CAPSTONE COLLECTION
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Senior Research Papers

by Students in the Medaille College Honors Program

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Editor’s Introduction

The Medaille College Honors Program is a distinctive academic community comprised of talented and highly motivated undergraduate students, enthusiastic faculty, and dedicated staff and administrators who seek to promote a dynamic intellectual environment within and beyond the classroom. During the final course in our core curricular sequence, students undertake an interdisciplinary research project in which they craft original research questions, analyze a range of scholarly literature, write an extended (20–30 page) argumentative essay, and give an oral defense. The five contributions in this Capstone Collection represent the most exceptional papers from the graduating class of 2014. These papers approach a wide range of issues across the social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities from multiple disciplinary perspectives.

The opening paper, written by English major Sarah Kinne, analyzes Khaled Hosseini’s bestselling novel *The Kite Runner* through the critical work of Chicana cultural theorist Gloria Anzaldúa. Through a close reading of the text, Sarah reveals how Anzaldúa’s concepts of ‘borders’ and ‘multiple subjectivities’ open new avenues for understanding how Amir (the novel’s protagonist) struggles with issues of cultural identity, ethnic/racial difference, and the idea of ‘home’ during his transnational journey from Afghanistan to California. Sarah deftly handles a variety of complex and delicate topics—identity, consciousness, race, and subjectivity—by drawing eclectically from the work of feminist theorists, anthropologists, linguists, and literary critics.

Our second paper was written by Zachary Kieser, a Liberal Studies major with a keen interest in the workings of the human mind. Building on previous coursework in philosophy and psychology, Zach explores how ideas of money and cleanliness can influence human
behavior and decision making below the level of conscious awareness. In a direct challenge to the deeply-held philosophical belief in an autonomous free will, his paper highlights an array of current psychological research illustrating how being subtly primed with the idea of money makes humans behave more self-interestedly in social situations. Zach concludes by offering a number of provocative evolutionary explanations for this psychological effect.

The third paper in this volume, authored by Education major Brittany Pivarsi, evaluates the controversial new Common Core Standards in primary and secondary American education. Eschewing the histrionic rhetoric that has too often characterized both sides of this debate, Brittany carefully assesses the basic claims of this ambitious educational initiative: is it really grounded in pedagogical theory? Will it effectively prepare children for college and their careers? What is the purpose of using international benchmarks? In each of these instances, her paper identifies a number of fundamental flaws that could prevent this program from reaching its ultimate goal of improving achievement among students of all socioeconomic, cultural, and family backgrounds.

Dominic Militello, a major in Biology, composed the fourth paper in this collection, which investigates the causes and consequences of the global illegal wildlife trade. Dom expresses serious concern with the widespread perception that the selling of endangered or regulated species on the black market is a “folk crime” undeserving of the same resources as, for example, illegal trade in guns or drugs. His paper argues that since current legislation and law enforcement tactics have become increasingly ineffective in stopping poaching, alternative strategies such as public outreach and situational crime prevention need to be more widely implemented.

Brandon Kryszak, the author of our final contribution, is a Criminal Justice major, but his choice of topic was inspired by a longstanding personal interest in the Second World War. His paper focuses on Operation Barbarossa, the failed German invasion of the Soviet Union. Over the last half-century, numerous historians have
sought to understand why the formidable Nazi Blitzkrieg strategy did not prove as successful in Russia as it did in the rest of continental Europe. Marshalling a range of historical evidence, Brandon places the lion’s share of blame on Adolf Hitler’s decision (against his field commanders’ wishes) to delay an all-out attack on Moscow in favor of securing the flanks of the invading front.

The five papers collected in this volume are the product of several months of rigorous intellectual inquiry, meticulous scholarly research, and all the pleasures and frustrations that accompany the writing and revising process. Each of these papers was significantly improved by peer-review as well as input from several of Medaille’s outstanding faculty. As the Editor of this volume, I offer my sincerest congratulations to these outstanding students for all their hard work and dedication over the course of two semesters, and deepest appreciation to Profs Correa, Johnson, Kotzin, Nisbet, and Pelton, who served as external referees for these papers.

K. Patrick Fazioli, Ph.D.
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Negotiating the Self

Multicultural Identity in Anzaldúa and Hosseini

Sarah Kinne

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes Khaled Hosseini’s bestselling novel *The Kite Runner* through the critical lens of Gloria Anzaldúa’s mixed-genre work *Borderlands/La Frontera*. I will compare and contrast stages of protagonist Amir’s life in terms of Anzaldúa’s concept of multiple subjectivities to answer the question, “How does Amir navigate the various socio-economic and racial spaces of Afghanistan and the United States by utilizing multiple subjectivities?” I will argue that while Amir moves both towards and away from positions of centrality and marginality to construct a coherent personal identity, he does not achieve the synergistic quality advocated by Anzaldúa. This paper will utilize primary source texts and a variety of scholarly literature.

INTRODUCTION

*Living on borders and in margins, keeping intact one’s shifting and multiple identity and integrity, is like trying to swim in a new element, an ‘alien’ element.*

Gloria Anzaldúa
Borderlands, the mixed-genre work of Chicana feminist and activist Gloria Anzaldúa, offers a new lens through which to read multiethnic literature. The Kite Runner, a 2003 bestselling novel by Afghani-American author Khaled Hosseini, brings to life the tale of Amir, a privileged Pashtun coming of age in revolution-era Afghanistan. In The Kite Runner, Amir is forced to take refuge in America, as his homeland Kabul is attacked by Soviets. Amir and his father, Baba, flee Kabul for Peshawar, Pakistan, and finally arrive in Fremont, California, where they begin to build new lives. Amir struggles to reconcile conflicting aspects of his self-identity, tensions that are perpetuated by the distinctness of his Afghan roots from his status as an American refugee. Largely as a result of witnessing the adolescent rape of his best friend and servant, Hassan, Amir finds that America is the ideal place to reinvent himself and bury his guilt.

Gloria Anzaldúa’s personal experience growing up in the Rio Grande Valley was the inspiration for Borderlands (1987). In this highly acclaimed work, she explores the effects of the Mexican-American border on her self-identification as mixed-race, Chicana, a woman, and a lesbian. Ostracized from each of these groups, Anzaldúa creates a new mestiza identity which both allows for and encourages a synthesis of disparate elements of identity into a synergistic whole. A mestiza is a woman of mixed Caucasian, Hispanic, and Native American descent. This consciousness which encourages opposition and contradiction is made necessary by the conditions created by the geographical, political, and psychological border. While The Kite Runner’s protagonist, Amir, does not identify with the same groups as Anzaldúa, his character is also profoundly shaped by borders. Amir undergoes a perpetual struggle to define himself both within the confines of and in opposition to his native Afghani culture and his status as an American refugee.

In this paper, I will analyze Amir’s life in three stages: 1. His flight from revolutionary Afghanistan as an adolescent, 2. His initial and turbulent resettlement in America, and 3. His socioeconomic reestablishment as a working class Afghani-American. Drawing on
Gloria Anzaldúa’s theories of multiple subjectivities and mestiza consciousness, I will explore the various ways in which Amir navigates the socioeconomic and racial spaces of Afghanistan and America by moving towards and away from positions of centrality and marginality to construct an identity that, although somewhat cohesive, fails to achieve the synergistic quality advocated by Anzaldúa.

SECTION 1: POSITIONALITY AND SUBJETIVITY—CONTEXT

Cultural Consciousness

Like all people, we perceive the version of reality that our culture communicates.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, p. 16)

In order to discuss consciousness and self-identity in terms of race and culture, we must first establish working definitions for these complicated terms. In the seventh chapter of *Borderlands* (“La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness”), Anzaldúa sets up a seminal reference for these definitions: perception is in fact reality. The *mestiza* discovers that concepts and ideas cannot be held in rigid boundaries; they must remain flexible (Anzaldúa 1987, p. 79). Just as the new *mestiza* cannot hold notions of culture and race in static, isolated categories, neither can the contemporary critic.

Definitions of ‘culture’ have changed monumentally over many centuries. Robert J.C. Young traces the etymology of the term itself and the predominant theories surrounding it in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race*. For the purpose of this analysis, ‘culture’ can best be described as “the product of humanity at large” (Young, 1995, p. 44). Another widely accepted definition of culture is “the total way of life of a people, composed of their learned and shared behavior patterns, values, norms, and material object” (Rogers and Steinfatt, 1999, p. 79). Raymond Williams provides three conno-
tations of culture in *Keywords*, one of which resonates closely with Rogers and Steinfatt: a “particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group” (qtd. in Young, 1995, p. 53).

The salient features of all of these definitions are that culture is collective, and that it exists simultaneously as a product of life and a lived experience in and of itself. Anzaldúa writes that she is cultureless because she challenges dominant, collective beliefs, yet she is cultured because she is participating in the creation of another culture (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 80–81). This reframes and reinforces Young’s (1995, p. 30) assertion that culture is essentially antagonistic. Although Young was referring to the ideological and etymological antagonism between ‘civilization’ and ‘culture,’ the heart of this contradiction for Anzaldúa lies in the complex relationship between the individual and the collective.

*Mestiza Consciousness*

In the article “What is Cultural Studies Anyway?”, Richard Johnson distinguishes between subjectivity and consciousness Johnson by stating that the latter embraces “the notion of a consciousness of self and an active mental and moral self-production” (qtd. in Yarbo-Bejarano, 1994, p. 14). Self-identification is inherently rooted in self-consciousness, and is therefore an active, dynamic process. Anzaldúa (1987, p. 80) challenges the mestiza—a woman of Mexican, Caucasian, and Indian descent—to break down the subject-object duality that imprisons her identity as a woman, a lesbian, and a Chicana. Anzaldúa defines *mestiza* consciousness as the creation of a new mythos, “a change in the way we perceive ourselves, and the ways we behave” that embraces the straddling of two or more cultures (ibid.). ‘Consciousness,’ as Anzaldúa uses the term, refers primarily to self-awareness and the emergent properties that result from self-awareness. *Mestiza* consciousness is a type of higher order consciousness in which self-awareness is accompanied by a meta-mental state, a non-inferential higher order state implying perception of consciousness (Van Gulick, 2011).
The Border

Anzaldúa’s “border” is first manifested geographically and politically in the region known as the Magic Valley, or the Rio Grande Valley, on the Texas-Mexico border. Maria Herrera-Sobek (2006, p. 267) characterizes the Rio Grande Valley as one of the poorest areas in the United States and home to ‘white,’ ‘black,’ and ‘brown’. According to the 2010 United States Census, 74% of individuals are below the federal poverty line in Hargill, TX, the community in which Anzaldúa grew up (“Percentage of Families”). Conversely, the 1980 Census reports the poverty rate of the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission Metropolitan Statistical Area, in which Hargill is located, at 35.2% (“CPH-L-186”), demonstrating that poverty in this region has steadily increased since 1980.

Racial segregation in this economically disadvantaged area was either legally sanctioned or by custom, symbolic of the greater ostracism present both between and within communities of race, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic class (Herrera-Sobek, 2006, p. 267). Ironically, the fence defining the geopolitical border between the United States and Mexico was brought into being by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, and any land left to Mexican owners was swindled away soon thereafter (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 7). This land, perhaps even more so today, is where “the Third World grates against the first and bleeds” (ibid., 3). Anzaldúa’s depiction of the border as “Third World” may inadvertently reinstitute the very binaries she is attempting to dismantle, as the poverty-stricken border communities of the U.S. are not remarkably different than those of Mexico. Nevertheless, the striking imagery of violence and injury serves to heighten the awareness of readers.

Although the geopolitical border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is less poignantly defined in The Kite Runner, it is just as significant. Hosseini does not speak at length about the defining geographic features of this border as does Anzaldúa about the Mexican-American border; it is the border’s role in Amir’s journey to freedom which
is symbolic. Amir and Baba travel to the relative safety of Pakistan, which is described plainly: “He was taking us to Jalalabad, about 170 kilometers southeast of Kabul, where his brother, Toor, who had a bigger truck with a second convoy of refugees, was waiting to drive us across the Khyber Pass and into Peshawar” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 111). Amir comments on the familiarity of this border, saying that he and Baba had driven over the Mahipar summit “countless times on our way to Jalalabad, the city of cypress trees and sugarcane fields where Afghans vacationed in the winter” (ibid.) Here, the geography takes on new meaning.

The border is psychologically constructed just as it is geopolitically constructed. Anzaldúa’s use of the word “border” problematizes her theory of consciousness as more than a simple diametrical opposition. According to Yvon Yarbro-Bejarano (1994, p. 8), Anzaldúa’s presentation of binarisms—good/male/light v. bad/female/dark—effectually calls them into question. Furthermore, the border sets up a dichotomy between safe and unsafe, us and them (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 3). Borderlands is not, however, simply a romanticized meta-narrative of the Other, nor is it merely a case study in postcolonialism. The border is the lived experience of millions who must move “towards a new consciousness” to synthesize disparate self-identities. The border is the “emotional residue of an unnatural boundary” (ibid.).

**Positionality**

Inhabitants of the border, whether geopolitical or psychological, are constantly renegotiating their subject positions. Positionality involves a social production of the individual as a “culturally imagined type,” according to Dorothy Holland and Kevin Leander (Holland and Leander, 2004, p. 130). Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, p. 17) laments that women in Chicana culture are given three options of culturally imagined social positions: nun, prostitute, or wife. To step outside of these positions is to move away from a position of cultural centrality and towards one of marginality. These three aforementioned social
positions are the product of a discursive paradigm that is culturally specific; the paradigm implies a norm and the level of deviance from which is tolerable (Yarbro-Bejarano, 1994, p. 6).

Positionality in Chicano culture is defined not only by gender, but by race, sexual orientation, profession, et cetera. Chicano culture exists only in relation to Caucasian claims to Eurocentric heritage, rationality, and supremacy; the marginal is constructed as a consequence of its relation to authority (ibid.). Anzaldúa (1987, p. 7) writes that the “Gringo is locked into a fiction of white superiority.” While white superiority is of course biologically fictional, its social and political consequences are all too real. Herrera-Sobek (2006, p. 267) shares similar ideas about the inaccessibility of epistemic truth: in the Magic Valley, “truth was indistinguishable from fiction. Hegemonic society imagined itself as white.”

Twentieth century Afghan society as portrayed in The Kite Runner is similarly racially constructed. A clearly articulated racial binary informs the social positions and thus subject positions of Kabul. According to Stuart Hall (2001, p. 19), subject positions are “temporary points of attachment” constructed by discursive practices. This hegemonic dichotomy informed by race is extended much like Anzaldúa’s ‘good/male/light v. bad/female/dark’ to include racial, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic characteristics. Pashtun/Master/Wealthy is fixed in opposition to Hazara/Servant/Impoverished. These oppositions are what Lakoff and Johnson (2008, p. 92) refer to as conceptual metaphors, and they govern not only language but everyday intellectual functioning. Ernesto Laclau referred to these constitutive terms as ‘marks’ (qtd. in Hall, 2001, p. 18). According to Laclau, the Other is a marked subject; in the case of The Kite Runner, ‘Hazara’ is the primary marked subject. The dominant subject, i.e. ‘Pashtun,’ is left unmarked. Additionally, the concept of subject position may also refer to the designation of an individual as subject or object, with the former option retaining a sense of agency.

The political turmoil of Afghanistan that causes Amir to seek asylum in Pakistan is a metaphoric expression of Amir’s shifting
consciousness. Political borders are imaginary as opposed to natural borders, which partition land geographically based on the salient characteristics of the terrain. These two often coalesce to form a geopolitical border, which hinges on an “interplay between physical and symbolic reality” (Bornstein-Gómez, 2010, p. 52). The inherent opposition between the natural and imposed characteristics of these borders reflects the contradictions present within the psyche of residents of the borderlands. Political borders are erected with complete disregard for existing cultures, an epistemic denial of the continuity of humanity (ibid., p. 51).

Women are highly subservient to men in both Afghani and Chicano cultures, a feature symbolically communicated through the novel’s lack of significant female characters. This exclusion is a nuanced example of a conceptual metaphor, which differs from a surface level metaphor in that it is not necessarily named or exterior (Aigner-Varoz, 2000, p. 48). Erika Aigner-Varoz writes that conceptual metaphors may be “imposed on the individual by the collective unconscious,” implicitly challenging the assumption that collectivity is not hegemonic (ibid., p. 49).

SECTION 2: ASYLUM AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS

The Subject’s Move Toward Marginality

As revolution in Afghanistan reaches a boiling point, Amir and his father, Baba, are forced to flee the country, leaving behind their lives of Pashtun privilege and status. This shift in socioeconomic status is immediately evident to the reader, first via the loss of power that Baba has over his servant, Ali, and his son, Hassan. Upon Ali’s resignation from his employment, Baba becomes enraged and then desperate. “Baba was pleading now. ‘At least tell me why. I need to know!’” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 107). The power distance between Baba
and Ali is shifting, which is representative of a larger shift in Baba’s and Amir’s lives.

Since Ali is no longer in Baba’s employment, he is no longer subject to the same degree of external control, effectively liberating himself from the Pashtun/Master/Wealthy v. Hazara/Servant/Impoverished dichotomy on a microcosmic scale. Ali is freeing himself from the role of object in the context of his relationship with Baba, though whether he has the agency to truly free himself from this position in Afghan society is debatable. Aletta Norval (2004, p. 19) contests that an individual cannot escape from ‘the experience of undecidability’ unmarked, as this experience (emphasized as terrible and tragic by Derrida) calls for a bearing of responsibility. Thus, an examination of Ali’s resignation via Laclau’s definition of ‘marked’ subjects may suggest to the reader that he has not modified his subject position on two possible grounds: 1) Ali has not freed himself from the ‘mark’ of Hazara, the Other in Afghan society, and 2) Ali must still bear responsibility for his decision to resign. Baba’s “need to know” reflects his inability to cope with the lack of a clearly articulated relationship between himself and Ali, and between himself and his native country, now in tumult.

Amir experiences an immediate socioeconomic decentralization as he leaves Afghanistan and the life he knows behind. He begins to move away from privilege and towards marginalization. The shock of pursuing asylum does not allow him adequate time to process this shift. He reflects:

Standing on the shoulder of the road, I thought of the way we’d left the house where I’d lived my entire life, as if we were going out for a bite: dishes smeared with kofte piled in the kitchen sink; laundry in the wicker basket in the foyer; beds unmade; Baba’s business suits hanging in the closet. Tapestries still hung on the walls of the living room and my mother’s books still crowded the shelves in Baba’s study. The signs of our elopement were subtle: My parents’ wedding picture was gone, as was the grainy photograph of my grandfather and King Nader Shah standing over the
dead deer. A few items of clothing were missing from the closets. The leather-bound notebook Rahim Khan had given me five years earlier was gone. (Hosseini, 2003, p. 112)

Amir and Baba enact a variation on what Anzaldúa refers to as la travesía: “stay in Mexico and starve or move North and live” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 10). They may stay in their native Afghanistan out of pride and resilience, and ultimately perish, or flee and survive.

Amir is moving from a position of material wealth to one of poverty, in which he comes to what Anzaldúa (1987, p. 20) might identify as an intersticio, a “space between the worlds he inhabits” in a geopolitical and socioeconomic sense. Navigating los intersticios requires Amir to embrace multiple subjectivities. Hall (2001, p. 17) remarks that identities are inherently intersecting and antagonistic, yet it is precisely this difference through which they are constructed. Pakistan is an intersticio for Amir, a place that exists between his privileged Pashtun status and his future status as a refugee in America. Amir does perhaps view Pakistan as such an intersection, as he is aware upon entering the country that it is not his intended destination, but merely a stop along the way. Conversely, Stephen Heath describes subject positions as the result of a successful articulation or “chaining” of the subject into the flow of discourse (qtd. in Hall 2001, p. 19). While Anzaldúa sees intersections as unarticulated gaps in identity, Heath uses the same term to describe the successful embodiment of subject position within discourse. “Intersection” thus takes on multiple connotations: an empty space and a fusion. This polysemy is symbolic of the divergent paths that the mestiza, a cultural hybrid, faces.

