buy winter and retirement homes. In addition, fish-camps sprang up all over the area (Wass de Czege 1982, 33-35).

By 1982, there were thirty-four active businesses in Astor and Astor Park, and the post-office served more than 4000 customers of whom 500 lived across the river (Wass de Czege 1982, 38). Despite the Astor area’s growth, the beauty of nature still exists. Albert Wass de Czege wrote this about the future of Astor: “The majestic flight of the bald eagle...will be here for those whose souls are yearning for a world created by God and not yet spoiled by man” (1982, 39).

HISTORY OF THE CEMETERY

William Astor donated the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery to the people of the area as a free cemetery in 1885. On December 31, 1969, Otis M. Lee, George Drossos, and Bradford E. Brown⁵ filed the Articles of Incorporation with the State of Florida in order to keep the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery free for residents. On January 7, 1970, the cemetery received a certificate of incorporation (not for profit). The first people to make up the Board of Directors were: President Otis M. Lee, Vice President George Drossos, and Secretary/Treasurer Bradford E. Brown. Additional property was donated to the cemetery in 1977 by Patsy Tatum (Cemetery Packet).

⁴According to the cemetery board’s history, the cemetery was not donated until 1885 (Cemetery Packet).

⁵All three of these men are buried in the cemetery.

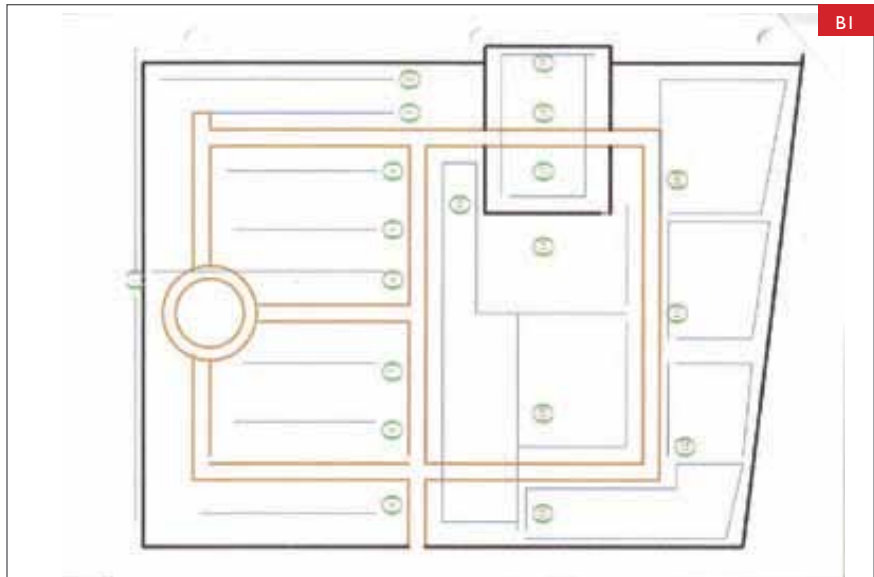


FIGURE B1.
(CEMETERY PACKET). MAP CRE-
ATED BY CEMETERY VOLUNTEERS.

CEMETERY DETAILS

The deceased individual or his/her immediate family has to be a resident of the Astor/ Astor Park area in order to be buried in the cemetery. The cemetery is free to all residents whether they own or rent their home. As a result of limited resources, the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is not a perpetual care cemetery. The Board of Directors is comprised of residents who overlook and maintain the cemetery. All work is done on a volunteer basis, and the board members do not get paid for their efforts. Several clean ups are conducted during the year in order to keep the grounds well maintained (Cemetery Packet).

The cemetery is bordered by Wild Woods Campground on the east and an un-named, paved road on the west. Undeveloped land borders the north end of the cemetery, while State Road 40 borders the cemetery to the south.

The cemetery has paths created in the grass. Figure B1 depicts these paths. An entrance path in the center of the cemetery acts as a divider between the north and south sides. Visitors either park in the gravel or drive on the paths to bring them close to the graves of the individual(s) they are visiting. The newest burials are at the north-west and north-east quadrants. A section of African American burials is located in the south-west quadrant (containing at most four known burials), and the original Astor/Astor Park Cemetery (originally for whites only) is located in the south-east quadrant. A section for urn burials is also in the south-east quadrant located between the entrance path and the original cemetery. Figures B1 – 4 (continued on next page) are four different maps of the area that will give an idea of the cemetery layout.

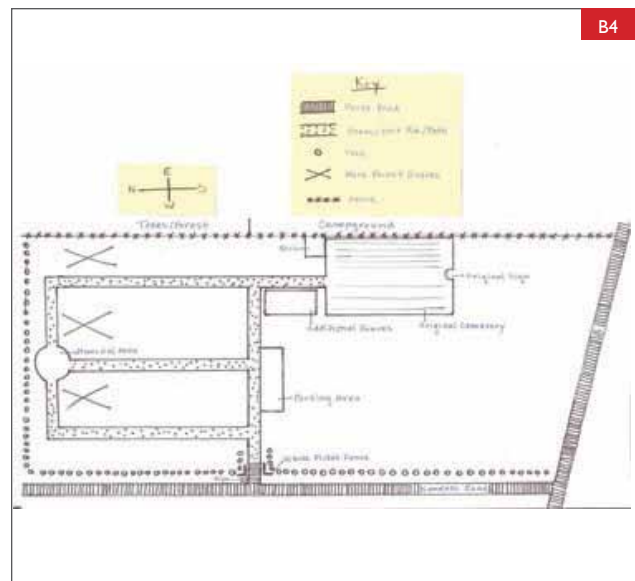


FIGURE B2, B3. (GOOGLE MAPS). A SATELLITE VIEW OF THE WHOLE CEMETERY AND A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE ORIGINAL CEMETERY SECTION

FIGURE B4. A SKETCH OF THE CEMETERY LAYOUT. (COMPASS ROSE IS ACCURATE FOR OTHER MAP FIGURES AS WELL)

As previously mentioned, the focus of this study is the original cemetery (located in the south-east quadrant). The oldest headstone in this part of the cemetery is that of H. B. Sanders who died in 1886. The burials in this area are arranged into eight general rows. Not every grave marker fits precisely into the row arrangement, but eight rows can be distinguished. All of the markers face east with one exception: that of Marrietta Jones faces north.

For the purpose of this study, the rows were labeled one through eight starting with the row furthest west. There are thirty-one headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirty-eight individuals) in the first row, fifteen headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-four individuals) in the second row, twenty-five headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirty-one to thirty-two individuals)⁶ in the third row,

twenty-two headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-eight individuals) in the fourth row, twenty headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-three individuals) in the fifth row, seven headstones (representing the burial spaces of nine individuals) in the sixth row, eleven headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirteen individuals) in the seventh row, and eleven headstones (representing the burial spaces of twelve individuals) in the eighth row. The total number of headstones in this cemetery is 142. Secondary grave-markers as well as footstones are not included in this count. There is a total of 175 people represented on these headstones, but there are only 167 people buried in the cemetery as far as can be determined. There are several possible explanations for the disparity. For example, if headstones do not have a death date, it is likely that the individual has not yet died or is just not buried in this cemetery.

⁶ One of the headstones in this row is totally unreadable. It may belong to the same person as one of the markers beside it, or it may belong to a separate individual.



FIGURE A1.
HEADSTONE—H B SANDERS;
1881 – 1886

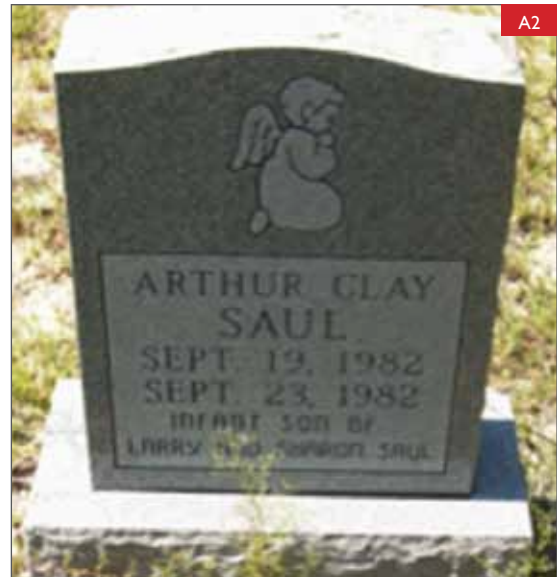


FIGURE A2.
HEADSTONE—
ARTHUR CLAY SAUL;
SEP 19, 1982 – SEP 23, 1982

Cemetery records have also been used in calculating these numbers, and it is possible that some of the record information is erroneous. In addition, some of the headstones may not be up to date. For the purpose of this study, the total number of interred individuals is considered 167 and the total number of individuals represented on headstones is determined to be 175. These two numbers are used to determine certain statistical information found in subsequent sections of this study.

TOMBSTONE DESIGN

Stylistically, headstones have not changed drastically throughout the generations. For example, a child's headstone from 1886 (see Figure A1) is strikingly similar to that of a child who died in 1982 (see Figure A2). The main difference is in the precision of the cut of the stone, and this is due to technological advancements. However, there does seem to be an overall trend toward shorter and wider headstones in more recent years. This could be due to stability factors. The closer a headstone is to the ground and the wider its base, the more stable it will stand over time. Tall, thin headstones, of which we see a few of in this cemetery from earlier decades, would be more easily knocked over or damaged.

The 142 headstones of the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery range in style from those with absolutely no decoration



FIGURE A3.
HEADSTONE—SAM LAHTI;
1881 – 1965

to those which are very elaborately decorated. Sizes range from the smallest at 8 inches long by 4 inches tall (that of Unknown) to the largest at 7 feet, 1 inch long by 3 feet, 2 inches tall (that of Ralph and Anna Reeder). Headstone decoration varies. Some have no decoration at all while some have a simple decorative pattern incised on them. Others, however, are very elaborate. Floral and religious decorations are very popular, and the two coexist on many of the headstones. Secular scenes and emblems are also found on some of the grave-markers in this cemetery. In addition, there are eleven headstones of which the decorations are unable to be deciphered at all or are only partially decipherable. Sixty-eight headstones have no decoration (borders are not considered a form of decoration in this study), twenty-four have floral decoration (these also sometimes have a simple pattern accompanying the flowers), eighteen

have religious decorations, eleven have floral and religious decorations, five have secular decorations, three have only incised patterns, and two have both floral and secular decorations.

NO DECORATION

The first type of grave-marker to be discussed is that with no decoration at all. The headstones that fall into this category are the simplest in the entire cemetery. These headstones are small, rectangular, and lay either flush or almost flush against the earth. They are incised with a single line, and solely the name, birth date, and death date of the individual are inscribed (see Figure A3). There are seven such headstones. The next type is larger, but still rectangular, and is also laid almost flush with the earth. Nine of these exist, and on two, inscriptions are incised with a double line rather than a single line. Another type of headstone belonging to this category lies flush against the ground. These incorporate an incised border.



FIGURE A4.
HEADSTONE—
ALEX WATANEN;
1873 – 1943

FIGURE A5.
HEADSTONE—
JAMES O. JOHNSON;
1879 – 1961

FIGURE A6.
HEADSTONE—FRANK P. STEELE,
JAN 2, 1903 – APR 14, 1958;
JUANITA B. STEELE,
APR 14, 1912 – JUN 27, 1981
THE HEART DECORATIONS

FIGURE A7.
FIGURE A7: HEADSTONE—
MARTHA ANN BRYAN

Seventeen have borders that consist of a single line, and seventeen have double-lined borders (see Figure A4).

Seven upright, wedge-shaped (wider at the base than they are at the top) headstones also belong to this category. Two have a double-line, incised border and the rest have a single-line border. Just like all the types previously mentioned, this type also usually contains only the individual's name and dates of birth and death (see Figures A5). There are seven other upright headstones in this category that are not wedge-shaped. Four are single headstones, two are multiple person headstones, and one is for a married couple (see Figure A6).

Some of the oldest headstones in the cemetery fit into this no decoration category as well. Three are upright, arched-top, stone grave-markers that have solely the name and birth and death year of the deceased carved into them (see Figure A1). Also,

in one case, it seems that a cement square was simply poured onto the ground onto which only a name was sloppily carved (see Figure A7).

FLORAL DECORATION

Floral images, usually incised but not always, are the most popular forms of decoration found on the headstones in this cemetery. It seems natural for images of flowers to appear on headstones since it is common practice for bouquets of flowers to be left on graves. Tombstone company websites have lists of common headstone symbols and their meanings. Many flowers have assigned symbolic meanings or represent specific stages in human growth and maturation. For example, a certain type of flower or a depiction of a flower bud may be used on the headstone of a child, but a fully blossomed flower may be used on the headstone of an adult. When considering the meanings given to these floral images by these



A8



A9

FIGURE A8,A9.
EXAMPLES OF AN ORCHID-TYPE
FLOWER AND A ROSE-TYPE
FLOWER.

companies, it seems likely that some of the floral depictions in this cemetery have a symbolic meaning along with the seemingly more obvious purpose of beautifying the headstone itself.

The first example of floral decoration appears on a headstone from 1958. Eleven headstones have floral decorations paired with religious decorations, two have floral decorations paired with secular decorations, and nineteen have solely floral decorations. The simplest depiction included in this category is the appearance of branches on one headstone. The next simplest floral depictions occur on four upright headstones. On these, an incised border with an arched-top is accented by symmetrical flower designs in the upper corners. These designs consist of one simplistic, five-petaled flower in each corner that includes a small stem that has three leaves sprouting from it.

