LEGACY

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Food of a Life and Century: From Homegrown to Frozen Food Southern Illinois' Regional Diet Change through the Twentieth Century

"We cooked the sausage outside in black pots, and the rest of the steer or pig inside. Then we would can the ribs and sausage, and salt and dry other parts of the animal. This kind of work was hard, but it was fun."[1] This statement was given by Esther, a ninety-year-old rural Southern Illinoisan woman. Esther was describing how her family prepared meat from a butchered steer or pig by cooking and canning or salting and drying animal parts in the 1920s and 30s. The especially interesting part of her statement was that she said that this hard, dirty work was "fun." Difficult labor was a natural aspect of life in rural Southern Illinois throughout the twentieth century, and people who grew up on farms often retained this outlook on life as they grew older and moved into towns. Thus, when commercialized, processed food was gradually introduced, these people still held on to their prior beliefs and tastes concerning food. That is, although people began to eat more food bought from stores, most of the food that they ate was still grown on their own land. As time passed, Southern Illinoisans did change their diets to incorporate what might be considered the standard national diet. However, today, they still eat some of the same food that they did almost a century ago. And while Southern Illinois rural society has increased their diet over the past century, they have been able to retain much of their food diet consistently throughout their lives because of their upbringing, which was based on farming.

Although the revolution of the American diet has been written about numerous times and in many different ways, the specific diet change in rural Southern Illinois has rarely been studied. The most comprehensive, academic pieces concerning the Southern Illinois diet change in the twentieth century are works by Jane Adams. Adams is a professor at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale who studied farm life in Southern Illinois' counties. One of her pieces was an article called, "Resistance to "Modernity": Southern Illinois Farm Women and the Cult of Domesticity," which explains the role

of women on farms. From the article, Adams expanded her research to include a book entitled, *The Transformation of Rural Life.* This book studied the lives of seven farming families in Union County, Illinois, and how farming changed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[2] As farming production advanced, it became specialized and many people no longer found it necessary to produce most of their food. Southern Illinoisans did continue to have small gardens, but they did not feel the need to grow everything that they wanted to eat. Most material found on diet change in the United States in the twentieth century can be applied to most of the country. Therefore while numerous sources were useful in describing the overall diet change of people in Southern Illinois, very few pieces were specifically directed toward Southern Illinoisans.

Many people who farmed, or at least grew what they needed to eat, in Southern Illinois in the early twentieth century do not continue that way of life today. While many rural-born Southern Illinoisans may still have gardens, they usually do not live off of their land. Two of the three people interviewed for this study grew up on a farm, while the other person lived in the country, but only grew a large garden for the family. Esther Wolters grew up on a farm in rural Steeleville, Illinois. She was born in 1919, and today lives in the town of Percy, Illinois. For half of her life, her diet consisted of food that was grown by her and her family.[3] Claude Husband was born in 1928 and grew up on a farm in rural Steeleville as well. For about the first twenty-five years of his life, he subsisted mostly off of food grown on his land. Like many Americans, his diet began to change in the 1950s, after World War II.[4] Laura Husband was born in 1932 and grew up in the country west of Murphysboro, Illinois. She did not live on a farm, but her family did grow food for themselves.[5] Once again, the largest changes in her diet began to take place in the 1950s. Similar to many rural Southern Illinoisans in the first half of the twentieth century, these people ate mostly what they either grew or could pick off of the land. Even when their diets began to change because of technology introduced in the 1940s and 50s, they often retained many aspects of their earlier diet throughout their lives.

A memoir written by Edith Rendleman also gives wonderful insight into the lives of a farmwoman who lived through the twentieth century. Rendleman wrote about the livestock raised on her farm and the types of food that her family ate in their rural Union County community. "Food and Culture in Southern Illinois – A Preliminary Report," by Bennett, Smith, and Passin

also was written about Southern Illinoisan diets. It focused on the relationship between the ethnicities of people in Southern Illinois, what they ate, and how their varying diets were passed down through generations. The report was published in 1942 and included studies of German, English, and African American diets.[6]

From the 1920s through the mid-1940s, rural Southern Illinoisan food lifestyles reflected largely those of the nation as well. By the 1920s, the processed food industry was a larger business than steel and textiles.[7] However, many rural communities across the nation seldom bought these canned goods and manufactured food items. Most of the meals for rural people consisted of food grown or butchered on their own land. Growing most of their own food proved important during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Great Depression did not change what many Americans ate, but it definitely did not affect what rural Southern Illinoisans ate.[8] They continued to grow and eat the same food that they had in the past. Esther Wolters remembered that her eggs had still cost six cents a dozen during the Depression as they had before, and that her family was able to grow the same crops that they had produced prior to the Depression because they were not affected by the droughts.[9] Harvey Levenstein makes the argument that many Americans' diet actually improved during the Great Depression because people cut back on things like insurance, but not on what they ate.[10] Americans' diet became better because people not only had the same foods available to them, but they also increasingly bought canned goods and other store-bought items to expand their diets.

From the 1920s through World War II, Southern Illinoisans ate a variety of items grown on their farms. The region of Southern Illinois studied in the report by Bennett, Smith, and Passin was populated overwhelmingly by people of German heritage. This German diet was still largely reflected in the meals of these residents in the early twentieth century. People enjoyed beans, potatoes, pork, beef, soups, cottage cheese, rye bread, pickled vegetables, head-cheese, buttermilk, liverwurst, and blood sausage.[11] Vegetables were grown in the spring, picked in the late summer or early fall, and then canned for the winter. Hogs were often butchered twice a year, and the steers once a year. Berries were picked to supplement the diet, and were often used in making preserves and jellies. Bread and butter were made in the home, and cows were kept for milk. Families would often use fish or wild game to increase their meat diet as well.

Most of the food that Esther Wolters ate was grown or raised by her and her family. She raised sorghum to make cookies, cakes, and pies. Her family also made many jellies throughout the year, and made peach and apple butter as well.[12] Laura Husband and her family would pick berries from the nearby woods to enhance their meals, and these would often be canned as well.[13] Edith Rendleman also lived on a farm all of her life. In her memoir, she related the kinds of food she usually ate, and what food she grew on her farm. Her family also made jelly in the fall which would last until the next fall. There was always a jar of jelly on the table for every meal of the day. Along with jelly, she also remembered canning pickles and sauerkraut. Rendleman wrote that her family had their own milk cow and made their own butter. She also recalled that she made a lot of soup and cottage cheese, and ate beans almost everyday for dinner.[14]

In Esther Wolters's family, potatoes, corn, and beans were all grown in the garden, and whatever the family could not eat right away would be canned for the winter months.[15] Most of the food that Claude Husband ate in the first half of the twentieth century was grown on his own land. From the garden he ate such items as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, beans, corn, beets, tomatoes, apples, peaches, and strawberries. In the summer, these items would be eaten fresh, and in the fall they would be canned for the winter.[16] Laura Husband's family was not involved in commercial farming, and therefore most of the food that they grew came from their own garden and was strictly for themselves.[17] The food that they could not eat directly from the garden, they would can, such as potatoes, green beans, and corn.

Esther Wolters explained that she ate a lot of eggs when she was young. She raised the chickens herself, and sold the eggs to make money for her family.[18] Adams says that it was very common for Southern Illinois women to raise chickens, and that raising them was almost always the woman's job.[19] Esther not only raised chickens for their eggs, but she ate them too. Chickens would be butchered a few times a year, with around fifty being butchered at one time. The style in which the chicken was usually served at the table was fried.[20] Figure 1 is a picture of Lena Wolters, Esther's mother-in-law, sitting outside of her chicken house in 1939. The chickens in the photograph included several different types of chickens, but they were all considered spring chickens. Behind Lena is the large chicken house which was home to over one hundred chickens. Within a few days, all of the chickens in the photograph were slaughtered.

Figure 1[21]

Other Southern Illinoisans also relied heavily on the presence of chickens on their farms. Claude Husband's family raised chickens to eat and then sold the eggs. Once a year, Claude's family would butcher some chickens after the cockerels got over three pounds. This would be the only time of the year that Claude got to eat fried chicken.[22] Chicken could be bought from the store, but it was expensive and therefore Southern Illinoisans usually chose to raise them instead. Laura Husband's family raised chickens, and they ate the eggs and chickens themselves.[23] Edith Rendleman also raised chickens and sold the eggs to nearby neighbors to earn extra money. Rural men usually did not give their wives money to spend at the store. Consequently, Rendleman's mother sold chickens and eggs to buy the family clothes and necessary groceries.[24] Bennett, Smith, and Passin also found that low income households often needed to sell items such as meat, eggs, and milk to supplement their family's income.[25]

Livestock was common on almost every farm in Southern Illinois. Esther Wolters stated that pigs and steers were always butchered outside, the sausage would be cooked outside, and then the rest of the meat would be cooked in the home. From the pigs, Esther would can most of the meat, and salt and dry some also. Beef was mostly canned. Some of her favorite meals from these animals included pig feet with cabbage and backbones with sauerkraut. Esther explained that meat made in the early twentieth century also tasted better due to how it was prepared. She stated, "Ham

was just as good the next day, you could even eat it before it was fried; now you can't do that because there's no taste."[26] Esther said that the canning and smoking process that people used on their farms left the meat tasting better and lasting longer than when meat was bought from the store. Formerly, ham was not dangerous to eat before it was cooked; but, now, after being processed and preserved, ham can no longer be eaten before it is cooked.

Claude Husband and his family also raised livestock to butcher twice a year. These animals included pigs and steers. Most of the beef would be canned, while most of the pork was cured. Claude canned outside of the home by placing a tub on three rocks, filling it with water, building a fire around it, placing jars in the water with meat inside of them, and then making sure that the cans were being heated by the fire. This was the process by which his family canned their beef.[27] Edith Rendleman also raised a lot of livestock on the farm which included hogs. Four to six families would help each other with the hog butchering, and each family would butcher between four and six hogs. From the hogs, such treats as hams, shoulders, sides of bacon, heads, ribs, backbone, and feet would be eaten. The heads would be made into head cheese and the feet would be pickled.[28]

Southern Illinois families also hunted to supplement their meat diets. Laura Husband's brothers hunted a lot of wild game and fished.[29] The men in Edith Rendleman's family also often hunted and trapped to supply meat for the table. They brought home coons, possum, muskrats, mink, and squirrels. The squirrels were often eaten for breakfast.

Esther Wolters grew up on a farm only two and a half miles from town. However, her family only bought necessities from the store. These items included sugar, flour, coffee, oatmeal, and salt. In cases such as Laura's, where no livestock was raised, families would also buy their meat from the local grocer.[30] In many instances, families could not afford to buy items that they needed from the store. Consequently, instead of using cash to make their purchases, they traded items, like eggs and especially butter, to buy store goods.[31] In an interesting article by John W. Bennett, "Food and Social Status in a Rural Community," Bennett argued that Southern Illinoisans needed their farms to raise some money so that they could afford to buy store items.[32]

World War II had an impact on Americans' diet due to the rationing of food. There were many Americans who were not happy about food rationing because they felt that it was unfair to many

people and that it overstepped the government's boundaries.[33] There were two categories of food stamps for rationing: canned goods and fresh food. As more and more canned goods were being produced every decade, even the rural societies began to eat more canned goods, especially canned vegetables. Processed foods, including canned goods, began to boom during the war because they simplified cooking for families and used less of women's valuable time.[34] When rationing set an exact amount of canned goods and fresh food that families obtained each month, many rural families wanted more canned goods and less fresh food. Rural families did not need many fresh food stamps because they grew almost all of what was considered fresh food themselves: the food that came from their gardens or the livestock that they raised. Esther Wolters received "B" stamps that allowed her to purchase some meat and canned goods including "pork n' beans", corn, pineapple, and apricots.[35] However, Esther still grew much of the food that she ate during World War II. Claude Husband said that the food rationing did not affect his family too much because his family would trade town people meat stamps in exchange for stamps to purchase sugar.[36] Southern Illinois rural families were affected some by food rationing during World War II in relation to the canned goods that they bought, but most of their diets still consisted of the same items they had eaten for the past few decades.

While many Americans during World War II were demanding more canned goods, the supply was not there. Many of the canned goods produced in the United States went to war with the American troops, and there was a shortage for American citizens. However, the shortage of canned goods brought a rise in the amount of frozen food consumed by Americans. Frozen food packaging took fewer materials that were needed in the war effort as well. They took less paperboard, parchment, waxed paper, and cellophane than canned goods. But, in 1942, military bases in the United States also began to use frozen foods, and frozen foods were put on the rationing list. By 1945, however, most troops were overseas, and therefore frozen foods were no longer rationed. The surplus created caused Americans across the United States to increase their supply of frozen food because it was cheaper and easier to obtain than some canned goods at that time.[37] Rural Southern Illinoisans who had either iceboxes, or could afford to purchase refrigerators, bought some frozen items. However, frozen food was much more popular in towns, where less food was grown.

In the mid-1940s through the 1950s, broad changes in

technology and food production transformed what Americans ate, how food was stored, and how it was prepared. The largest contributor to advances in the variety of food available was the popularity of refrigerators and deep freezes in homes. Refrigerators had been used in homes since the 1920s, but they had cost around $600 apiece. Many people continued to use iceboxes until the 1940s when refrigerators were only $150 apiece because most people could not afford an expensive refrigerator in exchange for their relatively cheap icebox.[38] In rural Southern Illinois, many people still chose not to buy a refrigerator until the 1950s, or even later, because they did not need one for the food that they grew. In 1927, an article appeared in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in which Homer Grant praised the utilities in the modern kitchen. The mechanical refrigerator could run on gas, insulation in stoves caused a savings on heat, and sinks were great for washing vegetables. Table appliances such as waffle irons, toasters, grills, and percolators were useful in the kitchen as well.[39] Grant's statements referred to the availability of these products and not to their actual use by all Americans. For Southern Illinoisans, the kinds of statements Grant made in his article would have been better suited to describe the use of electrical appliances in Southern Illinois in the 1940s and 1950s when they were first being used in that region.