Disjointed Narrative and Border Crossing

After a painstaking two weeks of hiding in a dark, damp basement, waiting for the truck that will take them to safety, the refugees are forced to ride in an oil tanker to Peshawar, Pakistan. Hosseini’s use of imagery here highlights the nature of the shock that Amir and Baba
are undergoing both physically as a result of being transported in an oil tanker and psychologically as a result of their journey:

Panic. You open your mouth. Open it so wide your jaws creak. You order your lungs to draw air, NOW, you need air, need it NOW. [...] Somewhere a dam has cracked open and a flood of cold sweat spills, drenches your body. You want to scream. You would if you could. But you have to breathe to scream. Panic. (Hosseini, 2003, p. 121)

The chaotic, disjointed nature of this narrative reflects Amir’s asylum—unreliable and unpredictable. Amir must abandon, at least temporarily, the culturally informed conceptual metaphors he has lived by to focus on basic physiological needs. The unsafe environment of the oil tanker mimics that of the Borderland, forcing Amir to adopt multiple subjectivities. In this environment, he is stripped of his Pashtun/Master/Wealthy privilege, as the deoxygenated environment does not distinguish between Pashtun and Hazara, powerful and powerless. The linguistic shift of the narrative from that of an educated, privileged Pashtun simplifies to a grammatically incoherent stream of consciousness, again emphasizing the universal experience of asylum and the impermanence of power. This extreme shift in subjectivity is seminal in Amir’s subsequent self-identification, as he is unable, much like the illegal immigrants Anzaldúa describes, to ever leave the border (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 12-13).

The noticeable linguistic shift occurring in this passage may also exhibit what Anzaldúa (1987, p. 38) refers to as *la facultad*, “a quick perception arrived at without conscious reasoning... It is an acute awareness mediated by the part of the psyche that does not speak, that communicates in images and symbols [...] causes a shift in perception.” It is “the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities” (ibid.). Typically, those who are marginalized engage *la facultad* as a compensatory means of self-preservation. Just as Anzaldúa remarks that *la facultad* “allows us to sense the rapist when he’s five blocks down the street,” it allows Amir to sense that he
is vulnerable at the hands of the Roussis and the environment (ibid., p. 39). It is more fully developed in those who, like Amir, are “caught between worlds” (ibid.).

A point of critique against the notion of hybridity as a self-cel-ebration of diversity is the contention that groups such as migrants and refugees can never be in a position of privilege, as they did not choose the life “in-between” cultures, and thus may not gain the insight or possibility necessary for privilege (Frello, 2007, p. 3). Per this view, \textit{la facultad} may not act as a means of self-preservation, but rather as a detriment to increased consciousness, an interpretation in direct opposition to Anzaldúa. The chaotic nature of Amir’s narrative relaying this dangerous journey during which he first crosses the Pakistani border signifies his shifting social position, but does not afford him the objectivity to critically examine this position.

SECTION 3: IMMIGRATION AS A “BORDER”

Anzaldúa’s Construction of Home

In \textit{Borderlands}, Gloria Anzaldúa reconstructed \textit{homeland} to refer to both the geographical territory of the Rio Grande Valley and the \textit{Mestizaje} that inhabited it, thus imbuing the term with a sense of being both physically and psychologically grounded. Chicanos, who were not considered white, reclaimed the American Southwest as their homeland during the civil rights movement of the 1960s by tracing their heritage back to the Aztecs, and Anzaldúa’s participation in this kind of claim to legitimacy is startlingly similar to that of Anglo European anthropologists (Herrera-Sobek, 2006, p. 267). Primary acquisition is a common strategy used not only to establish territorial legitimacy, but also to anchor a particular genetic history—in this case, \textit{mestizo(a)}—to indigenous inhabitants (Bornstein-Gómez, 2010, p. 48).

The semantic power exercised by the idea of the nation-state
Negotiating the Self

as a distinct, homogenous unit of culture is addressed by Anzaldúa. Johann Gottfried Herder first articulated this position in the eighteenth century, arguing that individuals as well as nations develop in relation to local climate and in relation to land and the traditions that develop out of it (Young, 1995, p. 39). However, this simplified conception of culture neglects those inhabiting the margins of society, geographically speaking—the borderlands. The inhabitants of the borderlands have, as Maria Herrera-Sobek wrote, the sense of being a foreigner in their own land (Herrera-Sobek, 2006, p. 266). Anzaldúa fought against this claim of cultural homogeneity, yet her attempt to historically establish those of mixed race in the Rio Grande Valley presupposes racial purity, a notion problematized by postcolonial theorists. By acknowledging the heterogeneity of her geographic and psychosocial communities, Anzaldúa crafts a cosmopolitan ethic to serve as the backdrop for her personal narrative.

Anzaldúa contends with the seeming incompatibility of nationalism and diversity by examining the negative aspects of nationalism. Nationalism, according to Anthony Smith (2001, p. 442), may be defined as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population, some of whose members deem it to constitute a ‘nation’.” The very notion of America as a “melting pot” advocates assimilation and shows racial and cultural diversity as something to be overcome in the interest of collective unity. Teresa McKenna (1990, p. 31) writes that such metaphors of self-designation, including the image of America as a “salad bowl,” which is outwardly less racist than the melting pot, are distractors, meant to distance the debate of diversity from critical issues of ethnocentrism. Mexican culture is no less chauvinistic and prejudicial; according to Anzaldúa, it excludes la cultura chicana, white culture, and the indigenous culture (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 78).

The notion of home is strongly rooted in the discrepancies among theories of race and hybridity. If the quintessential characteristic of a nation is racial purity, as Herder suggests, where do those of “mixed race” call home? Anzaldúa (1987, p. 78) writes, “In a state of per-
petual transition, the *mestiza* faces the dilemma of the mixed breed: which collectivity does the daughter of a darkskinned mother listen to?" Anthropologists Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992, p. 7) address this problem from a postcolonial viewpoint, questioning where a hybrid culture belongs in a colonial rhetoric of “old” and “new”. A romantic passion for ethnicity exists in contrast to this privileging of racial purity (Young, 1995, p. 42). The preoccupation with the disenfranchised Other perpetuated by Modernism and Postmodernism runs the risk of embodying what Caren Kaplan (1987, p. 191) refers to as a “linguistic or critical vacation,” in which the critic may assume the Other’s position in writing. The first-world theorist may choose deterritorialization, may engage in the process of “becoming minor,” yet this position is not equal to the marginalization of the subjects he or she studies. The first world theorist has the option of moving away from home, while the Other is denied the privilege of home.

Home is an illusion of coherence and safety, one that is unattainable by those living on the edges. Anzaldúa was forced to leave home—a place where the illusion of coherence and safety was not extended to Chicanas, women, and lesbians—to find home, a psychological space where duality is mitigated (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 16). Anzaldúa’s new *mestiza consciousness* seeks to aid in the evolution of human nature into something better; something that does not see multiplicity as abnormal (Aigner-Varoz, 2000, p. 57). Unlike the dominant American and Mexican cultures, the *mestiza* must practice divergent thinking to encourage multiple perspectives and inclusion, rather than exclusion (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79).

Anzaldúa also encourages recognition on the part of the reader that he or she is racialized. María Lugones (1990, p. 48) asserts that recognition of one’s existence in a racialized society is necessary for a meaningful recognition of difference. In her essay, “Hablando cara a cara/Speaking Face to Face: An Exploration of Ethnocentric Racism,” Lugones writes, “One cannot think well about racism […] without an awareness of one’s ethnicity, or one’s being racialized, as well as the ties between the two” (ibid., p. 50). Anzaldua writes:
As a mestiza I have no country, my homeland cast me out [...] I am cultureless because, as a feminist, I challenge the collective cultural/religious male-derived beliefs of Indo-Hispanics and Anglos yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 80)

Anzaldúa questions the linguistic significance of terms such as “culture” and “race” by claiming she has none, and thus has no home. Her challenge to the Anglo-European conception of culture is made explicit by her insistence that she, too, is empowered to create a new culture.

**Hosseini’s Home**

As a refugee emigrating to Fremont, California in the 1980s, Baba reconstructs a sense of home by juxtaposing elements of his ‘old’ and ‘new’ cultures that fit within his unitary system of values. An excellent example of this juxtaposition in the most literal sense is his placement of a portrait of Ronald Reagan beside a photograph of himself shaking hands with King Zahir Shah (Hosseini, 2003, p. 126). Baba began to support Reagan after hearing him call the Shorawi, the Farsi term for Soviets who invaded Afghanistan, “the Evil Empire” (ibid.). The inherent incompatibility of Reaganomics with Baba’s socioeconomic status as a struggling refugee was apparent to Amir, who noted that he “was the lone Republican in our building” (ibid.). Baba’s identification of Ronald Reagan as an American likeness of King Zahir Shah reveals his inability to redefine home outside of his predetermined criteria; at home, Baba is in a position of racial and socioeconomic power. He is unable to conceptualize home as a refugee in America without using the framework that defined home in Afghanistan, and is thus operating “under erasure,” grappling with an idea that “cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all” (Hall, 2001, p. 16).
Amir achieves a relatively more rapid and successful redefinition of home, largely as a result of the guilt he attempts to bury in his native land. He sees America as an opportunity to break out of the Pashtun/Hazara dichotomy that caused so much misery to Hassan and Ali, and in turn to Amir himself as a result of his inability to rescue Hassan from Assef’s attack. Amir recognizes the different attitudes with which he and Baba view their new home: “For me, America was a place to bury my memories. For Baba, a place to mourn his” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 129).

Whereas Baba clings to his Afghan culture, Amir apologizes for it. While making a purchase at a local grocery store owned by a Vietnamese couple, Baba became outraged at the idea of having to present his ID to pay with a personal check, and breaks the window in the storefront, screaming, “Almost two years we've bought his damn fruits and put money in his pocket and the son of a dog wants to see my license!” (ibid., p. 127). Though he does not describe the means of economic exchange in Afghanistan as inferior, Amir more readily accepts that things are done differently in America. “I returned to the store and apologized to the Nguyens. Told them my father was going through a difficult time. I gave Mrs. Nguyen our telephone number and address, and told her to get an estimate for the damages. […] I saw her hands were shaking more than usual, and that made me angry at Baba, his causing an old woman to shake like that” (ibid., 128). By moving away from “home” and the guilt borne out of the Afghani land he grew up in, Amir was able to deconstruct the terms of social privilege and power that kept him from moving towards his ultimate goal: redemption (Kaplan, 1987, p. 193).

Although Fremont, California in the 1980s could not compare to his neighborhood in Kabul in terms of beauty and prestige, Amir readily adopted this dilapidated city as home. Amir comments on the cityscape of his neighborhood, as he drives through town in his Ford Gran Torino, a high school graduation gift from Baba: “I drove through the grids of cottonwood-lined streets in our Fremont neighborhood, where people who'd never shaken hands with kings lived in
shabby, flat one-story houses with barred windows, where old cars like mine dripped oil on blacktop driveway” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 135). In this moment, Amir articulates a sense of moving away from a position of socioeconomic centrality towards marginality. At the same time, he is positioning his existence in relation to other cultures and demographics. Driving through the hills of Los Altos, he sees houses that make “Baba’s house in Wazir Akbar Khan look like a servant's hut” (ibid.). Amir embraces multiple subjectivities by identifying home in relation to more and less affluent neighborhoods in both America and Afghanistan.

Language and Subject Position

Language is an explicit means by which power relations are exercised and sustained in the communities of both Borderlands and The Kite Runner. Anzaldúa questions the acceptance of knowledge produced at the center of power, an “epistemic nucleus of hegemony,” according to Bornstein-Gómez (Bornstein-Gómez, 2010, p. 50). She engages dynamically with subject-object duality to give a voice to Chicanos/-as, who have traditionally been unable to express themselves. In “Towards a New Consciousness,” Anzaldúa refers to a poem, “La Encrucijada/The Crossroads:” “A chicken is being sacrificed / at a crossroads, a simple mound of earth / a mud shrine for Esu, / Yoruba god of indeterminacy, / who blesses her choice of path. / She begins her journey” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 80). She clarifies the significance of this verse, stating, “Su cuerpo es un bocacalle. La mestiza has gone from being the sacrificial goat to becoming the officiating priestess at the crossroads” (ibid.). These code-switching poems that occur throughout Borderlands are perhaps the most significant transformative gesture of the mixed-genre work. It is through language—English, Spanish, and several hybrid variations—that Anzaldúa enacts the synergistic consciousness she advocates.

“La Encrucijada” is a physical embodiment of the border, a “different side of the same reality” (Bornstein-Gómez, 2010, p. 51).
Symbolic reality essentially refers to the phenomenon of two people experiencing the same time, place, and events, but perceiving entirely different versions of supposedly objective “reality.” *La mestiza*, until now, has been the sacrificial goat at the crossroads; the object on which the action is being performed. Via semantic inversion, Anzaldúa transposes *la mestiza* to the role of “officiating priestess,” a subject position which gains agency over the object, and over herself. A change in subject position may signal a shift in symbolic reality. Enlightenment ideas about subject position tend to view this relationship as innocuous and static; language merely makes objects present to consciousness rather than sociolinguistically constructing them (Flax, 1987, p. 625). Conversely, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity contends that a cultural system is embodied in the language of the people who speak the language, a concept supported by Anzaldúa’s illustrations of semantic inversion (Rogers and Steinfatt, 1999, p. 102). Anzaldúa exemplifies the degree to which language shapes reality.

The theme of hybridity which runs so strongly through both *Borderlands* and *The Kite Runner* applies to language as vehemently as it does to race. The Chicano Spanish spoken by Anzaldúa, a hybrid of Spanish, English, and Nahuatl, was forced underground, a victim of linguistic terrorism. Chicano Spanish, according to Christina Beltran (2004, p. 596), is a ‘border language,’ developed as a direct result of geopolitical tensions on the Mexican-American border. Anzaldúa’s ample use of code-switching throughout *Borderlands* is, as such, a deliberate and conscious expression of cultural transgression. Although bilingualism gives Amir agency, allowing him to mediate interaction between Baba and life in America, it is the English language that allows Amir to reconstruct cultural memory. Cultural memory, according to Shafiq Shamel (2007, p. 185), is primarily a function of language. Shamel comments on the imbalance between Persian and Farsi in Afghanistan, quoting this as the most contentious point between Hazara and Pashtun subcultures (ibid.).

A parallel linguistic imbalance exists within Amir as refugee, per-
sonifying the struggle between Afghan and American traditions. As a point of deliberate transgression against the Afghan notions of what constitutes ‘work’ and responsibility, Amir tells his father that he will major in English, specifically creative writing, in college (Hosseini, 2003, p. 134). Is it fair, however, to characterize Amir as a transgressor of cultural boundaries, in effect hybridizing the Afghan and American economies, when the concepts behind the term “hybridity” are in fact in opposition with each other?

Birgitta Frello (2007, p. 3-4) asserts that the very essence of hybridity lies not in a ‘liberal hybridism,’ denoting a “harmonious fusion or synthesis,” but displacement. Amir is neither achieving this synthesis nor experiencing displacement; as a college student who has the liberty to pursue his passion for writing, Amir has begun a seminal move towards centrality. This move is anything but harmonious, however, as Baba responds to his choice of study: “So, if I understand, you’ll study several years to earn a degree, then you’ll get *chatti* job like mine, one you could just as easily land today, on the small chance your degree might someday help you get... discovered” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 134). It is the English language which creates the version of reality that Amir perceives, and thus supports his self-identity with a centralized demographic. Anzaldúa remarked, “The ability to respond is what is meant by responsibility, yet our cultures take away our ability to act” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 20). It is a testament to Amir’s self-identification as an American that he rejected the responsibilities projected upon him by his indigenous culture, instead relying on the agency he gains from his shifting subject position. He utilizes English as a means of beginning to subvert and defy the power dynamics of Afghan culture.
SECTION 4: REESTABLISHMENT AND SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Socioeconomic Reestablishment

Amir negotiates the spaces between the American and Afghani economic systems, effectively crafting an increasingly coherent self-identity by reestablishing himself as an American citizen. Anzaldúa (1987, p. 78) optimistically asserts, “The possibilities are endless once we decide to act and not react,” a remark fitting to Amir’s seeming ability to remove himself from the margins, from the center, and step outside. One critique of hybridity theory as it applies to Amir’s immigrant position is that a hybrid self-identity reproduces patterns of pre-existing narratives of romantic identification and exclusion, which essentially continue to “invoke the category of experience as a fundamental precondition for political agency and knowledge” (Beltran, 2004, p. 596). Critics may, in this vein, reject the notion that Amir has gained agency simply by identifying with American socioeconomic ideologies; rejection of many of his Afghan cultural roots is not sufficient to achieve what Stuart Hall calls the “double-consciousness of the exile, of the migrant, of the stranger who moves to another place, who has this double way of seeing it, from the inside and the outside” (qtd. in Frello, 2007, p. 2).

Socioeconomic class in 1980s America is composed of many dichotomies, distinct from though similar to those of revolution-era Afghanistan. Any class structure is inevitably composed of the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots,’ and the world in which Amir lives is no exception. In his early years as an immigrant, Amir and Baba resold used goods from yard sales at an all-Afghan section of a flea market to close the gap between their income and expenses (Hosseini, 2003, p. 137). This Afghan-American, immigrant subculture obeyed the rules and customs of the native culture. Amir notes:

There was an unspoken code of behavior among Afghans at the flea market [...] and shook your head mournfully when the conver-
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sation turned to Afghanistan and the Roussie—which it inevitably did. But you avoided the topic of Saturday. Because it might turn out that the fellow across the isle [sic] was the guy you’d nearly blindsided at the freeway exit yesterday in order to beat him to a promising garage sale (ibid.).

This is a prime example of Afghan and American cultural ideals in competition, in antagonism, with one another. Amir is unable to adhere to the social and economic conventions determined by hegemonic American and Afghan cultures without transgressing the boundaries of either—something he recognizes the other refugees are unwilling to admit. This period of reestablishment and reinvention of the self is when those of mixed race and ethnicity experience the greatest challenge: determining to which group they owe the greatest solidarity and allegiance (Hall, 2001, p. 16). Stuart Hall notes that self-identification is “never a proper fit, a totality” (ibid., 17).

Gender Relations

La mestiza is a product of the transfer of cultural and spiritual values of one group to another.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, p. 78)

Much like the mestiza, Amir is in a state of mental nepantilism, constantly torn between his Afghan and American ways. Amir recognizes this substantial difference in custom in terms of gender relations. While contemplating whether or not to speak to Soraya, daughter of the respected General Taheri, who would later become his wife, Amir notes, “I was fully aware of the Afghan double standard favoring my gender. Not Did you see him chatting with her? but Wooooy! Did you see how she wouldn’t let him go? What a lochak!” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 146). The double standard that Amir references, the damaging effect of gossip on the potential of women to marry respectably, is equally strong in this Afghan-American sub-community as it was his native country. However, it is the reactions of the Afghan community in southern
California that Amir is concerned about, not those of the Caucasian majority. He consequently follows the proper Afghani standards of courtship, including waiting a full year to speak directly to Soraya, and thus both upholds tradition and respects Soraya’s tenuous position as a woman in a misogynist culture.