Flowers often accent the corners of headstones. A simplistic four to five-petaled flower accompanied by leaves is used on ten headstones.

Seven of these also have religious decorations and one also contains a secular image. Four headstones have a simplistic flower, much like the five-petaled flower discussed earlier, along with some leaves carved at the bottom, top, or top and sides of the headstone—one of these is also accompanied by a secular image. There is variation among the floral accents used in the corners. The simple flowers mentioned previously are not the only style. A rose-type flower is used on twelve headstones, and an orchid-type flower is used on one headstone (see Figures A8 and A9).



FIGURE A10.
EXAMPLE OF A WREATH EMBLEM

FIGURE A11.
HEADSTONE—
WHITEY WOJCIECHOWSKI,
1909 – 1989;
URA WOJCIECHOWSKI,
1889 - 1985

FIGURE A12.
HEADSTONE—ARTHUR CLAY
SAUL; AUG 7, 1953 – AUG 20, 1958

Wreath emblems are also being considered a form of floral decoration, and five grave-markers have small wreath emblems located at their tops (see Figure A10).

RELIGIOUS DECORATION

Religious images are the second most popular type of decorations found in the cemetery. This is not surprising as the area is heavily populated by Christians—specifically Baptists. For the purpose of this discussion, marriage symbols (such as linked wedding bands) are considered a form of religious decoration (see Figure A11). In addition, it is assumed that depictions of lambs are considered to be “the lamb of God,” Jesus Christ (see Figure A12). Images of linked wedding bands carved into couple headstones appear twice, and single lambs are incised on two headstones as well. Both the wedding bands and the lambs are usually accompanied by depictions of flowers.

The simplest of the religious decorations are single crosses which appear on fifteen headstones. They are usually incised and are most commonly centered at the top of the headstone; however, there are two instances of single crosses centered at the bottom of grave-markers. These two crosses are raised. In addition, nine of the incised crosses are surrounded by an incised circle.



FIGURE A13.
PICTURE OF PRAYING HANDS
ACCOMPANYING A CROSS

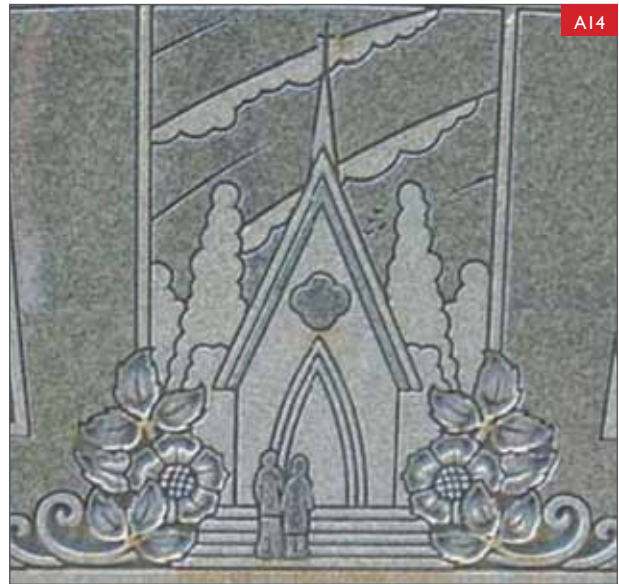


FIGURE A14.
PICTURE OF THE CHURCH SCENE

FIGURE A15.
PICTURE OF THE SCENE
IN WHICH GOD'S HAND
REACHES DOWN FROM HEAVEN

Crosses appear quite often on other headstones with more elaborate decorations. In one instance, praying hands accompany a cross (see Figure A13), but praying hands also appear alone on two other headstones. Angels appear on headstones as well—twice alone and twice as one of multiple symbols.

There are two elaborate scenes involving religious symbols. The first depicts a small, charming church against a backdrop of trees and cloud-streaked sky. Two people are standing on the steps of the church gazing toward the building as if waiting to be welcomed in through its doors (see Figure A14).

The second depicts two hands reaching up through flowers toward another, slightly larger hand that is descending from the clouds (see Figure A15). This scene is to be interpreted as the hands of the two deceased individuals reaching up to embrace the hand of God. He is ushering them and welcoming them into Heaven.

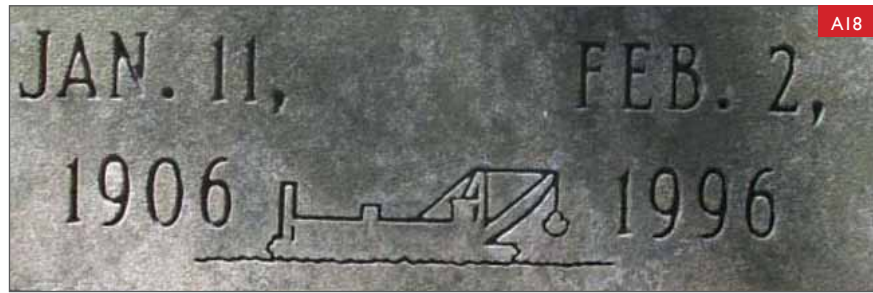


FIGURE A16,17.
EXAMPLE OF A MASONIC
SYMBOL AND A PICTURE OF
THE HEART DECORATIONS

FIGURE A18.
PICTURE OF THE
INDUSTRIAL BOAT

SECULAR DECORATION

Secular decorations are those that do not have an obvious connection with religious groups or ideas. These images may represent something that was important to the deceased during his/her life. The secular decorations are mostly limited to specific symbols. For instance, three headstones are engraved with Masonic symbols (see Figure A16). There is one occurrence of heart decorations⁷—a pair located in each upper corner of the headstone (see Figure A17). One headstone even has an industrial or commercial boat engraved at its center (see Figure A18).

Two of the most interesting, elaborate, and beautiful headstones are set apart from the other headstones with secular decorations because they contain landscape scenes. One of these scenes consists of a snowy field with a few blades of grass peeking out of the snow.

⁷ There are also two other headstones in the cemetery that make use of hearts, but not in the same way being discussed here. One headstone is in the shape of two hearts and another has the names of the deceased individuals inscribed in hearts. These two headstones also contain religious decorations.



FIGURE A19.
PICTURE OF THE SNOWY
FIELD NATURE SCENE

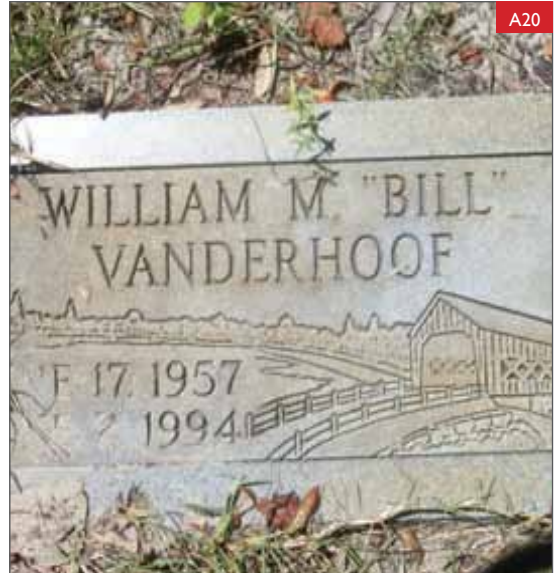


FIGURE A20.
PICTURE OF THE COVERED
BRIDGE NATURE SCENE

A buck and a fawn (or a doe) graze in the field (see Figure A19). The other shows a covered bridge over a river. Open land surrounds the bridge, and trees can be seen in the distance (see Figure A20).

OTHER

In addition to all the headstone designs discussed above, there are some headstones that have depictions that cannot be completely deciphered. This is due to erosion, dirt, and difficulties caused by ambiguous designs.

EPITAPH FOLKLORE

Only 23 of the 142 headstones in this cemetery have epitaphs.⁸ These epitaphs range in date from 1898 to at least 2004. There is one other headstone with an epitaph that may or may not be later than 2004, but its year of production is unknown. This type of folklore is the product of multiple individuals. For example, the person who selects the epitaph is obviously

involved; however, the person who physically creates the epitaph is also involved (i.e. an engraver). There are three different individuals who may be involved in selecting the epitaph: (1) the deceased individual (for example, if headstone is purchased before death), (2) the family members or friends who are making the burial arrangements for the deceased individual, or (3) the cemetery directors (if there is no one to make the burial arrangements for the deceased individual). The epitaphs in this cemetery all fall into five different thematic categories:

⁸ Headstones of some veterans state the war and branch of the military in which the individual served. In this study, these statements were not considered epitaphs.

Remembrance of the deceased is a very popular theme.
There are seven instances of epitaphs that fall into this category.

- Informative statement
- The temporary state of death
- Characteristic of the deceased
- Remembrance of the deceased
- God's role in death and the presence of an afterlife in which God is involved

Keep in mind that some of these epitaphs harken to more than one theme, but for the most part they fit best into one thematic category, and this main category sets the parameters for the following discussion.

The informative statement is one of the least used types of epitaphs. This type of epitaph states a fact about the deceased individual and is not what one would typically expect to read on a headstone. There are only two examples of this type of epitaph: (1) Born in Turku, Finland and (2) Infant son of Larry and Sharon Saul. Both of these provide information about the deceased.

Two other epitaphs portray the theme of the temporary state of death; however, they portray this theme in different ways. One epitaph states, "We will meet again." This statement declares that the separation between the deceased and loved ones is temporary—in fact, there will be a future encounter. Therefore, this epitaph also harkens to the presence of an afterlife (this theme will be discussed in more detail later). The other epitaph reads, "Only Sleeping." This phrase seems to mean that death itself is only temporary. Eventually, this individual will wake up. Just like the previous epitaph, this one also harkens to an afterlife.

There are four epitaphs that describe a characteristic of the deceased. A main theme within this category is love. These epitaphs include (1) Loved by all, (2) Beloved, (3) Loved by their children and grandchildren, and (4) Beloved son, brother, father—Hard Head. All of these state that the individual was, and is still, loved. The last is particularly interesting because the second part of it, "Hard Head," embodies a bit of humor. This is the only instance of humor seen in all the instances of epitaphs in this cemetery.

Remembrance of the deceased is a very popular theme. There are seven instances of epitaphs that fall into this category. Many are self-explanatory. For example, there are two occurrences of "In loving memory of" and one occurrence of "In loving memory." The others include: "Gone but not forgotten," "Immortalized in the writings of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings," "Precious Memories," and "In our hearts forever." Each one of these states, in a similar way, that despite death the individual lives on in the memories of loved ones. The epitaph that speaks of immortalization is particularly interesting because it means that this individual will be remembered for generations. The use of the word "immortalized" leads one to believe this man can never be forgotten.

The most popular theme is that of God's role in death and the presence of an afterlife. Eight epitaphs fall into this thematic category. Two of these simply read "At Rest." Wherever the deceased individuals happen to be now, they are "at rest." This seems to hint at the presence of an afterlife. One of these epitaphs is very

⁹"In loving memory of" and "In loving memory" also adhere to the theme of love discussed in regard to the epitaphs that state characteristics of the deceased. It is important to note that there is overlap between epitaph themes.

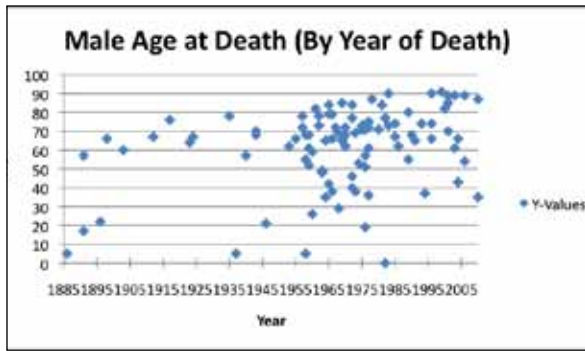


FIGURE B5
SCATTERPLOT DIAGRAM—MALE AGE AT DEATH (BY YEAR OF DEATH)

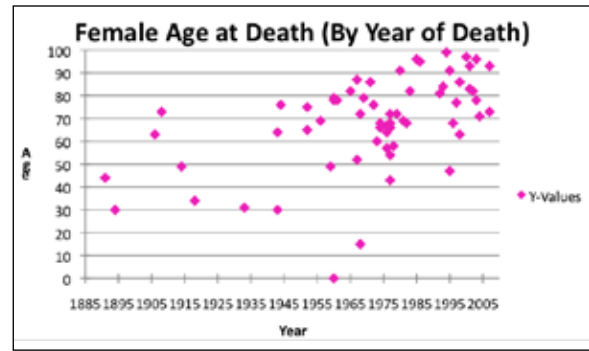


FIGURE B6.
SCATTERPLOT DIAGRAM—FEMALE AGE AT DEATH (BY YEAR OF DEATH)

difficult to decipher. However, it appears to read, “God gave, he took, he will...” The word after “...he will...” is undecipherable. It is a jumble of letters that does not actually spell a word. The letters appear, “i cslo ve.” Erosion may have destroyed some letters or may have altered the appearance of existing letters resulting in erroneous interpretation. This epitaph possibly means that God gave life, took life, and that in the future will act further (pers. comm. Kimberly Flint-Hamilton). Since we don’t know what the last word is, we don’t know what God’s future action will be. Two other epitaphs, “My trust is in God” and “In God’s Care,” all declare that God is expected to take care of the deceased in their afterlife. “Our Father which art in Heaven” is clearly religious because it is the first phrase of the Lord’s Prayer. The next epitaph in this category reads, “Precious Lord take my hand.” The Lord will guide the deceased in the afterlife. The final epitaph of this category reads, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” The house can be interpreted as Heaven because that is where God resides. The deceased are expected to join God in his house.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Cemeteries are a treasure trove of demographic information. This part of the study reveals the most important information about the people of the area in the late nineteenth through the twentieth centuries including age at death, sex, race, and ethnicity. This knowledge coupled with immigration and occupation information allows conclusions to be drawn about socioeconomic status.