Americans also needed to have electricity available in their homes before they could have refrigerators and deep freezes. In Southern Illinois, most people had electricity in their homes by the late 1940s. Laura Husband had electricity in 1945, but did not have a refrigerator until after she was married in 1950.[40] Claude Husband had electricity in his home in 1947 and a refrigerator the same year.[41] Esther Wolters had electricity in 1948, but did not have a refrigerator until 1960.[42] Edith Rendleman had electricity in her home as early as 1942.[43] The difference in the years that people bought refrigerators and when they first had electricity is due to not only the income of the individual families, but also to their diet. Laura Husband's family did not eat a lot of frozen food and therefore did not feel the need to spend money on a refrigerator because their icebox still suited their needs.[44] Esther Wolters did not want a refrigerator prior to 1960 because most of her food still came from the garden and the family farm. Her icebox still satisfied her needs as well.[45] Claude Husband's family did want a refrigerator soon after obtaining electricity, and could easily afford one. They had earned quite a profit during the war, and wanted to freeze more items and can less. Freezing food was a simple

process when compared to canning, and it took less preparation time. The refrigerator enhanced the diet of Claude's family as well because they began to buy more items from the store because they could store them. These items included margarine, cheese, ground beef, wieners, frozen strawberries, and ice cream.[46] Nonetheless, Claude's family still grew the majority of their food on their farm and was supplementing some of their diet.

Innovations in stoves appeared in the late 1940s. Many Americans installed electric stoves soon after they had electricity. Southern Illinoisans were no different. Laura and Claude Husband both had electric stoves placed in their homes in the same years that they had electricity installed.[47] In the early twentieth century, prior to the electric stove, many people had kerosene stoves in their homes. These stoves were practical for both cooking food and heating the home. Kerosene stoves were not only replaced by electric stoves, but many people bought gas stoves instead. Esther Wolters bought her first gas stove in 1952.[48] Acceptance of new stoves in the home was allowed by Southern Illinoisans and Americans as a whole because newer stoves made cooking easier and was much safer than the older stoves. The new stoves did not change Southern Illinoisans diets too much, but they made it easier to cook food.

Smaller kitchen appliances were available in the early part of the twentieth century, but were introduced to rural communities largely in the 1940s and 50s. In the 1940s, items such as blenders, carving knives, mixers, can openers, and coffee grinders were common in many American homes.[49] Claude and Laura Husband began using a toaster, mixer, and other small appliances in their home because they were wedding gifts given to the couple in 1950. If they had not been given these items, they said that it was possible that they would not have bought them until many years later.[50] Esther Wolters did not use small appliances in her home until the 1970s, when she began using a mixer and a coffee maker. The decade when families began to use small electronic appliances was determined by how much Southern Illinois families relied on their own gardens and livestock to continue to feed them and how much they relied on grocery stores and supermarkets. Many Southern Illinoisans continued to fix their traditional food in the same traditional ways.

Rural Southern Illinoisans sought to expand their diet to a degree because of family members moving into urban areas, and because of the increasing presence of processed food in local grocery stores and supermarkets. Adams argues that young family members who

either moved into urban areas after the war, or saw expanding technologies and brought them home, increased a family's use of new technologies.[51] Introduction of food and technology to rural areas because of travel to urban areas is evident in Laura and Claude Husband's lives as well. After they were married in 1950, they lived in St. Louis County for about one year. When they moved back to rural Southern Illinois, they continued to buy store bought items while they lived in a small town. They bought all of their meat and some of their vegetables because they had been introduced to this type of diet while they were living in a city.[52]

The expansion of supermarkets in Southern Illinois and the nation drove out the local country stores and also expanded the diet of local residents. By 1953, supermarket sales accounted for almost one-half of all grocery sales in Southern Illinois.[53] The expansion of these national supermarkets allowed for the nationalization of food. When Americans visited supermarkets, they could obtain the same food in Southern Illinois as they could in New York or Los Angeles. Processed foods were not restricted to one area of the country. "Jell-O," for example, became the symbol of 1950s food and was available anywhere in the country.[54] The television also expanded Southern Illinoisans and the rest of America's diet as well because people saw ads for food on television which they could conveniently purchase at their local supermarket. Bennett, Smith, and Passin reported that it was perhaps due to aspirations of being more like the urban middle class that a dependence on stores began to thrive in Southern Illinois.[55]

In Southern Illinois, it appeared that diets also began to expand exponentially when children in the home were sent to school in the 1950s and 60s. These children were introduced to many processed foods at school, and they wanted to continue eating them once they returned home. Claude and Laura Husband similarly explained that they began to drink more milk from the store and to eat more cereal, bread, and lunch meat after they had children. Although Claude and Laura moved back to the rural countryside of Southern Illinois in 1954, they continued to eat many foods bought from the store because of their experiences in the city and their children's preference for these items. Claude and Laura did begin to harvest a garden and to can vegetables again, but they also still bought soups, frozen foods, some canned vegetables, cakes, pies, cookies, and candies from the store.[56] This period shows how Southern Illinoisans combined the new food introduced to them along with their traditional diet.

While many Southern Illinoisans began to eat mostly store-

bought goods in the 1950s, others did not expand their diet until much later. Esther Wolters did not eat a large amount of store-bought goods until the 1970s. During this time, her husband's doctor recommended that he drink a lot of cranberry juice. Since Esther and her husband had to go to the store weekly for the juice, they began to buy more groceries from the store each time that they went.[57] In this case, Esther had not been exposed to many processed and store food until she actually started going to the store herself. She lived in a small community where she concentrated on growing her garden and working on the family farm. And while her children may have been exposed to more modern food at school, they still brought home cooked meals to school for their lunch. Esther was perhaps still part of the Old Country generation who liked to eat more traditional food prepared by Germans in the area, and although she modernized her diet through the twentieth century, she never fully relinquished the traditional diet of her youth.[58]

The 1980s and 90s were decades where the variety of food expanded for Southern Illinois once more, but there were no more great advances in food preparation or storage. The microwave was largely used by the 1980s. Claude and Laura Husband began using their microwave around 1980 and still use it today.[59] Esther Wolters first bought a microwave in 1994, but soon returned it because she feared the radium that the microwave might produce. She later had another one in her home when her grandchild lived with her, using it for some meals. But today she rarely utilizes it.[60] Besides increased use of microwaves in homes, the same appliances that were widely used in the 1950s continued to be used in the 80s, 90s, and even today. There have been advances in these individual appliances, but not substantial inventions, like the refrigerator.

While Southern Illinoisans continue to buy most of their food from the store, they buy items similar to (if not the same as) those they bought in the 1950s and 60s. Like many parts of the United States, frozen food, meat, bread, desserts, and canned goods are still some of the top sellers. Individual diets have progressed in the past few decades only because of personal preferences for different food. For example, Claude and Laura Husband did not start eating fast food until the 1970s, when they ate at their first McDonald's.[61] They have increasingly eaten fast food in the past decades as Americans everywhere continue to eat out. Esther Wolters never ate fast food very much, but in the 1990s she did discover a fondness

for pizza, and in the mid-1990s she began ordering frozen food bi-weekly from Schwan's.[62] These examples show that although no major advances in food technology have taken place in the past few decades (such as the invention of the refrigerator,) Southern Illinoisans still have increased their diets to include food that they had not eaten before.

Finally, as people who grew up in the early twentieth century pass away, the food traditions that they carried with them do as well. However, in some parts of the country, and in Southern Illinois, there remains nostalgia for fresh food off of the farm or for food prepared in old-fashioned ways. Across the United States, the production of food has become specialized and food travels from one end of the country to the other.[63] Farmers often grow only one or two types of food in a high production environment. Farm families no longer live off of their own land. In Southern Illinois, there is a movement by farmers to put more locally grown produce into the region's grocery stores, farmer's markets, restaurants, schools, and prisons. Farmers are working with the Illinois Local and Organic Food and Farm Task Force to promote the local food movement in Southern Illinois. However, the region has a high poverty rate and low access to quality food because of the growing dependence on food from supermarkets, such as Wal-Mart. Produce and food grown in local markets travel less, and therefore need fewer chemicals to keep them fresh. Even with the benefits of buying locally grown food, the movement has had difficulty in establishing a successful local market.[64] In recent decades, there has also been an increase in cookbooks, recipes, and articles that encourage traditional or old-fashioned foods. These readings promote cooking with fresh fruits and vegetables, home-butchered livestock, and fish and game that are indigenous to Southern Illinois. Many traditional recipes for Southern Illinoisans included German, French, Italian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian styles of food and cooking.[65]

Southern Illinois food diets have changed with the decades of innovations, but they have also kept traditional aspects. In rural Southern Illinois, older people have passed down to their children the importance of growing gardens and canning some of their vegetables. Livestock is still often slaughtered. Many of the traditional foods and ways of preparing home cooked meals will soon be lost as succeeding generations only remember processed foods and store bought items. However, some aspects will still survive because of the sense of tradition among rural societies

and families in Southern Illinois. Rural Southern Illinoisans grew up in the twentieth century growing their vegetables in gardens, making their own bread and butter, and butchering their own meat. Through innovations in technology, these people began to buy some of their food from grocery stores, but not all of it. A sense of growing what you need and raising it yourself still exists in rural Southern Illinois. In the spring and summer, Claude and Laura Husband still grow a vegetable garden. In the last few years, Esther Wolters and her family still made apple butter, and in the basement of their home, on rows and rows of shelves, still sit jars of yearly canned home vegetables.

Figure 2[66]

Notes

1   As quoted by: Esther Wolters, interview by Rachel Wolters, 3 October 2009.

2   Jane Adams, *The Transformation of Rural Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 6.

3   Wolters, interview.

4   Claude Husband, interview by Rachel Wolters, 23 October 2009.

5   Laura Husband, interview by Rachel Wolters, 23 October 2009.

6   John W. Bennett, Harvey L. Smith, and Herbert Passin, "Food and Culture in Southern Illinois – A Preliminary Report," *American Sociological Review* 7 (October 1942): 650.

7   Harvey A. Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table* (University of California Press, 2003), 151.

8   William H. Young, *The 1930's* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 96.

9   Wolters, interview.

10 Harvey A. Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*: *A Social History of Eating in Modern America* (University of California Press, 2003), 24.

11 Bennett, Smith, and Passin, "Food and Culture," 645-60.

12 Wolters, interview.

13 Laura Husband, interview.

14 Edith Rendleman, *All Anybody Ever Wanted of Me Was to Work* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 58, 60, 61, 63, 80.

15 Wolters, interview.

16 Claude Husband, interview.

17 Laura Husband, interview.

18 Wolters, interview.

19 Adams, *Rural Life,* 90.

20 Wolters, interview.

21 Lena Wolters and Chickens. Photograph in collection of Esther Wolters. 1939. Obtained by the author, 30 November 2009.

22 Claude Husband, interview.

23 Laura Husband, interview.

24 Rendleman. *All Anybody Ever Wanted,* 71, 76-79.

25 Bennett, Smith, and Passin, "Food and Culture," 651.

26 As quoted in: Wolters, interview.

27 Claude Husband, interview.

28 Rendleman. *All Anybody Ever Wanted,* 71, 76-79.

29 Laura Husband, interview.

30 Ibid.

31 Adams, *Rural Life*, 90.

32 John W. Bennett, "Food and Social Status in a Rural Society," *American Sociological Review* 8 (October 1943): 569.

33 Robert J. Sickels, *The 1940's* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), 101.

34 Sherrie A. Inness, *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender, and Race* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 158-59.

35 Wolters, interview.

36 Claude Husband, interview.

37 "The War Years – and Boom," *Frozen Food Age* 51 (December 2002): 38.

38 Sylvia Whitman, *What's Cooking?: The History of American Food* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Co., 2001), 57, 67.

39 Homer Grant, "Electricity is Fairy Godmother of the Kitchen," *The Chicago Daily Tribune,* 3 July 1927.

40 Laura Husband, interview.

41 Claude Husband, interview.

42 Wolters, interview.

43 Rendleman. *All Anybody Ever Wanted,* 153.

44 Laura Husband, interview.

45 Wolters, interview.

46 Claude Husband, interview.

47 Claude Husband and Laura Husband, interviews.

48 Wolters, interview.

49 Sickels, *The 1940's*, 105.

50 Claude Husband and Laura Husband, interviews.

51 Jane Adams, "Resistance to "Modernity": Southern Illinois Farm Women and the Cult of Domesticity," *American Ethnologist* 20: 103.

52 Claude Husband and Laura Husband, interviews.

53 Adams, *Rural Life,* 169.

54 Whitman, *What's Cooking,* 70.

55 Bennett, Smith, and Passin, "Food and Culture," 656.

56 Claude Husband and Laura Husband, interviews.

57 Wolters, interview.

58 Bennett, Smith, and Passin, "Food and Culture," 652.

59 Claude Husband and Laura Husband, interviews.

60 Wolters, interview.

61 Claude and Laura Husband, interviews.

62 Wolters, interview.

63 Deborah Fitzgerald, "Eating and Remembering," *Agricultural History* 79 (2005): 394.

64 Karen Binder, "A Fresh Look at Fresh Food," *Southern Illinoisan,* 22 March 2008.

65 Joanne Will, "Make History in Your Kitchen Cooking Old-Fashioned Foods," *Chicago Tribune,* 13 November 1976.

66 Jars of Canned Food. Personal photograph taken by the author, 26 November 2009. The photograph includes jars of beets, tomatoes, and pickles on the top shelf, and green beans, apple butter, and fruit on the bottom shelf. Dates for the jars range from the early 1990's through 2008.