Amir is highly conscious of the privilege granted to him by his gender. Despite his heightened awareness of the inequitable gender relations in Afghani culture, his thought patterns occasionally revert to the prejudiced values that his native country instilled in him. While speaking at the flea market, Soraya tells Amir that she heard he writes stories. He is startled by this forwardness, thinking:

I wondered if her father had told her, maybe she had asked him. I immediately dismissed both scenarios as absurd. Fathers and sons could talk freely about women. But no Afghan girl—no decent and mobtaram Afghan girl, at least—queried her father about a young man. And no father, especially a Pashtun... would discuss a mojarad with his daughter, not unless the fellow in question was a khastegar, a suitor, who had done the honorable thing and sent his father to knock on the door (Hosseini, 2003, p. 147).

Feminist theorist Jane Flax (1987, p. 634), in contemplating the recursive nature of gender relations, has remarked, “We must be as socially and self-critical as possible about the meanings usually attributed to those relations and the way we think about them. Otherwise, we run the risk of replicating the very social relations we are attempting to understand.” This statement is particularly applicable to this instance of Amir’s logic; he attempts informally to deconstruct gender relations and yet replicates the very prejudice that he seeks to overcome by falling back into privileged, heterocentric thought patterns.

General Taheri reinforces the Afghan subculture that Amir slowly attempts to break away from by reinstating a Pashtun system of social norms. When Amir brings Soraya some of his short stories to read, General Taheri immediately throws them away and tells Amir, “So it’s my duty to remind you that you are among peers in this flea
market. [...] You see, everyone here is a storyteller” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 152). Taheri reminds Amir that although he is in America, he is still bound to Afghan custom—at least in the company of his Afghan neighbors. Amir’s consciousness of gender inequality is heightened through his interactions with the Taheri family at the flea market, but the power exerted by the Afghan subculture limits his ability to integrate American customs into preexisting social norms.

**Individualism**

_The individual exists first as kin, and last as self._

Gloria Anzaldúa, 18

One of Amir’s functions as protagonist in a familiar metanarrative of multicultural identity and redemption is to embody the universal experience of defining oneself. The death of his father shortly after Amir’s marriage to Soraya is a critical moment in which he must redefine himself as something other than Baba’s son. After hearing multitudes of praise for Baba at the funeral, Amir realized, “How much of who I was, what I was, had been defined by Baba and the marks he had left of people’s lives…. Baba couldn’t show me the way anymore; I’d have to find it on my own. The thought of it terrified me” (Hosseini, 2003, p. 174).

Amir’s desire to redefine himself outside the context of his powerful and respected father is a microcosmic illustration of the relationship between self and society. All his life, Amir defined himself in terms of and in comparison to his father, and rarely felt that he measured up. He has, in the words of Anzaldúa, existed last as self. Baba’s death reduces the tendency of Amir to self-define via either/or dichotomous thinking, essentially seeing the self as inherently opposed to its “other” (Keating, 2008, p. 61). The relationship between Amir and Baba is parallel to and symbolic of Amir’s relationship to Afghanistan; once Baba is no longer a predominant force in his life, Amir is able to more effectively break his ties to Afghan ideologies and practices, for better or worse. He engages his height-
ened consciousness of cultural difference to synthesize disparate self-identities as a Pashtun and refugee American.

Like Amir, Soraya begins to define herself as an American, and as an individual. While America is a place for Amir to bury his guilt, it is a place for Soraya to overcome the limitations imposed upon her by her gender and by Afghan tradition. Soraya, previously married to an abusive, drug-dealing husband, is considered by the Afghan community to be “impure.” The stigma placed on unchaste women was so great, that Soraya’s mother feared she would never marry (Hosseini, 2003, p. 178). By marrying Soraya, Amir disregards this misogynistic double standard, and ultimately realizes that he cannot chastise her for her past when he would like nothing better than to be freed from the burden of his (ibid., p. 165). Soraya expresses her frustration, telling Amir, “Their sons go out to nightclubs looking for meat and get their girlfriends pregnant, they have kids out of wedlock and no one says a goddamn thing. Oh, they’re just men having fun!” (ibid., p. 179). Soraya’s desire to free herself from patriarchal oppression pushes her to self-identify as an American, simultaneously encouraging Amir to do the same.

While Baba worked long hours at a minimum wage job to support his son, and General Taheri provided for his family through welfare, refusing to accept a job below his stature, Amir chose an alternate path: he continued to pursue his education at San Jose State University, working a security job at night. Amir experiences not only the privilege of access to higher education, but is able to study and even write his first novel while at work (ibid., p. 181). Some Mexican artists and writers reject the “euphemized vision of the contradictions and uprootedness of the border […] seeing the celebration of migrations often caused by poverty in the place of origin, a poverty repeated in the new destination” (Yarbro-Bejarano, 1994, p. 16). In other words, critics of border theory do not see crossing the border—specifically the Mexican-American border—as a route out of poverty, but rather merely a means of experiencing the same poverty in a different place.

For Amir, the effect is reversed: he was wealthy and privileged in
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Kabul and is now regaining a modified form of privilege in America. In 1988, only eight years after his initial arrival in America, Amir sells his first novel, which is met with critical acclaim and a five-city book tour (Hosseini, 2003, p. 183). He is even able to later pay for in-vitro fertilization with just the advance from his novel (ibid., p. 186). Unlike many who cross the Mexican-American border and remain “refugees in a land that does not want them,” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 12) Amir achieves a fairly rapid integration and acceptance into American culture.

Antithesis

There are several avenues through which to critique this analysis of *The Kite Runner* against a backdrop of *Borderlands*. The most transparent, readily accessible critique of this application of Gloria Anzaldúa’s theory of *mestiza* consciousness to a chronological analysis of Amir’s self-identity might be made by staunch proponents of hybridity theory. Strictly in terms of race, Amir is not “hybrid” in the way that Anzaldúa is. Scholars who view hybridity as an amalgamation of race inherently presume that there is something “pure” to be mixed (Frello, 2007, p. 2).

Shafiq Shamel (2007, p. 184) refutes this idea of racial purity in the context of the clearly articulated binary between Pashtuns and Hazaras, noting that Afghan rulers have frequently engaged in forced or voluntary marital relations throughout history, largely for the purpose of gaining the loyalty of multiple ethnic groups. Thus, although Amir may not identify as mixed race, his cultural history dictates otherwise. Furthermore, Amir’s discovery that his childhood friend and servant, Hassan, was actually his half-brother puts the idea of racial and cultural ‘mixing’ at the forefront of the novel.

The inclusion of definitions of “hybridity” beyond that of racial mixing supports the analysis of Amir via this lens. Birgitta Frello analyzes hybridity as a concept of cultural transgression. She sees the phenomenon described by Stuart Hall, the “double conscious-
ness of the exile,” as a “hybrid position on the margin” (Frello, 2007, p. 2). As a refugee, Amir is doubtless moving towards this heightened consciousness that some consider an act of cultural transgression; he is Afghan-American, the very name reflecting the hybridity inherent in his immigrant status.

Conversely, hybridity may be viewed as a means of emancipation from the restrictions imposed on society by hegemonic cultural convention. Naming, “the active tense of identity,” both extends the possibilities of mixing and sets up boundaries for the hybrid subject (qtd. in Yarbro-Bejarano, 1994, p. 17). Amir’s designation as a cultural hybrid allows him the possibility of emancipation, though incomplete, from Afghan convention. Although hybridity theory may function as a potential point of weakness in this analysis of *The Kite Runner* via *Borderlands*, an expansion of our definition of ‘hybridity’ allows readers to examine in depth the underlying etymological power that such concepts exercise.

**CONCLUSION**

*Borderlands* by Gloria Anzaldúa and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini examine self-identity across multiple paradigms of existence, primarily focusing on race, socioeconomic class, and gender. *Borderlands* explicitly questions the exclusionary politics of identity formation and challenges individuals of mixed race to embrace opposition through heightened consciousness. *The Kite Runner* also questions exclusionary identity formation, but falls short of the transcendental ideal advocated by Anzaldúa. Amir fails to fully integrate his Afghan roots and American nationality, thus begging the question: Is it fair to determine that Amir failed to integrate disparate parts of his self-identity, if that never was his intention?

A thorough textual analysis of *The Kite Runner* in the context of *Borderlands* suggests that Amir’s navigation of the racial and socioeconomic spaces of America ultimately serve to more fully integrate him
into mainstream American society. Amir intentionally left many parts of his identity as a Pashtun in Afghanistan, figuratively speaking, for this position of privilege directly tied him to the guilt he felt over witnessing the childhood rape of Hassan. Like Anzaldúa, Amir embraced multiple subjectivities in an effort to form a coherent self-identity, moving alternately towards and away from positions of centrality and marginality. His adeptness at navigating these cultural spaces allowed Amir to remain primarily in a position of centrality, of economically- and gender-based privilege, but he did not achieve the synergistic “third space” that Anzaldúa’s mestiza consciousness does.

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“Percentage of Families and People Whose Income in the Past 12 Months is


ABSTRACT

This paper will analyze the psychological effects of money, particularly how decision making is impacted by exposure to the idea of money. How do forces below one’s conscious awareness impact decision processes? Specifically, how does money shape the way people approach concepts such as fairness, cooperation, and pro-social behavior? The paper argues that our choices are easily swayed by irrational, subconscious forces. Recent research suggests that simply priming a person with an idea such as money or the concept of cleanliness can dramatically influence whether or not a person behaves ethically and pro-socially, and how decisions about fairness, happiness, and even right versus wrong are shaped by simple ideas lying below conscious awareness. This paper contends that human reactions to money, or even the mere idea of money, are the product of evolutionary adaptations.
INTRODUCTION

Money is the basic fabric of modern industrialized society and is paradoxically viewed as both a good and evil. It is undeniable that money impacts behavior. For example, if not for money, many of us would not get out of bed to go to work in the morning. The importance of money is also evident in our language, with expressions such as “time is money” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1983). Before considering the impact money has on human psychology, it is first important to understand what is meant here by the term money. In standard economics, money (coins and paper currency) is considered to have three basic functions: a medium of exchange, a unit of account, and a store of value (Devoe & Iyengar, 2010). Ideas of money have been shown to alter how people view fundamental issues such as fairness, reciprocity, and trust, as well as how people interact with one another.

Cleanliness is also an important idea in moral psychology. Our language (“cleanliness is next to godliness”) and religious rituals (baptism, feet washing) reveal that physical cleanliness is intrinsically linked with moral purity. Recent laboratory evidence suggests that the idea of being “clean” can have profound impacts on behavior. Money and cleanliness are also linked on a deeper level. Whether money itself is dirty or clean can influence moral behaviors. Despite the fact that money is a fairly new concept in the history of the human species, there is a significant amount of compelling evidence to suggest that humans have evolved to respond to it in dramatic ways.

This paper begins by introducing some basic terminology that is important to understanding the way social scientists study economic behavior in controlled environments. Next, the reader will be introduced to the most current psychological research relative to concepts of money and cleanliness. Then, I will explore the surprising connections between these two concepts; this paper will attempt to provide an explanation for these phenomena as suggested by the existing literature, drawing heavily from evolutionary psychology.
and anthropological research. Finally, potential counterarguments will be addressed.

**ECONOMIC GAMES**

It is necessary at the outset to understand some basic types of scenario “games” used in behavioral economic research, as they are crucial to research on how people behave with money in relation to others. A *Trust Game* is a scenario which examines people’s willingness to trust others and to live up to others’ trust in them (rather than exploit the other). A trust game has two roles: the sender, who is given a set amount of money and has the opportunity to send part to the other participant while keeping the rest. Any money sent to the other person (the receiver) will be tripled. The receiver then has the opportunity to either keep all of the money (triple the original amount) or divide the money, sending part of it back to the sender. This game is based on the idea of trust: if the receiver divides the money equally in the end, the sender will end up with 50% more than the initial donation; however, if the sender lacks trust in the receiver, it may seem more advantageous to keep most or all of the initial money, rather than risk getting little to nothing back (Yang et al. 2012, p. 476).

A *Prisoner’s Dilemma* is also based on trust; it requires the player to choose their move while unaware of another player’s simultaneous move. Players must choose between a non-cooperative strategy that involves exploiting others while protecting oneself from being exploited, or a cooperative strategy which involves trusting that the other player will not betray you. A cooperative strategy yields higher payoffs, but only if both players cooperate. If one player cooperates while the other defects, the cooperator suffers a significant loss, while the defector benefits (ibid., p. 480). The *Dictator Game* is one of the most commonly used economic games. Participants are given a sum of money to divide between themselves and another person. The participant’s decision is final and the other player has no choice; both
players are paid whatever the participant (dictator) chooses. Due to the fact that the receiver has no power, the participant's behavior is taken as a sign of generosity: “a relatively pure measure of how well the participant wishes to treat the other person” (ibid., p. 483).

Lastly, *Ultimatum Games* assess constructs of fairness and reciprocity by allowing the player to either accept or reject an unfair offer. The game also has two players: a proposer and a responder. The proposer is given a sum of money and may decide how they would like to divide it between themselves and the responder. The responder has a significant amount of power in the sense that they may choose whether or not to accept the offer. If the responder accepts, both players receive the proposed amount. If the responder refuses the offer, both players get nothing. Essentially, the ultimatum game is a more complicated version of the dictator game (ibid., p. 481).

**MONEY AND SELF-SUFFICIENT ORIENTATIONS**

In recent years, many studies have been done to examine the influence the idea of money on behavior, which have yielded dramatic results that seem to contradict some general assumptions about human behavior. Kathleen Vohs, Nicole Mead, and Miranda Goode (2006) have hypothesized that money brings about a state of self-sufficiency which causes a preference for independence and freedom from dependents. Using nine experiments, these researchers attempted to support this hypothesis through the use of money priming techniques. They found that participants primed with money were less likely to ask for help on difficult problems, often working longer than control group participants before asking for help. Participants primed with money were also significantly less likely to help others.

1. Priming is a concept in psychology having to do with implicit memories. It involves exposure to a stimulus that can influence a response to a later stimulus.
with solvable problems that required no specialized knowledge or training. For example, participants in one experiment were asked to help an undergraduate student code data (a process that took about five minutes per sheet); another experiment asked participants to help explain directions to a confused confederate. Compared to the control condition, participants primed with the idea of money helped to code fewer sheets and only spent half as much time helping the confused confederate.

To show that the amount of effort involved in the task did was not a variable influencing helping behaviors, Vohs et al. (2006) designed an experiment in which no knowledge or skill was required: participants had the opportunity to give a person who spilled a box of pencils. The dependent measure of this experiment was the number of pencils picked up. An additional group was added to this experiment to see if the degree of helping was influenced by the amount of money as well. Monopoly money was used as the prime. The high money group was left with $4,000, the low money group was left with $200, and the control condition had no money at all. Compared to the low money group, the high money group picked up fewer pencils.

Compared to those who have not been exposed to money, money-primed participants are also less likely to help to charitable causes. In one experiment, participants were each given $2 in quarters at the beginning of the study as compensation for their participation and also ensuring that they would have money to donate. The priming task consisted of word descrambling tasks that even had money based on neural concepts. After a false debriefing, participants were told that the lab was accepting donations for a University Student Fund. The amount of money donated was the dependent measure. As expected, those primed with the idea of money donated significantly less than those who had been primed with neutral concepts (Vohs et al. 2006).

Money has also been shown to have an impact on social intimacy and participation. A study measured the effect of money-primes on physical proximity. For priming, each participant viewed one of
three screensavers: money, fish, or no screensaver at all. Participants then participated in “get-acquainted” exercises with other participants during which they were instructed to move two chairs together. The dependent measure was the distance between the two chairs. As expected, participants primed with money put more distance between themselves and the other participant than those in the fish or control conditions (ibid.).

The research team further hypothesized that people primed with money would have a preference for being alone and participating in solitary activities. They designed an experiment that measured preferences for leisure activities through a questionnaire offering choices between two activities: one of which was an experience for one person, while the other was an option for two or more people to participate. Priming occurred in the form of posters depicting various denominations of currency, a seascape, or a flower garden. Participants in the money prime condition chose many more individually focused activities than either of the control groups, suggesting that money leads people to be less social (Vohs et al. 2006). Finally, desire to work with a peer was also significantly influenced by money primes. Primes again consisted of screensavers: money, fish, or no screensaver at all. Participants were given the option of completing a task either alone or with a co-worker. Working with a co-worker would presumably reduce the amount of work necessary for each individual; however, it also leaves the possibility of the co-worker preferring to rely on the participant (i.e. a form of dependency, which goes against the idea of being self-sufficient). Those in the money-priming conditions chose to work alone significantly more often than those in the other two conditions. There was no difference between the fish and no screensaver conditions (ibid.).

In sum, the nine experiments conducted by Vohs, Mead, and Goode (2006) present strong evidence for the theory that money brings about a state of self-sufficiency in which people strive to be free of dependency and dependents. As compared to people in other conditions, those who are thinking about money (even at a sub-con-
MONEY AND FAIRNESS OF ALLOCATIONS

To what extent does money as a medium of exchange influence human behavior? Sanford DeVo and Sheena Iyengar (2010) set out to answer this question by looking at the fundamental social problem of how to distribute resources fairly. They found that perceptions of fairness in resource allocation change with the medium of exchange. In fact, they note that “…the extent to which a resource is a medium of exchange is a casual variable in fairness-allocation preferences” (Devoe & Iyengar, 2010). Medium of exchange basically means that money in and of itself does not need to have any inherent value as long as the participants of a particular market consent to accept it. For example, Roman soldiers were compensated for their service with salt (which was the medium of exchange in this situation). Developmentally, humans tend to form preferences for equal distribution of resources between the ages of three and eight; this preference continues to be a prevailing norm in many aspects of life, such as social justice. However, at the age of nine, there is a radical shift in which a market-pricing model begins to develop. In this model, preferences form for differentiation in resource division based on an individual’s contribution; this is the predominant model for employment contracts in traditional capitalist economies.

Several experiments were conducted to determine whether fairness allocation preferences change along with the medium of exchange. In one experiment, participants read a scenario in which a fictional firm exceeded its sales goal and the division manager is tasked with dividing a specific type and amount of a resource to ten associates. Four different resource types were used: dollars (money),
credit card reward points, vacation days (time off), or boxes of chocolate (food). Two different size conditions were also tested. For example, 20,000 or 40,000 dollars or credit card points, twenty or forty vacation days or boxes of chocolate. Participants were asked to use a nine-point scale (one being extremely unfair to nine being extremely fair) to rate the allocation plan of “give an equal amount of the [resource type] to each sales associate” (Devoe & Iyengar, 2010). In general, researchers found that equal allocation of a resource was considered less fair when the resource was a medium of exchange, in this case, money or credit card reward points. When the resource had value in use, such as time or food, participants generally found equal allocation a fairer strategy. Size did not have an effect on allocation preferences.

In order to determine to what degree a resource being a medium of exchange was a causal variable in the perceived fairness of resource allocation preferences, researchers kept all other properties of the experiment constant, except for the degree to which the credit card reward points were a medium of exchange (i.e. what goods or services it could be exchanged for). The manipulation introduced four different types of goods: books, electronics, movies, or music. In one condition, the reward points could be exchanged for any four of the goods. In the other condition, points were only exchangeable for one of the four goods. Participants were again asked to rate the fairness of the plan to ‘give an equal amount [...] to each sales associate’ on a nine-point scale. Results varied significantly across conditions. There was a greater preference for equal allocation when the points were only redeemable for one type of good. People were less likely to favor equal allocation when the reward points were redeemable for multiple types of goods. This experimental evidence suggests that the extent to which something is considered a medium of exchange impacts peoples’ perceptions of fairness when the resource is distributed. Generally, the more something is a medium of exchange, the less likely people are to endorse the equal allocation of said resource (Devoe & Iyengar, 2010).
CLEANLINESS

The idea of cleanliness also has a dramatic influence on behavior. Most world religions have some kind of cleansing rituals; for example, Baptism is practiced by both Christians and Sikhs. In linguistics, words like “clean,” “pure,” or “disgust” are used to describe both physical and moral states. A Mandarin phrase that means ‘a pair of dirty hands,’ refers to one who steals. Chen-Bo Zhong and Katie Liljenquist (2006) attempted to explore the connection between moral and bodily purity through a phenomenon they labeled the Macbeth Effect², which theorizes that a threat to moral purity will activate a need for physical cleansing.