DEATH TIMING AMONG MALE/FEMALE

The oldest person buried in this cemetery was 99 years old, and she died in 1994. The youngest person died at 1 day (or less) old, and she died in 1960. Note that both of these individuals are female and thus represent the oldest and youngest females buried in the cemetery. The oldest male buried in the cemetery was 91 and died in 1999 while the youngest male buried in the cemetery was 5 days old and died in 1982. The average age at death for adults (only people eighteen years old+ were used to calculate this number) is 67.22 (based on 157 individuals). The average age at death for adult men is 64.97 (based on 95 individuals), and the average age at death for adult women is 70.66 (based on 62 individuals). According to these numbers, women outlive men by an average of 5.69 years. The average number of years women outlive men based on the cemetery numbers is only slightly higher than the four years women are presently expected to outlive men according to the United Nations Statistics Division’s life expectancy calculations for the years 2010 through 2015 (United Nations Statistics Division).

Age at death based upon year of death between the males and females buried in this cemetery is pretty evenly distributed according to the scatterplot diagrams—especially considering the ratio of 100 males to 64 females. Figures B5 and B6 are scatterplot diagrams that depict distributions of age at death by year of death (for all ages, not just the adults). These diagrams show that many more women than men were living into and beyond their eighties. In addition, many more males than females were dying under the age of thirty, and more male

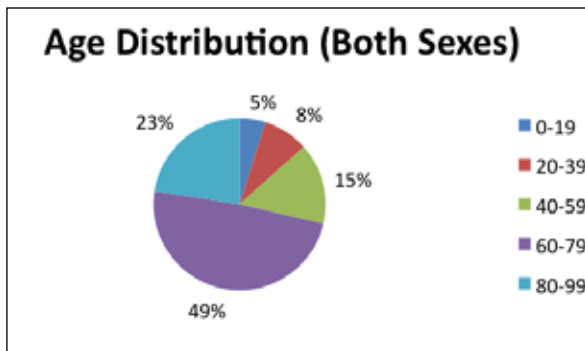


FIGURE B7.
PIE CHART—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BOTH SEXES

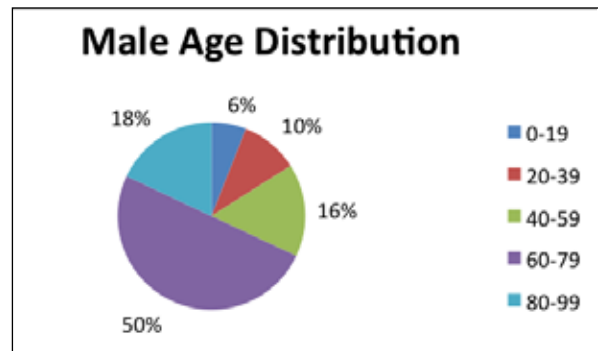


FIGURE B8.
PIE CHART—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALES

children than female children were dying. However, in the years preceding about 1940, many more males than females were dying at older ages. Starting at about 1950, the diagrams show a substantial upswing in the amount of burials in the cemetery. This fact likely indicates dramatic population growth.

DEATH TIMING AMONG SPOUSES

There are forty-seven couples, known to have been married, that are buried in this cemetery. Married couples were determined through the use of census records and marriage records. In addition, shared headstones were sometimes indicators of married couples. Headstone décor was taken into consideration as well. For example, if an image of linked wedding bands was present on a shared headstone, it is obvious that the two individuals were married. Helen and William Press may or may not have been a couple. There is no evidence to support whether they were married, blood related, or just happen to have the same last name, so they were not included in this part of the study. Of these forty-seven couples, twenty-two of the husbands died before their wives, and twenty wives died before their husbands. Three couples died in the same year. Both the husband and wife of one couple are either still alive, not buried in the cemetery, or have headstones that are not up to date because there are no death dates engraved on them. For one couple, the order of death is uncertain because there is no death date on the wife's headstone or in the cemetery records.

The combined average of one spouse outliving the other is 13.22 years. On average, the wives outlived

their husbands by 14.79 years and the husbands outlived their wives by 11.11 years. This number supports the demographic notion that women live longer than men. Interestingly, 14.79 years is much larger than the expected four years women are presently expected to outlive men. It is important to remember that many of these people died several years ago when life expectancies were different. However, there is also a disparity between the number of years spouses outlive each other and the number of years women outlive men in this cemetery population (these numbers were discussed in the previous section).

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION STATISTICS (AGE DISTRIBUTIONS, ETC.)

Age at death can be calculated for 165 people buried in this cemetery. There are at least 167 people buried in the cemetery, but an age cannot be calculated for two of the individuals due to a lack of birth and death dates on both the headstones and cemetery records. Eight of the deceased are between the ages of zero (infants) and nineteen, fourteen are between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, twenty-five are between the ages of forty and fifty-nine, eighty are between the ages of sixty and seventy-nine, and thirty-seven are between the ages of eighty and ninety-nine. The age distribution for all individuals as well as a separate male age distribution and female age distribution can be seen in Figures B7-B10 (continued on next page). These pie charts indicate that a majority of the cemetery population was dying between the ages of sixty and seventy-nine. The second

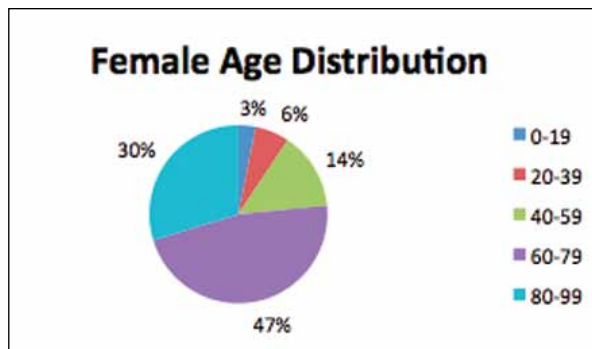


FIGURE B9.
PIE CHART—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALES

largest group of deceased based on age is comprised of individuals eighty years of age and above.

OCCUPATIONS

Of all the people represented on the headstones in the cemetery, occupations (held at some point during the deceased's life) were found for forty-two. The majority of the occupations are manual labor jobs: farmers, fishermen, gas station attendants, etc., with only a few exceptions. Some of these exceptions include merchants, business owners, and store clerks (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009). Notice that all but one of the individuals on this list are men. The only woman is Nan Hendrickson (toward the end of the table) who is listed as being a merchant in Astor in 1945 (see Figure B10 on next page).¹⁰ During the years this part of the cemetery was used regularly, it was unusual for women to work outside the home. This idea is reflected in the fact that Hendrickson is the only woman with an occupation.

RACE/NATIONALITY

The races of 144 of the 175 people represented on the headstones in the historic section of the cemetery have been discovered. All 144 people are white (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009). This is not surprising because there is a known historic "black" section of burials in the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. However, this section was only found when additional land was cleared for the cemetery. Originally these burial sites were hidden among the trees in a wooded area. The existence of a section of historic African American burials coupled with the racial data found for the 144 individuals leads one

to believe that all the interments in the historic section are going to be white burials. The nationalities of some, but not all, were also found. Twenty-six of the people buried in this section of the cemetery were immigrants. The majority of the immigrants were Finnish, but a few were from other countries. There is one person from the West Indies, one from Greece, one from Ireland, one from Russia (a citizen of Russia but born in Finland), and one from Scotland. Finnish immigrants are by far the majority with twenty-one buried in the cemetery. (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009).

FURTHER ANALYSIS

FINNISH IMMIGRATION

Many of the people buried in the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery were immigrants, but the vast majority of these immigrants were Finnish. Why did they come to the United States? Why did they stay in rural Astor instead of being pulled to industrialized urban centers like most other immigrants? Between 1880 and 1921, "new immigration...made its debut in the United States" (Kraut 1982, 8). In the 1900s, Finns left the rural areas of their country to find work in urban, industrial areas; however, some did stay put to revamp farm life. On the other hand, some Finns left their home country altogether and decided to try their luck in America (Hoglund 1960, 3). After 1860, thousands of Finnish immigrants began entering the United States. Finns had come into the country at earlier times, but not in very large numbers. The 1860 instance of immigration

¹⁰These occupations were found through Ancestry.com. This website allows users to access numerous kinds of records in order to track down ancestors to build a family tree. Ancestry.com proved very valuable to this project because it contains historical documents that provide information on sex, age, race, occupation, birthplace, native language, genealogical connections, etc. The data in Figure B10 came from census records and military registration records.

Name	Year of informative document (Location of home): Occupation
Ralph N. Darden	1935 (Astor, FL): Laborer 1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Arthur L. Smith	1920 (Nassau, FL): Fisherman 1930 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Arthur Martin Sutton	1900 (NC): None
Henry Saul	1930 (VA): Farmer; General Farm 1945 (Astor, FL): Laborer
Arthur Merle Shearer	1930 (TN): Salesman; Electric Appliances
Charles Gilbert Dorris Sr.	1930 (Lake, FL): Laborer; Filling Station 1943 (Volusia, FL): Attendant; Gas stations/parking lots 1945 (Daytona Beach, FL): Navy Service
Charlie H. Cason	1930 (Polk, FL): Laborer; Farm 1942 (Volusia, FL): Attendant; filling stations and parking lots
Walter H. Campbell	1920 (FL): Linesman; Western Union
Hubert C. Saul	1943 (Lake, FL): Skilled welders and flame cutters
Alex Niskanen	1930 (MI): Machine Hand; Motor Car Co. 1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer 1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
George Drossos	1930 (NY): Owner (or possibly "Server"); Restaurant
Uuno Kujanpaa	1920 (Astor, FL): Fisherman; Lake
John Rudolph Uleen	1910 (Chicago): Machinist; Machinery 1920 (Astor, FL): None
Albert Maki	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Truck Farm 1930 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Poultry Farm 1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Charles J. Okerman	1930 (NY): Carpenter; Buildings
Sam Lahti	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Truck Farm 1930 (Astor, FL): Laborer; General 1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer 1945 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Nestor S. Wick	1920 (Astor, FL): Fisherman; River 1930 (Chicago): Carpenter; Building
Victor Saari	1930 (Astor, FL): None 1935 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Johan R. Gronlund	1920 (Astor, FL): Machinist; Machine Shop 1935 (Astor, FL): Machinist
William Gronlund	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; General Farm

FIGURE B10.
(ANCESTRY.COM OPERATIONS,
INC., 2009). OCCUPATION TABLE.

	1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Fred Arthur Hosford	1918 (Astor, FL): Farmer; for self 1930 (Lake, FL): [unreadable]; General
Bradford E. Brown	1943 (FL): Attendant; gas stations/parking lots
Adam Niskanen	1917(MI): Automobile-Bodyworker 1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer 1945 (Astor, FL): Carpenter
Sherrill Dillard	1930 (Volusia, FL): Fruit Grower; Citrus 1935 (Volusia, FL): Farmer
William "Bill" R. Moulton	1930 (Miami, FL): Clerk; Feed Store 1945 (FL): Engineer
Spencer T. Pease	1930 (Ohio): Lay Out; Zealand?
Rodney Dale Louçakis	2004 (Satsuma, FL): Owner/Operator of Rodney's Pressure Washing
Alonzo Click	1930 (KY): Laborer; Oil and Gas
O. L. Baber	1880 (MS): Farmer
Calvin Long	1900 (FL): Farmer
W. H. Bryan	1900 (Astor, FL): None 1870 (FL): Farmer
Albert Thomas Gustafson	1943 (FL): Foremen, Construction 1945 (FL): Army
Charles Gustafson	1930 (Astor, FL): Carpenter; House 1935 (Astor, FL): Carpenter 1945 (FL): Labor
Otis Lee	1945 (Lake, FL): Marines
John W. Sullivan	1900 (Astor, FL): Farmer 1910 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Stock
Curtis Moore Richie	1880 (SC): Farmer 1900 (Astor, FL): Farmer 1910 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Robert Lightfoot	1945 (FL): Labor
Paul Arnold	1941 (FL): Fishing Occupations
Thomas Nisbet	1910 (Astor): Fisherman; River 1920 (Astor): Fisherman; River
James C. "Pete" Johnson	1945 (Lake, FL): Painter
Nan J. Hendrickson	1945 (Astor): Merchant
Matt E. Soini	1945 (Palm Beach, FL): Car Repair

was the one to pave the way for the main period of Finnish immigration. The greatest number of Finns arrived in America between 1890 and 1910 (Hoglund 1960, 7-8).

Industrialization and new opportunities drew the Finnish, along with other groups of immigrants, to America in general and the United States specifically. The historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery shows that a large amount of Finns lived and died in the area. However, sources dealing with immigration are adamant about the fact that people were moving away from agriculturally based areas. "By the 1880s, most immigrants found that cities offered them more plentiful economic opportunities than the country-side," Alan M. Kraut writes, "The United States was beginning a period of rapid industrial expansion which necessitated a ready supply of cheap, unskilled, and semiskilled labor for factories and mines" (1982, 12). Astor and Astor Park were predominantly agriculturally based. A large number of the occupations these people held at certain times in their lives dealt with farming.