Glenda Sullivan

Plantation Medicine and Health Care in the Old South

Medical care in the Old South was provided by a variety of people by a variety of means. Physicians were few and far between, and their range of care was dependent upon their professional training. Due to the shortage of physicians and the distance that often separated doctors from the plantations, men and women (both white and black) were often left on their own to treat illnesses, handle medical emergencies, and to bring new life into this world. Those who had limited or no access to professional medical care relied upon self-help manuals written by physicians, commercial medicines or home made remedies, folk beliefs, conjuring, and superstition to help meet their medical needs. In the absence of a trained physician, non-professionals such as masters, mistresses, and the enslaved were instrumental in providing medical care on southern plantations.

In order to understand the need for medical care in the Old South, it is important to first consider the conditions that existed at that time. Antebellum southerners were subject to most of the illnesses that others in the United States suffered from. Medical conditions such as tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, yellow fever, malaria, worms, yaws (an infection of the skin, bones, and joints), and cholera are but a few of the diseases that affected those living in the Old South. The marshlands and warm humid summers in the South also were favorable to mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria. The residual effects of malaria left the patient with agues, or alternating fever, chills, and sweating, which would continue for months after the patient was infected by the disease.[1] Moreover, morbidity rates for the enslaved were especially high on rice plantations in the low country of South Carolina and on sugar plantations due to climates that were conducive to illness and the difficult working conditions of slaves.[2]

In addition to illnesses and diseases that affected the general population, women's reproductive health also suffered due to lack of knowledge of proper nutrition, prenatal care, and sanitary facilities. Documentation of the mortality caused by illness,

accidents, and childbirth as well as the small number of trained physicians in the antebellum South confirmed the need for additional medical care laypersons.

The Old South had only five medical colleges before 1845, and medical students spent only one to two years working with a preceptor and attended only a few lecture courses to complete their medical training.[3] Although some southern physicians received their medical training in the North or in Europe, the number of patients in the Old South remained greater than the number of physicians available to treat them. For example, *The Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery* reported that in 1850 in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia there were 802, 739, and 700 people per physician, respectively.[4] Consequently, medical treatments and care in the Old South were not limited to "regular" doctors, those who completed their formal medical training. In fact, some southerners relied upon the "irregular" doctors such as homeopaths, empirics, and eclectics.[5] At any rate, the schooling of southern doctors was limited by, and subject to, the scientific and medical theories of the antebellum South.

Theories of differences in the physiology and medical needs of men and women and whites and blacks were also explored during the antebellum period. For example, southern physician Dr. Samuel Cartwright believed that the size of black people's brains was "a ninth or tenth less than in other races of men," while black people's hearing, sight, and sense of smell were better.[6] Moreover, some physicians associated theories and diseases specifically with slaves, such as "Drapetomania" (a theory that mental disease caused slaves to run away from their owners) and "Cachexia Africana" (or dirt eating.) In an attempt to control the presumed practice of slaves eating dirt, physicians and plantation owners implemented techniques such as "using mild purgatives, threats, punishments, iron masks or gags, cutting off the heads of those dying from the practice, and other harsh responses."[7] Thus, based upon the knowledge and theories of the period, physicians attempted to treat the various illnesses and diseases that they encountered.

The most common method of treating an illness in the Old South was "depletion," which involved draining the body of what was believed to be harmful substances deemed responsible for illness. Methods of depletion included "bleeding, sweating, blistering, purging, or vomiting."[8] Determining just how much depletion the body could withstand was key to this cure. The physician's treatment plan often included calomel, or mercurous

chloride, which served as a drug to cleanse and purge the body. Another treatment used to induce vomiting was ipecac, a medicine made from a root. Some medical treatments by physicians such as bloodletting (draining the body of large quantities of blood) were drastic, and at times the "cure" could be as deadly as the illness. For this reason, patients were often skeptical of the health care available to them by physicians.

No family was exempt from the tragedy of death. Children were often treated with the same medical procedures as adults, and unfortunately suffered the consequences when medical treatment failed. In 1848, William Whitsitt wrote the following lines in his diary after the death of his seven-year-old daughter, Martha Jane, due to whooping cough:

> But one consideration yet wrings the hearts of her bereaved parents with unutterable anguish. And that is the fact that she did not die a natural death. To die is natural. This is very true. But to be eaten up by calomel is not natural… poor Martha Jane was killed by degrees, eaten, destroyed, murdered, butchered by calomel and that, too, administered by a regular bred physician.[9]

These comments indicate not only the failure of a widely used medical treatment to cure a common ailment in the South, but they also show the lack of confidence of the father in the physician's chosen method of treatment for his daughter.

As one might imagine, some southerners were not only skeptical of health care, but they were also fearful of physicians' medical treatments. A letter written in 1845 from one J. H. Ruffin in Haw River, North Carolina, to Paul Cameron provides a response to an earlier inquiry from Cameron concerning a physician. Ruffin wrote, "With regards to your enquiries as to a Physician, I really [do] not know to whom to refer you. My own opinion is that they are all ignorant of their calling [and] best left alone. I would send for none."[10] Apprehensive of physicians' care and their prescribed medical treatments, many residents of the Old South relied upon their own methods of treatment. Medical manuals were one source of information that individuals could use to provide for their own health care.

Several medical manuals were available for use by literate southern men and women. Mostly written by trained physicians,

these manuals were designed as a guide to help the layperson treat illness or injury in the absence of a trained physician. Examples of these manuals include: *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves* (1803); *The Planter's and Mariner's Medical Companion* (1807); *The American Medical Guide for the Use of Families* (1810); *Letters to Ladies, Detailing Important Information, Concerning Themselves and Infants* (1817); and *Gunn's Domestic Medicine* (1830).[11] Due to the popularity of these manuals, several editions of the various books were produced. For example, by 1819 Dr. James Ewell had produced the "greatly improved" fifth edition of *The Medical Companion*, originally published as *The Planter's and Mariner's Medical Companion* in 1807.[12] In *The American Medical Guide*, Dr. Ruble included an apology to his fellow physicians, stating that his book was "never intended for them, but for another description of readers, among whome, by a practice of many years, I know that a great deal of ignorance, and even supersticious error still prevail."[13] Based on the number of medical manuals written and the additional editions published, it appears that the physicians who authored these manuals saw a definite need for providing medical information to laypeople in the South. In the same way, the fact that so many copies of these manuals were purchased by laypeople indicates the usefulness of the manuals and the desire of the public to have this information in hand. Having medical instructions readily available, Southern men and women thus attempted to treat both the minor and major medical needs of their families and their slaves.

In addition to addressing common illnesses and cures, these manuals offered information on topics such as fear, grief, and hope as well as instructions for treating serious physical ailments like Apoplexy. Dr. John Gunn provided the following instructions in *Gunn's Domestic Medicine* for the treatment of apoplectic fits, or what we would call today a cerebral hemorrhage.

> The chief remedy in Apoplexy is large and copious bleeding, which must be repeated if necessary. Cupping at the temples ought also to be resorted to, the great object being to draw the blood from the head and to relieve the oppression of the brain, as speedily as possible. The next thing to be attended to, is to give the most active purges:--see table for doses. Apply cold cloths wet in vinegar, and the cold, est [sic] water constantly to the head.[14]

Many of the laymen's manuals also included sections specializing in the "materia medica" available in the South. This Latin term, interchangeable with our use of the word medicine, referred to substances such as plants and roots that were used as medicinal remedies. Accordingly, Dr. Gunn provided the following instructions for the various parts of the peach tree, a plant well known by those residing in the South:

> This valuable tree affords us, not only a most delightful fruit, but its leaves, flowers, and gum, possess the most active and important medicinal virtues. I have also been informed—but never tried the experiment—that the bark of the Peach tree contains very active powers as a purge. The leaves and blossoms purge the bowels freely, and without the least griping, when taken as a strong tea, in doses of a tea-spoonful every hour: and they also act as a mild purgative when taken as a syrup, prepared by boiling slowly their juice, with an equal quantity of honey, sugar or molasses, and given to children in doses of a tablespoonful, and to grown persons in doses of a wine, or stem-glassful.[15]

One should note that, in both descriptions, the treatment plan resulted in depletion and purging the body, common methods used by the medical community.

Some southern publications that focused on agriculture and economics, topics of interest to most planters, also advertised medical products thought to be beneficial to laypeople. For instance, *DeBow's Review* promoted medicine chests specifically for planters. The advertisement read: "To Southern Planters. John Milhau, Pharmaceutical Chemist and Wholesale Druggist… French and other Foreign Chemicals and Medicines always on hand. Medicine Chests for Plantations, &c., &c."[16] Another advertisement, also published in *DeBow's Review*, concerned a product called Swaim's Panacea, a "cure" for incipient consumption, scrofula, rheumatism, and several other ailments. But the ad warned:

> Persons wishing to obtain the genuine SWAIM'S PANACEA AND SWAIM'S VERMIFUGE, should be careful to observe that the name SWAIM is spelled correctly on the bottles and labels or they may be imposed on by medicine made in imitation of them by a person bearing a somewhat similar name, well calculated to deceive.[17]

In 1837, amidst ads for clothing, runaway slaves, and physicians' services, the front page of *The Picayune* (a New Orleans newspaper) had no less than three announcements for medicines said to cure a number of ailments: Brandreth's Vegetable Universal Pills, Dr. Elmore's Anti-Dyspeptic Pills, and Improved Bilious Pills prepared by Dr. J. H. Elmore.[18] It is difficult to ascertain whether doctors actually recommended these products. However, considering theories of physiology and the prevailing treatments offered, it is reasonable to assume that the medical community endorsed these "cures." At the same time, choosing among the various "cures" may have made it difficult for southern laymen to decide upon the best product. Nevertheless, laymen equipped with medical manuals written by physicians, and armed with commercial and herbal remedies, set out to provide medical care to those that may not have otherwise received such care.

But medical treatment was not the only aspect of providing health care in the South. Supplying adequate food, clothing, and shelter to white families and slaves was also important in maintaining health on the plantation. Specifically, damp and earthen floors, lack of windows and poor ventilation certainly contributed to the poor health of slaves.[19] Writing in 1847, J. D. B. DeBow (slave owner and founder of *DeBow's Review*) addressed these conditions and others as well. He suggested:

> Houses for negroes should be elevated at least two feet above the earth, with good plank flooring, weather proof, and with capacious windows and doors for ventilation, a large fireplace, and wood convenient. A negro house should never be crowded…. Good water is far more essential than many suppose…. In relation to food a word might be ventured; the point is to provide enough.[20]

Proper nutrition and adequate, clean clothing were essential in attempts to maintain the health of the slaves. By providing clothing and shoes appropriate for the season of the year and food that included the proteins and salt necessary for maintaining a healthy body, the productivity and health of the slave work force fared better.[21] However, in those instances when a serious illness did occur, patients were sometimes moved from the slave quarters to the "sick house" for medical care.

The "sick house" provided a place where the patient's condition, medical care, and progress could be supervised, usually under

the direction of the plantation mistress who was assisted by slave women.[22] But masters were not exempt from administering medical care themselves, as physicians were often plantation owners. Still, planters usually delegated health care duties to the plantation mistress, an overseer, or a slave. Hospitals or "sick houses" were only found on larger plantations, while smaller farms might set up sick rooms in the plantation house.

That said, planters frequently complained that slaves malingered or overused the "sick house." At the same time, however, planters also encountered slaves who were reluctant to seek medical care. Consequently, contagious illnesses could spread to others on the plantation and surrounding areas, or an illness that went untreated for whatever reason could lead to more complicated medical problems later.[23] It was thus in the planter's interest to take a proactive role in the medical care of slaves. Ultimately, the slaves represented a financial commitment for the owner, and expenses associated with paying physicians' fees or the loss of a worker due to the death of a slave negatively impacted the productivity and economic success of the plantation.

On those occasions when illness or injuries required care beyond the skill of the layperson, the planter summoned a physician to the plantation. In 1854, *The Rowan County Medical Society Tariff of Fees* for medical procedures in North Carolina indicated that the charges for doctors' visits to the country, three miles or under, were $1.50 with an additional fee of fifty cents for each mile over three. Likewise, the cost for a night visit by the doctor was an additional dollar. The fees for a physician to attend an uncomplicated birth ranged from $10 to $20, while the fees for a complicated delivery ranged from $20 to $100.[24] As one might imagine, medical fees quickly mounted when physicians were called to the plantation to provide treatment to the planter's family and enslaved workforce.

In addition to overseeing the "sick house," the mistress played other important roles in providing medical care for herself, her family, and slaves. Notably, this responsibility meant that plantation mistresses were able to move outside of paternal boundaries in their role as medical caregivers. Relying upon medical manuals, home remedies that she prepared, and knowledge passed down from generation to generation, the plantation mistress was responsible for overseeing the medical needs of her own family as well as slaves, sometimes at the expense of her own health.[25]

An advertisement in an 1848 edition of *DeBow's Review* offered the services of one O. M. Wozencraft, M.D. for treatment of "Female

Derangement and Disease." It read: Dr. Wozencraft "flatters himself that he has attained that degree of perfection in treating that class of diseases so common, and yet so much neglected among Females."[26] It would be interesting to know how many women presumably were afflicted with this ailment, though obviously, it was thought common enough that Dr. Wozencraft attained perfection in treating such an illness. Perhaps the stress caused by the numerous responsibilities placed on women in demanding positions such as plantation mistresses, wives, mothers, and caregivers was more than some women could handle, resulting in stress-related ailments.