The researchers performed several experiments in order to support this theory. In order to determine whether physical cleansing actually helps people cope with threats to their morality, researchers assessed whether threats to moral purity would increase one’s mental accessibility to “cleansing-related words” (Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006). Participants were asked to recall either an ethical or unethical deed from their own past and to describe their associated feelings and emotions. Next, participants engaged in a word-completion task, in which word fragments were converted into meaningful words. Each fragment was selected to be able to form both cleansing-related and neutral words. For example, W__H could become wash, wish, or with and SH__ER could become shower, shiver, or shaker. Their results demonstrated that participants who recalled the unethical deed generated significantly more cleansing-related words than those who did not (ibid.).

Due to the results of the first experiment, researchers then investigated whether threats to moral purity would increase a desire for cleansing and thus, a preference for cleaning products. Partici-

² The Macbeth Effect is named after William Shakespeare’s play, Macbeth, in which Lady Macbeth attempts to clear her conscious of a murder through desperately washing her hands.
pants were asked to hand-copy a short story that was written in the first person that described either an ethical or unethical deed. They were then asked to use a seven-point scale to rate the desirability of products (one being completely undesirable and seven being completely desirable). The items included cleansing products such as Dove shower soap, Crest toothpaste, Windex cleaner, Lysol disinfectant, and Tide detergent, as well as neutral products, such as Post-It Notes, Nantucket Nectars juice, Energizer Batteries, Sony CD cases, and Snickers bars. In keeping with the pattern from the previous experiment, copying the unethical story increased the desirability of cleansing products (ibid.).

The idea of threatened morality increasing the preference for cleansing products was extended in a hybrid of the two previously mentioned studies. Again, participants were asked to recall an ethical or unethical deed and then were offered a free gift: either an antiseptic hand wipe or a pencil. A pretest verified that a pencil was considered an equally attractive offering. A majority of the participants who requested the antiseptic wipe (67%) were those who had recalled the unethical deed. Together, these three experiments provide overwhelming support for the existence of the Macbeth Effect (Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006).

Cleanliness has also been shown to have an impact on pro-social behavior, specifically in terms of volunteerism. In another experiment, participants were asked to describe an unethical deed from their past and then either cleansed their hands with an antiseptic wipe or not. They then completed a survey about their current emotional state, and then were asked if they would be willing to assist a desperate graduate student by volunteering to participate in another research study without pay. The researchers hypothesized that those

3. Brand names are specifically mentioned in the study. In an independent examination of my own, people (N = 15) tended to believe that brand name vs. generic products would potentially impact the desirability of a particular product.
who had cleansed their hands would be less motivated to volunteer because the sanitizing wipes “washed away their moral stains and restored a suitable moral self,” thus eliminating the need to behave in a pro-social manner (Zhong & Liljenquist 2006, p. 1452). As predicted, hand cleansing significantly reduced volunteerism: only 41% of participants who had washed their hands volunteered to assist the graduate student, as compared to 74% of those who did not, indicating that physical cleanliness has a very strong connection to ideas regarding moral purity.

Clean scents have also been shown to have an impact on moral and pro-social behaviors. Researchers tested whether clean scents would increase the reciprocation of trust. Experimenters took participants to one of two rooms. Both rooms were exactly the same except one room (the experimental variable) was sprayed with citrus-scented Windex. Participants then played a Trust Game in which all participants acted as the Receiver and were told that the Sender chose to send the full amount ($4) which was then tripled ($12). The participants were presented with a choice: they could exploit the sender through keeping the entire sum themselves or they could return a portion of the money back to the sender, thus honoring their initial trust. Participants in the clean-scented room returned significantly more money than those in the non-scented (control) room (Liljenquist et al., 2010).

Clean scents have also been noted to have an impact on charitable and pro-social behaviors. Again, an experiment was set up in which there were two equivalent rooms; the only difference was that one room was sprayed with citrus-scented Windex. Participants were asked to work on a packet of unrelated materials. Each packet contained a Habitat for Humanity flyer requesting volunteers. Participants were asked to report their interest in volunteering for the organization in the future. Mood was ruled out as a variable through the use of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). Participants in the clean-scented room expressed a significantly greater interest in volunteering for future Habitat efforts than the control group. Additionally, a larger
proportion of participants from the clean-scented room indicated a willingness to donate money to the cause. Thus, it is fair to say that the scent of a room can “have a significant effect on volunteerism and donation rates” (Liljenquist et al., 2010).

The notions of order and cleanliness have even influenced interpretations of criminal behavior. The Broken Window Theory is a well-known concept in criminal justice suggesting that “if a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired, all of the rest of the windows will soon be broken” (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Even though the reasons for this phenomenon may not have been entirely understood, psychological research presents a plausible explanation.

CLEAN VERSUS DIRTY MONEY

Some researchers have identified a fascinating connection between money and cleanliness. The psychological effects of money on morality are significantly altered by the physical state of the money itself. Researchers conducted a series of experiments in which participants handled one of four items: clean money, dirty money, clean paper, or dirty paper. A variety of economic games (trust, dictator, ultimatum, and prisoners' dilemma) were used to test the hypothesis that people who handled clean or dirty money would treat people differently. To account for cleanliness being a factor in the desirability of money in and of itself, a pretest was conducted. Participants were asked to rate the value of clean or dirty notes, as well as their level of happiness if they were to find the currency. There was no difference in the perceived value of the money; estimates of how many eggs one could buy with the money did not vary based on the physical state of the notes. Participants also reported that they would be just as happy finding the dirty money as the clean money (Yang et al., 2012).

4. The “dirty” money/paper was literally stored in a bag of wet dirt for several days.
In a Trust Game experiment, all participants were told that they were playing the role of receiver and that they had the power to decide how to divide the multiplied sum of money. In this case, someone else would have trusted the receiver, who now has the choice of whether to divide the money equally, generously, or selfishly. Prior to the experiment, participants were primed through counting money that was either dirty or clean. As a control, half of the participants counted clean or dirty paper. In the setup, participants would enter a room two at a time then be led to different rooms. Each participant would then complete a “finger dexterity measure,” in which they counted the clean or dirty paper or money. Then they would begin the aforementioned Trust Game. The clean money condition returned significantly more money than the dirty money condition. There wasn’t a significant difference in the amount of money returned by either paper condition. In essence, participants who counted the cleaned money were inclined to behave most generously and fairly, in many cases, even returning more than half of the sum they received. In contrast, the dirty money participants behaved least fairly, on average keeping more than half of the amount for themselves. The results of the paper conditions fell between either money conditions (Yang et al., 2012).

Another experiment was conducted using a Prisoner’s Dilemma Game (see above), in order to assess anticipated reciprocity. Using a sample of 156 people, each participant was asked to complete the same finger dexterity task as the other experiments, counting either clean or dirty money or paper. Next, in a seemingly unrelated activity, participants were told that they would be playing a Prisoner’s Dilemma Game with several randomly assigned opponents. Subjects were told that a database existed containing the play-records of each player’s cooperations and defections. Participants could see

5. In reality, no database existed. Participants viewed 16 different player profiles: eight of cooperators (who cooperated more than 50% of the time), eight of deceivers (who defected more than 50% of the time).
the number of times each player cooperated or defected and were then asked to use a scale to indicate the extent to which they would be willing to cooperate with the other player. The scale consisted of numbers from zero (not at all) to ten (totally), in which a score of five or higher indicated the decision to cooperate. Every participant was under the impression that they were playing for real money (Yang et al., 2012).

The Prisoner’s Dilemma experiment yielded some powerful results. It showed that the dirty money group reciprocated trust less than the clean money group. On the other hand, the dirty paper group reciprocated more than the clean paper group. The dirty money group reciprocated less than the dirty paper group and the clean money group reciprocated more than the clean paper group. These findings suggest that “clean money promotes reciprocal fairness, whereas dirty money reduces it” (ibid.).

In the Dictator Game, experimenters used the set-up to test “inner responses” that can drive people toward or away from fairness and reciprocity. In contrast to previous experiments, in which participants counted money or paper that was either dirty or clean, in this experiment, participants were asked to read a short article that discussed either the “cleanliness or dirtiness of the nation’s money supply” (ibid). The control group read a weather report that did not address the concepts of money or cleanliness at all. All participants were then asked to complete a finger dexterity exercise, in which they counted 100 notes of standard circulated money (that was neither incredibly clean nor incredibly dirty). Next, in what seemed to be a different task, participants engaged in a computer exercise (lexical decision procedure) in which they evaluated fifteen words as either “good” or “bad.” Five of the fifteen words related to economic exchange (e.g. reciprocity, business, trade, deal, transaction). Finally, participants played a dictator game in the role of the proposer for twenty rounds. It was entirely up to them to decide how to divide the sum of money (which ranged from $5 to $20).

Results for this experiment held consistent with previous evi-
dence. For the lexical decision procedure, participants who read the clean money article rated the exchange-related words more positively than the control or the dirty money conditions. The dirty money condition rated the words as worse than the control or clean money groups. It seems that even just the idea of clean money seems to raise the subjective appeal of economic exchange, whereas ideas about dirty money induce negative attitudes towards commerce. In the dictator game phase, the clean money group was significantly more generous and overall fairer than the control. On the other hand, the dirty money condition was less fair than the control. This experiment shows that simply by priming subjects with ideas about cleanliness (or dirtiness) and money can have a profound effect on whether greed or fairness prevails.

Finally, it is important to consider an ironic and somewhat counter-intuitive finding from these studies. One would think that people would rather have clean things, including money; however, a preponderance of evidence suggests that clean money (or even just the idea of it) prompts people to give more generously, whereas dirty money paradoxically causes people to want to keep money for themselves and actually gain more money if possible.

EXPLAINING THE INFLUENCE OF MONEY: PAIN AND SOCIAL DISTRESS

A recent study has found a connection suggesting that money can alter perceptions and feelings relative to social distress and physical pain. It is an undeniable fact that without interdependence, it is unlikely that humans as a species would survive and thrive as well as they do, but this interdependency comes at a cost: humans possess a strong need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Money, however, can act as a substitute for social popularity, allowing people to manipulate the social system to get what they want, regardless of whether or not they are liked by others (Lea & Webley, 2006). Additionally,
past work has found a neurobiological connection between physical pain and social distress. Considering that money may be used as a substitute for social popularity, it is plausible to believe that money, feelings of social exclusion, and physical pain may be connected on a neurobiological level.

Zhou et al. (2009) conducted six different studies to determine whether such a relationship may exist. In one experiment, researchers tested the hypothesis that being socially rejected would increase the desire for money. This builds off of past work, which showed that people who are rejected will donate less money than others who were not, suggesting a decrease in pro-social motivations (Twenge et al., 2007). In this experiment, Chinese undergraduate students were placed into same-sex groups of four and engaged in a getting acquainted activity for a five minute period. Participants were then separated and asked which of the other group members would they like to work with on a two-person (dyad) task. Participants were then told that either everyone or no one selected them for the next activity, thus forming two conditions: acceptance and rejection. Due to the extremes of each condition, the participants were led to believe that they would not be able to participate in the dyad task. Instead, participants were asked to draw a $1 Chinese Renmimbi (RMB) coin from memory without a visual reference. Past work (Bruner & Goodman, 1947) has confirmed that drawing larger coins is a sign of stronger desire for money (Zhou et al., 2009). Participants were also given a list of seven things that would be considered to be pleasant (e.g. spring, sunshine, beach, chocolate, etc.) and asked which they would be willing to permanently give up in exchange for $10 million RMB (about $1.4 million). Lastly, another experimenter would enter the room and ask participants to donate money to an orphanage (cf. Twenge et al., 2007). Results of this experiment show that compared to those in the acceptance condition, rejected participants were more likely to draw larger coins, willing to forego more pleasant things in exchange for money, and donated less money (Zhou et al., 2009).

In another experiment, researchers tested whether “priming the
idea of physical pain would activate the desire for money” (Zhou et al., 2009, p. 701). Participants (again Chinese university students) were asked to perform a word-completion task in which they would be given thirty words to complete. The control group had thirty fragments that would create neutral words (stone or lunch). Participants assigned to the pain condition would have twenty neutral words and ten pain-related words (e.g. headache, sore, or pain). Participants were then given a sheet with ten coin sizes and were asked to identify which pictures corresponded to the size of three actual coins. Participants were also asked to list ten things that they valued in life besides money and asked which they would be willing to exchange for $10 million RMB. Compared to the neutral controls, participants in the pain group estimated larger coin sizes and were willing to trade more valued concepts for money (Zhou et al., 2009).

Due to the results of the first two experiments, researchers hypothesized that thinking about money would “reduce suffering from problems, including social exclusion” (ibid., p. 701). Participants were asked to perform a finger-dexterity task (cf. Yang et al., 2012), counting out eighty $100 bills. Those in the control group counted out eighty pieces of paper. Participants then played a computerized ball-tossing game known as Cyberball. Each participant was told that they were playing with three other participants. The game began by tossing the ball equally among all four players; next, participants divided into one of two conditions. In the normal-play condition, equal play continued for the duration of the game. In the social-exclusion condition, the computerized players stopped tossing the ball to the participant after ten throws. Participants were then asked to rate their social distress using the Southampton Social Self-Esteem Scale (Sedikides, 2008) and were asked to estimate how many throws they received. Participants also completed the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988).

6. Cyberball is a computerized ball-toss game that is often used by social science researchers to study concepts such as social rejection, discrimination, etc.
Compared to those in the normal-play condition, participants in the social-exclusion condition (accurately) estimated receiving fewer throws. There was no difference in whether the group counted money or paper in terms of estimating the number of throws. Data analysis did conclude that the group that counted money experienced less distress than the group that counted paper; even when rejected. Analysis of the PANAS item of strong showed that participants who counted money felt stronger than those who did not. This experiment provides strong support for the idea that money can decrease psychological pain associated with social exclusion.

Since physical pain and social distress activate the same part of the brain, the previous hypothesis was slightly modified for a new experiment. Researchers theorized that “counting money should reduce physical pain” (Zhou et al., p. 702). As in the previous experiment, participants were asked to count money or paper. Next, participants performed a pain-sensitivity task in which their left middle and index fingers were placed into water of different temperatures three times. The high-pain condition, participants’ hands were placed into water 43°C (109.4°F) for thirty seconds, then water at 50°C (122°F) for another 30 seconds, and back to 43°C for another thirty seconds. The moderate-pain (control) condition had their fingers immersed in the 43°C water for 180 seconds. Next, participants rated how painful the task had been using a nine-point scale and completed the PANAS (ibid.). Results showed that higher pain was reported for the high-pain group as compared to the moderate-pain group. Reported pain was lower for participants that had counted money as compared to those who counted paper. Also, as in the previous experiment, participants who had counted money reported feeling stronger than those who did not. This experiment provides more support for the idea that thinking about money can reduce physical pain and social distress.

Since exposure to money has been shown to reduce pain from social exclusion, researchers were curious to see if losing money would increase stress suffered from social rejection. Participants were each asked to complete a writing assignment. Half were asked to list
all of their own personal monetary expenditures within the last thirty days. The other half was asked to write about the weather conditions for the past thirty days. Participants then played a game of *Cyberball*, being placed in either the normal-play or social-exclusion conditions. Participants were also asked to complete the Southampton Social Self-Esteem Scale and the PANAS (ibid.). Results showed that social distress was higher for the participants in the social-exclusion condition than the normal-play control. Additionally, participants that listed their monetary expenditures demonstrated higher social distress than those who discussed weather conditions. There was also a connection between *Cyberball* and writing conditions: reflecting on having lost money increases social distress, regardless of what play condition a participant was placed in. Participants who thought about having lost money also felt less strong than those who thought about the weather (Zhou et al., 2009).

The results from the last experiment were also extended to physical (rather than social) pain. Participants performed the writing task from the previous experiment and participated in the high or moderate pain water immersion task (see Experiment 4). Participants then rated their pain on a nine-point scale and completed the PANAS. Results showed that participants in the high-pain condition experienced more pain than participants in the moderate-pain condition. Perceived pain was worse for those who were in the money-loss condition rather than the weather group. The aforementioned experiments show a powerful connection between physical pain and social distress being either heightened or lessened by exposure to money. If psychological responses to money did not have an evolutionary component, it is unlikely that it would be cognitively linked to such systems.

**SOCIAL NETWORKS**

Some scholars have sought to identify the common thread that runs through all cooperative social networks. In essence, all cooperative
social networks possess two unique factors. The first is *reciprocity*, the idea that if Person A helps Person B, Person B will help Person A. Conversely, if Person A harms Person B, Person B is more likely to harm Person A. A key component to reciprocity is the idea of repeated interactions over time (Trivers, 1971) and occurs more frequently when people are in closer proximity to one another. People tend to prefer interacting with “those who cooperate with them” and will thus tend to live closer (Rand, Abersman, & Christakis, 2011; Van Lange & Visser, 1999; Wang, Suri, and Watts, 2012; Apicella et al., 2012). The second is *transitivity*, a concept in which individuals generally share their friends’ opinions. Thus a friend of a friend would also likely be a friend. For example, Person A is friends with Person B and Person B is also friends with Person C, it is plausible that Person A would also be friends with Person C. If this concept is not present (Person A dislikes Person C, or vice versa), it will lead to dissonance and eventually the breakdown of one of the friendships (Person B will eventually cease to be friends with Person A or Person C) (Gray et al., 2013).

Additionally, researchers studying the evolution of cooperation have shown that human social networks “show striking structural regularities,” even across cultures (Apicella et al., 2012). Using a Tanzanian hunter-gatherer group known as the Hadza, researchers determined that even primitive groups that are relatively isolated and have little to no exposure to modern technology (they are more similar to early humans) form social networks in a way similar to modern humans. Thus one can infer that human social networks have evolved to increase chances to survive and thrive as a species. These studies also found higher transitivity and reciprocity in both Hadza and modern social networks as compared to random controls, as well as a high degree of homophily, the tendency to connect with those similar to oneself (ibid.).

The idea that all human social networks possess similar characteristics provides very compelling evidence that social network behaviors have evolved in order to increase chances of survival in human
populations. This theory can be extended to infer that psychological responses to money have also evolved in response to money’s ability to facilitate the survival and social presence of humans.

ANTITHESIS

While an evolutionary explanation may seem very compelling, it fails to provide an air-tight case. Some have argued that money is such a new concept that it is too young to have had an evolutionary impact (Lea & Webley, 2006). Moreover, many evolutionary explanations for economic behavior (such as prospect theory) are generally taken as given, without facing empirical testing (Apicella et al., 2013). There are also several methodological flaws that may exist in social science research used to explain psychological phenomena. A common methodological flaw in social science research is non-representative samples. Most social scientific research is conducted in modern industrialized societies, specifically, on college campuses. There are many reasons for this, but mostly because of simple convenience. A commonly voiced concern in psychology is whether or not college students provide an accurate representation of human beings in general, and the general consensus is that they do not.