Why did these Finnish immigrants (1) stay in this area despite the trend to move to industrialized urban centers, or (2) choose to move to this area from industrialized centers? Often times when Finns moved to industrial centers for work, the trades they were skilled at were no longer useful; however, when they moved to farms, they were able to use "their old skills as jacks of all trades" (Hoglund 1960, 23). In addition, as more and more Finns moved to the area, maybe Astor became a 'Little Finland' for the immigrants. "As soon as they came to America,

Finnish immigrants sought each other's companionship," A. William Hoglund writes, "In their trials they found solace through informal contacts among themselves" (1960, 37).

CONCLUSION

Ethnographic studies of cemeteries can reveal a great deal about the culture in which the people lived and died. The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery provided a wealth of information about religious beliefs, socio-economic status, race, and nationality of the area's past population. The cemetery provided a view into the lives of those interred within its bounds.

Due to limited time, only a fraction of the information this cemetery has to offer was gathered in this study, but multiple conclusions can still be drawn. Overall, a continuity of décor and epitaph themes exist throughout the generations of headstones. In addition, it seems that a variety of shapes and sizes of headstones has always been available. There is variation in headstone appearance even among the earliest headstones in this cemetery. Taking tombstone décor into consideration, this community seems to have been composed predominantly of non-religious people since only 28 of 142 headstones have religious decorations. This is surprising due to the large Christian influence currently found in the community. However, only 50 percent of the headstones have any decoration at all. Floral decorations are the most common, and Christian decorations are the second most common. Despite the low number of religious headstones, the fact that only Christian depictions are

represented in the cemetery does suggest that if residents of this community did belong to a religious group, it was a branch of Christianity.

The large amount of headstones without decorations could be due to financial reasons. It is likely that simple headstones were all that the families in this rural area could afford. The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is and has always been a free cemetery, so it is not surprising that people of lesser economic means would choose it as the burial place of their loved ones. Perhaps more headstones would have had religious decorations if family members could have afforded more elaborate headstones.

The fact that a majority of the headstones in the cemetery are plain and simple leads to the assumption that these people were not wealthy. However, a number of the simple headstones may not be original headstones. Perhaps the original headstones were more elaborate but were damaged after several years and subsequently replaced with simpler, less-expensive headstones. However, the idea that the people living and dying in this area were not wealthy is supported by the occupation findings that reveal that the people buried in this cemetery had careers that would have put them in the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum. This was a farming community largely made up of immigrant families. Another possibility does exist: maybe wealthy people did live and die in the area and are just buried in a different cemetery since the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is a free cemetery. In addition, wealthy people may have lived in the area and died after the new sections of the

cemetery were being used and are therefore interred in a section of the cemetery not focused on in this study. Occupation findings also reveal that the earliest people buried here lived during a time when women were not expected to have jobs, and men were expected to be the breadwinners. It was unusual to find a woman working outside of the home. This conclusion is drawn from the occupation findings presented in Figure B10 in which Nan J. Hendrickson is the only woman found to have been employed. However, occupation information was not found for every person in the cemetery, so it is possibly that a few more may have had jobs.

The racial data found on these individuals supports the claim that this original, historic section of the cemetery was an all-white cemetery; however, it seems like it continues to be an all white cemetery to this day because the recent burials are generally family members of people previously buried in this section of the cemetery. In addition, it seems that the Astor/Astor Park area in general was predominantly white since there are only four known black burials (at most) in the black section of the cemetery (located outside the historic cemetery section). Astor has continued to remain a predominantly white area even today.

When comparing the age distribution pie charts between male and female, the death pattern between the two sexes is fairly equal; however, when comparing the scatterplot diagrams, many more women are living into their nineties than are men. In fact, there is only one man that surpasses 90 to reach 91 years of age at time of death.

Overall, it can be concluded that this area was composed of predominantly white, low to lower-middle class individuals who were probably Christian and tended to die after the age of sixty. Clearly Astor was an area largely based on agriculture. In addition, it is obvious that Finnish immigrants found Astor to be a good quality area in which to live, work, and raise families as roughly 13 percent of those interred in the cemetery are first generation Finnish.

Throughout the course of this investigation there have been a few difficulties. For one, history about the Astor area is hard to come by, and sometimes histories contradict one another. In addition, the cemetery records contain errors. For instance, the records for the section of the cemetery discussed in this study are missing three individuals, have one person listed as two separate individuals, and sometimes have birth dates, death dates, or interment dates in the wrong columns. Also, the records are missing birth dates, death dates, and interment dates for many of the individuals buried there. Additionally, there is no record of which headstones are originals and which headstones are replacements or of when and how many times headstones have been replaced. This made it very difficult to study how headstones have changed stylistically over the generations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A search of the Lake County public records would be helpful in further investigation of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery and the individuals buried there. In addition, a much richer understanding of the history and culture of these people and the general area would have resulted from interviews with relatives of the deceased and community members. Also, further outside research concerning epitaph and headstone design patterns throughout the generations in other cemeteries would have been valuable in comparison with the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. Lastly, a study of the black section of the cemetery (which is not located in the original section) along with a comparison between the original Astor/Astor Park Cemetery and the black section of the cemetery would be informative—especially regarding how African Americans lived in earlier decades and regarding race relations in the area.

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Dumpster Dinners: An Ethnographic Study of Freeganism

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Abstract

Dumpster Dinners: An Ethnographic Study of Freeganism at Illinois State University dives into dumpsters with the freegan subculture of Bloomington-Normal, Illinois. Freeganism is a way of life based on limited participation in the conventional economy and has been gaining popularity in recent years. Freegans strive to spend little money, barter or trade for goods and services, and live off food that has been thrown away. The freegans in this study are three motivated and educated women who regularly dumpster dive behind local businesses for food and products. Additionally, the freegans barter for goods and services and exhibit a “make it do or do without” attitude that seems almost obsolete in today’s hyper-consuming America. This study explores where and why freegans exist, the process of turning garbage into groceries, why perfectly good groceries become garbage in the first place, and what can be learned from the freegan way of life. This study was conducted for an undergraduate senior thesis course in Anthropology at Illinois State University, spring of 2010.

On a misty evening, Rex Sunnyside approaches a dumpster, turns on the flashlight, and takes a look inside. “Ooooh...it’s really nasty!” As she moves the light around, familiar things appear. “Oh, wow, there’s a mango... a pear... look, there’s a pineapple... and a cantaloupe...but it looks pretty funky!”

Americans dispose of billions of pounds of food waste per year; much of it still fit for consumption. In a study by the USDA Economic Research Service, it is estimated that 11.4 percent of fresh fruit and 9.7 percent of fresh vegetables per grocery store were lost due to inedibility from 2005-2006 (Buzby 2009:2). Unfortunately, supermarkets often toss these so-called “inedible” fruits and vegetables for superficial reasons. Some people,

outraged by the “waste” grocers send to the landfill, have begun to salvage and eat it. These people, sometimes called “freegans”, are “people who employ alternative strategies for living based on limited participation in the conventional economy and minimal consumption of resources.” (Weisman, Freegan.info). “Freegan” is a combination of the words “free” and “vegan,” although freegans are not necessarily vegans. Freegans expose the issue of food waste at a time when many of their neighbors--- some 49 million Americans, including 16.7 million children--live in food insecure households (Nord 2010:15).

In this paper, I describe a small group of young adult freegans living in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, and compare these college-student freegans to others within the larger international freegan movement. I describe freegan activities such as dumpster diving, bartering, and repurposing to show the symbolic transformation of garbage into groceries.

METHODS AND SETTING

Data for this paper comes from ethnographic research (participant-observation) and interviews with three self-identified freegans. The general purpose of ethnographic research is to learn how people make sense of their own communities and to show how dimensions of a culture are interrelated (Rosen 2000:55). To learn about freeganism, I became a participant-observer in a group of freegans in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois.

Bloomington-Normal is a prosperous, white-collar community and is home to two universities. The freegans

of this study were students or recent graduates of Illinois State University, a public university with 20,000 students. I had known two of the freegans, who I call Minnie Conrad and Rex Sunnyside, since our freshman year of college. Wimpy Oak, the third freegan, was introduced to me in January 2010 at the start of this project, which was conducted for my senior thesis in anthropology. As a freshman in 2006, I was aware that Sunnyside and Conrad sometimes attended school club meetings and art gallery openings for free food, and I heard them talk about there being “too much stuff in the world,” but at that time I had rarely heard the words “freegan” and dumpster diving come up in conversations. In August 2009, Oak, Sunnyside, and Conrad started dumpster diving together regularly. Weekly potlucks were popular with our mutual friends, and Conrad showed up with dishes creatively titled “dumpster salad” or “hobo soup.” Knowing exactly where the ingredients in her dishes came from, we would all have a good laugh, and then eat it with little hesitation.

As a participant-observer, I decided to become a freegan for one month. For that month, I did not spend any money on food; I ate food left over in my cabinets and food acquired while dumpster diving. In addition to six dumpster dives with the freegans, I participated in at least six on my own. In preparation for this experiment I bought a few staple items, such as spices, rice, lentils, and nuts. To reduce my overall participation in the consumer economy, I vowed to only use my car going to and from my internship and the dumpsters, nothing else. I also utilized a barter system to exchange goods. Additionally, I

These freegans demonstrate an extreme version of freeganism, separate from mainstream culture and live for free all the time.

recorded and transcribed in-depth interviews with each of the 3 freegans, and recorded dialogue while dumpster diving.

As far as I know, there is no other group of people who call themselves freegans in the Bloomington-Normal area, though there are plenty of other people who dumpster dive to collect cans and scrap metal to sell. The student freegans described in this thesis are not part of a marginalized population, but instead dumpster dive voluntarily to reduce waste and protest overconsumption.

FREEGANS: FORAGERS, ACTIVISTS, OR BOTH?

Although freeganism has received attention from the press (multiple news stories, magazine and newspaper articles, radio shows, and a discussion on Oprah), few ethnographic studies of freegans exist. An exception, Joan Gross explores freegan foodways in rural Oregon and describes freegans as, “modern-day foragers who live off the waste of others and what they can gather in the wild” (Gross 2009:57). Gross conducted her ethnographic study among one freegan household and had informal conversations with four other foragers all in the small rural town of Alsea, Oregon. None of the foragers were active in the community or had a stable residence; they had all lived in 4-15 places during one calendar year. In Alsea, they foraged in the wild, ate road kill, and took trips to the city to dumpster-dive. These freegans demonstrate an extreme version of freeganism, separate from mainstream culture and live for free all the time. The freegans in my study, in contrast, are employed, have professional goals and are active community members.

Gross points out that the freegans she knew had a strong sense of self-reliance and independence, without having a job or steady monetary income. In fact, the freegans saw paid work as “a kind of drug that sucked you in deeper and deeper” (Gross 2009:73). One freegan expressed, “...once you get into that cycle, paying rent and paying insurance on your car, you need money to keep those things going. So you’re dependent on your job, and you’re dependent on your car and your house... and it’s like you’re constantly spending money and never have enough...” Interestingly, interviews with other low-income individuals who had a more conventional lifestyle seemed to agree with that point of view. According to Gross, those individuals ate both less nutritious and less enjoyable meals than the freegans (73).

Ferne Edwards and David Mercer (2007) describe a very different group of freegans in Australia. Edwards and Mercer interviewed 20 men and 10 women, from 18-58 years of age, with the majority being in their early 20’s. These people either “(i) practiced either DD [Dumpster Diving] or FNB [Food Not Bombs], (ii) practiced both activities, and (iii) one person who exclusively collected ‘wasted’ food put aside by supermarket and bakery staff in separate boxes and bags.” (Edwards and Mercer 2007:282). Food Not Bombs is an all-volunteer organization that recovers food that would otherwise be thrown out, and makes fresh hot vegan and vegetarian meals served for free in public spaces. The authors found that people drawn to dumpster diving and FNB were predominately males in their mid 20’s from well-educated middle-class backgrounds who had strong

Freegans may make other economic and lifestyle adjustments such as relying on barter, where one exchanges goods and/or services.

ideological beliefs on which they based their lifestyle. They considered environmental and humanitarian aspects of where and how food was produced, and were aware of the ethics of food consumption. Some followed diets based on their convictions, including vegetarianism, raw foodism, or “veganic” (vegan and organic foods). Some also consumed road-kill, to “show animals the dignity that they deserve” (Edwards & Mercer 2007:287).

These and other studies (Black 2007, Graeber 2004) show a range of freegan livelihoods and counterculture. To some, freeganism is an organized countercultural movement; the role of which as Gross notes “is to call into question behaviors that are taken for granted by mainstream society,” (60). Globally it appears freegans are generally male, young, independent, and educated. They make a conscious effort to alienate themselves from capitalism and overconsumption.

Freegan activities, however, vary depending on personal attitudes and beliefs. Some simply ask store clerks to give them food about to be thrown away. Others might practice “plate scraping” or “table diving” by sitting at a restaurant (sometimes with staff permission) and finishing the food on people’s plates after they leave (Freegan.info). Others live from foraging the generally ignored edible plants that grow all around us.

Freegan activities are not limited to obtaining food. Freegans may make other economic and lifestyle adjustments such as relying on barter, where one exchanges goods and/or services. Some freegans, motivated in part by strong anti-consumerist, anti-corporate beliefs, may scam and shoplift from stores or take things from a workplace. Squatting, the practice of illegally occupying an abandoned space is practiced by some freegans, and many freegans bike, make their own clothing, buy second hand, organize free stores, and use websites like freecycle.org to trade goods. At another level, freegans may organize to use the waste for a greater social good such as donating it to shelters, or cooking and giving away free meals. Freegans in the UK, Australia, and New York City all have a very strong organized presence. They reach out to the public through the media and websites that explain how to freegan (such as New York based Freegan.info, which explains the freegan philosophy and organizes events to encourage individuals to meet other freegans in their area).