Large families were quite common in the Old South. Consequently, frequent births took a toll on women's health. The addition of children to the family is often thought of as a joyous occasion, and for most people it certainly is. In the South, however, pregnancy and childbirth were causes for fear, not only for the mistress, but also for her husband. Many women feared giving birth to a child because they could die in the process.[27] Family members gathered in the home to support and assist the expectant mother during the birthing process, which could take hours or even days. The potential complications following delivery were numerous and included clearing the body of the afterbirth; puerperal or "childbed" fever (a deadly infection within the uterus); the inability to breastfeed the child; and prolapse of the uterus, to name a few. Although few references were made in women's journals or medical manuals about birth control for white women, breastfeeding provided nutritional benefits to the child and also served as a natural means of birth control by delaying menstruation.[28]

If complications occurred and a white mother could not breast feed, slave women were occasionally called upon to be wet nurses for white infants. Ex-slave John F. Van Hook, in his Works Progress Administration (WPA) interview, recalled his great, great grandmother's experience as a wet nurse for the Angel family, which helped her gain her freedom from slavery. He remembered:

> The way Granny Sarah happened to be free was;
> one of the women in the Angel family died and left
> a little baby soon after one of Granny's babies was
> born, and so she was loaned to that family as wet
> nurse for the little orphan baby. They gave her her
> freedom and took her into their home, because they
> did not want her sleeping in slave quarters while
> she was nursing the white child. In that settlement,

> it was considered a disgrace for a white child to feed
> at the breast of a slave woman, but it was all right if
> the darkey was a free woman.[29]

In addition to caring for her own family, the mistress was also responsible for overseeing the health care of the slaves on the plantation. Nearly seventy percent of those who provided interviews for the slave narratives spoke of being cared for by their mistress, and administering medicine was one way the mistress helped take care of the slaves.[30] Ex-slave Victoria Adams recalled the care provided by her mistress, Martha Kirkland Black, in her WPA interview with Everett R. Pierce.

> Missus Martha she' did look after de slaves good
> when they was sick. Us had medicine made from
> herbs, leaves and roots; some of them was cat-nip,
> garlic root, tansy, and roots of burdock. De roots
> of burdock soaked in whiskey was mighty good
> medicine.[31]

The mistress thus administered medicine to those who were ill. Medicinal products were available for purchase as advertised in newspapers and other publications. Additionally, kitchen recipe books, or "receipt books" as they were called, contained not only instructions on how to prepare food, but also recipes for making medicine in the plantation kitchen. The ingredients in these recipes demonstrate the use of southern native plants and roots. For example, *The Confederate Receipt Book* provided this remedy for asthma:

> Take the leaves of the stramonium (or Jamestown
> weed,) dried in the shade, saturated with a pretty
> strong solution of salt petre, and smoke it so as to
> inhale the fumes. It may strangle at first if taken too
> freely, but it will loosen the phlegm in the lungs. The
> leaves should be gathered before frost.[32]

Most Americans of European descent believed that for every illness there was a corresponding plant that could be made into an herbal remedy. For example, if one had an ailment that affected the heart, plants with heart-shaped leaves would be used as a cure.[33] Yet, medicine was not only administered to treat illness, but also to help prevent illness. Former slave Della Briscoe recalled a tonic made of calomel and salts administered every spring to help keep the slaves healthy.[34]

The multifaceted role of the mistress in taking care of the family and home, as well serving as the medical caregiver of the slaves, must have been difficult at times. As wives of plantation masters, mistresses had a responsibility to their husbands to protect their financial investment in the slaves by caring for their medical needs.[35] However, in her role as medical caregiver, the mistress was placed in an atypical situation; that is, she temporarily was not subject to paternalism and male dominance.[36] Conversely, when called upon to provide medical care on the plantation, doctors worked in the "domestic environment" of the mistress instead of the "public arena." As the initial caregiver of the slave's injury or illness, the mistress thus influenced the physician's treatment plan for her patients.[37] In sum, plantation mistresses in the Old South were able to exert some authority in their role as caregivers for the sick and injured.

African Americans, free and enslaved, also played an important role in providing health care in the Old South. African Americans sought to treat the whole person with a holistic medical approach, which included not only treating the body, but the mind as well.[38] African medical folklore passed down through the generations became a combination of ritual and ceremony, plus a faith that plants, herbs, and roots served medicinal purposes.[39] Notably, slaves did not always follow the instructions of the slaveholder's physician— rather at times they followed their own medical regime to care for themselves and others within the slave community.[40] Not unlike the white population, slaves were also at times fearful of doctors and the treatment plans they provided. Some medical treatments, such as bleeding a patient or amputations, were difficult for the enslaved to understand and therefore to trust. Those of West African heritage also not only feared these methods of treatment, but these treatments conflicted with West African beliefs of caring for the body.[41]

Enslaved women suffered from many of the same reproductive health problems as did white women; and it is believed that about one half of slave women's pregnancies ended in stillbirths. Additionally, exhaustion from the physical demands of slave labor has been blamed for negligence in childcare that may have resulted in sudden death in infants. [42] Specifically, slaveholders demanded that women who had just delivered babies return to the fields almost immediately; pregnant women were forced to work; and pregnant women were whipped.

Slave women relied upon an interesting array of birth control methods. For some slave mothers, breastfeeding served as a natural

means of birth control. Other attempts at controlling pregnancy took on an entirely different approach based on superstition and folk belief.[43] Examples of these birth control methods included holding a brass pin or copper coin under the tongue during intercourse, lying motionless during the act or turning onto the left side afterwards, drinking concoctions such as gunpowder mixed with milk, swallowing nine pellets of birdshot, consuming a teaspoon of turpentine for nine days following intercourse, and using a mixture of tea from cocklebur roots and bluestone as a douche.[44] These methods were certainly not scientific by today's standards, yet they were the only methods available for black women to attempt to meet their contraceptive needs. When birth control methods failed and an unwanted pregnancy occurred, the enslaved turned to other measures to terminate a pregnancy.

To abort unwanted pregnancies, slave women sometimes used the cotton plant, the staple crop of the South. The root of the cotton plant could be made into a tea or chewed.[45] By terminating a pregnancy that would have resulted in an additional worker for the slave owner, and by utilizing the plant that provided him income, the female slave was exercising some control over her body and her enslaved situation.[46]

As indicated, for most enslaved women, pregnancy did not end their labor for their owner, although some planters were said to be more lenient when a slave was with child. Still, many slave women were expected to return to work shortly after having their babies. One unidentified former slave from Richmond County, Georgia, recalled in her WPA interview that "Whenever a child was born the mother come out in three days afterwards if she was healthy, but nobody stayed in over a week. They never stayed in bed but one day."[47] However, Julia Brown recalled in her WPA interview that "When the wimmen had babies they wus treated kind and they let 'em stay in. . . . We jest had our babies and had a granny to catch 'em."[48] Slave midwives or "grannies" were responsible for most slave deliveries, and for about one-half of white deliveries.[49] Due to their skills in delivering babies and assisting with other medical needs, some slave owners "hired out" their female slaves as midwives or medical caregivers to neighboring plantations as a way to make additional money.[50]

In addition to assisting in the birthing process, slaves also provided medical care in other ways. That is, in some cases, their knowledge of medicine was used to treat the master's family, despite a law passed in Virginia in 1748 that restricted slaves from

providing medical treatment to planters and their families.[51] For example, former slave Lila Rutherford recalled her role in medical care for her mistress, Mary Suber. "I was hired by Marse Suber as a nurse in the big house," Rutherford explained, "and I waited on my mistress when she was sick, and was at her bed when she died."[52]

As caregivers, the enslaved also prepared and administered homemade remedies, using plants, herbs, roots, and non-herbal substances as ingredients for medicine. These enslaved practitioners merged European, Native American, Caribbean, and African medical folklore to create their own blend of medicine.[53] The availability of plants and roots varied by location and climate, but various parts of plants such as peach tree leaves, catnip, sage, raspberry leaves, pine needles, mustard weed, and roots from the Sweet William plant, to name just a few, were made into medical remedies.[54] Non-herbal medicines were also common in the South.

Former slave Celestia Avery recalled a non-herbal remedy known as "Cow foot oil," appropriately named for the concoction made by boiling cows' feet in water.[55] Although Avery did not indicate what this concoction cured, she mentioned it along with other more common remedies such as castor oil and teas made from catnip and horehound. Former slave Marshal Butler also reported, with a touch of humor, an uncommon cure for a common ailment. "For constipation," Butler stated, "use tea made from sheep droppings and if away from home de speed of de feet do not match de speed of this remedy."[56] When interviewed by WPA writer Francois Ludgere Diard in 1937, eighty-five year old former slave Mammy Lucy Kimball, recalled "that she strictly adhered to old fashioned methods such as: going to church twice a week, not believing in doctors, and always taking home-concocted remedies."[57] Julia Brown likewise stated in her WPA interview, "Ah still believes in them ole ho'made medicines too and ah don't believe in so many doctors."[58] Another common herbal remedy was asafetida, a strong smelling concoction made from the roots and stems of plants tied in a small pouch and worn around the neck. While the medicinal value of asafetida may be challenged, its smell is said to have been so offensive that it kept people from getting too close to one another, thus keeping harmful germs away.[59] Many former slaves spoke positively of the benefits of these remedies in their WPA slave narratives.

The conjurer, also known as the hoodoo or root doctor, relied upon the supernatural as well as plants, herbs, and roots to heal

or cause harm to individuals. In addition to plant matter, these magico-religious folk practitioners used charms, holy words, and holy actions.[60] Conjurers were also known to use "trickery, magic, spells, violence, persuasion, intimidation, mystery, gimmicks, fear and some medical practices," which helped the conjurer rise to a level of importance within the slave community.[61] Conjurers could be male or female, and supporters believed conjurers were born with this gift.[62] In addition to having power to harm or heal, the conjurer's powers could provide good luck, keep people on friendly terms, and help improve romantic relationships.[63]

Former slave Estella Jones recalled the work of conjurers and root specialists, saying "I have asked root workers to tell me how they does these things, and one told me," she explained, "that it was easy for folks to put snakes, frogs, turtles, spiders, or most anythin' that you couldn't live with crawlin' and eatin' on the inside of you." Jones recalled that her cousin became ill and died after drinking a concoction made by a conjurer that caused frogs to live and grow within his body. Jones said, "you could hear 'em [the frogs] everytime he opened his mouth." Jones also told of another conjurer's spell cast over a spring of water that caused one John to become ill after drinking from the spring. Allegedly, a turtle began living within his body and eventually choked him to death.[64] The slave narratives also provide other examples of snakes and spiders coming out of sick or dead bodies from conjurers' spells.

Folklore also included the use of charms to cast spells or to undo them. Charms utilized by conjurers in the South included "graveyard dust, reptiles, pins, hair, graveyard dirt (gopher dust), reptile parts, herbs, bottles, bones, roots, nail clippings, and other personal effects."[65] The conjurer made use of these items as well as "prayers, incantations, healing touches, charms, amulets, and other items" to keep evil spirits away.[66] Graveyard dust and dirt, in particular, were used to "invoke spirits of the dead against the living."[67] Belief in the supernatural, however, extended beyond the realm of the conjurer.

Supernatural powers purportedly were granted to infants born with the caul (sac that encloses the fetus) over its face, to twins, or to the seventh child born into a family. Midwives were believed to have this special calling, as well.[68] Foretellers were also considered "special" for their abilities to look into the future and to interpret signs.[69]

Therefore, when treating slaves, the physician at times found himself not only taking directions from the plantation mistress,

but he was also in competition with enslaved medical leaders.[70] Moreover, in medical treatment as well as in conjuring, one may see a sense of community that helped to empower the enslaved. That is, because they were familiar with their own folk remedies and methods, and because certain established treatments (such as bloodletting and amputations) violated their religious beliefs, the enslaved trusted and relied upon practitioners within their own communities.[71]

The importance of confidence and belief in medical treatment, whether in non-traditional, herbal, or conjuring methods, should not be underestimated. The power of the conjurer could be used against an oppressive slave master. For example, the power of a root used for protection may be seen in the autobiography of Frederick Douglass. In his 1845 book, Douglass related how an acquaintance suggested that he carry a certain root in his right pocket that would protect him from beatings by his master, Mr. Covey. Douglass took this advice and found that, although he had confrontations with Covey, the confrontations usually went in Douglass's favor and eventually stopped. Douglass indicated that this experience with the root was the "turning point in my career as a slave."[72] From our perspective, it is difficult to belief that power actually came from the root. The point is that, because of this incident, Douglass felt empowered.