While considering experiments related to economics, one must also consider the type of economic processes and systems existing in the society used. Is the economy market-based (capitalist, socialist, communist) or gift-based? What is the role of technology within the society? Is there a significant amount of contact with outsiders or is the community fairly isolated? For example, the United States is a modern, industrialized, and capitalist nation. This is radically different from communist China or an African hunter-gatherer tribe that has little to no exposure to money. Thus one could argue that just because a phenomenon is present in American culture does not make it a human universal. There has not been a significant amount of research done on cross-cultural differences in regard to economic phenomena.
Recent research conducted on Tanzanian hunter-gatherers tested whether the endowment effect—a concept in which owned objects are valued more than objects that are not owned—has deep evolutionary roots or if it is better explained by socio-cultural factors. Coren Apicella and colleagues (2013) took this concept that was almost taken from granted as a human constant and showed that it is not present in all people. The Hadza Bushmen of Northern Tanzania are considered a useful analogue for early humans, due to their hunter-gatherer lifestyle and high degree of isolation from modern technology and culture. As a foraging society, the Hadza are nomadic and do not own things beyond essential items (such as bows and arrows). There is a high degree of sharing in their egalitarian society, in which no permanent social hierarchical arrangements exist. It is also important to note that “Hadza economic life is characterized by nearly 100% taxation and redistribution” (Apicella et al., 2013).

The Hadza study present a unique opportunity for social science research because of their similarities to early humans and the fact that there are two separate groups that have formed within Hadza society. Over the past five years, “a subset of the Hadza had been increasingly visited by ethno-tourists” (ibid.). Tour companies began compensating the Hadza for accommodating tourists. Due to this amplified connection with outsiders, two groups of Hadza began to form: High Exposure (those who were exposed to tourists) and Low Exposure (those with little contact with outsiders).

An experiment involving both high exposure and low exposure Hadza was conducted in which each subject participated in two trials to test for the endowment effect. There were two trials, one using two food items and the other using non-food items. This was in response to an earlier concern that the “endowment effect may only be associated with items of evolutionary relevance, such as food” (Bronsan et al., 2007). Researchers also responded to a criticism of experimental procedures voiced by Plott and Zeiler (2007) by “making [it] clear that the endowed item is randomized” and by “prohibit[ing] subjects from holding the endowed item” (Apicella et al., 2013). Two exper-
C*ash Rules Everything*

imental conditions were used. In Condition 1, participants receive an item from the experimenter, then are asked if (s)he “wishes to exchange it for another item” (ibid.). In Condition 2, two items are placed on the ground in front of each participant, ownership is established based on a coin flip.

This experiment was conducted on 91 Hadza from eight different camps (46 from the high exposure group, 45 from the low exposure group) with a fairly even division of men and women represented in each (Apicella et al., 2013). The results suggest that the isolated, low exposure subset of the Hadza displays no endowment effect, whereas the high exposure group, which has increased contact with modern society, and thus, modern markets, displays the bias (ibid.). This study provides powerful evidence for the idea that concepts that were once thought to be a human evolutionary constant may simply be the result of exposure to some kind of cultural factor.

The idea that exposure to ideas of money over time leads to more self-interested behavior can be further illustrated by several studies conducted by researchers at Cornell University. A survey sent to 1,245 random professors over twenty-three disciplines showed that economists were less likely to donate money to charity. 9.3% of economics professors donated no money to charity, as compared to only 2.9% - 4.2% of professors from other disciplines (Frank, Gilovich, & Regan, 1993). These findings are in line with the findings that thinking about money decreases one’s willingness to donate to charitable causes.

Economics majors were also more likely to defect in Prisoner’s Dilemma games than students from other disciplines. In a one-time Prisoner’s Dilemma game, participants were told that they could promise to not defect; however, there was no way of enforcing said promise. Over 267 games, economics majors defected 60.4 percent of the time, as compared to 38.8 percent defection from non-economics majors (ibid.). In games where the players were not permitted to make promises, the defection rate was 71.8 percent for economics majors and 47.3 percent for students from other disciplines. While
the rate of defection increased for both groups, the rate of defection in economics majors was still dramatically above those of any other.

In order to determine whether age may have something to do with defection rate, a study was done to determine whether defection rates would rise with exposure to more training in economics. In non-economics majors, a typical defection rate in a prisoner’s dilemma game for an underclassman (freshman or sophomore) is 52.7 percent, as compared to 40.2 percent for an upperclassman (junior or senior), suggesting that cooperation increases with age; however, “this trend is conspicuously absent for economics majors” (Frank, Gilovich, & Regan, 1993).

**IMPLICATIONS IF NOT EVOLVED**

The Hadza Endowment Effect and Cornell Economics studies both seem to suggest that psychological responses to money are due to cultural exposure, rather than evolved psychological factors. If psychological reactions to money are not shaped by evolutionary processes, but rather, are shaped by underlying economic processes, there are significant implications. As mentioned by Devoe and Iyengar, preferences for models of equitable distribution begin to shift to market-pricing models as early as age nine (2010). This suggests radical unintentional socialization. A current theory is that “American children are exposed to concepts of ownership, the use of money, and compensation for work at a very young age” (Apicella et al., 2013). More research would need to be done in order to determine whether said market-pricing models are present in all children, or whether culture may be a key driver of this phenomena.

The 1993 studies on college students majoring in economics being more likely to make self-interested moves in social dilemma games when compared to students of other disciplines show the potential dangers of being exposed to economic ideas for extended durations (Frank, Gilovich, and Regan, 1993). People are likely to be
less altruistic and more self-interested, which may lead to a breakdown of social welfare and cooperation. Because humans are social animals, interdependence and cooperation are requisite for survival. Thus, prolonged exposure to ideas about money would be dangerous to humans as a species.

RESOLUTION

While an evolutionary theory to explain the psychological phenomena associated with money is plausible, some aforementioned evidence seems to diverge, suggesting that human responses to money may simply be a result of cultural processes. These theories are not mutually exclusive; it is possible that evolution and adaptation could have occurred and are strengthened by underlying economic processes of human cooperation.

Money has only emerged as a concept within the last 3,000 years, a very small period of time in evolutionary scope (Davies, 2002, as discussed in Lea & Webley, 2006). Most scientists would agree that three millennia is too short a time for significant genetic adaptation to have occurred, and thus cannot be directly adaptive; however, it would be very difficult for one to argue that human responses to money have absolutely no biological basis. If it did, it would be an exception to almost all other strong human motivations. On the other hand, one cannot ignore the role of culture “because human instincts are always manifested in a cultural context” (Lea & Webley, 2006).

Using an Interactionist perspective (assuming that both biological and cultural forces help to shape behavior), it would be feasible to argue that money is simply a proxy for something else. Neuroscientists know that social rejection activates the same region of the brain as physical pain. This is likely a result of animals (humans) beginning to use social methods as a means to achieve biological ends. Rather than developing new biological systems to respond to these new circumstances, existing systems began to respond to social events (Pank-
Money seems to serve the function of fulfilling a basic human need and manifests itself within a cultural context.

Charles Darwin's finches are an excellent example of how a species can adapt to a very unique set of circumstances in order to survive and thrive. In order to acquire the most food possible, the finches' beaks began to change shape depending on what was available in a specific environment. For example, harder seeds led to a group of finches developing a larger beak in order to crack them. Members of a population that adapt first are more likely to survive than those who do not. Thus, the next generation is more likely to acquire the adapted trait. Another important concept in evolution is use vs. disuse. For example, if the finch uses its beak more than anything else to acquire food, and the size of the seeds begins to change, it is likely that the finches' beaks will also increase in size (Darwin, 2004). It would be reasonable to argue that money to a human is similar to what a beak is to a finch: both use what they have to acquire what they need to survive. Due to the diversity of human societies, it would not be surprising if some groups (e.g. capitalist societies) may have stronger responses to the concept than others (e.g. hunter-gatherers).

In order to truly understand the psychology of money and how it impacts behavior, more research needs to be done. A majority of research in this area has only been done in the last fifteen years (Boyce et al., 2010; Caruso et al., 2012; Devoe & Iyenar, 2010; Gneezy & Rustichini, 2000; Lea & Webley, 2006; Mogilner, 2010; Vohs et al., 2006; Vohs et al., 2008; Yang et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2009). Additionally, many of the concepts in economics used to explain economic behavior and human motivations (usually through an evolutionary justification) are rarely empirically tested (Apicella et al., 2013). With more research, it may be possible to discover more plausible explanations as to why money has such significant psychological implications on human beings.
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The Common Core Standards

A Flawed Approach to Education

Brittany Pivarsi

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the new Common Core Literacy Standards in the United States through the following questions: are the New York State Common Core Literacy Standards well-researched and evidence based? Does international benchmarking, as well as career and college readiness, play a role in the effectiveness of the Common Core Standards? Have the standards become so rigorous that students will not be able to effectively grasp the skills they need in college and life? I argue that the Common Core Standards are inherently flawed and will not improve student achievement in America. While there is certainly a need for educational reform in this country, these standards lack the evidence-based research necessary for proper implementation. Studies of international comparisons, observations in classrooms, implementation of core standards, and educational theory demonstrate that Common Core Standards are not the answer to the current educational crisis in the United States.
INTRODUCTION

Education in the United States is currently undergoing one of the most significant reforms in a century. Since the No Child Left Behind Act was passed in 2002, the education system has experienced a number of changes to ensure that all children are learning and meeting educational goals. The talk amongst the educational community since Race to the Top was initiated by the Obama administration in 2009 has focused on the Common Core Standards developed by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These standards are a set of skills that students should be able to demonstrate by the end of each grade level in order to be prepared for college and careers by the end of high school, and to compete in a global economy. Forty-seven states have already adopted these standards into their individual state curriculum and adapted them to meet state needs.

It is commonly agreed upon that there is a pressing need for educational reform in this country, as cities across the United States are experiencing some of the highest dropout rates in years (Jerald 2008, p. 11). Undergraduate colleges are finding that incoming freshmen are unprepared to meet the demands of their curriculum, especially in math and reading skills. Four in ten students who attend college are still required to take a remedial course in English before enrolling in credit-bearing courses (Rothman, 2012, p. 12). Changes in elementary education need to occur so that students are able to read at grade level and meet the demands of the high school curriculum and beyond. However, these changes have been accompanied by significant implementation challenges and widespread criticism.

This paper will discuss the research behind the Common Core Standards and argue that they are inherently flawed and that a national curriculum is neither necessary nor effective. The Common Core Standards are the first national set of standards the United States has ever attempted to implement, making the task even more challenging. A push for the creation of the standards was based on
the perceived need to compete with other countries in the global market. Although the standards are supposed to be “research and evidence based”, there seems to be a lack of developmental and psychological research to support these standards (Appendix A, 2010). Long established pedagogies and educational theory are being ignored in these new standards. The goal of college and career readiness, in relation to ranking high with other countries in reading ability, also places an enormous amount of unnecessary pressure on both students and teachers.

Education is a component of socialization that impacts everyone. These new Common Core Standards will change how we learn and, in turn, bring elementary school education into uncharted territory. As a future teacher, there is nothing I want more than to give the children in this country an education they can benefit from and be successful. Education reform is needed in America, but as this paper will demonstrate, the Common Core Standards will not prove effective.

**HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS**

The creation of common educational standards in the United States has been in development for decades. Such efforts began in 1965, when Lyndon B. Johnson passed The Elementary and Secondary Act to federally fund elementary and secondary education, while forbidding a national curriculum. The main idea was to bridge the achievement gap between students of different cultures, socio-economic status, race, ability, and so on. After the act was passed, it was thought that every child would have the opportunity for a fair and equal education. The funds were allocated in a multitude of ways, including teaching resources, professional development, and educational materials. The Act requires reauthorization every five years to ensure that all children have access to the best education possible. The most recent reauthorization of this act came in 2002 with George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
No Child Left Behind expanded the role of the federal government in American education by requiring standards reform. Each state was required to establish measurable standards and assessments in order to receive funding from the federal government. According to this act, each state had its own individual set of standards or goals to meet, as well as individual assessment for those specific standards. The variability among the standards was so great that some states were outperforming others in an array of subject areas. The problem was that some states had more relaxed standards, where others were more rigorous, in addition to an array of failures including aligning curriculum to the test and increased cheating and fraudulent test scores (Guisbond, 2012). NCLB was the first act to require state standardized testing to measure state improvement by individual school. Schools that repeatedly performed poorly in assessment of the four core subjects were required to have some sort of intervention. Criticisms of this act included the lowering of achievement goals so that all students have the ability to score high, and “teaching to the test”, which remains a concern of implementation with the new standards.

The most recent federal education policy is Race to the Top (RTTT), enacted by the Obama administration in 2009 to address the issues with No Child Left Behind. RTTT is a federally-directed competition encouraging states to raise their standards in education based on a point system consisting of different criteria. Some of its components include adoption of the Common Core Standards, Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), lifting the rules on number of allowed charter schools per state, and ways to assist the lowest performing schools. One problem with RTTT is that no two sets of state standards were the same, so it has been difficult to compare achievement. For example, as a result of a required assessment by the National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading and mathematics, Tennessee had 87% proficiency in fourth grade as compared to Massachusetts, which had only 40% proficiency (Rothman, 2012, p. 12). While one might assume that students in
Tennessee are grasping more concepts than those in Massachusetts, the reality is that the curriculum in Massachusetts is simply more rigorous (ibid.). With so much variability, it is difficult to ensure all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, learn the skills necessary to be successful.

CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION REFORM

Common Core Standards Initiative was led by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to develop a single set of clear standards that all states could adopt. These standards are specifically compiled for English Language Arts and Mathematics to help prepare students to enter college and the workforce. The Common Core Standards Initiative was formed because of the extensive variability in different state standards, which failed to produce high achieving results from any of the states (Watt, 2011, p. 11). The focus of the initiative was to develop higher, clearer, and fewer standards than those created from NCLB. These standards in student achievement are benchmarked in comparison to the standards of other high performing countries with student success. They are allegedly grounded in educational research, based on best practices, which need to be integrated in order to properly prepare students with the skills they need to be successful in a modern, technological society (ibid., p. 13).

ANTITHESIS

While this paper will examine the flaws in the Common Core Standards, it is important to first address counterarguments in favor of Common Core Standards. Advocates for the Common Core say that a national curriculum will set high and equal goals for all students, and because of this equality students will perform successfully. In the spring 2011 issue of the journal American Educator, many agreed...
that a “systematic effort to establish common, knowledge building content” is the most effective reform strategy (Editors, p. 42). Advocates of the Common Core support the grade-by-grade sequencing and suggest it will help students build upon prior knowledge to learn new, more complex concepts. Supporters like Timothy Shanahan (2012) claim the Common Core Standards will raise student achievement in America. Shanahan claims that these literacy skills promoted by the Common Core are necessary for children to be successful in the current job market. Those in support of the Common Core reform also advocate for an increase in text complexity, which will be a slow but ultimately attainable goal for teachers (ibid., p. 14).

The Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy document outlines goals, expected outcomes, and suggestions for implementation. The main claims of this document are that the Standards are “(1) research and evidence based, (2) aligned with college and work expectations, (3) rigorous, and (4) internationally benchmarked” (NGA, CCSSO 2010, p. 3). This paper challenges each of these claims by showing how they are either inherently flawed or a detriment to implementation and success of the standards initiative.

RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE BASED?

One of the major claims of the Common Core State Standards is that they are research and evidence based. Appendix A of the Common Core Initiative describes the evidence and data that drives what the standards are composed of and the yearly goals throughout the grade levels. One of the primary focuses of the research behind the literacy standards is text complexity, or how hard a text is to read based on specific factors. The ACT Corporation (formerly American College Testing) plays a large role in the research behind the creation of the standards, and current implementation of the standards.

One of the major flaws of the Standards is the research. According to the Common Core Initiative, text complexity needs to
be matched to each individual student according to his or her abilities. The Literacy Standards Document for New York State reads:

students must also show a steadily growing ability to discern more from and make fuller use of text, including making an increasing number of connections among ideas and between texts, considering a wider range of textual evidence, and becoming more sensitive to inconsistencies, ambiguities, and poor reasoning in texts (NGA, CCSSO, 2010, p. 2).

This emphasis on text complexity affects all other areas of literacy instruction because it is dependent on the texts that are chosen. The Common Core includes a list of qualitative and quantitative measurements by which books should be leveled. For example, text complexity can depend on meaning, structure, conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands (Appendix A, 2010, p. 43). There are other systems of leveling books; the Lexile Framework is mentioned in the research done by the ACT on text complexity (ibid.).

Contrary to the research conducted by the Common Core Initiative, Hiebert and Mesmer (2013) have conducted research that indicates that while text complexity has changed in the high school grades, it has not deteriorated in primary grades. More importantly, there is not sufficient evidence to indicate that progressively increasing in the primary grades will actually increase ability to read college level texts. Research by the National Center for Education Statistics did find in 2004 that only half of the students who needed remediation when entering college actually received a degree (ibid.), but there is not enough evidence to demonstrate that increasing text complexity in the primary grades will increase student achievement.

Moreover, the ACT, who conducts the majority of the research for the Common Core, has several methodological flaws in its approach to evidence-based research. The ACT indicates that students lack the abilities to extract information from expository texts such as the main idea, key details, and vocabulary knowledge (Appendix A, 2010). While this problem needs to be addressed, there
are discrepancies in the data. The first three entries in the bibliography section of the Appendix are studies conducted by the ACT and Achieve on “college readiness.” The ACT defines college readiness based on the scores of college entrance exams, in addition to what college professors on the Common Core Initiative team say are required skills for first year college students (ACT, 2010, p. 3). This data is automatically skewed because students who sign up to take the ACT are already students who are planning on attending college. We can assume that these students are on the higher end of the spectrum in ambition and ability, and that the rest of the population that does not choose to take the ACT and/or attend college has even lower ability (Rothman, 2012, p. 12).

Another problem is that ACT research of text complexity draws its samples from textbooks that are currently used by professors of first year college students. Significantly, there are no specifications as to what schools these professors come from or the curriculum taught in these courses. Since there is a great amount of variability among different colleges, and even more between classrooms, this assessment is not reliable. Finally, there are no definitions in this research that relate to what careers these standards were written to prepare students for in the workforce. While the studies do provide evidence that more careers are requiring problem-solving skills, and the ability to read expository texts, the studies do not specify the types of careers aligned with these areas.

CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS

The main goal of the Common Core Standards in Literacy is to teach skills progressively throughout the elementary grades. There is a need for increased attention to literacy in the elementary grades because students are not prepared for the skills needed in college. In order for the Common Core Standards to be successful, the standards need to be rigorous and properly aligned with the expecta-
According to the Appendix A of the Common Core Initiative, evidence-based research has been conducted on the text complexity of college level textbooks and literary materials that are used in freshman courses. The new Common Core Literacy Standards are designed to allow students to read texts of high complexity by the end of high school. Each grade level has a Lexile grade band that defines the range a student should achieve by the end of each grade. The Lexile framework is a quantitative analysis of a text based on things such as word length, syntax, and number of syllables. The Common Core Initiative has determined that the new Lexile grade band for each grade level should be higher than previous ranges and is now aligned to Common Core expectations (Appendix A, 2010, p. 8).

While a need for literacy education reform is needed, the Common Core Standards do not take into account vast variability between schools, which can result in an overly simplified model of schooling that fails to meet the individual needs of all children. American students have more difficulty reading informational texts than other kinds of texts such as short stories, poems, literature, etc. partly because it is not currently a focus in the curriculum of most schools (Shanahan, 2012, p. 14). This emphasis on informational texts as well as other reading skills (i.e. ability to research and compile information, locating key details, extracting information, etc.) will allegedly help students be more successful in college and beyond.