The freegans in Bloomington-Normal do not return items found in dumpsters, steal, plate scrape, forage in the wild, eat road kill, or continuously move from place to place. They do, however, barter, attend and organize free stores, and, as mentioned, dumpster dive for food and various other items. Conrad rides a salvaged bicycle, and both Sunnyside and Conrad alter and mend their clothing.

FREEGANS AT ISU

The people in this ethnography are all educated females in their twenties. They either currently attend or have graduated from Illinois State University, and currently they all dumpster dive together regularly. Wimpy Oak, 26, feels that she has always been a bit of a freegan because of the way she was raised. "We could have survived without picking things up on the side of the road, but if it was useful, we took it." Later, Oak started reclaiming thrown away goods while living by herself in college.

Conrad and Sunnyside, both 21, would go around campus keeping an eye out for free things - like free food at club meetings or gallery openings - during their freshman year. When it came time for move-out from dorms and apartments for the summer, Sunnyside and Conrad saw for the first time how many hard-used items were discarded as trash. Sunnyside explained that once she got to college, she realized "Wow. People get rid of a lot of stuff, and it's all useful." It is hard not to curb shop in college towns when items appear in such huge quantities.

Sunnyside's first time in a dumpster was with a friend she met through a religious student organization at ISU. The friend, also a female, had been dumpster diving before and after going with her once, Sunnyside's dumpster diving habit began. Sunnyside also believes that the way she was raised has an influence on her current lifestyle choice. "My grandmother doesn't throw out much; she knows everything that she has and how long she's had it... Also, growing up with four siblings we had to figure

out how to make ends meet. We were resourceful and looked for options that were cheaper and free."

The ISU freegans use some terms regularly that are worth taking time to define. To "dive" is to go dumpster diving: "*that dive was bountiful!*" Also, they use the word "dumpstered" to describe items found in the dumpster: "*The sauce has dumpstered peppers in it.*" Freegan is used as a verb: "*This book was freeganned.*"

INSIDE LOCAL DUMPSTERS.

My first dumpster dive was a chilly Sunday evening in late January. I met the girls at their apartment and we prepared for the dive. To ensure safety while diving, the divers either wear rain boots (preferably) or old gym shoes. Clothing does not usually get too dirty, but this is no place for your favorite jeans. Gloves, preferably sturdy gardening gloves, are good protection from anything sharp or nasty. In colder months, warm gloves underneath the protective ones are a necessity, along with the usual winter layers.

At first glance, dumpsters look grim and smell unpleasant. Eventually, your eyes adjust and familiar items appear, such as zucchini buried under wilted lettuce, or an upside down box hiding carrots and oranges. Shuffling around some more could reveal a bag of apples or onions. It takes your breath away when you see the amount of food that is unblemished, amongst a few rotten apples. Usually, the amount of food is so abundant that the freegans can be picky about what to take home.



FIGURE 1. PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

Unfortunately, there are bound to be garbage bags full of BBQ chicken wings and other meat products prepared and sold daily in the supermarket. These bags should be avoided as they are the source of the vile stench that wafts up from the dumpster and sticks to your clothing. Not all freegans would avoid this, though.

From observations, it is plain to see anything and everything in the produce department ends up in the dumpster at some point, even baskets used to display fruit. Apples, zucchini, pre-sliced fruit in containers, celery, bagged or boxed lettuce, carrots, and peppers are found quite frequently. Sometimes there are boxes of yogurt, bags of onions, oranges, grapefruit and potatoes, boxes of strawberries, asparagus, broccoli, tomatoes, jalapenos, poblanos, and specialty health juices. A solitary bruise is enough for a vegetable to get thrown away. One moldy orange, potato, apple, or onion in a bag of 12 is enough for the entire bag to be tossed. For some items there is no obvious reason for their disposal.

Some businesses have replaced dumpsters with trash compactors. Compactors increase the payload of the garbage trucks, making it economically beneficial. With the push of a button a store employee can destroy hundreds of pounds of "garbage." "Fresh Market, Walmart, Jewel, Meijer, Schnucks, they all have compactors so we can't go there," Conrad explained while we were on our first dive. It bothers Conrad to think that so much food and so many products are ruined in these machines daily.

Half-way into my first dive I was hooked. Initially I was shocked that we were pulling all of this nearly-perfect



FIGURE 2. MY FIRST DUMPSTER DIVE JANUARY 26, 2010. PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

food out of a dumpster. Once we got to the second store, I was excited. It was thrilling to do something rebellious. This feeling of excitement grew when we got home and unloaded the car. Going up their apartment building stairs, we each had our arms full of heavy bags.

HOW GARBAGE BECOMES GROCERIES.

Once in the apartment, we put music on and began cleaning. With a sink full of soapy water, we started dunking veggies to get them clean, and to get rid of the faint lingering dumpster odor. Some, like Conrad's mother for example, insist that dumpsters are dirty and diseased, and express concern for the welfare of the dumpster divers. The mere fact that the food has been pulled from a dumpster tarnishes the image of the food inside it, no matter how pristine. Anthropologist Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger* shows us that uncleanliness, or dirt, is matter out of place. "Dirt is the by-product of a systemic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements" (36). As hair isn't "gross" until it's detached from your head and found somewhere it shouldn't be, food in a dumpster is classified garbage because its location has changed. Waste is always a part of a classification system that arbitrarily designates what is pure and impure (Coyne 2010:2).

The almost pathological fear of germs that dominates American culture could also explain peoples disgusted reactions. Nancy Tomes, author of *The Gospel of Germs* argues this fear comes from bacteriological discoveries in the late 19th century, and has been exacerbated by the marketing of disinfectants and hygiene products. The



FIGURE 3. FEBRUARY 23, 2010. PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

concerns from Conrad's mom and society in general do not discourage the freegans at all. None of them have ever gotten sick from dumpstered foods. Freegans challenge our hegemonic "throw away" culture by interchanging the meaning of waste and food, insisting that found items are in fact still pure.

During the cleaning process, the plastic that wraps many of the items is thrown away, spoiled food is put in a container to be composted, and plastic containers that are reusable are washed and put away. After each veggie had a good scrub, we set them up to dry on the counter where, for purposes of this ethnography, we arranged our findings for a picture. Once the work was done and I saw the giant pile of beautiful food (see figure 2), I was changed. Clearly, some of what we label 'garbage' is far from it.

One trip to the dumpster can bring in the equivalent of \$100-200 worth of food. One dive, on February 23, 2010, yielded \$138 worth of groceries (see figure 3). This included boxes of guacamole, 28 zucchini, 14 wrapped containers of mushrooms, 11 bundles of radishes, and 10 bell peppers, lemons, fruit, lettuce, bread, broccoli, etc.

Another trip, on March 14th, yielded 3 bunches of bananas, 10-12 peppers (yellow, green, red), grapefruits, sliced pineapple, 12 containers of strawberries, 1 peeled watermelon, 2 10lb bags of potatoes, 12 containers of fruit, 3 bags of onions, 6 boxes of lettuce, cherry tomatoes, 3 eggplants, 1 mini watermelon, 1 yellow squash, 6 bouquets of flowers, green grapes, boxes of salad, 1 box of blueberries, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, 7 celery, 1 bag of



FIGURE 3. PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

apples, 3 bags flaxseed wraps, 1 box of fresh organic sage, carrot juice, and 1 orchid. The freegans often dubbed an item the Most Valuable Pick of the night. March 14th's MVP was definitely the orchid. Sunnyside stated, "I think we all decided that the best thing about [dumpster diving] is that you crave it. It turns into a scavenger hunt that is a surprise every time. It's enjoyable."

Although dives often bring a large amount of food, there are items that the freegans buy because they rarely if ever find it in the dumpster. These items include nuts, soy milk, peanut butter, olive oil, flour, and other baking ingredients.

Now that the found food is clean, it needs to be cooked into delicious dishes. Since grocery stores will throw away a large amount of the same item, the challenge becomes to use these ingredients before they spoil. Various preservation techniques are utilized to keep the food from going bad. Surpluses of fruit, like strawberries, cantaloupe, or blueberries, are frozen and used for breakfast smoothies. Grapes and bananas found in the dumpster are often on the softer side, and make a perfect frozen treat. One night we found 19 large containers of mushroom caps and portabella slices, so I learned how to freeze mushrooms. Loaves of bread and breakfast pastries are easily frozen and thawed, and fresh herbs can be dried.

Creative cooking can lengthen the life of the ingredients. One night we found 30 bell peppers (see figure 4) so I roasted 10 of them and had a beautiful jar of roasted red and yellow peppers. Other times there would be an abundance of grapefruits, broccoli, or

After that lengthy life food has had before it appears on our shelves, we foolishly expect the items to look perfect.

zucchini. These “problems” encourage the freegans to experiment with soups, breads, and juices. “In general I feel I cook more than the average college student. I think we do more ‘across the board’ functions in the kitchen,” said Sunnyside. Sunnyside, Conrad, and Oak all expressed that they are eating more healthily now than ever before. “Most of the time it’s fresh, we are cooking at home, utilizing all the ingredients to the fullest. We make apple sauce out of apples, you know?” Additionally, finding this food in a dumpster makes you want something different to come of the food. If it goes to waste, then it goes to waste, but we tried as hard as possible to use every last bit.

It became apparent early on that Sunnyside, Conrad and Oak enjoyed sharing food with others. Any extra food from our dives (which was often the case) would be given to neighbors, friends, family, or the local food pantry. Since there was no monetary exchange labeling the food as exclusively theirs, sharing was part of almost every dumpster dive.

HOW GROCERIES BECOME GARBAGE.

Picking out produce at the grocery store engages ones sense of sight to avoid imperfections, touch to determine a good firmness, and smell to gauge ripeness.

Most Americans begin their relationship with fruit and vegetables when it is finally ripe. Prior to arrival at the store, the fruit has had a long life and possibly traveled a long distance.

Take an apple, for example. The apple was grown in an orchard (possibly in Washington, Michigan or California), picked, and sent to a controlled atmosphere (CA)

warehouse where oxygen, temperature, and humidity are monitored so the fruit is kept alive, but does not ripen any further. It is then transported and stocked on the shelves of your local supermarket. “Today, the Washington apple industry has more storage CA capacity than any growing industry in the world,” Timothy Jones states in the 2005 article “Hallmark of a Sustainable Farming Industry.” These warehouses limit waste of apples in the production process and allow apples to be cheap year round. While the benefits are apparent, the fact that we find apples in the dumpster almost every time we dive shows that a lot of this energy spent preserving the apple prior to their arrival at the supermarket goes to waste. Thus, it is not only food being wasted, but also fertilizer, water, soil nutrients, pesticides, herbicides, diesel, and gasoline (Jones 2006). What about the foods that travel an even greater distance? Some grapes come from Chile, some kiwis come from New Zealand, some mangoes are shipped from the Philippines, and many avocados come from Mexico only to end up in the garbage.

Our detachment has blurred what is important when getting food. Consumers are very concerned with cosmetic qualities when choosing produce. After that lengthy life food has had before it appears on our shelves, we foolishly expect the items to look perfect. No one is about to spend his or her hard-earned money on produce that has a blemish, or is in some way sub-par. For this reason, stores are pressured to supply produce that meets our unreasonably high standards. Edible food that is deemed unworthy of our dollars is sent to the dumpster.

Additionally, “use by” and “best before” dates are often treated as expiration dates. The word expiration means the finish of something; ending, expiry, death. These words describe very little of the food in the dumpsters. Freegans trust their senses to tell them if food is edible or not, similar to anyone determining the quality of food in their own refrigerator. Freegans believe “sell by” and “use by” are not safety dates, but rather dates to keep the circulation of food on the shelves constant. The innate value of food is overlooked in the current system; monetary value seems to be all that matters. Sadly, it seems stores can’t or don’t try to eliminate food waste. Employees are not allowed to take food home, and expired food cannot be donated because of legal risk.

Besides a separate dumpster for corrugated cardboard, there is no attempt made by stores to recycle. Some of the packaging we find even says “please recycle,” “compostable,” or “biodegradable,” but the stores probably consider the sorting process too much of a hassle. One night we ironically found re-useable grocery bags with the words “[name of store] Recycles!” in the dumpster. The same night we uncovered what we think was the lost-and-found, which contained hats, gloves, scarves, sunglasses, coffee mugs, jewelry, and a sweater (note: these items were found on a blistery cold night in mid-January). Sliced fruit in containers are regular finds (seen on the left side and near the microwave in figure 3) so the freegans save these and therefore have a seemingly unlimited amount of re-useable plastic containers for leftovers. Similarly, it is not uncommon to find food that come with bags, rubber bands, and twist-ties that can be

re-used. The freegans eat the food they find, compost the food they don’t, and reuse or recycle the packaging, showing us how little of the garbage is actually useless. As for the lost-and-found clothes? They went to the local homeless shelter.

And to think: This was all one step away from the landfill. The 2010 Illinois Commodity/Waste and Characterizations study estimates the market value of the stock of materials currently in landfills in Illinois, if they could be recovered, would be about \$600 million, and I doubt that number includes food. Timothy Jones conservatively estimates that the U.S. economy loses 90 billion dollars when retail, farm, and residential losses are added up.

Our food supply is the “most varied and abundant in the world, choosing from an average of 50,000 different food products on a typical outing to the supermarket” (Kantor 1997:1). The perishable fraction of that number is what gets thrown out most often. ‘Food deserts’ exist in poor urban neighborhoods and small rural towns where the only place to get food is the local gas station or convenience store; neither of which has anything nutritious to offer. Healthy food is also unattainable to many because of cost. This makes me wonder why the healthiest, priciest food is also the food most often thrown away.