Historian Elliot Gorn provided another example of the power of the conjurer against an oppressive slave master. In this legend, the conjurer inflicted pain on his owner when he created an image of him from mud and then placed thorns in the image's back. His owner was said to have suffered back pain until the conjurer decided that he had been punished enough. Once the thorns were removed, allegedly his owner recovered. Thus, in a temporary role reversal, the master was not in control, rather the slave was.[73]

Superstition also influenced views on medical care within slave communities. For example, it was believed that a knife or axe placed in the proper location within the home would cut pain or "fend off some spirit or medical calamity."[74] Following childbirth, former slave Julia Brown also recalled that "The granny would put a rusty piece of tin or a ax under the mattress and this would ease the pains. The granny put a ax under my mattress once. This wus to cut off the after-pains and it sho did too."[75] Likewise, a cure for cramps was to "wear a raw cotton string tied in nine knots around your waist" and for a nosebleed or hiccoughs, "cross two straws on top of your head."[76] Superstition may be seen in this warning as

well: "Don't buy new things for a sick person; if you do he will not live to wear it out."[77]

Superstition was also said to influence explanations for children (born to whites or blacks) with "mothers' marks," or in today's terminology, disabilities. For example, it was believed that a woman gave birth to a child that had the features and actions of a fox because the mother, while pregnant, saw her master's fox daily. Similarly, while pregnant, the mother of a disabled child was said to have seen an elephant in a traveling carnival. Looking upon the elephant, it was believed, had "marked" her baby with its disability.[78]

The poor health of the plantation family and the slaves was detrimental to the success of the plantation. Because physicians were not always easily accessible, masters, mistresses, and the enslaved were responsible for providing much of the health care to those residing on the plantation. By providing for the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter, the plantation master's role as paternal leader was reinforced. However, plantation mistresses and the enslaved gained a sense of empowerment because their roles as health care providers allowed them a level of importance normally not relegated to them.

As the knowledge of science and medicine continued to increase throughout the antebellum period, more medical schools were established, and more physicians were trained to help meet the demands of health care. It was also during this time that women like Elizabeth Blackwell gained entrance to medical colleges to receive training in the male dominated field of medicine. However, increasing the number of physicians, both male and female; as well as establishing new medical colleges were slow processes. In the meantime, medical needs in the South had to be met. Consequently, health care provided by plantation masters, mistresses, and the enslaved was instrumental in attempting to meet these needs.

Notes

1 Todd L. Savitt, *Medicine and Slavery: The Diseases and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 19.

2 Herbert C. Covey, *African American Slave Medicine: Herbal and Non-Herbal Treatments* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007), 7.

3 Margaret Carolyn Mitchell, "Health and the Medical Profession in the Lower South, 1845-1860," *The Journal of Southern History* 10, no. 4 (1944): 441-43.

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Mitch Jordan

Faner Hall: Faux Pas and Follower?

For many young adults in today's society, searching for an institution to continue their educational process has become a rite of passage. Every year, thousands of young adults travel to campuses across the country to find the university or college that is right for them. When prospective students visit Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, few question the aesthetics of the campus. From the natural tranquility of Thompson Woods and Campus Lake, to the antique-like appearance of Shryock Auditorium, to the contemporary Morris Library, it could be argued that the campus at Carbondale is one of the most attractive in the Midwest. However, that argument would only stand until one stumbled upon the concrete monster that stands in the center of the campus. That monstrosity, Faner Hall, has been considered an eyesore since its completion in 1975.[1] Similar complaints about the appearance of the building still can be heard today. However, they are based on modern standards of appearance. They do not take into consideration the era in which the building was constructed. Faner Hall reflects the architectural trends of the 1960s and 70s, and its construction was necessary to fulfill the needs of Southern Illinois University's growing student population.

The 1950s, 60s and 70s were a time of significant change in the United States. The culture of America was shifting, and people were beginning to see things in a different light. Politics, war, and a massive counterculture movement caused people to reevaluate their lives. One aspect people began to reconsider was the value of an education, especially higher education. Americans were beginning to realize that education was the key to long term success in society.[2] With this newfound emphasis on higher education came an increase in the number of students continuing on to a college or university after high school. Large increases in the student population were first seen during the early 1950s. During a five-year span, from 1951 to 1955, total enrollment in higher education increased by over half a million students.[3] In 1960, there were approximately 2.2 million students enrolled, and by 1975 there were nearly 8.5 million

students roaming around America's campuses.[4] Nearly eighty-five percent of students were attending four-year institutions, although that percentage decreased slightly as more junior colleges were constructed.[5] At the time, schools were not prepared for the sudden influx of students flooding their campuses. Classrooms, dormitories, and other educational facilities were not large enough to accommodate all of the new students. In order to facilitate a new generation of learners, colleges and universities would be forced to expand on a larger scale. The educational landscape was changing and higher learning institutions needed to change as well.

As more students poured onto college campuses, expansion became an important issue for public and private universities alike. Many university planning experts began to question whether or not colleges would be able to handle the sudden increase in students. A report released by Educational Facilities Laboratories in 1964 concluded that universities were in fact not prepared for the new student population.[6] Construction of new buildings and facilities was taking too much time and the amount of money that institutions were willing to spend was not going to be enough. The same report estimated that colleges would need to spend around 1.9 billion dollars on expansion. In Illinois, only 195 million dollars were set aside to construct two satellite facilities, one of which was Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.[7] Despite spending less than what was reportedly needed, the Carbondale campus experienced immense growth during the second half of the twentieth century. That growth and expansion was led by former university president Delyte Morris, who was arguably the most influential figure in the history of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIUC).

When Morris took over as president of Southern Illinois University (SIU) in 1948, the school was a relatively unknown teaching college that had only a few thousand students. By the time Morris retired in 1970, the Carbondale campus was home to over 22,000 students, barely resembling the small teachers college that it once was. The most significant growth in the student population occurred during Morris's last decade as president. From 1960 to 1970, enrollment increased from 9,000 students to approximately 24,000 students.[8] One of the main factors contributing to the university's growth was the close relationship that Morris was able to form with the citizens of Carbondale. His emphasis on making the university the town's primary industry, while keeping it a rural community, sat well with Carbondale residents.[9]

Unlike many smaller universities that were forced to place caps on enrollment due to the large influx of students, SIU simply kept expanding. In 1976, six years after Morris retired, the university was finally forced to place a limit on its enrollment because the student population was growing so rapidly that there was not enough student housing available.[10] Morris's expansion was so significant that, early in his reign, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* ran a feature column entitled, "How Big Can SIU Get?"[11] Not only did Morris increase the student population in Carbondale, he increased the size of the campus exponentially and worked hard to reach out to the local community.

Morris's actions reflected the trend of expansion that was occurring across America, but the growth Southern Illinois experienced was unheard of at the time. In a span of only twenty years, Morris was able to transform SIU from a small teaching college into one of the nation's 100 largest universities.[12] When Morris left the university in 1970, he left a campus that was barely recognizable to anyone who had seen the school twenty years earlier. However, the expansion of SIUC did not end when Morris left. The Carbondale campus was only a few years away from being drastically altered once again, although this time only one building would revolutionize the landscape of the university's grounds.

The drastic increase in enrollment at Southern Illinois, as well as across the nation, signaled the need for more facilities to efficiently manage all of the new students. According to economist Peter F. Drucker, "To take care of all the additional students expected on the campus by 1975, colleges will have to construct new facilities equal to twice all of the campus buildings erected since Harvard opened in 1636."[13] Drucker's estimation held true in Carbondale, as the majority of the buildings on campus today were constructed during this period of expansion. Lawson Hall, Evergreen Terrace, Morris Library, and the Communications Building were all planned and constructed between 1965 and 1975. Also, during that time, a new Humanities and Social Sciences Building was planned. It was to be placed in the center of campus, directly on top of the University President's home.[14] A campus map from 1967 (Figure 1) shows the area in which the new building was to be placed.[15] Point B on the map represents the temporary barracks that were used for faculty offices and research; and Point A marks the University President's house. Both of these structures would be demolished to pave the way for the new Humanities building. Eventually that new building would be named after a late English professor whose office was situated in the temporary barracks that once occupied the space.
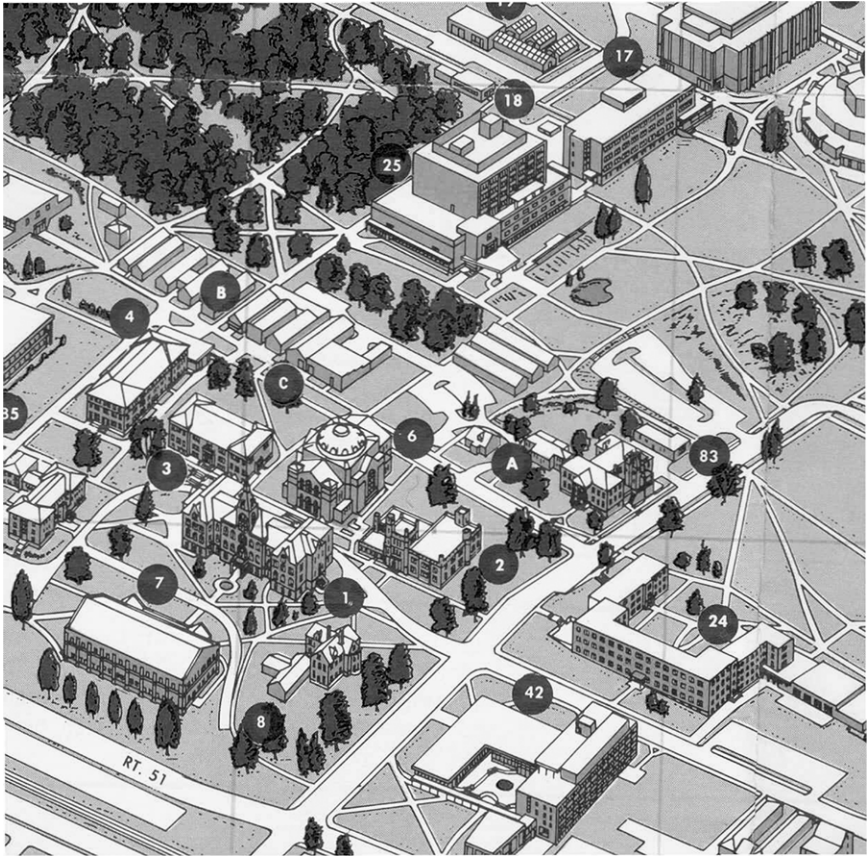
Figure 1

The decision to name the new Humanities and Social Sciences building after the late Robert D. Faner was a simple one. Faner had been a well-recognized educator at the university for thirty-seven years, and had received the Alumni Great Teacher Award in 1964.[16] According to Charles D. Tenney, his students remembered him for "the warmth [and] the enthusiasm of his teaching."[17] Faner, however, was far from a simple, kind-hearted English professor. His bold and multifaceted personality was what ultimately cemented his legacy at the university. Many faculty members remembered Faner for his maverick mentality and his "intense dislike of administrative prerogative and power."[18] Although his attitude may not have been beloved by university administrators, Faner's skepticism towards authority was admired by his fellow staff members and students. Tenney, a close friend of Faner's, connected the professor's intrepid

persona with the giant concrete structure that was to be named after him at the dedication ceremony for the building. Tenney said:

> Bob Faner's character was the essence of humanity and… naming the building after him will be a perpetual reminder of its nature and function. What other value does it have than to reward its students with feeling and wonder, to encourage its faculty members in the discovery and transmittal of knowledge, to keep the bureaucracy on its toes, and never to let anyone reject the human norm?[19]

The structure's complexity has certainly left many individuals bewildered throughout the years. But its dead-end hallways, multiple entrances, and maze-like construction would have pleased Robert Faner. The ability of the building to keep its visitors guessing would undoubtedly have left a smile on the English professor's face. In an effort to capture the essence of the building's namesake, some of Faner's work, as well as other artifacts pertaining to the building, were placed inside a time capsule that was buried just inside one of the entrances.[20] Despite the fact that planning for the building began shortly after the professor's death, and the building that bears his name seems to reflect many of the professor's character traits, it is unlikely that designers had Robert Faner in mind when they designed the facility.

The planning for Faner Hall began in December of 1967. From the beginning, the new Humanities and Social Sciences building was considered to be a major alteration to the appearance of the campus.[21] Towering over older campus buildings such as Shryock Auditorium, Parkinson Laboratory, and Davies Gymnasium, the new building would indeed be a significant variation from the surrounding structures. Yet, those who were doing the initial proposals for the building did not predict that its outward appearance would diverge as much as it did from surrounding structures. They did, however, have a distinct idea of what the building would look like. According to a report from the *Daily Egyptian*, "A major part of the [alteration] will be the construction of a long, open Humanities-Social Sciences building, to stretch from North of the University Center to the home of President Morris. The building's ground floor will contain classrooms and offices, and will feature a covered walkway."[22] When finished, the building would measure 914 feet long, have a total square footage of 225,000 feet, and use over 28,000 cubic yards of concrete.[23] The building would no doubt be a large undertaking for the architects who were chosen for the project.

The duty of designing the new Humanities building was bestowed upon the Philadelphia based architectural firm *Geddes, Brecher, Qualls, and Cunningham*. The design and planning of the building would eventually earn the group a Citation of Excellence from the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute of Architects.[24] To Geddes, the leader of the firm, it was the "Architects task to embody ethical and aesthetic values in a building at both the individual and social levels."[25] Many of Geddes's designs were similar in appearance, and Faner was no exception. Pictured in Figure 2 below is the Graduate Research Center at the University of Pennsylvania, one of Geddes's other designs.[26] It is obvious that he used many of the same concepts on Faner Hall that he did when constructing the Graduate Research Center. Most noticeable, he left the main construction material, reinforced concrete, exposed; making both buildings appear as if they were made of the same material that composed the sidewalks surrounding them. The two buildings also share similar structural designs. Each level of the building is clearly separated by concrete slabs and the exterior seems to be protected by an exoskeleton. The style and appearance of Geddes's work must have been aesthetically pleasing to those in the field of architecture because he is credited for designing several major buildings and he was the recipient of at least one architectural excellence award.[27] Geddes was not alone in his approach to the building's design, however, as many other building designers held similar views in regards to campus architecture.