However, a study conducted by the Brookings Institution suggests that middle-skilled jobs, which the Common Core Initiative claims will soon be extinct, are actually going to continue to be in high demand (Mathis, 2010, p. 8). These jobs require less schooling and skills than are demanded of the Common Core Standards. Furthermore, Paul Barton of Educational Testing Services notes the great variation in requirements by colleges compared to the skills identified as essential for professions. For example, to be “college ready” for a program at MIT is not the same as being “college ready”
for a welder at a community college (ibid., p. 9). It is true that students need to be prepared for college so that if they have the ability to pursue higher degrees and enter the global workforce, but the standards should be aimed at preparing students with literacy skills they can use in whatever path of life they pursue.

Large corporations, such as The College Board, Achieve, and ACT have played a large role in the creation of these standards (Rothman, 2012, p. 13). These companies create and administer entrance exams, such as the SAT and the ACT, that the majority of students are required to take before entering college to determine their skill level. The fact that these corporations financially benefit from these entrance exams and other assessments should be a red flag (Kohn, 2000). The ACT specifically provides a number of assessments for Kindergarten through twelfth grade which measure students’ reading skills; the ACT College and Career readiness benchmarks determine if a student has learned those skills or requires more instruction. This appears to be a significant conflict of interest. The ACT has played a large role in research of the standards, creation, and implementation through these assessments based on the standards. This company will ensure that from Kindergarten to the end of high school students will be required to learn these reading skills, or they will not pass the grade level assessments and eventually the college readiness exam known as the ACT.

EDUCATIONAL THEORY

Children construct their own knowledge and therefore show what they understand and know in a variety of ways (Dewey, 1964). According to Alfie Kohn (2000, p. 11), standardized tests “can’t measure initiative, creativity, imagination, conceptual thinking, curiosity, effort, irony, judgment, commitment, nuance, good will, ethical reflection, or a host of other valuable dispositions and attribute.” Educational theorists like Jean Piaget (1971) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) have shown that
many children learn best through authentic, collaborative experiences, building on what they already have in their schema, and learning in their zone of proximal development. Vygotsky, best known for his work with the zone of proximal development as aligned with sociocultural theory, completed extensive research on children’s learning, which found that children proceed through zones of proximal development where they require certain levels of assistance. His research also found that children need to have authentic experiences with their environment, including dramatic play such as playing pretend, in order to learn. Through this interaction with teachers and parents, children learn about the world around them and are able to develop important life and academic skills.

Jean Piaget’s research in cognitive development showed that children progress through four stages of development that are mutually exclusive to one another; this means that if a child does not completely finish in one stage, he/she cannot learn new skills that are in the next stage. When children, as well as adults, acquire new information it can either be assimilated with schema, information that has already been acquired, or a new schema can be created. Schema theory is a widely accepted pedagogical approach to teaching. John Dewey (1964) suggested that children build on prior knowledge, what is in their schema, and construct their own knowledge from engaging authentic experiences.

These educational theories expose significant flaws in the Common Core Standards’ approach to learning. The student needs to be at the independent stage of his/her zone of proximal development, according to Vygotsky, in order to build on a specific skill. If a child does not obtain a skill by the end of the grade level, he/she will fall behind because he/she does not have the capability to build on that skill and move onto the next. There is no room for a child to fall behind because of the way the standards are designed to be a year-to-year progression of learning.

In the Common Core, students will be forced to maintain a consistent progression of learning based on grade level expecta-
tions even though each child is different and will learn at their own rate. The Standards require that students learn foundational skills in reading such as for Kindergarten: “1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet” (NGA, CCSSO 2010, p. 22). Not all kindergarteners may be able to reach this goal by the start of first grade. It is inconceivable to teach reading skills isolated from other skills, as well as to command what a child will be able to understand at a given time (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 13).

Children who fall behind will only continue to fail at learning skills according to the time frame defined by the Common Core Standards. Children need to build on foundational skills that they already know, also known as the schema theory developed by Piaget (Tompkins, 2010, p. 11). We organize what we already know into our schema, which can be viewed similar to the functionality of a mental filing cabinet. If students do not acquire foundational skills by the end of one grade level, they won’t be able to learn more difficult skills the next year. Similar to retaining information in a ‘mental filing cabinet’, information that is not properly stored in the cabinet becomes increasingly more difficult to retrieve when needed.

Gangi and Reilly (2013) make the case that the Common Core Standards are ignoring these widely known educational theoretical practices. According to Luke and Freebody (1999), the majority of the Common Core Literacy standards insist that students be ‘code breakers’, ‘meaning makers’, and ‘text users’. However, the aforementioned educational research suggests that this is not adequate. Students need to be able to identify text in a deeper manner, using prior experience and point of view in order to truly benefit. As Luke and Freebody (1999) note: “As with other complex, culturally determined tasks, learners need distinct spaces for acquiring and practicing these domains, as well as ample room to practice their integration in meaningful events.” Students need to be able to make those text-to-self connections and gather meaning from the text. A student who is not native to a town, a state, or this country may not be able to use prior
The Common Core Standards experience to connect to a text deemed suitable in text complexity by the Common Core (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 9). Instruction needs to be tailored specifically to the individual needs of each student.

Louise Rosenblatt theorizes that students can read a text either efferently or aesthetically (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 9). In efferent reading, students read purely for information, but in aesthetic reading students read for many purposes, keeping in mind what they think and feel about the text. Many Common Core Standards only require efferent readings of texts such as in the grade one standard, “ask and answer questions about key details in a text” (NGA, CCSSO 2010, p. 11). Students do not gain valuable skills about reading through these standards. They need to be able to connect with a text and deeply analyze its meaning and purposes in order to comprehend and obtain information.

Motivation is lost when a task like reading a book at the frustration level becomes too challenging. According to Hiebert and Mesmer (2013, p. 48) no research has shown that continuously increasing the complexity of books will encourage students to be more engaged and knowledgeable in literacy. Yet the Common Core Literacy Standards for New York State directly states, “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts” (NGA, CCSSO 2010, p. 16). The Lexile grade bands aligned with the Common Core from grade two to eleven double from the old framework (Appendix A 2010, p. 8). This means that students will almost always be reading at the frustration level in order for them to be reading increasingly challenging texts.

Students learn best when they are engaged, interested, and are able to activate their prior knowledge (Tompkins 2010, p. 11). Yet the Common Core Standards do not encourage students to read with emotion. The National Association for the Education of Young Children, a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to improving quality of education for children in primary grades, has expressed concern over “the absence of social and emotional development and
approaches to learning, although the lack of attention to the whole child was generally noted” (ibid.). If we want them to learn facts, children in primary grades need to be thoroughly engaged and interested in what they are learning. Significantly, the Common Core Literacy document itself lacks the inclusion of words that signify the connection of standards to the emotion and development of children. The word feeling appears eight times and emotion twice in the Common Core Standards document, while the word analysis appears ninety-four times! The standards do not encourage the connection of emotion and learning even though the research indicates that they are neurologically intertwined.

**ASSESSING THE VALUE OF INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING**

International benchmarking has become increasingly used as a means of comparing American students’ ability with students in other countries. College and career-readiness is connected to international benchmarking because the ACT has based the need for more rigorous standards to prepare students for college on these international comparisons. This need has often been defined by where the United States ranks compared to other countries in a variety of categories such as reading ability of its students and educational systems (Jerald, 2008).

Benchmarking studies compare scores in reading in the United States to other countries (Appendix A, 2010). In this way, benchmarking helps the Department of Education to compare education models in the United States to other models internationally that produce the best scores. The National Governors’ Association (which created the standards) has claimed: “It is only through such benchmarking that countries can understand relative strengths and weaknesses of their education system and identify best practices and ways forward” (ibid., p. 7). Another reason for benchmarking is to
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examine other countries’ scores as they relate to the workforce and society. While international benchmarking has many purposes and in some cases can be necessary for staying competitive, it is not a necessary component of the Common Core Standards.

A national curriculum as rigorous as the common core standards may not yield any successful results. I believe the standards are meant to improve student ability and overall success to rank among other top performing countries, but a national curriculum may not be what is best for our students. An recent assessment comparing different countries’ systems of education stated: “While 8 of the top 10 performing nations on the 2007 TIMSS had centralized education systems (i.e., national curricula), so did 9 of the bottom 10” (Wilson, 2013, p. 4). In other words, there is no necessary correlation between national curricula and better scores on international testing. Curiously, the Common Core Initiative does not indicate specifically which countries the Common Core Standards are internationally benchmarked against (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 10). The Common Core Standards require five-year-old Kindergartners to learn foundational skills such as letter recognition, print features, phonemes, and rhyming. But compare this to Finland, which ranks in the top five countries for overall reading ability, where schoolchildren do not learn the foundational skills of how to read until they are at least seven years old (Jerald, 2008, p. 10). Likewise, the curriculum in the city of Shenzen, China, which has the highest university pass rate in the country, emphasizes choice of text, as opposed to the Common Core Standards, which require increased text complexity that is matched to the child by the teacher (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 10). The point here is that the Initiative aimed at Career and College readiness is supposedly based on international benchmarking, but the standards often promote exactly the opposite of what these other models suggest are high achieving strategies and curriculum choices.

Comparisons of the American educational system to countries like Finland must also keep in mind the significant differences between these countries. For example, the United States is a much
more culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse society than Finland (Entorf and Minoiu, 2005, p. 5). This means that it is far more likely that the Finnish student learns in the same language in school that is spoken at home, which has been shown to be a crucial factor in learning literacy (ibid.) In contrast, I have had the opportunity to witness a teacher from Buffalo, New York accommodate eight languages in a single classroom with students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds.

READING INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

There is great debate over the informational text now required by the Common Core. According to the Initiative, the skills required to read and extract information from non-fiction texts are necessary for success in college and the workplace. Students who are taking tests like the ACT as an entrance exam for college are not meeting benchmark scores, meaning those who fall below the benchmarks would most likely need remediation. Since students that taking the exam are choosing to attend to college, we can assume that the overall preparation of high school students is lower given this data (Rothman, 2012, p. 3). Almost all of the Literacy Standards for students in second through twelfth grade are based on this idea that students need to be able to read increasingly more complex texts and deeply comprehend them.

The Common Core document outlines guidelines for the standards. These include an emphasis on a shared responsibility among other core subject teachers for teaching literacy throughout the grade levels. The document emphasizes the “extensive research establishing the need for college and career ready students to be proficient in reading complex informational text independently in a variety of content areas” (NGA, CCSSO 2010, p. 4). The students will require at least 70% of their reading to be of informational texts, but they will have to spend more time learning how to read it and extract infor-
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information in their science and social studies classes (Shanahan, 2012, p. 14). Teachers will have to match books and resources for literacy instruction individually to the student and their ability level using both quantitative data (such as a gradient scale: Degrees of Reading Power, Flesch-Kincaid or The Lexile Framework) and qualitative data (Appendix A, 2010, p. 9). In addition to reading expository texts, students will also be required to continue to read literature that is increasing in text complexity (NGA, CCSSO, 2010, p. 4). However, it is possible that because of such emphasis on literacy in subjects such as social studies and science, the students will miss out on valuable learning experiences and knowledge in these content areas, such as authentic experiences with the American Revolution or hands-on science experiments.

As mentioned before, we need to emotionally connect with what we read in order to fully understand and have the ability to learn from the text (Gangi and Reilly, 2013, p. 11; Hiebert and Mesmer, 2013, p. 48). While literacy instruction is crucial to success in college, so is learning the content areas. Rather than intensively preparing for college and the workplace, children at the elementary age need to be exploring, engaging in dramatic play, interacting with functional and environmental print, and having authentic experiences (Combs, 2010, p. 17). Students who have knowledge of multiple disciplines are well rounded and better able to problem solve from their authentic experiences in the classroom. According to a study by EPIC, literacy standards do match up to coursework they will encounter in college programs (Rothman, 2012, p. 13). However, young children, especially in the lower grades still need to have those exploratory, hands on learning experiences to communicate and problem-solve (Quay, 2010, p. 6). If all they do is learn how to read informational texts, they will miss out on crucial skills needed for other areas of life and success beyond college.
FLAWS IN ASSESSMENT

A final flaw in the Common Core Standards is the lack of appropriate assessments to drive further instruction and measure student achievement. An assessment such as the SAT or even some of the NYS achievement tests have multiple-choice or fill in the blank questions that do not promote deep thinking (Kohn, 2000). Rarely do state tests or college entrance exams require this higher-order thinking on Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy, which really shows a student’s ability to apply concepts, think critically, and problem solve.

Students need to be observed in a variety of settings doing a multitude of different things that show a student grasps a concept (Combs, 2010). Many schools prefer standardized tests to a thorough investigation in the classroom of a child’s knowledge because they are fast, easy, inexpensive, and most importantly created and graded somewhere else (Kohn, 2000). While this may be an easier method, it is not necessarily the most effective way to assess our students. With new teacher evaluations and funding depending on curriculum, schools need to be held accountable for what their students know (ibid., p. 2). Teachers will be encouraged to teach students how to search for the answer within the question, or how to narrow down the choices in order to have better chances of identifying the correct answer, rather than introducing new concepts and content (Kohn, 2000, p. 6-8).

CONCLUSION

The Common Core Standards are problematic in a variety of ways, from their claims to be evidence-based, to implementation plans, assessment, and emphasis on international benchmarking. The Common Core Standards were established to improve education in this country, but they will only widen the achievement gap. Students will surely be able to read the words on a page and possibly pick
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out key details from a text, but they will not be able to connect their reading with real world experiences. Children may even lose their will and motivation to read because of these overly rigorous and inflexible standards.

A national curriculum will not solve the education issues in this country, nor will depriving our nation’s second graders from authentic experiences with text. If we recognize these flaws in the Common Core Standards, we as a country will be forced to make new decisions about education and how to best serve our children based on established educational theory, not what is easiest, cheapest, or what works best for other countries. Finding a middle ground between an unwieldy national curriculum and individualized curriculum in all schools is the solution to this ever-changing problem. A one-sized fits all strategy will not accommodate the vast number of learners here in America. We owe it to our children to find a better way forward.

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Controlling the Illegal Wildlife Trade

Is the System Broken?

Domenic Louis Militello

ABSTRACT

The illegal wildlife trade includes everything from the poaching of animals in the wild to be sold as pets to the overharvesting of animals for food, clothing, and medicine. While several steps have been taken in the United States and other countries to manage this problem, including passing strict laws and forming international agencies to control this abuse, the illegal wildlife trade remains widespread and is constantly evolving to circumvent law enforcement. This paper addresses two primary questions: first, have current laws and law enforcement agencies been effective in stopping the illegal wildlife trade? Secondly, what alternative solutions to simply increasing punishment or making stricter laws need to be considered? Studies suggest that current legislation is not working as effectively as once thought, so it is necessary for governments domestically and internationally to revise their current methods and look to alternative solutions, such as public education or better targeting of specific areas.
INTRODUCTION

The illegal wildlife trade, which includes the import/export of illegal or endangered species, poaching, over hunting, and selling of illegal animal parts, is a growing black market both domestically and globally. A report on seizures made by the organization TRAFFIC between July 1996 and October 2008 found that 22% of seizures involving illegal wildlife and wildlife products came from India and 6% from the United States (Rosen and Smith, 2010, p. 26). Third in size only to illegal guns and drugs, the annual illegal wildlife trade is estimated at about $5 to $20 billion in the U.S. and $332 billion internationally (ibid., p. 24).

The demand for illegal wildlife has been shaped by three main factors: culture, environment, and economy. Culture can have a big impact on the illegal wildlife trade such as the ownership of endangered or rare species as a status symbol or the use of specific animal parts as natural medicines passed down through generations. Mammal products such as furs from tigers and leopards, which are seen as status symbols of the wealthy, comprised an astounding 51% of seizures by TRAFFIC between 1996 and 2008 (Rosen and Smith, 2010, p. 26). Environmental influences can also play a key role in the illegal wildlife trade. For example, the illegal reptile trade in South Africa has grown over the past decade due to the climate in the country favoring the trade of these types of animals (Richardson et al., 2010). Finally, economic stability also plays a key role in the illegal wildlife trade. Studies performed in Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico strongly suggest that most illegal trade in wild parrots is committed not by large crime organizations but poor locals wishing to make money to support themselves and their families (Pires and Moreto, 2011, p. 110). Local poachers may consist of natives wishing to make money to support their families while organized crime is more structured utilizing poachers, middlemen, processing centers and markets (ibid., p. 105). It is clear that the illegal wildlife trade has grown increasingly complex and is a major threat to species around the globe.
In this paper, I will begin by discussing the background of the illegal wildlife trade and genesis of legislation both domestic and foreign. I will then address how current legislation and law enforcement has proven ineffective at stopping the illegal wildlife trade and how individuals are evolving new techniques to avoid them. Lastly, I will discuss why it is important for the illegal wildlife trade be controlled as well as propose alternative techniques/solutions which will be more effective in solving the problems that the illegal wildlife trade has caused.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC U.S. LAWS

Historically, the international illegal wildlife trade has prompted many nations to address the issue legislatively. In the early twentieth century, two notable but unsuccessful attempts were made to control wildlife management on an international level: the *London Convention Designed to Ensure the Conservation of Various Species of Africa Which are Useful to Man or Inoffensive* (1900) and the *London Convention Relative to the Preservation of Fauna and Flora in their Natural State* (1933) (Sand, 1997, p. 32). These proceedings attempted to set up a system to prevent the illegal trade and overharvesting of wildlife mostly pertaining to African species. Both London conventions were significant in that they helped to establish the format for future proceedings regarding the issue of illegal wildlife trade around the world. The next major international action taken towards the illegal wildlife trade was the *UN Conference on the Human Environment* (1963) which initiated the writing of IUCN Environmental Laws. These laws would operate on the basis of banning all trade of threatened species that appeared on a global list which could be updated when needed (ibid., p. 34).

One of the largest attempts on an international scale to control illegal wildlife trade was the Washington *Convention of International*
Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) that took place in 1975, building upon its predecessors like the 1933 London Convention. It successfully established mandatory licensing for all countries importing wildlife, which would be issued by the exporting country (Sand, 1997, p. 35). Determinations of which species to be protected, and thus prohibited to trade, were outlined in three appendices. The first appendix deals with the trade of endangered and threatened species being prohibited unless exporting and importing countries have special permits which are issued under certain circumstances such as scientific research. The second appendix refers to the species that can become threatened if overhunting and taking of these species is not controlled (Beardsley, 2006, p. 3-4). Thus, trade of these species may be legal under strict regulations. The third appendix deals with any species that a specific party may declare as protected due to possible threat of extinction. Trade of any of these species would require permits from both importing and exporting parties along with certificates of origin.

Unlike its predecessors, CITES set up a biennial Conference of the Parties which would meet to discuss decision making and periodic treaty adjustments (Sand, 1997, p. 35). It also allowed for possible international collaboration between member states. For example, the only DNA forensic lab dedicated solely to crime against wildlife resides in Ashland, Oregon (Alacs and Georges, 2008, p. 157). This lab is not only responsible for assisting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services but has also aided several CITES members such as Australia. Another international group that often works alongside CITES is the organization known as TRAFFIC. TRAFFIC is a joint project of the World Conservation Union and the World Wide Fund for Nature and has the responsibility of monitoring wildlife trade both legal and illegal, ensuring that the trade is not a threat to conservation efforts (Rosen and Smith, 2010, p. 25).

Domestic wildlife laws in the United States first emerged with the Lacey Act of 1900, which prohibited the interstate commerce of illegally taken wildlife; in 1935, it was extended to include ille-
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Gally taken imported wildlife (Sand, 1997, p. 33). The Lacey Act was followed by the 1930 Tariff Act which required a certificate of legal attainment for all imported animals and animal parts. The next major piece of legislation in the United States was the Endangered Species Act of 1969 which made a list of all national and international species that were threatened with extinction to be prohibited from being imported or exported unless for scientific research.