Moreover, it is not grocery stores that are gaining popularity today; supercenters are. These massive stores house many more items than grocery stores, therefore throwing away more as well. “One-stop

shopping is still a growing consumer appeal, practiced by half of US consumers, who now can find practically all their household requirements under one roof," (Seth 1999:197). The presumably massive amounts of waste produced by these mega-stores are destroyed without any hope of reclamation due to their use of garbage compactors.

IDENTITY & WAY OF LIFE

Although Oak, Conrad, and Sunnyside do consider themselves freegans, none participate full-time. They pay rent, pay for cell phones, attend a university (Sunnyside and Conrad), have a full-time job and drive a car (Oak). That said, when asked if they would be freegans for life, all of them replied with a confident "yes." Oak added that she might practice on a different level, maybe not always dumpster diving, but will always reclaim things and buy second hand. Additionally, the ISU freegans do not consider themselves anti-consumerists, but rather conscious consumers. They do participate in purchasing things like the rest of us, but do so much less frequently and with much more awareness than many Americans.

Freegans are committed to lengthening the life cycle of everything that comes into their lives, not just food. They don't believe in buying new, and try not to buy anything at all. This means they repair clothing, their bicycles, and anything else instead of throwing it away. They always seem to find new uses for old items and demonstrate a "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without" attitude. Although this mind-set seems obsolete within the younger generation, it is a philosophy which our

parents and grandparents grew up with. Some activities that exhibit this attitude include re-using birthday cards by drawing pictures over someone else's writing, catching the dripping runoffs of a candle into another dish and adding a wick, using pencil for making flash cards for school so they can be erased, Minnie Conrad even used the plastic packaging her USB drive came in as its carrying case.

The freegans barter regularly with friends. Bartering fits well with the freegan life since they are so focused on the use-value of items as well as community building. "If we barter say potatoes for shoes, both of these items will have diminishing marginal utility for us, i.e. the more we have of them the less useful they will be each additional amount" (Humphrey and Hugh-Jones 1992:9). The freegans believe bartering inspires participants to reach out to other people instead of stores for things they need. This gives value to an individual's talents, skills, and objects since such services and goods can be traded.

From Gross' article, the other ethnographic studies, and the media, it seems as though most freegans are male or females with males accompanying them. Only once did I ever come across an article solely about freegan girls, setting the ISU freegans apart. All three of them are strong, motivated, and independent women who believe in making a positive impact in the community around them. Not only are they female, but also they became freegans from the influence of other female freegans.

Dumpster diving, though fruitful, takes longer than a trip to the grocery store. Including traveling and cleaning, one dive could take 2-3 hours, and is also quite labor

One of the biggest differences between freegans and the rest of society is their perspective of value.

intensive. With little or no processed foods like Easy Mac or Ramen in their diet, cooking takes up more time than some students would be willing to spend.

Sunnyside and Oak see freeganism as an extension of their Christian religion. They believe that God gave humans the earth and therefore it should be respected. Sunnyside stated, “There is more of a circle involved in life, we just have to figure out how to get in that cycle and make [our food system] a connected circle instead of a disjointed line.” Minnie Conrad chooses not to align with a particular religious outlook, but agrees that, “the cycle is so complete and perfect, why would you mess with it?” referring to the cycle of nature.

One of the biggest differences between freegans and the rest of society is their perspective of value. They do not only see value in terms of how much money it is “worth,” but also in terms of its basic qualities and potential to be repurposed. Freegans try to live morally in a society and economy that they perceive as largely immoral. “To think about the relationship of morality and economics is to connect the most abstract and perhaps meaningful realm of human life with the most banal—to consider how the everyday matter of living agents gets infused with our deepest beliefs of what we live for and how we live well” (Browne 2009:2).

CONCLUSION

Freeganism uncovers how much is wasted around us every day. Living in a culture that allows food to be thrown away thoughtlessly is an enormous statement about what is considered sacred and important. Grocery stores seem to only pay attention to the monetary value of food and ignore its intrinsic value. Robin Nagle is the anthropologist in residence at the New York Department of Sanitation, and I believe she said it right when she said, “Why have we found ourselves implicated in a system that not only generates so much trash, but relies upon the accelerating production of waste for its own perpetuation? Why is that OK?”

Freegans live a life that is creative; giving life to goods viewed by most as unusable. Instead of trying to make money to spend it, they strive to make less, spend less, and make the most out of what is available. Innovation and resourcefulness are qualities that individuals, companies, and countries should all strive for, and the freegans are experts. Freeganism allows the participant to step back and question practices otherwise considered normal, and helps us remember that even within our own communities there are alternative ways of life. To quote American anthropologist Laura Nader, “We have as anthropologists studied the cultures of the world to find in the end that ours is one of the most bizarre of all cultures.”

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Acknowledging the Stigmatized: Sex Offenders and Their Outlooks Versus Women in Relationships with Incarcerated Men and their Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System

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Abstract

Offenders are a stigmatized group of individuals, making it difficult for society to proffer second chances so willingly. Furthermore, many women in relationships with offenders suffer the stigma that offenders themselves experience. This study offers a theoretical contribution that focuses mostly on sex offenders in an attempt to help reshape their perceptions and bring clarity to an existing theoretical framework. Sex offenders' outlooks were examined and placed into a three-schema approach (instrumental, political, and cultural schemas), implemented from a previous study, based on their overall mentality and how they have rationalized their offenses. Similarly, women's perceptions of the criminal justice system, based on society's views toward their relationship with an offender, were categorized into the three schemas to contrast the varying types of stigma. In this study, about 40 letters from sex offenders, as well as select stories from a book containing sex offender accounts, were coded and analyzed under this framework using Atlas-ti. Additionally, twelve interviews were carried out with women in relationships with incarcerated men. Results suggest that while many sex offenders desire change, they do not take full responsibility for their actions, meaning that these particular offenders' outlooks do not fit neatly into one schema. A fourth schema, christened the "chimerical schema", is proposed to further explain offenders' outlooks. Most of the women's perceptions, however, easily fit into one of the three schemas, rendering the fourth schema unnecessary. This study will add to an existing theoretical framework, making it more applicable to other marginalized groups.

Sex offenders are a stigmatized population within our country's justice system. In this study, I sought to unveil the mystery surrounding this elusive group of individuals and attempted to categorize their method of thinking in regards to the criminal justice system, rehabilitation, current laws, and overall outlook on their own offenses. Furthermore, I explored why sex offenders feel a compelling need to rationalize their offenses. In addition to these categories,

I made an effort to juxtapose this stigma felt by sex offenders with the stigma that society imposes on women in relationships with a broad array of incarcerated men. I felt that first-hand interviews with women in relationships with offenders enhanced the concept of stigmatization as a whole and provided supplementary views regarding our country's criminal justice system. Using a framework provided by Idit Kostiner in her article, "Evaluating Legality:

Toward a Cultural Approach to the Study of Law and Social Change,” three schemas were uncovered that she found to be applicable to social activists and how they utilize the law to achieve social change (Kostiner 2003). I adopted this framework and applied the three-schema approach to sex offenders; based on their outlooks of their own offenses, I categorized them into one of the three schemas Kostiner provided. On a smaller scale, I applied the three schemas to women’s perceptions of the American criminal justice system based on how society viewed their relationships with incarcerated offenders. Throughout the course of this study, I attempted to determine which of the three schemas a majority of sex offenders seemed to fall under and, when applicable, why and how sex offenders rationalize their offenses. I compared this with the stigma felt by women in relationships with offenders to further express the judgments that society passes on varying groups of individuals.

SELECTED LITERATURE REVIEW

The bulk of literature applicable to my research was Pamela Schultz’s *Not Monsters* (2005) and Hanson and Slater’s “Reactions to Motivational Accounts of Child Molesters” (1993). While this is a rather selective literature review, both of these contributed a vast amount of information to my research and allowed me to peer further into the world of sex offenders. *Not Monsters* contains accounts from interviews carried out with sex offenders by the author herself. I discovered that in a majority of these accounts, there is an underlying theme of the desire to change, yet unwillingness on the part

of the offender to accept responsibility for his actions (Schultz 2005).

In many of the accounts from *Not Monsters*, offenders used blaming as a rhetorical strategy. Most of them seemed highly unaware they even employed the use of strategies, but in essence, they projected the responsibility of their actions onto other people or ideas. In one of Schultz’s interviews, she states that while he displayed little empathy for the children he victimized, the offender made it clear that he held children in such high regard. To combat his projection of blame, Schultz further states, “When I pointed out that pilgrims generally don’t rape their deities, he shuddered and convulsively thrust out his hands, as though he wanted to push away the reality of my statement” (2005). Studying the accounts from the sex offenders exposed a predominant theme of denial. Furthermore, another offender stated that, “Most child molesters are in self-denial, and they don’t think they committed a crime” (2005). While so many offenders were open about their offenses and could recognize why their actions could be considered wrong, they still felt the need to justify and downplay their offenses to legitimize their rationale to society.

Hanson and Slater’s article, “Reactions to Motivational Accounts of Child Molesters,” delves into accounts that offenders provided regarding their respective offenses and how certain members of society change their perceptions of an offender and his blameworthiness, depending on how legitimate the account seemed to be. From the start, the authors used the example of a

It is apparent that we, as a society, want to believe that offenders have a legitimate excuse for their actions and are truly remorseful.

juvenile delinquent to convey the strategy of what they call “techniques of neutralization” (Hanson and Slater 1993). “[W]hen delinquents are asked to explain their actions, they will acknowledge that theft, for example, is generally wrong, but point to special circumstances that mitigate the wrongfulness of their actions (e.g., I needed the money, I was drunk, the owner mistreated me, etc.)” (1993). Other researchers documented such ‘techniques of neutralization’ in wife assaulters (Dutton 1986), rapists (Scully and Marolla 1981), and child molesters (De Young 1988; Pollock and Hashmall 1991; Taylor 1972).

In their study, Hanson and Slater found that of their interview pool (consisting of therapists and probation officers), “people are more likely to be accepting of deviant behavior when they perceive the transgression as caused by factors that are external and uncontrollable” (1993). Furthermore, the authors found that “it is likely that an offender who denied molesting a child (despite convincing evidence to the contrary) would receive a more lenient sentence than an offender who admitted to the offense without remorse” (1993). Judging by this observation, it seems that regardless of how culpable an offender actually is, society treats him with a greater degree of empathy when he projects his blame onto other people or circumstances and tries to rationalize his offense. It is apparent that we, as a society, want to believe that offenders have a legitimate excuse for their actions and are truly remorseful. This idea, however, propagates sex offenders’ beliefs that rationalizing their offenses is more acceptable to society; in reality, this belief merely evades the truth and creates more problems.

Applying Hanson and Slater’s article to *Not Monsters*, I discovered that while offenders may admit their offense was wrong, they project the blame onto others or focus on other irrelevant scenarios in order to rationalize their offense, thus justifying their actions. In one account from a more irritable offender, he discusses his first time in prison after he was reported by his daughter for sexually assaulting her. He states, “My family did come visit me. But I wouldn’t see them. I was kind of angry. What had happened was supposed to be a family issue, but my daughter turned it into a public issue...I said to my daughter, ‘You really didn’t have to put us through all this’” (Schultz 2005). This case represents a more obvious blaming tactic, especially when the offender tells his daughter that she was essentially at fault for the family’s predicament. By attempting to place the blame on someone else, the offender essentially tried to feel like what he did was not as severe as it is in reality. An offender who attempted to rationalize his pedophilia stated the following: “Me, I’m great at rationalizing. I can make myself look good for my own benefit. Being the type of person who doesn’t want to hurt anyone or do anything wrong, I could rationalize in a million different ways” (2005). Though disturbing, it is quite interesting to see how this offender coped with his wrongdoings. If he rationalized his offense in a way that made him feel less responsible, he did not feel that he doing anything wrong. Rationalization, although a well-used coping mechanism, can be detrimental, especially when responsibility is not taken for a wrongful action. This is a continuing issue, and as Hanson and Slater point out, “When self-presentation

I placed each offenders' outlook into the most appropriate schema out of the three, hoping to draw conclusions as to how developed offenders are in their viewpoints regarding their offenses.

attempts are readily recognized, it becomes possible to identify the offenders' genuinely deviant attitudes, attitudes that may contribute to their criminal behavior" (1993).

METHODOLOGY

Using Atlas-ti, I coded and analyzed 40 letters from sex offenders as well as accounts from sex offenders coming from *Not Monsters*. Due to Dr. Chrysanthi Leon's (of the University of Delaware) academic establishment in this field, incarcerated or previously incarcerated sex offenders from across the nation write her on a regular basis in regards to their opinions on current sex offender laws, their hopes of participating in her research, and personal stories about their own offenses and the effect it has on their lives and the lives of others. I coded the most recent letters received by Dr. Leon from spring of 2010, keeping the offenders' identities confidential. As mentioned previously, I implemented Idit Kostiner's three schema approach, from her article "Evaluating Legality: Toward a Cultural Approach to the Study of Law and Social Change," as my theoretical framework. As a brief overview, the three schemas are as follows: the *instrumental* schema is a desire for a change of concrete resources, the *political* schema is one that seeks to empower marginalized groups/communities and rally forces, and lastly, the *cultural* schema seeks to transform assumptions made by typical society. While Kostiner used these schemas to categorize those involved in social activism, I applied them to sex offenders.