Figure 2

The style of a building plays a significant role in how people view it aesthetically as well as functionally. Campus planning and design expert Richard Dober defines style as:

> The recognizable, special, and definitive way in which building parts are shaped into a vocabulary of forms; the forms assembled into distinctive and repeatable patterns; an outer fabric selected with materials that become associated with those forms and patterns; and the whole organized and sited to serve function, to appeal visually, and to signify client attitudes and values.[28]

When Robert Geddes designed the new Humanities-Social Sciences building almost completely out of concrete, he was incorporating a mono-form style that was prevalent in campus architecture during the time period. Concrete construction became a trademark of the twentieth century, and it was used in dramatic fashion on college campuses across America. The photograph below, Figure 3, shows Yale University's Beinecke Library, which was constructed in 1963.[29]
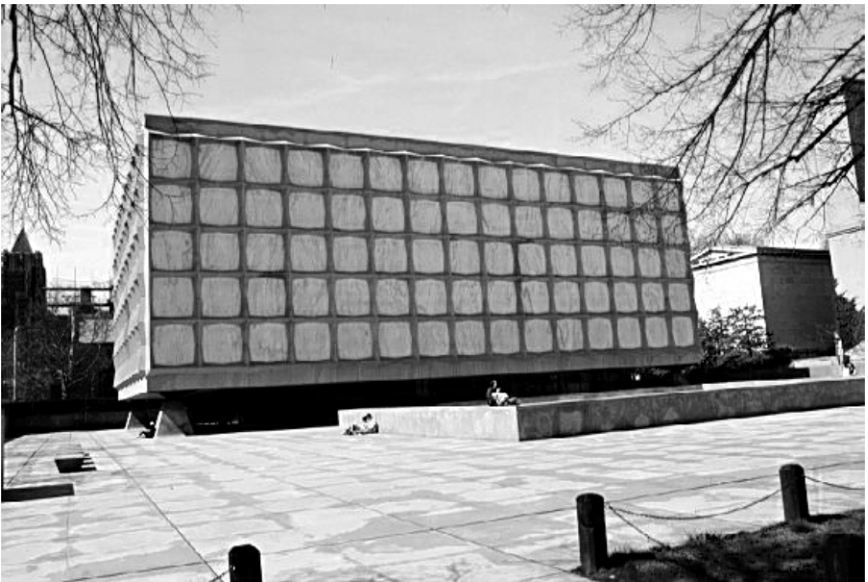

Figure 3

The structure clearly fits Dober's definition of style, as it has noticeable patterns and the material contributes to the repetition of those patterns. The style that is evident in Beinecke Library can also

be seen in Faner Hall. Although the interiors of the buildings are not comparable, the exteriors are quite similar. Both use exposed concrete as the façade, and both have distinguishable patterns along the exterior. The two structures also share the common rectangular prism shape. There is also a walkway underneath both buildings. The Beineke Library is not the only education facility that resembles the Carbondale structure, however. A structure that resembles Faner Hall even more closely exists at Boston College.

In 1984, O'Neill Library was opened at Boston College. Not only did it reflect the concrete architecture that dominated the middle twentieth century, it also bore a striking resemblance to Southern Illinois University's concrete structure, pictured in Figure 4 below.[30] When placed side by side, the two structures are difficult to tell apart. O'Neill Library, Figure 5 below, not only has the same mono-form characteristics as the structures mentioned earlier, it also incorporates the same type of split-level walkways as Faner.[31] It is apparent that the designers of O'Neill Library drew inspiration from Faner Hall. In this instance, Geddes's Carbondale masterpiece was indeed a leader, not a follower.

Figure 4   **Figure 5**

The concrete design that Geddes and many others used in their buildings was part of a new architectural style that arose in the middle of the twentieth century. Architects were trying to move away from traditional styles that dominated both new and old college campuses. Designers wanted to create a style of their own, one that was not a descendant of the Oxford and Cambridge styles of the previous centuries. In order to do this, builders would need to utilize other materials besides brick and cement. Many turned to concrete, which according to Richard Dober, was believed to have "intrinsic characteristics, truths, which when discovered would yield objectively defined architecture."[32] Because concrete could be formed into almost any size or shape, designers began to come up with new and revolutionary ideas for building designs. Doer explains, "The shapes and forms [of concrete] would liberate designer and client from having to imitate or interpret styles from earlier generations."[33] No longer were architects forced to create

brick structures that resembled European castles and churches. Concrete blessed designers with a flexibility that had previously been unavailable to them. Sharper angles and cylinders could now be incorporated into building designs. Concrete design also eliminated the need for timber, thus saving an important natural resource.[34] Large buildings also became a more feasible option with the use of concrete. Thus, the practicality of concrete helped to make it the material of choice during the era of college expansion.

Concrete buildings also became a status symbol for universities after the 1940s. By placing new concrete structures on their campuses, campus officials were able to show that they had moved away from traditional architectural styles and were ready to embrace new ideas. Concrete structures also showed that universities were prepared to take on the new student population that accompanied the postwar boom, as they tended to be larger than older campus buildings. According to Dober, "Concrete structures became the signals of institutional advancement," representing not only a change in architectural styles, but also a shift in the overall landscape of higher education.[35]

However, as much as concrete helped change the face of college campuses nationwide, it also possessed several negative traits. The aesthetic properties of the material left much to be desired. As Dober put it, "On some campuses today, the appearance of concrete would seem to be not a material that manifests institutional advancement, but an error in aesthetic judgment."[36] The bland, grey color of concrete is more often than not quite unappealing to the human eye. It is hard to find beauty in a building that is the same color as the walkways that surround it. Hence, although the material withstands the elements, concrete is not always aesthetically pleasing. For example, Dober noted that on a wet day "moisture-dampened concrete is dreary and dismal," which takes away from the often times impressive architectural design.[37] When there is moisture in the air a concrete building looks more like a highway overpass or a parking garage than an educational facility. Concrete also tends to become non-uniform in color, making it appear dirty or stained. These negative aspects would ultimately lead to harsh judgment of Faner Hall from students and faculty on Southern Illinois's campus.

Even before the $14 million structure had been completely finished, Faner Hall was being criticized by faculty and students.[38] The building had been given nicknames such as the "aircraft carrier" and the "concrete zeppelin," neither of which belongs in the middle

of a rural college campus.[39] The fact that the building was finished a year behind schedule led to a few complaints, as well. Faculty members who moved into the facility soon complained about the confusing layout of the building, leaking pipes, and temperature control problems. The outward appearance of the building did not help its cause, either. Faculty members complained that "the building did not fit in with the rest of campus, calling it 'ugly' and 'impractical.'"[40] Their complaints were undoubtedly warranted considering the fact that nearly all of the surrounding buildings had been constructed decades earlier. The gloomy gray color of Faner Hall did not blend well with the vibrant red and brown bricks that decorated the exteriors of all of the neighboring facilities. Students and faculty also expressed their ill feelings toward the building by voting against the construction of the parking garage that is in front of Faner Hall today. Although the main argument against the building of the parking garage was not related to Faner Hall, the new building did play a factor in the opposition to the garage.[41] Teachers and students alike did not want another concrete structure to be placed next to older, more visually appealing structures like Parkinson Laboratory.

Obviously the complaints about the building did not lead to its destruction, and it can be assumed that those departments that were housed in Faner were more than happy to be housed in a new, up-to-date facility. Still, many were unhappy about the appearance of the new building.

University personnel were quick to defend the design and appearance of the newly built, and newly despised, Faner Hall. Officials acknowledged that the building did not fit in with the surrounding structures, but they insisted that if it had been the same design, then the campus would be unexciting.[42] Rino Bianchi, the Director of Facilities Planning during the construction of Faner Hall, stated the obvious: "The concrete has been used honestly. We didn't paint or put up a brick veneer. Concrete is an honest material."[43] Certainly Bianchi was not the only school official who had to defend the appearance of a new concrete building. Many other concrete structures were undoubtedly criticized by students and faculty at other universities.

Moreover, those who question Faner Hall's design are not alone, as many a passerby has wondered about the building's design and appearance. However, one would only need to look at other college campuses to discover that the structure is far from unique. As indicated, the building possesses qualities that exist in many other

facilities that were also constructed during this time period, and its immense size is a direct result of the large increase in student population. Unlike other structures, however, Faner has a rich history that is as intriguing and distinctive as the building itself. Although it will continue to be ridiculed about its confusing layout and bland exterior, Faner's classrooms will be utilized by young scholars for years to come. I can only hope that in the year 2075, one of those young scholars researches the building once again and discovers that there is a treasure trove of information located a few feet under the building, waiting to be exhumed.[44]

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Devin Vaughn

Slavery as a Political Tool: The Battle over Kansas

The decades leading to the Civil War were marked by an increase in political combat between the North and the South over the question of slavery. Territorial expansion and the admittance of new states greatly intensified this battle, causing legislators to argue over the question of whether or not slavery would be allowed to continue westward. In the decade preceding the Civil War, the struggle over the admission of Kansas as a state embodied the South's attempts to utilize the institution of slavery as a political tool to aid in this battle. Southern political forces went to great lengths in their attempt to admit Kansas as a slave state, hoping that the newly created state would increase the South's political potency.

There is much to be considered when defining the "South," given its geographic, economic, political, and cultural diversity. This paper will utilize slavery as a means of determining southern identity, because the institution had geographic, economic, political, and cultural implications. The official slave states by 1860 were Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.[1] These fifteen states were what comprised the South as a factional entity.

Comparatively, the North was a less united entity. Its free workforce was a less systematized economic configuration and therefore required less centralization. As a result, the formation of the North as its own entity was due less to a uniting internal aspect, like slavery, and more to a reaction against an external aspect; the South's political prowess. The official free states by 1860 were California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin.[2] These eighteen states were what comprised the North as a factional entity.

An important factor in comparing the South and the North is the breakdown of their populations and how those populations were represented in Congress. The Three-Fifths Compromise,

which allowed three out of every five slaves to be factored into the population represented in Congress, was established at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and allowed the lesser populated slaves states to stand up against the North's superior population; and, for many years, the Three-Fifths Compromise leveled the sectional playing field in Congress.[3] Unfortunately for southern interests, the North's population grew at a far greater rate.

In 1790, the South had a total population of 1,961,372 people (free and enslaved), while the North had a population of 1,968,455 people.[4] But following the War of 1812, millions of immigrants poured into the country, most of them into northern port cities like New York and Boston. Meanwhile, many Americans in both the South and the North moved westward into the territories, which was a concern for the South, because its population was not being replenished by European immigration.[5] As a result, by 1850, the South was populated by 9,612,769 people (free and enslaved), while the North was populated by 13,434,922 people. When one detracts the value of the South's 3,200,304 slaves, its free population is revealed to have been 6,412,465; but in terms of political representation, as a result of the Three-Fifths Compromise, approximately 1,920,182 of the slaves were counted as freemen, giving the South an adjusted free population of 8,332,647 people. In comparing the South's adjusted free population to the North's population, one finds that the North still had 5,102,275 more people than the South in 1850. That difference represented roughly sixty-one percent of the South's adjusted free population. Without the Three-Fifths Compromise, the difference would have been roughly 110 percent. However, despite the North's far greater populace, the South stretched over more land, occupying 851,448 square miles, while the North occupied 612,597 square miles, meaning the South controlled roughly fifty-eight percent of the total area of the United States, excluding the territories.[6]

The Three-Fifths Compromise would also greatly alter the Electoral College. In 1852, the South had 120 electoral votes, and the North had 176 electoral votes. Had the electoral votes not taken into account three-fifths of the slaves, the numbers would have been 105 and 191, respectively, thus giving the North even greater representation.[7] One can clearly see the political advantage the Three-Fifths Compromise afforded the South.

Even with this advantage, the North still would have politically overpowered the South much earlier had the political system predating the presidential election of 1860 been purely sectional.

Fortunately for southern interests, the political system since the time of John Adams' presidency had been a non-sectional two-party system, with various political parties taking active, dualistic roles. As a result of the non-sectional party system, sectional issues were less troublesome because voters could channel their sectional anger into a less divisive, non-sectional system capable of compromise.[8] From 1836 to 1852, the Whig-Democrat party system dominated presidential politics.[9] It was under this system that the Slave Power would have its last era of dominance, being able to manipulate the party system in its favor.

The term "Slave Power" is used in this paper to describe an oligarchy of slaveholders who acted in varying forms of unison to control state and national politics to favor their interests. The idea of such a class of men in the United States, trying to limit federal power to favor their own interests, had existed since the debate over the ratification of the Constitution in 1787. Alexander Hamilton, in advocating ratification, wrote of such men, stating their intentions to limit the power of the federal government and describing their desire as:

> the perverted ambition of another class of men, who will either hope to aggrandise [sic] themselves by the confusions of their country, or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies, than from its union under one government.[10]

Though Hamilton did not specifically name the "Slave Power," he outlined its objective: to make itself more powerful at the cost of the federal government.