EVOLUTION OF THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

The illegal wildlife trade has managed to grow and evolve despite the policies taken by many countries and international organizations. The illegal wildlife trade is much more complicated than most people realize; first of all, there is not just one kind of poacher. Poachers can vary in how they behave, in their motives, and how they perform their illegal activities. Pires and Moreto, (2011, p. 117) outline several common categories of poachers: (1) backdoor hunters/poachers, (2) experienced/chronic poachers, (3) opportunistic poachers, and (4) trophy poachers. Backdoor poachers are individuals who use their own property, as well as their neighbors, to take wildlife illegally using the privacy of their land to evade law enforcement. This poses a serious problem for law enforcement since it limits their ability to track and targets movements, especially in areas where the majority of land is privately owned. For example, a conservation officer from Kentucky noted that this kind of poacher was particularly difficult to apprehend: “These guys own 200 to 300 acres; and they’re there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week” (ibid.).

Experienced/chronic poachers are individuals who have been performing the activity for years, understand the legal system, and as a result have fine-tuned their skills. These poachers are very elusive and quiet about their activities. Third, opportunistic poachers are described by one Kentucky conservation officer as “[poachers who] don’t go out with the intention of killing [an animal], and they just
happen to see one and they kill it...They may only kill one every year or two” (Pires and Moreto, 2011, p. 118). The sporadic behavior of these individuals presents the problem of being unable to consistently track their movements. Lastly, trophy poachers are the most elusive of poachers despite their very specific targets. The species targeted by these poachers are usually those that are rare and often highly prized. These poachers are described as being very efficient in what they do and using various quick kill techniques to take their targets (ibid., p. 119).

Once caught or killed, smuggling is often employed in the illegal wildlife trade as a way to bypass law enforcement when transporting their contraband. This includes the use of false paperwork, such as fake CITES permits and captive-bred certificates. One case in 1997 involved large numbers of Indonesian reptiles such as the endangered Fly River turtle (*Carettochelys insculpta*) that were falsely declared as captive-bred when in reality the animals were poached from the wild (Rosen, 1997, p. 27). Some individuals may also try to mask or disguise the illegal wildlife or wildlife parts they are carrying. Examples include the painting of ivory to resemble wood or the concealing of animals within specially made compartments in luggage, clothing, etc. One bizarre case involved a man from Fiji trying to smuggle three iguanas into the U.S. using a hollowed out compartment in his prosthetic leg (ibid.).

In addition to the different behaviors adopted by those who poach and supply animals to vendors in the illegal wildlife trade, the vendors themselves are constantly changing their tactics. The internet, especially websites such as e-Bay, has become an important tool for dealers in illegal wildlife. Foreign vendors can place ads on websites that can allow them to easily connect with buyers around the world. Selling of illegal wildlife over the internet allows for sellers to have their orders mailed directly to the buyer’s door, thereby avoiding the use of a middle man. A study performed by the International Fund of Animal Welfare in 2005 identified over 9,000 illegal animal and animal parts available for purchase on the internet.
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(Beardsley, 2006, p. 6). Of the more than 197 listings for elephant ivory, only two sellers were found to be compliant with wildlife legislation (Alacs and Georges, 2008, p. 150). Due to its broad reach and anonymity, the internet has made it even more difficult for CITES to be effective. In response, many law enforcement agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services have begun to implement cybercrime enforcement teams. Despite these additions, it is still difficult to build strong legal cases against these individuals due to lack of information such as place of origin of the website or buyer. Also depending on where the seller or buyer is located (especially if it is an international deal) brings its own set of complications on how the person can be successfully prosecuted.

Ironically, illegal wildlife trade activity is also beginning to emerge in programs and organizations which have been specifically established to regulate the trade of wildlife. One shocking example comes from green tree python breeding centers in Indonesia: in a study performed from August 2009 to April 2011, it was estimated that over 5,337 green tree pythons were illegally harvested and sold through these legal breeding centers (Lyons and Natusch, 2011, p. 3078). These breeding centers were originally set up by the Indonesian government to take pressure off of the harvest of wild green tree pythons, which had been made an endangered species in 1999. Most of these illegally harvested animals were brought into breeding farms to be used for breeding or to be sold directly to foreigners. In the same study, a staggering 60% of green tree python dealers reported that foreigners had personally contacted them for wild-caught specimens (ibid., p. 3075). The case of corruption of the breeding centers is a troubling example of the future problems international organizations could be facing and highlights that present laws and programs are becoming less effective.
THE INSUFFICIENCIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

From an international standpoint, wildlife laws have not always been efficient at controlling and regulating illegal wildlife trade. CITES itself has several limitations; since its creation in 1975, there have been many disputes over established policies, such as the illegal trade of ivory in Africa (Sand, 1997, p. 43). Since not every country in the world is a member of CITES, attempts to limit international illegal wildlife trade become complicated when involving a nation that does not recognize the treaty. Perhaps the treaty’s biggest shortcoming is that it only focuses on the illegal wildlife trade from an international perspective, leaving domestic issues up to individual countries (Sand, 1997, p. 48).

One possible solution to controlling illegal wildlife crime internationally or domestically is to create more laws or bans on threatened species with stricter punishments. As outlined above, poachers are utilizing different techniques to avoid law enforcement and it is unclear whether the current legislation is effective. Although CITES and law enforcement agencies have helped to slow the decrease in numbers of certain endangered species, there is evidence that the laws and regulations are broadly inconsistent in their results. For example, one study showed that while tiger populations worldwide have remained steady, rhino populations declined from 75,000 to 11,000 (Pires and Moreto, 2011, p. 105), demonstrating how wildlife trade bans may help some species but may do nothing to help others.

In the United States, there has been considerable debate over whether law enforcement has significantly impacted the illegal wildlife trade. The fact is that not many studies have been done on the effectiveness of wildlife law enforcement in the United States. This lack of attention may be due to the widespread attitude of wildlife conservation enforcement as a so-called “folk crime”, which is not taken as seriously. Tara O’Connor Shelley and Matthew Crow (2009) analyzed the field activities of Florida conservation officers and found a surprising trend among conservation officers becoming law
enforcement generalists instead of wildlife specialists. In addition to performing specific tasks in their field, conservation officers were also increasingly responsible for aiding in other areas of law enforcement. The study found that of the total arrests for conservation officers in Florida, 28.34% were for boating violations, 14.83% for outstanding warrants, and 11.74% for illegal drug possession (Shelley and Crow, 2009, p. 17). Fishing crimes ranked fourth at 11.43%.

The data show that conservation officers are being utilized for general law enforcement instead of their specialized function, perhaps due to lack of adequate funding for law enforcement more generally. A major concern is that if conservation officers are being utilized to perform other tasks, less time will be spent on their specific field in which they are more effective and experienced. While some argue that having conservation officers participate in these activities increases revenue for that branch of law enforcement (ibid., p. 25), how much revenue do these extra duties bring in? The answer is unknown at this point and thus cannot effectively justify the action. The insufficient use of law enforcement, along with the shortcomings of international and domestic law, requires a major change in approach.

THE NEED FOR CHANGE

The illegal wildlife trade has had a huge impact on both animal and plants species around the world. The activities of these criminal individuals and organizations threaten to wipe out entire species and disrupt the ecology of our planet. As the green tree python poaching case in Indonesia reveals, one of the major impacts of the illegal harvesting of these animals is the rapid decline in their population. Reports from one trader described that over ten years of harvesting, the snakes had become much less abundant on the Biak in Indonesia (Lyons and Natusch, 2011, p. 3075). If not properly addressed, the continued poaching of such large numbers of snakes could eventually lead to their extinction in the wild.
The green tree python case in Indonesia, along with many other illegal wildlife trades such as overfishing or overhunting, are the product of the “Tragedy of the Commons”. This term refers to individuals overusing common property for short-term benefits but at severe negative long-term costs (Pires and Moreto, 2011, p. 102). The exact quantity of species being harvested illegally is difficult to estimate with the only information coming from seizure reports by various organizations. According to seizure reports by TRAFFIC, trade is not evenly distributed across species and shipment size itself can vary. For example, TRAFFIC found that illegal shipments of amphibians could range anywhere from 22 to 3,000 individuals (Rosen and Smith, 2010, p. 26). Sadly, most animals that are smuggled do not even survive the trip. Another report by TRAFFIC describes a shipment of 900 crab-eating macaques seized by Malaysian authorities, which were starved to the point that they began to eat their own young (ibid., p. 27).

The driving of species to extinction from overharvesting is not the only issue that has arisen from the illegal wildlife trade. Introduction of foreign species and pathogens to new areas has also had many serious environmental consequences. Invasive species such as the Burmese python and Asian snakehead fish are just two examples of species introduced into the United States through the illegal wildlife trade, which are now well-established in the ecosystem. The spread of pathogens across the globe as a result of the illegal wildlife trade has become relatively new area of study. Some of these pathogens such as Chytrid fungus and Rana virus from imported amphibians have been found in native species of fish and amphibians due to exposure from often escaped specimens (Picco et al., 2010). Zoonotic diseases, which can pass from animals to humans, pose a major threat to public safety. In one case report from TRAFFIC, a shipment of 76 cockatoos smuggled into the U.K. from Singapore was found to be infected with a zoonotic respiratory disease known as psittacosis. The disease can cause severe pneumonia in humans with a 10% -15% mortality rate if untreated (Rosen and Smith, 2010, p. 28). If left unchecked,
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the impact of the illegal wildlife trade can have devastating impact on native species as well as continue to put the public at risk. As a result, it is critically important that research be put into alternative methods to help regulate and control the illegal wildlife trade.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS

While the typical response to illegal wildlife trade has been to increase the severity of punishment, other viable alternative strategies need to be considered. One method is to provide indigenous populations with incentives to discourage the poaching of native wildlife. As previously noted, studies performed in Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico indicate that most illegal trade in wild caught parrots is committed not by large crime organizations but poor locals wishing to make money to support themselves and their families (Pires and Morato, 2011, p. 110). One strategy would be to educate locals about the importance of these species and give them the responsibility to look out for, and be so-called “guardians” of the animals. The snow leopard, a species highly prized for its fur, is now an endangered species listed under Appendix 1 of CITES. These animals are often killed by local farmers trying to protect their livestock and who then use the fur to supplement their income (ibid., p. 111). In Mongolia, a community-based conservation program called Snow Leopard Enterprises was established to educate rural community members how to produce handmade woolen goods to decrease the reliance on raw animal based products as well as teach farmers how to properly protect livestock against predators.

Abstaining from poaching can also be encouraged by the building of eco-lodges, which can attract tourists and bring in money for locals communities while protecting the wildlife. In 2001, India implemented the Traditional Village Homestay program to help local communities surrounding Hemis National Park to gain direct benefits through ecotourism (Pires and Morato, 2011, p. 113). Locals were trained with skills and given resources to house foreign tourists.
However, it is important to recognize that these strategies are most effective under the following conditions: (1) native locals make up the majority of poachers of wildlife in the area, (2) poaching behavior is influenced by the need for income, and (3) tougher sentencing and stricter laws are having no effect on the poaching of wildlife (Pires and Morato, p. 104). Creating a positive relationship between locals and conservation officers and organizations is probably the greatest tool for discouraging individuals from dealing illegal wildlife. Economic incentives for not participating in the illegal wildlife trade are another important method influencing individuals to look at wildlife in a positive manner and not simply as a means to an end.

Another alternative method to deter the illegal wildlife trade is the use of situational crime prevention (SCP), which “acknowledges that crime occurs as a result of the person-situation nexus that occurs in specific settings and posits that the surrounding, contextual environment is a dynamic factor in any criminal act and should not be merely considered as a backdrop for an offense to occur since such an environment may actually stimulate an offender to offend” (ibid., 107). In other words, SCP uses the immediate environment of the crime as the background for why the crime is happening and how it should be handled. There are twenty-five techniques associated with SCP and all aim to “increase the effort, increase the risks, reduce the rewards, reduce provocations and remove excuses in any presented opportunity to an offender” (ibid.). These ideas all work under the assumption that each area where illegal wildlife trade is occurring has its own set of factors that influence the market and thus require specialized solutions for each problem.

A final alternative method is the use of DNA forensics to identify the species being poached as well as the poachers themselves. In Scotland, a study was performed to determine the possibility of this science being used to identify poachers responsible for illegally hunting deer out of season by collecting DNA from possible sites of contact on the deer carcasses that have been left behind by poachers (Tobe et al., 2011, p. 190). One of the major challenges that occurred
during the experiment was trying to separate the enormous amount of deer DNA from human DNA in order to get a clean sample of human DNA. Seven out of ten kits for the study produced substantial results with some of the kits giving complete to near complete profiles (ibid., p. 192). Since this technique is fairly new, it is hard to tell just how effective this method will be in identifying culprits behind wildlife poaching.

One of the major challenges of monitoring illegal wildlife trade is that specimens such as skins or furs may not always be easy to identify due to the rarity of the species or from intentional disfiguring by poachers. In India, the use of DNA analysis to identify species of snakes from skins collected through customs has helped to stop traffickers. The DNA barcoding technique can be used to identify samples in which morphological examination could not yield the identity of the sample. As stated earlier, one technique smugglers may use to deceive law enforcement is to alter the physical appearance of the contraband they wish to transport. In other cases, the species may have no distinguishable features that can allow conservation officers to differentiate it from other similar species. Using a large DNA database of snake species, conservation officers can determine the species and thus stop violators before they are overlooked (Dubey et al., 2011, p. 181). DNA barcoding is a technique that uses taxon-specific primers which amplify specific gene sequences in the samples DNA. From the generated sequences comparisons can be made to reference sequences in a database. Reference sequences would be collected via blood or tissue samples authenticated specimens. The major problem associated with this method is that primers cannot always amplify the sequence especially if very degraded. During the experiment performed by Dubey et al. (2011), it was found that the accuracy of DNA barcoding is only as good as the reference database itself. Also if the DNA is too degraded then the primers will not be able to amplify the gene code sequence.
ANTITHESIS

The illegal wildlife trade is an ever-growing problem given a growing human population and its incursion into previously uninhabited wild areas. While it has been argued above that current techniques are not working to solve this issue and that alternative ones are necessary, many still believe that the best course of action is to continue with more laws, stricter bans, and harsher punishments, which have been shown to work in some cases. For example, a study of the illegal trade of Sumatran tiger parts in 2002 showed that stricter laws and bans decreased the number of sellers of illegal tiger parts in cities from 71% to only 29% in 2004 (Barber-Meyer, 2010, p. 919). This data may seem to support stricter laws, but other factors must be taken into account as well, such as the decrease in availability of tiger parts or a change in poacher behavior allowing them to evade law enforcement. Thus, stricter law enforcement was not necessarily solely responsible for the decline.

While the use of stricter laws and increased police crackdowns may create immediate results, these results are often only temporary. Illegal wildlife crime activity will immediately resume after such police crackdown become less frequent. Moreover, as Pires and Morato (2011, p. 106) note in their study of the illegal parrot trade: “if the authorities tried to punish more poachers, they would therefore risk losing the support of the local population.” This evidence further supports alternative methods that target locals in a positive manner such as providing financial incentives are much more effective.

Some have argued that DNA and public education strategies are not worth the resources needed to be put into them. In the aforementioned Scottish case, one issue that the researchers had was being able to obtain enough human DNA that was contaminated with a large quantity of deer DNA. The experiment managed to yield maximum 3.86 pg/microliters of human DNA which included samples of from blood, hair, dirt, and other surrounding debris (Tobe et al., 2011, p. 192). Of the ten kits used in the study only seven produced results
two of which were later excluded upon further analysis due to an excess number of drop-in alleles. What the excess number of drop-in alleles means is that the sample contained too heavy a mixture of human and deer DNA which was useless for further testing which requires samples to be close to 100% homogeneity or purity. With these kinds of difficulties, one could argue that DNA forensics would not be very cost effective. Yet the experiment in Britain did manage to produce positive results in which pure samples of human DNA was yielded. The truth is that the use of DNA forensics in wildlife enforcement is still relatively new and very few experiments have tested its effectiveness. It would wrong to immediately assume that DNA forensics is not a viable alternative. Further experiments could yield more information and better results.

CONCLUSION

The illegal wildlife trade is evolving, and the demand of endangered species is ever growing, both domestically and internationally. This trade has numerous negative impacts including the depletion of wild populations of animals, the spread of dangerous diseases and pathogens, as well as the introduction of destructive invasive species. Criminals are finding ways to get around law enforcement through methods which exploit the flaws in current legislation. As previously discussed, most current laws focus on the international part of the illegal wildlife trade and as a result tend to overlook domestic issues. Since most illegal wildlife trade stems from domestic sources, alternative methods which target the individuals involved at this level will prove effective in stopping the market. More importantly, alternative methods that provide positive incentives to locals in areas where the illegal wildlife trade will be much more effective in the long run.

A final overarching problem with the illegal wildlife trade is the general lack of research on this issue. Surprisingly little effort has been put into analyzing how effective legislation and law enforce-
ment is in stopping the illegal wildlife trade, which entails an enormous underground economy. In order to protect our natural wildlife, we must explore alternative methods such as public education and incentives which focus on local domestic traders before they reach the international level. Due to the overall lack of information on the illegal wildlife trade, one of the best solutions to solving this issue is for there to be more emphasis on the study of this black market. Further data concerning the effectiveness of law enforcement, legislation, and alternative methods may be one of the best approaches to solving the issue. As one of the many species on this earth, we all rely on one another for survival and thus it is important to ensure that future generations have access and ability to admire these species for years to come.

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The Fate of Soviet Russia on the Eastern Front

Brandon Kryszak

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes Nazi Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa) in light of the following question: why did the Blitzkrieg fail to be as successful against the Soviet Union as it was in Poland and France? Some scholars have suggested that factors such as timing and sheer size of the opponent may have been significant. However, this paper contends that the German logistical and operational problems at the start of Operation Barbarossa were the decisive factor in its ultimate failure. Specifically, this paper considers why Army Group Center chose to head south and north to assist the flanks of the Operation, rather than directly towards Moscow. I contend that the fall of the Moscow area, which composed a large industrial and economic area in the Soviet Union, would have been enough to push the Soviets over the edge and cause the entire Soviet Union to collapse in terms of militaristic and logistical operations.

INTRODUCTION

Nazi Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 was one of the greatest undertakings in military history, and continues to be debated to the present day. When they decided to attack the Soviet
Union, Germany seemed to be unstoppable in their quest to control all of Europe. The German leadership assumed that their new form of Blitzkrieg warfare would lead to a quick victory. This paper will detail how the Blitzkrieg (“lightning war”) was used to an almost fatal effect against the Soviet Union. Germany’s Army Group Center had the key task of reaching Moscow before the onset of winter. Had this Group not been diverted to assist the flanks of the invasion, it is likely that they could have reached Moscow and struck a massive blow to Soviet production and morale, perhaps leading to a decisive victory over the Soviet Union. Other factors that may have been crucial to Army Group Center's failure were the strength of the opposition facing them, the German lack of strength after the battle of Smolensk, shortage of supplies, and the start date of the invasion. While these other factors were indeed of concern, I contend that they would not have stopped Army Group Center if it had stayed on course and struck a deadly blow to Moscow.

THE BLITZKRIEG

The term Blitzkrieg has become synonymous with the German invasions of Poland, France, and Soviet Russia. The term was first used by Germans in the 1930s to describe how a swift strategic knockout of a nation may prove impossible with modern weapons against superior fortifications (Harris, 1995, p. 336). The Blitzkrieg concept was modified by Heinz Guderian, who would become known as the father of armored warfare and tactics. Guderian believed the idea of combined-arms warfare would be the way to achieve the most effective and devastating success. Guderian believed that tanks alone could not prove effective, but with support from air and ground forces, this combination could prove deadly. Guderian also emphasized that the tank must play the primary role in the concept, while the air and infantry should be used only for support (Guderian, 2002, p.13).