I began the coding process by extracting the offenders' outlooks on their own offense from the letters and, once found, coded for words and phrases most applicable to the three schemas, offender rationalization, any type of stigma that was encountered, and any other emotions expressed by the offender that stood out to me. Some of the main words, concepts, and phrases I searched for included: blaming, desire for change, denial, empowerment, anger toward the political power structure or toward those directly or indirectly involved with the offender, and a desire to change others' opinions. Upon completing the process of coding the letters, I placed each of the offenders' outlooks into the most appropriate schema out of the three, hoping to draw conclusions as to how developed offenders are in their viewpoints regarding their offenses. Since the cultural schema is the most ideal schema for sex offenders to embrace, due to the fact that it encompasses an acceptance and responsibility that surpasses the characteristics of the other two schemas, an analysis of the offenders' letters was the first major step in determining where offenders fit in categorically. Due to the nature of these three schemas, however, they are not mutually exclusive. While my initial goal was to place offenders' outlooks into only one of the three categories, some of them embodied more than one.

In order to execute the interview process for women in relationships with incarcerated offenders, I borrowed names from an existing research study that was being carried out by graduate student Laura Rapp and Dr. Chrysanthi Leon of the University of Delaware. Over the course of about two months, another graduate student

and I set up phone interviews with women interested in participating in the study. We amended a questionnaire from Rapp and Leon's study to better suit our own research objectives and asked the women a range of questions including, but not limited to, their childhood, their relationship, the impact that their significant other's conviction has had on their life, how others in their life have reacted to their relationship, and how involved they are in any advocacy groups. The interviews were generally structured, but any questions, concerns, or additional thoughts from the women were welcomed. The women's identities remained confidential. We conducted twelve interviews. Upon concluding the interview process, I used the information I obtained and categorized the women's outlooks into each of the three schemas based on how they viewed the criminal justice system in terms of how they felt society perceived them for their relationship.

Similar to Kostiner, I carried out an interpretivist study. As she states in her article, "While survey methodology is another way to studying culture, it is more limited in its ability to capture the richness and subtleties of culture" (Kostiner 2003). Ann Chih Lin captures the perks of interpretivist research perfectly in her article "Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches to Qualitative Methods," and states that, "[Interpretivist research] can seek to...uncover the conscious and unconscious explanations people have for what they do or believe, or to capture and reproduce a particular time, culture, or place so that actions people take become intelligible" (Lin 1998). I concerned myself with tying theory to one's experiences rather than generalizing attitudes. While I

cannot draw conclusions across the board in regards to sex offenders and their outlooks, I can find meaning within the accounts that I analyzed and better understand why sex offenders rationalize their offenses to such a degree. My research is case specific. While an interpretivist approach makes it difficult to suggest policy implications or generalize to the entire population of sex offenders and women in relationships with offenders as a whole, I am seeking to make a contribution to the theoretical realm of academia rather than public policy. The bulk of my research is not generalizable, focusing on identifying with the sex offender community and attempting to see the world as they do.

Although I was unable to interview the sex offenders, I gathered firsthand accounts through their letters which allowed me to indirectly obtain a greater understanding of this subculture of offenders that society possesses limited access to. By carrying out the interviews with women in relationships with offenders, I was able to better comprehend the stigma that both experience and Kostiner's three schemas as applied to my research. The interviews with the women served as an enhancement to what I discovered from coding the sex offenders' letters. Both, however, were equally crucial in my research; I compared and contrasted each group's general outlook in order to gain a greater understanding of their individual struggles and experiences within our country's criminal justice system. While my research was case specific, it provided a more intimate environment through interviews with women in relationships with offenders and personal letters containing detailed accounts from sex offenders'

that proved to be more engaging and interactive than a more positivist approach.

DATA

The schemas are crucial in my study and applicable in regards to sex offenders. Within her framework, Kostiner explained the complementary characteristics of the law and achieving social change. Applying her findings to sex offenders proved quite fascinating; the voice of sex offenders, unlike other marginalized groups, is a voice that society rarely listens to. By utilizing the three schemas, however, I found that many of the offenders' voices go unheard due to how they portray themselves to society. By conforming to a more understanding and transformative approach, sex offenders may be able to obtain a voice in society and address issues regarding public policy. In her article, Kostiner challenges what she finds to be legal myths and states that more often than not, many "legal doctrines are ideologically biased in support of status quo hierarchies. Due to this ideological bias, these studies see that use of legal norms and tactics as preventing or co-opting the struggles of marginalized groups" (Kostiner, 2003). It is depicted here that many of these so-called "rights" are doing more harm than good. By challenging these ideas and regrouping sex offenders' outlooks into various schemas, society can begin to view offenders in a different light and rethink some of the policies that we, as a society, believe to be effective, when in actuality, they are often not.

INSTRUMENTAL SCHEMA

Probing further into Kostiner's framework, the three schemas are presented in more detail. The *instrumental* schema is the least developed of the schemas and possesses very basic characteristics. This schema focuses on the needs of the individual, and success is seen when efforts lead to change. Social power is not a motivation here; there is an underlying goal of serving others in need and a desire to help. Additionally, there is a focus on concrete (and often material) needs; often times they attempt to justify these needs with demands. Basic strategies of this schema include service and policy advocacy (Kostiner 2003).

To reflect this sentiment, I coded many accounts of the *instrumental* schema as exhibited in the sex offender letters. One offender stated, "I am a college student... and am presently enrolled in a sociology class... I do hope that your research helps to correct the many problems associated with how our government treats sex offenders." In this instance, the heart of the *instrumental* schema's characteristics shines through. While the offender desires change for himself, he makes it clear that there is a concrete need for change among sex offenders as a whole. He expresses hope that the research will lead to a different societal attitude toward sex offenders; this brings to the table the idea that success is seen in the solution—one of the main themes of the *instrumental* schema.

In regards to women in relationships with offenders, many viewed the criminal justice system from the instrumental perspective.

Another offender expresses his interest in Dr. Chrysanthi Leon's research and states, "I am an offender serving a 25 year sentence. I believe much of the information that is used to make legal decisions and shape social views pertaining to sex offenders is inaccurate and/or misleading. I truly believe that a result of this can be an increase in offenses and an increase in the number of victim deaths." Similar to the first offender, this offender is also interested in public policy and stresses the need for change and a focus on societal needs. Additionally, the need for success is present; the offender believes that without a concrete solution, there will be no successful result.

In regards to women in relationships with offenders, many viewed the criminal justice system from the *instrumental* perspective. All of the women interviewed stated that at some point, and to varying degrees, they felt judged by society; often times, the people in their lives would simply deny their relationship's existence—even families. One woman went so far as to say that "[t]hey try to say they understand, but they haven't got a clue. They don't even try. They just think that maybe it's a phase, or... they just don't really talk about it anymore. It makes them very uncomfortable." Many women whose outlooks fit into this schema discussed the need for a modification of the corrections system and sincerely believed that change would not come unless this first occurred.

A large amount of the women whose outlooks fit into the *instrumental* schema, however, expressed the characteristics of service and advocacy. A fair number

of the women interviewed involve themselves in Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE), an organization that promotes the rights of prisoners and a criminal justice system that is conducive to rehabilitation. Many of these women selflessly donate their time to advocacy organizations and often drive hundreds of miles to visit their boyfriends or spouses in prison. This desire to help and to be an active member and advocate for prisoner's rights is one of the defining features of the *instrumental* schema.

POLITICAL SCHEMA

While the *political* schema seems more developed than the *instrumental* schema, the two differ in a variety of ways. Instead of the *instrumental* schema's indifference to social power, the need for social power is a strong underlying theme of the *political* schema. Emphasis is placed on the political power structure and the need to oppose it. The *political* schema opposes power structures and oppression because they view power as the source of inequality and injustice. For those who claim to be a part of this schema, anger often acts as the motivator and the goal is to empower marginalized groups. It is not an individual concept—this schema stresses mass movements and united fronts. Organization is another main theme (Kostiner 2003).

While more developed than the *instrumental* schema in that its characteristics are more complex and require a higher level of organization, the *political* schema possesses a more intense nature and a stronger focus on opposition. One offender states that "[t]he important thing is that

Clear signs point subtly toward this woman's embodiment of the anger and bitterness that often accompanies the *political* schema, but it is fleeting.

you are doing research that will hopefully someday help cut down on the hysteria that the media and the politicians are instigating so that they can scare the public and get votes in the next election." As depicted here, the offender expresses feelings of bitterness and hostility toward the political power structure. Motivated by his feelings of anger and distrust, he believes that politicians are unjust and they feel the need to oppress groups of people for political gain. This is a common sentiment among members of the *political* schema; one is rooted in bitterness and aimed at gaining more control over a situation.

None of the women in the relationship study directly expressed any facets of the *political* schema. When I asked one woman how she reacted to society's ignorance regarding her relationship, she responded by stating, "I used to get really upset and angry. And I used to get really drunk. But you know I wasn't getting anywhere and I had to stop..." Clear signs point subtly toward this woman's embodiment of the anger and bitterness that often accompanies the *political* schema, but it is fleeting. She did not express opposition or a strong desire on her part to achieve social power. In no way did she express a need to organize groups or movements to protest society's treatment of these women or their incarcerated significant others.

CULTURAL SCHEMA

Lastly, the *cultural* schema is the most ideal and what Kostiner believes social activists should strive to achieve. This schema adopts a globalized perspective and

attempts to embrace and encompass all views. Members of this schema believe that injustice is a result of society's misconception of marginalized and oppressed groups. Here, the goal is to expose and transform these biases into understanding. This schema, like the *political* schema, discourages opposition and replaces it with a strong focus on thinking, which allows for a more tender approach. Members of the *cultural* schema believe that change only occurs when their method expresses a message of love and respect and when it ties to personal experience (Kostiner 2003).

Unlike the *instrumental* schema, the *cultural* schema does not measure success by immediate change. Instead, members of this schema are more long-term goal-oriented, realizing that change takes time (Kostiner 2003). One offender recently wrote, "I am very interested in being researched as I want the truth out... Ideally, if I'm released I'll be able to participate in a more thorough and detailed research of pedophiles to prove that we're not harmful or dangerous... I want you to know I'll be open and honest and only want the truth to come out so that the public will learn the truth. Thanks so much for doing this." While traces of the *instrumental* schema exist here, this offender exceeds this schema's characteristics and embraces a more personal and understanding ideology. The offender takes note that change is a long process, therefore, motivating him to be truthful regarding his offense in order to hopefully transform what he believes to be society's misconception regarding sex offenders. He expresses his gratitude toward the study and making it easier for one to believe that he accepts full responsibility

for his actions and desires not only a change in society, but in himself as well. Unlike members of the *political* schema, society would certainly be more willing to listen to offenders categorized in the *cultural* schema.

Judging by the fact that the *cultural* schema is a more advanced and developed version of the *instrumental* schema, it is no surprise that many of the women in the relationship study fit this schema as well. Many of these women's lengthy involvements in the criminal justice system, whether it be as a corrections officer or attending hearing upon hearing for her significant other, brought about the realization that change is not only a necessity in the criminal justice system, but also a gradual process. Most of the women fitting into this schema accepted the fact that society misconstrued their relationships with incarcerated offenders. In taking a more loving approach toward society, one woman stated, "I don't need to alienate the world because there may come a point in time where I really need them...they know that I've been with him [her boyfriend] all this time and that he's a very important part of my life whether they acknowledge it or not." Contrary to the *political* schema, this woman takes a more optimistic approach and realized that while society may not accept her now, taking the time to be patient with them may pay off long-term.

Furthermore, a large portion of the *cultural* schema focuses on transforming society's misconceptions of biases—in this case, incarcerated offenders and the women who choose to be in relationships with them. The same woman spoke about how she coped with society's

discomfort toward her relationship and said, "I've just learned that I really have to try and let it go. I'm not going to change anybody. I can't convict them or change them or even convince them that they need to see things my way...I've just come to the point where I just kind of live with it and I don't press the issue—I don't push it on them anymore. Now if they ask, that's one thing. But I'm not going to force it on them because they're just too uncomfortable with it." While she clearly wishes to transform society's prejudices into understanding, she realizes that she cannot change their opinions suddenly and that change is gradual. She believes it may not come. The fact that she is at peace with this concept speaks volumes about how most of these women cope with society's judgments.

CHIMERICAL SCHEMA

Consequently, I found that although I could place many of the sex offenders in one of the three schemas, they did not all neatly correspond to one of the three. Some encompassed more than one, some embraced one schema more than another, and still others seemed to fit in a different category. Studying and coding the letters from sex offenders in my possession, I established a fourth schema, which I call the *chimerical* schema. I find this schema better explains a majority of these offenders' outlooks. Accordingly, I found that the *chimerical* schema did not apply to the women in the relationship study; virtually all of the women fit neatly into the *instrumental* and *cultural* schemas.

The *chimerical* schema embraces aspects of all three schemas, but is not quite as developed as any of these three due to its scattered nature and overall lack of organization. The main aspect of this schema focuses on the end result due to activism, rather than focusing on the process and what is required to attain the end result. Thus, members of the *chimerical* schema idealize change and believe it to be instantaneous, rather than the process that it usually is. Members often reflect naïve tendencies and are incredibly unrealistic in their approach. Success in the *chimerical* schema occurs not only when major change happens (similar to the *instrumental* schema), but also when society's treatment toward sex offenders becomes revolutionized. Members of this schema see success in the solution, as well as through getting their way with minimum compromise.