In 1850, the number of slaveholders in the South was 346,048; and, of that number, 92,215 owned ten or more slaves. This was a rather small figure in relation to the overall size of the South, but the influence of this class was great. Furthermore, the majority of the South's economy was derived from agriculture. In 1850, the value of the South's agricultural product was $631,277,417, whereas the value of the product of its manufactures was $165,413,027. In the field of agriculture, 3,697,649 people were employed; of that figure, 2,500,000 of them were slaves. This means that sixty-eight percent of those who worked in the most profitable field of the southern economy were slaves.[11] Consequently, slaveholders controlled more than two-thirds of the workforce in the largest sector of the South's economy. This figure taken separately (assuming that each agricultural worker produced the same amount of product) was

larger than the remainder of the value of the agricultural product combined with the value of the industrial product. When one combines the data of the agricultural and industrial products, slaveholders employed in agriculture were directly responsible for at least fifty-three percent of the South's overall economic product, meaning that the slaveholders were clearly the most important figures in the South's economy.

Another important factor in determining the influence of slaveholders can be found in data concerning how political discourse might have been circulated. Census data relating to urbanization, education, the press, and transportation gives a context to the Slave Power's potential to control the southern populace.

Given the lack of an accessible national media, local institutions influenced most voters.[12] In the South, most institutions of political influence were fewer and more disparate than in the North. Cities, for example, were important cultural centers for circulating political debate; but the South was home to very few large cities. In fact, in 1856, census data revealed that there was "less than fifty cities with a population of 3,500" in the South.[13] This meant that southerners were less likely to have strong, nearby cultural centers of political discourse. In relation to education, a strong means by which political debate is advanced, the South had only 18,507 public schools to the North's 62,433; and only 152 public libraries to the North's 1,058. Illiteracy was also high in the South. In 1850, 512,882 illiterate white people lived in the South, or roughly seven percent of the total white population, assuming that the figure representing the number of slaves in the total population remained constant. Also, in 1850, there were 454 political periodicals in the South with a circulation of 413,265 (a figure very close to the number of slaveholders.) Comparatively, the North had 1,160 political periodicals with a circulation of 1,394,582. And another important means of circulating political discourse was transportation. In 1854, the South had 4,212 miles of railroads to the North's 13,105, and 1,116 miles of canals to the North's 3,682.[14]

If one takes all of this information together, one can see that the methods by which political discourse was circulated in the South were minimal and more likely to have been controlled by regional influences, giving much more power to local leaders. Since slaveholders controlled the largest portion of the economy, it can be reasonably assumed that they were able to take advantage of their influential positions and guide their regional masses in a manner that would have been less imaginable in the North.

By whatever method, though representing only a small fraction of the population, slaveholders and their interests were well represented in government. In the executive branch, between the presidencies of Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe, the state of Virginia held sway over the presidency for nearly a quarter century; and, prior to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, the only presidents to ever serve more than one term (Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson) were slaveholders. In addition, of the fifteen presidents before Lincoln, nine of them were from the South. Many more slaveholders served in Congress, including those who served as Speaker of the House the longest (Henry Clay, Andrew Stevenson, and Nathaniel Macon.) In the judicial branch, the South maintained a strong advantage, as nineteen of the thirty-four Supreme Court Justices before Lincoln were slaveholders.[15] Considering the South's relatively small population when compared to the North, one would assume that the South would not have had such clout in government, but the South was able to maintain great power preceding the Civil War because of its political savvy.

The South's ability to maintain its strength existed in its ability to manipulate northerners. On May 26, 1854, William Seward, a Whig senator from New York, addressed the Senate regarding the upcoming passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. He spoke of the South's ability to maintain its power:

> The great support of Slavery in the South has been its alliance with the Democratic Party of the North. By means of that alliance it obtained paramount influence in this Government about the year 1800 which, from that time to this, with but few and slight interruptions, it has maintained.[16]

The Democratic Party, since the time of Andrew Jackson, required a presidential candidate to have the backing of at least a two-thirds majority of the nominating caucus; and because the South was such an integral element of the party, it would have been impossible for a Democratic presidential candidate to receive the party's backing if he were at odds with the South. Consequently, if a northern Democrat were to have any hope of success in the party, he would have to back the southern agenda.[17] As a result, the South more or less controlled the Democratic Party on the national level.

This organization allowed the South to always fend off threats in Congress. For example, if a bill were presented to Congress opposing the interests of the Slave Power, its un-amended passage

would have been highly unlikely, given that opposition to the bill would have included the entire South (both Whigs and Democrats) and the northern wing of the Democratic Party. In fact, for many years, the only real opposition to the South as a whole was northern Whigs.

This acquiescence, on the part of northern Democrats, made possible the passage of such bills catering to southern interests as the admission of Arkansas as a slave state in 1819, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. As time wore on, however, the South found it more difficult to rely on support from northern Democrats because their staunch support for the South caused them to lose elections. Meanwhile, some northern Democrats felt that they were not adequately profiting from their support for the South since northerners could seldom gain a great deal of power in the Democratic Party.[18] Consequently, by the time the Kansas-Nebraska Bill came to Congress in 1854, the South was in a politically weaker position than it had been in previous decades.

The admittance of new states had long been a difficult subject in antebellum politics. For many years preceding the Civil War, the number of slave states had remained equal to the number of free states. If a new slave state was admitted, it was coupled with a new free state, and vice versa. For example, Alabama offset Illinois; Missouri offset Maine; and Arkansas offset Michigan. By this method, a certain level of sectional equality was maintained in the Senate.[19]

This delicate balance, however, would be undone. As a result of the gold rush of 1849, many Americans flocked to California in search of wealth. The influx of so many people required a territorial government, and Californians drew up a constitution prohibiting slavery. Many of those mining gold wanted to keep slavery out of California, due to racism and fear that slaveholders would take over the mining industry as they had the agricultural industry in the South. As a result, California was admitted as a free state in 1850.[20]

The admittance of California destroyed the balance between the South and the North in the Senate. Consequently, as the 1850s began, there were fifteen slave states and sixteen free states, meaning the balance in the Senate was thirty and thirty-two, respectively.[21] Though the South could often count on the votes of northern Democrats, the idea of this new imbalance prompted efforts to reestablish balance in the Senate.

Meanwhile, in the early 1850s, Congress was pressured to officially organize the remainder of the Louisiana Purchase to allow for settlers. Stephen A. Douglas, a Democratic senator from Illinois serving as the chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories, brought forward a bill in early 1854 organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. Prior to this bill, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been used to determine the expansion of slavery in the territories. The Compromise stated that slavery would not be allowed in the territories north of the 36°30' parallel line (the southern border of Missouri.) This statute was intended as a concession to the South from the North, but more than three decades after its passage, the Slave Power was no longer satisfied.

In a move to draw southern Democratic support, Douglas overturned the Compromise of 1820 with his new bill, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which voided the 36°30' parallel line and stipulated that the people of the territories would decide for themselves the question of slavery via popular sovereignty. As a result of overturning the longstanding Compromise of 1820, the Kansas-Nebraska Act would prove to be very divisive. Many southerners welcomed the bill because it potentially opened up the West for slavery, but many northerners found in it more reason to reaffirm their belief in the existence of the Slave Power controlling national affairs.[22]

When William Seward addressed the Senate in late May of 1854, he had no illusions about the outcome of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Referencing the bill's approaching passage, he lamented, "The sun has set for the last time upon the guarantied [sic] and certain liberties of all the unsettled and unorganized portions of the American continent that lie within the jurisdiction of the United States." He went on to point at the "political equilibrium between the free and the slave States," indicating that the bill could destroy it, giving the South more power and influence over the North. Though Seward's opening statements seem particularly dejected from a northern perspective, his tone would change when speaking of the future.[23]

Fear is what Seward described as the motivating factor in the South's support of the Kansas-Nebraska Act: "Slavery, wherever it exists, begets fear, and fear is the parent of weakness. . . . It is the apprehension that, even if safe now, they [the slave states] will not always or long be secure against some invasion or some aggression from the free States." A primary factor in the fear described by Seward was the increasing political potency of the North. As aforementioned, by 1850, the North's population was

greater than the South's adjusted free population by 5,102,275 people which figures to be sixty-one percent of the South's adjusted free population. Seward cited European immigration as being a primary factor in this force of population that would eventually make slavery obsolete.[24]

Earlier that same year, in the House, the Kansas-Nebraska Act was dividing some southern congressman, sparking disagreements over the meaning of the 1820 Missouri Compromise. Alexander H. Stephens, a Democratic congressman from Georgia, stated that the 1820 Compromise had been only a compact between the federal government and the state of Missouri, and that the slavery-prohibiting effect of the 36°30' parallel line did not stretch outside of Missouri, meaning that slavery was free to be established in any of the United States' territories. He also stated that the North did not respect the line, as many northern congressmen voted against the admission of Arkansas as a slave state, even though it fell below the line. Citing what he implied to be hypocrisy and dishonesty on the North's part, he felt that the South had no obligation to respect the Compromise of 1820. He went further to identify the northern threat. His reasoning implied, if the North could legislate slavery out of the territories, it could possibly do the same to the South in the future, should it gain the political support of the new states. He made clear his desire to give slavery a chance in the West via popular sovereignty.[25]

Theodore G. Hunt, a Whig congressman from Louisiana, refuted some of Stephens's claims in his speech. He stated that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 would be a dangerous precedent. It would destroy the good faith in the negotiations and compromises made previously between the South and the North. He also stated that the Missouri Compromise was a "southern measure carried by southern votes," in that many southerners voted in its favor, it respected southern interests, and it created peace between the South and the North. Ultimately, the negation of the Compromise would potentially make any laws or agreements on the books in relation to slavery open to repeal.[26]

With this in mind, Hunt said, "And now, I would ask, what motive has the South to extend the area of slavery within the present limits of the Republic?" Hunt had stated that much of the western territory was unsuitable for southern cash crops that had been used to warrant slavery in the first place. "Why then," he continued, "this lust for new lands not wanted and not capable of being used?" Hunt would answer his own question: "There

are those who desire that the slaveholding States should acquire additional territory, in the belief or hope of effecting and preserving a balance or equilibrium between them and the non-slaveholding States. But this is a vain and delusive hope."[27]

Hunt's assertions implied that the Slave Power sought to continue slavery into new areas of the country, where much of the land would not be hospitable to the institution, for the sake of political gain. In much of the western territory, slavery would not have been of value economically as much as it would have been politically because once slavery was imbedded in a state, that state's society would come to generally revolve around it, therein creating an increase in power and influence for slaveholders. As a result, slavery created a comparatively centralized political system by means of a collective interest based around slaveholders that extended across all slave states. In this sense, the Slave Power was adverse to the South's championed system of politics: states' rights.

Nineteenth-century historian Henry Adams explained the actions of the Slave Power in relation to its supposed support of states' rights:

> Whenever a question arose of extending or protecting slavery, the slaveholders became friends of centralized power, and used that dangerous weapon with a kind of frenzy. Slavery in fact required centralization in order to maintain and protect itself, but it required to control a centralized machine; it needed despotic principles of government, but it needed them exclusively for its own use.[28]

Had states' rights been the real issue in southern politics, Douglas would not have opposed the Mormon settlers' sanctioning of polygamy in the Utah territory, given the fact it was the popular decision of the citizens of that territory.[29] Also, the South's passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which more or less forced northerners to participate in catching fugitive slaves, was hardly an example of states' rights, seeing as it forced northerners to support laws they did not endorse. In short, southern politics did not operate on the idea of states' rights; it operated on the idea of what was best for the Slave Power.

In 1856, the Democratic Party tried to put a bill through Congress bringing in Kansas as a state under the aegis of popular sovereignty; that is, allowing the people of the state to decide on the issue of slavery. However, as the southern rhetoric developed,

it highlighted the importance of slavery to the South more than it championed the idea of states' rights. In the bill, the Democrats deferred guilt on the issue of slavery by stating, "We shall not undertake to determine why the God of nature made the African inferior to the white man; or why He permitted England to fasten the institution of slavery upon the colonies against their repeated and earnest remonstrances." They then added that any attempt by the government to revoke slavery would be in opposition to the Constitution and the political system of states' rights which the Democrats implied was the modus operandi from the nation's beginning.[30] In this argument, the South covered its real intent to expand slavery and shrouded its arguments with support for the Constitution and states' rights, as well as economic factors.

Conversely, John Allison, a Whig congressman from Pennsylvania, attacked the bill and spoke of the question of slavery's expansion:

> I represent a constituency whom to say nothing of the question of humanity, are interested in this question — interested because it is the overshadowing moneyed interest of this country — controlling its Government, dictating its legislation. The vast amount of capital invested in slave property, together with other causes, renders it the most vigilant and sensitive interest ever known to any country.

He would continue to denounce the expansion of slavery as an economic and political weight on the country, as well as a moral weight, adverse to the nation's principles.[31] His statements recognized the political expediency of slavery and how its westward expansion would have further affected national politics.

James A. Stewart, a Democratic congressman from Maryland, through supporting slavery and its westward expansion, verified its strong influence on the economy and politics. He stated, "Such a scheme [abolition] would be utterly destructive to the negro race, and in its results would occasion a fearful paralysis in all departments of trade everywhere, from which, galvanism, nor all the restoratives within reach, could save you." Stewart then tried to turn the tables on the North by stating that the South and the West were natural allies, capable of making the North obsolete. By Stewart's implication, the North was fearful and dependent of the South.[32]

Stewart's implications were weakened by Judah P. Benjamin, a Democratic senator from Louisiana, who maintained an aura of fear

in regards to the North. Benjamin focused more upon the political advantages the North would have if Kansas were simply allowed to be a free state, theorizing that the North would eventually be able to take a decisive political majority and alienate the South from power. He stressed the necessity of keeping a political balance:

> Sir, in every case where the framers of the constitution foresaw any temptation which could induce a majority from one section of the Union to legislate for their own exclusive advantage, they have expressly prohibited such an abuse in order to preserve equality between the States.