Guderian also stressed that in order for a fast-paced strike against
an opponent to be successful, all tanks needed to be equipped with radios (Guderian, 2002, p.20). This would play a key role in all Blitzkrieg campaigns conducted by Germany during World War II. Since this method of fighting relies heavily on combining air and infantry and tank, communication is essential. While German armor could communicate tank-to-tank, Allied tanks had to rely on hand signals, flags, or verbal calls, allowing German armor to more quickly move, reorganize, and communicate with other military branches and divisions.

German Chancellor Adolf Hitler embraced the Blitzkrieg after witnessing this strategy during mock war-games in the early 1930s. It was later partially tested in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, before being used in full force against Poland. Due to its effectiveness, Germany forced the surrender of Poland faster than anyone had expected; after only a month of fighting, Germany had surrounded and eliminated all major Polish resistance. The deadly success of Blitzkrieg soon became well-known across all of Europe. France suffered the same fate, surrendering after a matter of weeks (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.16). Blitzkrieg again showed its potential against the Soviet Union, even though the latter outnumbered the Germans in tanks, men, and guns. The Blitzkrieg tactic completely takes away the effect of static defenses, by focusing on bypassing them and causing chaos behind enemy lines and surrounding large pockets of opposition (Guderian, 2002, p.27). This in turn leads to the deep penetrating armored columns being vulnerable to counter-attack, out-running their own supply lines, and getting themselves cut-off.

The reason Poland, France, and Soviet Russia failed to take advantage of the vulnerable armored units that were behind enemy lines was a lack of communication and the fear caused due to the Blitzkrieg. German armored units would rush past the main line of defense and then surround the troops they just passed. Against France and Soviet Russia, Germany had far fewer tanks that were also inferior in armor and shell caliber, but they were better equipped and organized. The Allies spread their tanks out along defensive lines, believing the tank to be an infantry support weapon. German tacticians massed their
tanks together on a *schwerpunkt* or single focal point (Guderian, 2002, p.25). This is where the Germans would send their main armored column to penetrate behind the enemy lines.

This new form of warfare would become Germany’s most powerful weapon in the war. This superior strategy allowed Germany to defeat Poland, France, and the Balkan states in the course of eighteen months. Against Soviet Russia, the scale of the *Blitzkrieg* operation was larger than anything previously attempted and Germany would put their new type of warfare to the ultimate test.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT:**
**THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

World War II began on September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, France and the United Kingdom would declare war on Germany. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) would later invade Poland as part of a secret pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, who divided up the conquered nation (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.12). Germany then headed north, invading Denmark and Norway before attacking France, Holland, and Belgium on May 10, 1940 (Jordan and Wiest, 2007, p.55). The Low Countries surrendered within the same month, and France formally surrendering on June 25 (Jordan and Wiest, 2007, p.57).

Riding high on this success, Germany’s leaders considered the possibility of invading Britain. However, this would only be possible after Germany controlled the skies over Britain. Thus began “The Blitz” (air war over Britain), which would last from July until October of 1940 (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.30). With minimal gains and growing casualties, Germany stopped the air war and postponed the invasion of Britain. In February of 1941, Germany began sending troops to North Africa to assist Italy, which had been losing ground to Anglo-American forces. By 1941, with all of Europe practically under German control or influence, Germany began massing troops
June 22nd of 1941 would be a vital moment in the war, and the course of history.

DECISION TO INVADE THE SOVIET UNION

Adolf Hitler was ultimately responsible for the decision to invade the Soviet Union. Hitler hated the concept of Bolshevism, and believed that a titanic struggle between fascism and Bolshevism for control of Europe was inevitable (Hitler, 1925). As early as 1925, Hitler hinted in Mein Kampf that Germany would need to invade the USSR for Lebensraum (living space), raw materials, and land (ibid.). His long held desire to conquer the Soviet territories was embodied in Generalplan Ost (Master plan East), a grand scheme to acquire the necessary resources from the East that his “Third Reich” would require to prosper for a thousand years (ibid.).

Germany and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact in August 1939 called the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. This treaty was signed shortly before the German invasion of Poland and was done to ensure that Germany would not have to fight the Soviets along with the Poles, or have to worry about a two-front war. A secret protocol to the pact outlined an agreement between the Germany and the Soviet Union on the division of the bordering states between Germany and Soviet Russia. The Soviet Union and Germany would split Poland in the event of Poland being invaded (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.11-12). The pact surprised the world because of the mutual hostility and the conflicting ideologies between the two super-powers.

With his early military success, Hitler became convinced that his armies were unstoppable, a sentiment shared by most of the German Generals, which fostered sense of invincibility among the troops. The ineffectiveness of the Red Army during the Winter War, when the Soviet Union invaded Finland to establish a border to protect her vital asserts in the North, also convinced Hitler and his generals that the Red Army was weak and incompetent (Bishop and McNab, 2006,
p.90). Hitler believed that Slavs and Bolsheviks in the East, who he saw as racially inferior, were no match for his armies. The Nazi Party aimed to destroy the Soviet Union as a political entity in accordance with their geopolitical ideology.

Soviet leader Joseph Stalin’s Great Purge of the 1930s, in which many experienced and skilled Russian commanders and officers were killed or exiled, also played a critical role in Germany’s decision to invade the East. The purge killed over 30,000 Red Army officers, leaving only six out of ninety generals and thirty-six of 180 division commanders, making the Soviet Army leaderless and weakened (Rayfield, 2004, p. 315). Stalin, who believed that Hitler would not betray their non-aggression pact (at least until after Germany had defeated Britain), was shocked when Germany invaded the Soviet Union.

Plans for the invasion of Soviet Russia started as early as July of 1940 (Glantz, 2001). While German military leaders feared confronting the massive Soviet Union, Hitler believed the benefits outweighed the risks. Field Marshal Walter von Brauchitsch, Head of Oberkommando des Heeres (OKH or Army High Command), Franz Halder the chief of Army High Command, and Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt all opposed invading the Soviet Union (Guderian, 2002 p.51). These high ranking military leaders all felt that to invade Russia was suicide and would lead to a two-front war, and to a conflict costing impossible amounts of manpower and resources. Yet Hitler ignored all arguments and demanded plans to be made for an invasion. He had Halder, the head planner for operations, design plans for invading the Soviet Union with the main focal points being Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev (Bishop and McNab, 2006 p.40).

German planners, under Hitler’s persistence, eventually came to believe that a Blitzkrieg campaign would be successful as it had been in the past. Hitler believed the campaign could be completed within six to eight weeks, and the delayed start would prove irrelevant. German generals were at first reluctant, but because of their great confidence agreed that the autumn 1941 would be the best chance to strike. Germany and her allies had a massive amount of troops and
material prepared to invade the Soviet Union. Surprise and speed (along with a little luck) had worked so far in Poland and France, but this undertaking against the Soviet Union was a very different situation. Due to the size of the Soviet Union, the number of soldiers the Soviets would need to commit was far greater than any other European nation, and, as history has shown, the Russian winter is the ultimate defense against invading armies, but Hitler as well as German troops and officers believed they were invincible.

Even though the enemy would be the largest ever faced numerically and geographically, and the amount of supplies required would become an inexhaustible vacuum consuming countless soldiers, weapons, and material, Hitler and his military planners believed the Blitzkrieg tactic would prove as successful as it did against France and Poland. Halder's plan utilized the Blitzkrieg, but would involve three Army Groups, rather than the two Army Groups in the campaigns against Poland and France. Halder argued for a quick strike against Soviet Russia involving the capture of vital industrial areas including the Moscow area, which would cripple the Red Army and force the Soviet Union’s surrender (Manstein, 1994, p.177). Moscow and its surrounding region constituted eighteen percent of industrial manufacturing for the Soviet Union during World War II. However, Hitler believed that the primary concerns should have been the Baltic region in the north (including the Baltic States and Leningrad) and Ukraine and Caucasus in the south, while Moscow was just a secondary non-essential objective. This was the first of many arguments between Hitler and his generals regarding how to invade the Soviet Union; as time passed, Hitler grew less confident in his generals and their ideas.

OPERATION BARBAROSSA

Operation Barbarossa, the code name for Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union, was named after Frederick Barbarossa, the famous
German medieval Holy Roman Emperor. The invasion was authorized by Hitler for a start date of May 15, 1941, but was postponed five weeks due to conflicts in the Balkans and unusually severe flooding in Eastern Europe from the spring thaw. It began on the early morning of June 22, 1941, and involved almost four million Axis troops—the largest invasion in the history of modern warfare. In addition, the Axis forces had 600,000 motor vehicles and 750,000 horses under their command.

Germany would send three Army Groups—North, Center, and South—to invade the Soviet Union. Army Group North, led by Field Marshal Wilhelm von Leeb, had the task of going through East Prussia and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and capturing or destroying Leningrad and the surrounding region. Army Group Center, led by Field Marshal Fedor von Bock, had the task of going through White Russia and taking Minsk, Smolensk, and then Moscow. This would be accomplished by marching through Byelorussia (Belorussia), or what is today Belarus. Finally, Army Group South, led by Erich von Rundstedt, was to strike through the Ukraine and capture Kiev, the Crimea, and eventually head further East into the Don and Caucasus region.

ARMY GROUP CENTER

Army Group Center was the strongest of the three Army Groups. Totaling forty-nine German divisions, they were organized into the 2nd and 3rd Panzer (tank) Groups, along with the 2nd Air Fleet, and the 4th and 9th Armies. Army Group Center included two Panzer Groups, whereas Army Group North and South only had one. This was intended as the main thrust was to be dealt by Army Group Center for it was to be the schwerpunkt.

Operation Barbarossa started off as a huge success. Five days after start of the invasion, Army Group Center had advanced two hundred miles into Soviet lines, and its two Panzer Groups had completed their first objective by meeting up at Minsk on July 2nd, just
ten days after the start of the invasion (Stolfi, 1991, p. 76). By doing so, they had also created the first of many large salients, trapping thousands of Soviet troops, such as the Bialystok pocket and the Minsk pocket. Army Group Center’s infantry and motorized units had surrounded the pockets, and effectively eliminated Soviet resistance in both pockets after July 3rd (ibid., p. 78).

Here the distinction between Hitler’s strategy for Soviet Russia and the German Army’s position is evident. Hitler’s directive would demand that, following the destruction of Soviet forces in White Russia (the areas west of Moscow), mobile German forces would head north to assist in destroying enemy forces in the Baltic region with Army Group North, and south to cut off the Ukraine. German field marshal Feder von Bock, the Commander of Army Group Center, believed that his mobile troops should now head straight for Smolensk, and the capture of the land bridge to Moscow (Stolfi, 1991, p. 79). The success of Army Group’s North and South had convinced even the nervous Hitler to allow Bock to continue with his drive to Smolensk and Moscow. Nevertheless, after every successful battle Hitler grew more anxious about Army Group Center’s success.

After the first eighteen days of the invasion, German units had penetrated as far as five hundred miles. On July 14th, the lead Panzer Groups reached Smolensk (Stolfi, 1991, p. 81). Smolensk was considered the “land bridge” to Moscow and was the last major city before Moscow for Army Group Center to capture. The Soviets realized that Moscow was at risk, and began heavily reinforcing Smolensk at this time. On July 16th German forces captured Smolensk, and created another large salient west of Smolensk (ibid., p. 90). After the capture of Smolensk, Hitler believed that Bock was going to send his armor to assist the flanks in capturing Leningrad and the Ukraine. Bock, Guderian, and Hoth all disagreed with this rationale and felt that Moscow must be attacked immediately, because Moscow, being the capital of the USSR, held political value as well as strategic value. Unlike in France, where Panzer Commanders took risks and continued to deeply penetrate enemy territory, in the East they were
restrained by Hitler's nervousness and his “fortress” mentality. This fortress mentality can be described as a defensive mentality, focusing on adding lands around you to act as a border or barrier which is used to defend yourself in your fortress (Stolfi, 1991). Hitler also preferred to take what he believed were valuable territories and cities in the North and South, rather than focus on Moscow. Still, Bock, Hoth, and Guderian all insisted that the only way to defeat Russia was a quick knockout blow that required Moscow to be captured immediately.

Hitler believed that the main effort for the armor columns on the eastern front should be to take Leningrad (Stolfi, 1991, p.80), which would give Hitler control of the Baltic Sea and control of Russia’s second largest industrial city, but would not allow victory in the East. This half-success shows Hitler's fortress syndrome getting the best of him. Hitler implemented directives 33 and 34, the former to send Panzer Group 2 (Hoth) to the control of Army Group North, and the latter to send Panzer Group 3 (Guderian) to aid Army Group South. By doing so, Hitler had focused on his half successes rather than a chance to knock out the Soviet Union. This action is the true cause for Germany’s failure to effectively eliminate the Soviet Union from the war. Hitler’s persistent worrying had finally done irreparable damage that not even the talented German Commanders could overcome.

After the capture of Smolensk, Hitler sent orders for securing the flanks of the invasion (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.76). This led to the siege of Leningrad, which would last almost nine hundred days, and the great encirclement of Kiev. By November, the whole of Ukraine was under German control, along with the Crimea and the Baltic Countries (Bishop and McNab, 2006, p.78). Hitler was now willing to go after Moscow, but the two-month delay (August and September) since halting Army Group Center was too long. Winter was setting in, but before the grounds froze, all the dirt roads turned to mud, since there was no paved highway system in Russia. As the Germans drove on Moscow in late November and early December, they also faced stiffening resistance since the delay had allowed
skilled winter combat troops from Siberia to arrive. The Germans were stopped outside of Moscow, a mere seventeen miles from the Kremlin due to poor transportation, freezing weather, and fresh Siberian troops.

A “WHAT-IF” SCENARIO FOR ARMY GROUP CENTER

By July 16th 1941, German spearhead troops had captured Smolensk. Guderian, thinking that Moscow was his next target, had already sent recon divisions to secure bridgeheads over the Dvina and Dnieper Rivers, located Northwest of Moscow (Stolfi, 1991). Not expecting Smolensk to fall so quickly, Soviet defenses on the rivers were light or non-existent. In early August, German armor had established a beachhead over these rivers and controlled Smolensk, which allowed a clear and direct land route to Moscow. Elements of the 7th Panzer Division had reached Jarcevo, thirty miles east of Smolensk. At this stage, the Russians had lost a million men and around 2,500 tanks and 3,500 guns (ibid., p. 136). While Panzer elements rested for the final push to Moscow, German infantry and motorized elements caught up to the armor, and completely eliminated all resistance in the Smolensk salient by August 5th (Bishop and McNab, 2006 p. 57). After allowing a week for all the resupplying and reequipping, we can assume Army Group Center was ready to send its full force towards Moscow on August 13th 1941.

Germany’s failed Operation Typhoon (Moscow offensive) left German troops only seventeen miles from Moscow. They had travelled from Smolensk to the outskirts of Moscow, about 75 miles, from October 2nd to early December against tough Soviet resistance and with minimal sunlight (due to the two-month delay caused by Hitler). Therefore, Soviet High Command (STAVKA) had August and September to bring in troops from the east to defend Moscow and in winter the amount of sunlight and daytime decreases sig-
nificantly, reducing the time available to operate (Jordan and Wiest, 2007, p. 73).

Now if we imagine an August 13th starting date, without the Soviet advantages in tanks and men, and in light of how fast German tanks had crossed in good driving conditions on solid roads before winter, it seems reasonable that the final ninety miles would have been easily covered by the Panzer groups in a matter of days. Army Group Center had cleared all major pockets of resistance, Soviet resistance in front of Moscow was weaker in August than in October, and they were still disorganized due to the speed of the invasion. Without the two month period to recover and reorganize, Soviet defenses in front of Moscow would likely have been insufficient to stop the German assault.

Had Hitler pursued the final assault on Moscow in August, as his generals in Army Group Center urged, the fall of Moscow would have been virtually guaranteed. Many Russian officer POWs were later quoted saying that the fall of Moscow had been already accepted by their troops (Stolfi, 1991, p. 118). Had Hitler listened to his generals and initiated Operation Typhoon on August 13th rather than October 2nd, the fate of Soviet Russia may have been quite different.

**ANTITHESIS**

Scholars have forwarded a number of different theories concerning why Germany failed in successfully taking out the Soviet Union, and why Operation Barbarossa was failed operation. One popular argument says that the Soviet forces had reorganized and defended the Smolensk region for two months, from July to September, which forced the Germans to abandon an attack on Moscow. Yet the fact is that Hitler had already decided to alter the course of Panzer Groups 2 and 3 from Army Group Center to aid the flanks of the invasion. This is no coincidence, but rather a fact that the infantry of
Army Group Center were halted, waiting for Army Group North and South to achieve Hitler's half-successes which were Leningrad and the Ukraine. Soviet forces did counter in the Smolensk region, but they were poorly executed and unorganized. Simply put, these attacks did not convince Hitler that he in fact should send the Panzer Groups back to Army Group Center.

Another common argument states that the invasion start date was too late, and the German forces would never have reached Moscow in time before the severe winter weather arrived. Author Bryan Fugate suggests that the later start date for the operation, from May 15 to June 22, was a costly delay for the German invasion (Fugate, 1984, p. 132). Yet not only did Germany have a sizeable force ready in August, Army Group Center waited two months before beginning their attack on Moscow. In terms of geography and logistics, German armor penetrated up to twenty-five miles in one day, and was able to go 200 miles in a matter of days. Moreover, the late thaw of the Pripyat Marshes due to a severe winter would have delayed the invasion anyways (Hart, 1999). Therefore, despite the delays, the start time did in fact allow Axis forces enough time to effectively capture Moscow.

A third argument for why Germany’s Operation Barbarossa failed focuses on the stiffening of Soviet resistance and the introduction of the new T-34 tank. However, Axis forces had beaten eight of nine Soviet Armies in front of Moscow, forcing many Soviet troops to conclude that Moscow would fall into German hands. Also, the early models of the T-34 Russian tank lacked proper visibility, did not possess radios, and had a two-man gun turret, which required the tank commander to also serve as the gunner (Foss, 1977). Furthermore, the first T-34 came into service on August 18, five days after Army Group Center should have begun its attack on Moscow. The T-34s were primarily produced was in the Moscow region and would have been captured within a few weeks of the assault. This means that the number of T-34s that could have been put into service to defend Moscow would not be enough to make a meaningful impact.
A final claim is that the Germans were not strong enough to take Moscow at any point of Operation Barbarossa. Yet this can be disproven by looking at the resistance that the 2nd Panzer Group faced when it was diverted south to cut off the Ukraine, as well as the resistance during the battle of Kiev. This force was the same if not stronger than what was left in front of Moscow (Stolfi, 1991, p.165).

CONCLUSION

The invasion of the Soviet Union by Axis forces in 1941 was one of the greatest undertakings in modern military history. German planners created a quick victory scenario over the Soviet Union, using their new form of Blitzkrieg warfare. Germany seemed to have Soviet Russia on the verge of defeat when Hitler’s indecisiveness led him to alter the course of Army Group Center’s two Panzer Groups, which ultimately changed the outcome of the campaign. Had Army Group Center not been diverted to assist the flanks of the invasion, I firmly believe that they could have reached Moscow and struck a massive blow to Soviet production and morale, leading to the elimination of the Soviet Union as a fighting force. Germany’s fatal mistake was not to complete their Blitzkrieg against Soviet Russia, allowing the Soviets critical time to recover. This decision, and thus the blame, can be squarely assigned to Adolf Hitler, as it was his decision to divert the Panzer Groups. Had he listened to his generals and commanders, Operation Barbarossa would likely have been a major German victory.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