Additionally, blame comprises another major aspect of the *chimerical* schema. As it pertains to my research, I observed in a majority of the letters, as well as in accounts from *Not Monsters*, that offenders place blame on other people, objects, or ideas in an attempt to elicit sympathy in order to achieve change. Furthermore, like members of the *political* schema, members of this schema use anger and bitterness as motivators. The *chimerical* schema often includes ostracized individuals that are alone over the *political* schema's theme of unity and mass movements. While it is common knowledge that sex offenders are an ostracized and stigmatized group of individuals, offenders fitting into this schema seem more set apart than usual—even from other offenders that they associate with on a day to day basis.

While the *chimerical* schema shares many similarities with the *political* schema in regards to opposition and bitterness, it differs in that the *political* schema does not strongly stress change. This fourth schema, though agreeing with the *political* schema's theme of opposition, stresses change. Change is difficult to come by, however, due to the introverted and isolated nature of the members of this schema. The *political* schema is largely characterized by unified organization (as opposed to individual efforts) and mass movements. Since the *chimerical* schema lacks this important quality, the sex offenders' ideation of change becomes more unrealistic. When members realize that change is almost unattainable, they begin to utilize blaming strategies as a defense mechanism and tend to alienate themselves.

Many of the offenders categorized in the *chimerical* schema did express characteristics from other schemas. As mentioned previously, the schemas are not mutually exclusive; therefore, many offenders fit into more than one schema. I did observe that most of the offenders blatantly displayed characteristics from the newly founded fourth schema. One of the major themes I observed was an offender's attempt to play up his situation in order to evoke the reader's sympathy. In one offender's letter, he states the following: "I want to enumerate the negative, destructive, and lifetime consequences that harsh, callous, merciless, cruel, and inhumane sentence of 17 years 'flat-time with no chance of commutation, reduction, or any revocation' I'm currently serving... My wife and my family are devastated emotionally, psychologically, financially, and spiritually... I suffer from a heart condition for which I

The conflict here is that many offenders possess the desire and will to change, but through justification of their crimes, they do not help their case.

have a pacemaker implant. My wife has a pacemaker-defibrillator that counters the electrical imbalance in her heart. She NEEDS me to be HOME with her so I can help to manage our family and her daily activities!” While the offender is most likely being honest about his situation at home, the anger and bitterness of his words are quite obvious. His caustic tone is a voice that most of society would likely ignore.

Blame is another prevalent theme in this offender’s letter. While the situation regarding his heart condition (as well as his wife’s) is unfortunate and rather sad, he utilizes these vices to complain about a crime that he chose to commit. He states that he needs to be home with his wife to assist her; here, the offender attempts to mask his own crime without taking responsibility for his actions and tries to make change come about by using his sick wife as an excuse. Additionally, he blames the criminal justice system for his crime without acknowledging that his action as wrong.

In another letter, an offender goes off on a tangent blaming everyone but himself. He criticizes the police, his lawyer, the judge, and the state of Oklahoma—all without accepting any blame or responsibility for his own actions. Another offender states that “Georgia does not offer treatment for sex offenders...but even if they did, I have no intention of waiting years for a therapist to ‘fix me.’” In this instance, the offender illustrates his desire for change to occur immediately; he is too impatient to see a therapist for years in order to achieve gradual change and improvement. Change, as displayed in the teachings of

the *cultural* schema, is a process that takes place over an extended period of time.

Rationalization also played a part in my coding process and analysis the offenders’ letters. Interestingly, rationalization and blame comprise an essential part of the *chimerical* schema. Reinforced by Hanson and Slater, I meticulously observed that many offenders made major attempts to rationalize and justify their crimes. The authors explain this phenomenon by stating that, “People who are caught violating social norms typically feel social pressure to explain their transgressions” (Hanson and Slater, 1993). The conflict here is that many offenders possess the desire and will to change, but through justification of their crimes, they do not help their case. When individuals (sex offenders in particular) appear angry about a situation that they need to take responsibility for, society chooses to alienate and ignore them. In addition to this, many offenders grapple with the characteristic of the *cultural* schema, the desire to transform society’s perception of them as a whole. By embracing the lesser-developed *chimerical* schema, offenders only hurt their case and their chances at achieving public policy that will benefit society as a whole.

DISCUSSION

The *cultural* schema, while difficult to attain, is something that sex offenders should attempt to achieve. Sex offenders are a stigmatized group in society and have done little to help their cause. While many offenders embrace the *cultural* schema, or aspects of it, many others sabotage this decent image of sex offenders by

Even in the brief period of time I spent speaking to these women, I noticed the positivity in their voices and hopefulness in their words.

expressing anger, bitterness, blame, justification, and an unwillingness to accept responsibility for their actions. Kostiner highlights one of the important aspects of the *cultural* schema, “In fact, when activists invoke the *cultural* schema they find the rhetoric of power to be similarly problematic. In particular, they reject the idea of a struggle between two opposing groups or the rhetoric of ‘us against them.’ They view such rhetoric as futile, arguing that it only adds negativity to people’s thoughts instead of transforming them into positive thoughts of love and respect” (Kostiner, 2003).

It is important to note that while sex offenders are a severely marginalized group in society; ideally, respect should be gained through positive thoughts and without a power struggle. The *cultural* schema also emphasizes familiarization with one’s self and one’s desires and beliefs. By learning about and changing oneself, activists can “reach their full potential as people who are striving for social justice” (Kostiner, 2003). Reinforcing Kostiner’s view, I find that a movement toward the *cultural* schema is ideal for sex offenders. This will allow society to begin accepting them as a more understanding group of individuals. Letting go of the *chimerical* schema and embracing the *cultural* schema will give offenders the chance to be heard.

Contrary to how sex offenders fit into Kostiner’s framework, most of the women in the relationship study already embody the ideal *cultural* schema. Even in the brief period of time I spent speaking to these women, I noticed the positivity in their voices and hopefulness in their words. A majority of them eagerly shared their experiences, the

stigma they endured, and their views on the nation’s justice system. I believe the degree of stigma impressed upon these women versus that of the sex offenders explains this pattern in the data. While the women in this study experience society’s judgments and discomfort in regards to their relationships with incarcerated men, they possess a more optimistic outlook on the system than do the sex offenders. The stigma surrounding sex offenders is more severe and disparaging than that of women in relationships with incarcerated men. These women still live a freer lifestyle. It seems that regardless of society’s treatment toward both, sex offenders attempt to overcome a much bigger obstacle; this could be attributed to the higher number of women embracing the *cultural* schema. Perhaps by making greater strides to attain the characteristics of the *cultural* schema, sex offenders can begin to make a case for themselves and prove to society that they should be viewed in a different light.

Furthermore, the *chimerical* schema (which includes blame and aspects of rationalization) is detrimental to an offender’s case. As Kostiner states, “Changing people’s unconscious assumptions seems almost an impossible task,” and as sex offenders are a marginalized and stigmatized group of individuals, change amongst this group is even more of a challenge. Without losing hope, however, the author finds that the seemingly impossible may still be achieved (Kostiner 2003). Though it may not be instantaneous, embracing the *cultural* schema makes change a more possible task. In Hanson and Slater’s study, therapists and probation officers were asked to

sentence imaginary child molesters based on various accounts given. The study expressed, however, that even when people maintained their skepticism toward child molesters (therapists in particular), this did not translate into a more punitive sentence (Hanson and Slater, 1993). This demonstrates the possibility of change in the mind of society; while ambitious, not all individuals possess the same perspective on sex offenders as many sex offenders themselves assume. By displaying themselves in a more gentle and articulate light, they may gain a voice to speak out and make necessary changes in society.

Further research will be conducted in which one-on-one interviews with sex offenders will be carried. This will help obtain a better perspective of their outlooks and views on their offenses and current laws. I believe adding the *chimerical* schema to the three-schema approach, makes Kostiner's framework more applicable to society and to other marginalized groups. Since the *cultural* schema is the most ideal, change will likely occur for sex offenders through the adaptation and embracing of this schema. It is evident that clinging to the *chimerical* schema does not aid many offenders and only makes their situations worse.

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REVIEWS

The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town

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INTRODUCTION

The introduction to *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town* begins with a story about discontent in the Mayan region on the day that the North American Free Trade Agreement was implemented. This showcases Mayan attitudes and gives weight to Carlson's later arguments regarding Atiteco resistance to foreign influence. It points out the continued presence of Mayan

language and culture in modern day Guatemala. It speaks to the dedication that Atitecos have for their homeland. This book should appeal to anyone who studies anthropology, or who has been to a Mayan site and left wondering, "Where did these people go?" This book provides part of a solution to that question. It is incredibly relevant to those who have studied the history of Latin America and Guatemala specifically. The success of the new edition,

published in 2004, shows that this book continues to be relevant today.

Carlson's research is based on a combination of time spent in Santiago Atitlán and work by other anthropologists. He combined this information into *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town*, his story originally ended with the expulsion of the Guatemalan army that he talks about in Chapter Seven. The new edition includes a preface that covers what has happened in Santiago Atitlán since then. Each chapter in this book builds on the chapters preceding it. Therefore, I will outline the book in a chapter-by-chapter format.

Chapter One is meant to give the reader an idea of the social climate of Santiago Atitlán in recent times. Carlson explains that political violence and military occupation have influenced much of the day-to-day existence of Santiago Atitlán. He pays particular attention to the emergence of local fundamentalist Protestantism and how it clashes with what he describes as the "still potent, traditional cultural background of the town" (p. 5). The chapter has theoretical portions that even Carlson suggests should be avoided by a "nonprofessional reader." He suggests giving that section only a superficial reading without losing sight of the overall ideas of the chapter. The overall idea is this: Despite resistance to the foreign influence he mentioned previously, the Atitecos cannot totally resist it.

Chapter Two discusses the physical characteristics of Santiago Atitlán. Among these are the geographical setting in southern Guatemala and the town layout. He

also details characteristics of the local population, such as dress patterns and linguistics. In Chapter Three, Carlson argues that the Atitecos, the residents of Santiago Atitlán, have successfully resisted their supposed spiritual conquest. He claims that a defining characteristic of the post-Columbian town is a "distinct and identifiable continuity with the pre-Columbian past" (p. 5). He claims that the Atitecos have effectively reconstituted their Mayan culture through an ancient Mayan core paradigm that they call *Jaloj-K'exoj*. *Jaloj-K'exoj* is "a Mayan conceptualization of observed processes and patterns in the natural environment, particularly of agricultural production, [and] is a central paradigm of the local culture" (p. 49). Carlson then argues that this paradigm allowed the Atitecos to assimilate new, foreign elements into Atiteco culture.

Chapters Four and Five share a similar objective. Chapter Four attempts to reconstruct and explain the historical environment that allowed for the continuity that Carlson points out in Chapter Three. Though Carlson has conducted first hand research in Santiago Atitlán, this chapter contains many references to primary historical documents and the research of other specialists. Carlson uses both chapters to present a historical reconstruction of Santiago Atitlán. He compares his personal research and experiences to the historical research of other specialists and the primary historical documents. When the research and documents shed light on older culture in Atitlán, he includes examples of contemporary Atiteco cultural behavior. For example, Carlson mentions the desire of the Spanish to force Christianity on the natives.

Carson examines elements of traditional religiosity, local Protestantism, civil violence, and how all three combine.

Despite that, he claims that the Franciscan monastery that was built has been almost entirely abandoned, and though it gets the occasional visit from traveling missionaries, is rarely used by the Atitecos.

In Chapter Five, Carlson suggests that a series of events was unleashed approximately 125 years ago that ultimately led to sociocultural change on a fundamental level in Santiago Atitlán and in other areas of highland Guatemala. He says that there was a “quantum increase in power of the Guatemalan state...coupled with a marked decline in potential indigenous power” (p. 119). This, combined with the confiscation of large amounts of Mayan land, undercut the Mayans’ economic capacity and forced reliance on outside influence. He states that, because of this, Atitlán is now “engaged in a transformation which in many ways eclipses even that which followed the Conquest” (p. 6).

Carlson uses Chapter Six to measure the magnitude of the changes that have occurred. As with Chapter One, he provides a warning to the casual reader that there are parts of this chapter that may not be enjoyable. He claims that quantitative data shows that the local population of Santiago Atitlán has yet to establish an economic and cultural base that is capable of satisfying its contemporary needs. One example would be the increasing population of Santiago Atitlán. He claims that this has led to less land being available for each Atiteco, causing less agricultural ability and less reliance on the “Old Ways” and more submission to foreign influence.

Chapter Seven contemplates contemporary Guatemalan political realities. Carson examines elements of traditional religiosity, local Protestantism, civil violence, and how all three combine. He specifically mentions how, in December 1990, the Atitecos managed to cooperate with each other in order to force the Guatemalan Army to leave their town forever, effectively forcing “peace in a land of war” (p. 6). The army left a sign that read: “Atiteco Friends, the future of Your Village Is in Your own Hands” (p. 151). Though the soldiers had killed at least thirteen of the Atitecos, the stubborn residents of Santiago Atitlán had won. Their town was once again their own.

The Epilogue discusses Carlson’s fifteen years of study in Santiago Atitlán, which included 17 trips to the town and approximately two and one half years of residency. He questions his own objectivity, expressing concerns that his time spent there compromised his ability as an anthropologist to correctly interpret events and history. Nonetheless, I feel that Carlson has been successful in his attempts to combine historical data with his personal experiences. He takes the reader into the heart of Santiago Atitlán and helps them to experience the Atiteco lifestyle. He instills such a sense of understanding that there is a definite sense of pride felt when the Atitecos finally retake their hometown. I recommend this book to undergraduates like myself, but also to those who might be interested in learning a bit about contemporary Mayan culture. When one visits ancient Mayan ruins, it is easy to forget that those people are still around. This book is a great reminder of that.

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