He continued by stating that the majority of the South's economy was agricultural and that slaves formed the majority of the agricultural workforce. If slavery were to be excluded from the territories, the South would be economically castrated there. Benjamin then identified what he thought to be the reason behind the North's refusal to adopt the bill:

> The motive is a struggle for power — for political power — for the chance of subverting that equality of the States to which I have adverted . . . The object is to attain such power as shall put these parties in possession of sufficient representation, in both branches of Congress, to change the federal constitution, and to deprive the South of that representation which is already inadequate to protect her rights. [33]

When looking back over the statements of the legislators in relation to this bill, it is interesting to note how much of the focus was upon slavery, its importance to the South, and the ramifications of its prohibition in the West, as opposed to what was supposed to be the official issue behind the bill: states' rights. The southern legislators glossed over the idea of states' rights, veering their arguments more toward protecting slavery, determinedly focusing on its expansion. As aforementioned, the South was less concerned with states' rights and popular sovereignty, focusing on issues more immediate to the Slave Power.

The bill failed to pass. By the time the Democrats tried to push it through Congress in 1856, the United States' political climate had changed. The old non-sectional Whig-Democrat party system was on its last legs. Replacing the Whigs in the two-party system

were the Republicans; and in the presidential election of 1856, it was made clear that the Whig party was a thing of the past. The Democratic candidate, James Buchanan, won the election, scoring 45.3 percent of the popular vote with a total of nineteen states in his pocket and 174 electoral votes; the Republican candidate, John C. Frémont, scored 33.1 percent of the popular vote with a total of eleven states in his pocket and 114 electoral votes; and the Whig-American candidate, Millard Filmore, scored only 21.5 percent of the popular vote with only one state in his pocket and eight electoral votes.[34]

Though the Democrats decisively won the election, the results must have seemed very troubling. Prior to this election, the party system had not been sectional, and the election returns never implied one section of the country was at war with the other. Conversely, the returns of the presidential election of 1856 were very sectional. The entire South, with the exception of Maryland, went to Buchanan; while the North, with the exception of Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, went to Frémont.[35]

The fears expressed by so many southern politicians had come true. The North, with its vastly superior population, had begun to organize itself politically. If things were to continue along this path, many southerners must have thought that the South would be politically overshadowed by the North, ultimately ostracized from power. The South responded in desperation, trying again to politicize the West in its favor by installing slavery as a permanent institution. This time, the doctrine of states' rights was not even used to mask the intentions of the Slave Power.

In 1858, President Buchanan was determined to bring Kansas into the Union as a slave state. He attempted to push a bill through Congress to admit Kansas as a state based upon the Lecompton Constitution, a constitution written and ratified by a group of proslavery men largely unrepresentative of the entire populace, many of whom came from Missouri.[36] This constitution stated that the government "shall have no power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves without the consent of the owners," and it also stated that the government would have no power to block immigrants to the state who were slaveholders.[37] This attempt represented a complete breakdown of the previous southern rhetoric supporting states' rights.

In the House of Representatives, William Porcher Miles, a Democrat from South Carolina, stated forthright that the issue of the new bill to admit Kansas as a state had nothing to do with

popular sovereignty. He said, "The mind of the whole country has been long distracted by this slavery agitation. It has entered into every political question and it is impossible to disguise the fact that it constitutes the very pith and substance of the contest in which we are engaged." Miles did not even seek to deny the fraud surrounding the Lecompton Constitution; instead, he affirmed them, even implying the coordinated efforts of slave states, led by Missouri, to flood Kansas with proslavery men. He defended cries of foul play from the North by stating, "The question of frauds is a minor one." He reasoned that the real necessity was to maintain a political equilibrium between the South and the North.[38] With Minnesota and Oregon on the verge of being admitted as free states, Porcher was adamant that Kansas enter the Union as a slave state to keep the South a politically active force.[39]

Conversely, Alexander H. Stephens did not affirm the alleged frauds of the Lecompton Constitution and maintained its legitimacy. He argued that the United States Constitution was not ratified by a popular vote, instead by a convention, thus giving legitimacy to the proslavery convention that had ratified the Lecompton Constitution. In making this argument, Stephens was abandoning the past justification of popular sovereignty to reveal the expansion of slavery to be the real agenda of the South.[40]

In accordance with Stephens, Trusten Polk, a Democratic senator from Missouri, denied any corruption in the Lecompton Constitution as well, stating that it was not necessary, given the large number of proslavery men in Kansas. In explaining the North's opposition to the bill, Polk alleged that the Lecompton Constitution's section legalizing slavery was the only reason that there was any controversy at all regarding the admittance of Kansas. His argument ignored the idea of popular sovereignty in the same manner as did Stephens.[41]

James M. Mason, a Democratic senator from Virginia, argued that the North's attempts to exclude slavery from the territories were an effort "to prevent the expansion of political power in the South." His arguments did not deny any fraudulent activity, deferring the guilt of such allegations by claiming similar frauds occurred commonly across the country. In closing, Mason bargained the admission of Kansas as a slave state for the admission of Minnesota as a free state.[42]

The southern arguments for the admission of Kansas as a slave state betrayed the original justification of their argument: popular sovereignty. Both the debate over the Kansas-Nebraska Act and

the Democratic bill to admit Kansas as a state in 1856 attempted to put some focus on what was considered to be the popular will of the would-be citizens of Kansas. The 1858 bill, comparatively, had stripped itself of the façade of popular sovereignty and revealed itself to be the South's expansionist agenda, utilizing slavery as its primary tool.

On the northern side of the argument, in his opening speech before the Senate, William H. Seward, who had become a Republican, gave no pretensions about popular sovereignty. He stated that the conflict "involves a dynastical struggle of two antagonistical systems, the labor of slaves and the labor of freemen, for mastery in the Federal Union. One of these systems partakes of an aristocratic character; the other is purely democratic." The Slave Power, he stated, had controlled the government from the nation's beginning but had begun to be replaced by the ascension of the North as a political entity. He concluded that all civilized nations of the world had abolished or were in the process of abolishing slavery; only the Democratic Party still clung to the institution.[43] In his closing speech, Seward stated that the arguments in the House and Senate had "stripped [the Democrats] bare of all pretences of fairness in the exercise of maintaining [their] own avowed policy of popular sovereignty. [They] will go before the people . . . in the detested character of a party intervening for Slavery against Freedom."[44]

Oliver A. Morse, a Republican congressman from New York, affirmed the idea of the South's former political control of the North by stating, "It has been obvious that, for a long time, the national power has been kept from the North, not by the proper strength of those who kept it, but by political stratagem and management." He continued by adding that the North was overtaking the South in political power and that this caused the South to worry unnecessarily; he added, "there is no contest by the North with the South, though the Southern people persist in assuming there is one."[45]

John A. Bingham, a Republican congressman from Ohio, argued that the forces at work behind the bill to admit Kansas as a state under the Lecompton Constitution were organized and committed to slavery. He stated, "The President and his party not only endorse the Lecompton Constitution, but by argument, by entreaty, and by threat, seek to induce Congress to endorse it, and thereby give to it the sanction and force of law." He continued by citing a claim by a southern senator that his state would secede, should the bill not be passed.[46] Bingham's arguments identify a political agenda at work in the Democratic Party to pass the bill.

The North's arguments, like the South's, were stripped of all pretenses. They focused solely on the political nature of what was at hand: the South's attempt to force slavery into Kansas as a means of keeping the South afloat in terms of political power. Their arguments also recognized that the North was in control politically, evidenced by the fact that the Lecompton Constitution did not pass with the approval of Congress.

The 1850s had seen three major attempts made by the South to use slavery to politicize the West in its favor, starting with the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and followed by the Democratic bill to admit Kansas as a state in 1856. The Democratic bill to admit Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution in 1858 was the most desperate and last major attempt made by the South to push slavery westward to increase the national influence of the Slave Power. By the time of the Lecompton Constitution, the South's political dominance had been usurped by the North, which had organized under the Republican Party in response to the South's apparent political prowess and control. It was the South's failure to maintain its political superiority in the 1850s that led to a Republican presidential victory in 1860 and the resulting secession of a majority of the southern states, which triggered the Civil War.

Notes

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Rachel D. Brewer

"We will drain our dearest veins, but we shall be free!": The Legend and Legacy of Sir William Wallace, Warrior, Martyr, and National Icon

"It is regrettable but typical that Scotland should choose a loser, albeit a glorious one, as its hero. One hundred years ago, Scots admired success but now they admire failure: just look at our national football team."[1] This was the reaction of Michael Fry, author of *Wild Scots: 400 Years of Highland History*, to a 2006 poll conducted around the Edinburgh area. The poll asked readers of *Scotland on Sunday*, a local newspaper, to vote for their choice of "Greatest Scot Ever" from a list of ten choices, among which were Robert Bruce, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, and David Livingston. After two weeks of online voting, more than a third of those 1,300 polled agreed that Sir William Wallace, "defender of Scottish freedom," was most worthy of the title "Greatest." Contrary to Fry's assertion that Scots a century ago would have chosen a more admirable figure as Scotland's champion, hero-worship of the "loser" Wallace is far from a recent development.

In the 700 years since his death at the hands of the English, the famed Scot has served as a martyr-like icon for every generation, a pillar of remembrance to the ferocity and persistence of Scotland's seemingly eternal fight for independence. There have been four chief phases during which the Wallace legend has been most widely invoked: the early Wars of Independence (1296-1357), the Scottish Renaissance and Revolution (1600-1746), the Age of Romanticism (1780-1860), and the current Scottish freedom movement (1960-present). Though the hero has remained important to each rise in the country's nationalism, the way in which his legend is considered and employed by the Scots has evolved with each phase.

Many historians today view descriptions of the life of William Wallace as legend rather than fact, and this is due mainly to the nonexistence of conclusive evidence to support a thorough biography. By 1296, when Wallace is believed to have still been a young man living in the Lowlands, Scotland found itself under

the forced rule of the English king, Edward I (also known as Longshanks), a fact that caused widespread resentment and threats of revolt. In 1297, William Wallace's first known act of rebellion occurred when he killed the English sheriff of Lanark, William Heselrig. This action gained him a reputation as an outlaw among the English, as well as an impressive following of other dissatisfied Scottish commoners, churchmen, and nobles alike.

Wallace fought only two real battles against the English, the first of which was a miraculous victory for the Scots at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, followed by their defeat at the Battle of Falkirk that same year. In 1305, Sir John de Menteith betrayed Wallace, forcing him into the hands of the English who tried him for treason, then hanged, drew, quartered, and beheaded him.[2] Since that time, many Scots have viewed Wallace as the inspiration for later revolts against English rule, such as Robert the Bruce's famous victory at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1328 and the succeeding 300 years of war between the two countries. Many others have regarded him as a failure, however; but this is an accurate assessment only in regard to his failure to permanently expel the English from Scotland.Moreover, after seven centuries, it is clear that his successes lie elsewhere.

In order to understand how the Wallace myth has persisted for 700 years, one must look at the primary vehicle by which the myth has been carried through the centuries. The story of William Wallace probably would not have reached such mythic proportions, nor have survived as such a powerful national memory, if not for the writings of the English minstrel Blind Harry (1440-1492.) Though the exact identity of Blind Harry or Hary—also known as Henry the Minstrel—remains something of a conundrum for historians, he is credited with the epic poem titled *The Actis and Deidis of Schir William Wallace,* also known simply as *The Wallace,* which is thought to have been written around 1477.[3] Historians believe that "*The Wallace* had passed through more editions than any other Scottish book before the times of Burns and Scott—it was the book next to the Bible most frequently found in Scottish households."[4]

The Wallace is comprised completely of heroic couplets, 11,853 lines in length, relating stories about the life of William Wallace, "augmenting the known facts with tales and traditions preserved in folk-memory."[5] One excellent example of the influence of oral tradition on the minstrel's writing appears in his physical description of Wallace: "*Nyne quartaris large he was in lenth indeed,*

Thyrd part lenth in schuldrys braid was he…Woundis he had in many diuerss place, Bot fayer and weill kepyt was his face."[6] The minstrel, born more than a century after Wallace's death, never actually saw the hero and therefore must have relied completely on folk-tale, if not a little bit on his own imagination. The lines between fact, fiction, and wishful thinking are often obscured throughout the poem, though Harry would certainly not be the first author guilty of this type of historical writing. Blind Harry's Wallace is portrayed as nearly super-human, capable of fantastic and impossible feats, much in the model of classical heroes. According to the poem, for example, "no one but Wallace was strong enough to draw his great bow"—an ability by which he proves his "superiority to the English archers at their own skill" by "killing fifteen Englishmen with his bow and arrows."[7] Like the famed archer Robin Hood, Wallace became an "honorable outlaw" and champion of the people.

The pervasive influence that the supposedly blind minstrel has had through each succeeding generation is apparent, though it should be pointed out that evidence of this influence has been apparent during some periods more so than others. When compared to other great works of history, *The Wallace* does not stand out as an example of reliable reference—a fact that has caused the book to be the target of much criticism and denigration in just the last 150 years. It is not the historical accuracy, however, that one must examine when attempting to explain the importance of Harry's work as it relates to the history of the Wallace myth. In 1920, author William Henry Schofield responded to its critics by writing:

> Let the critical modern historian dissect and reject as he may the stories here and there interposed in the narrative of Blind Harry, it shows but a purblind imagination not to realize the effects of these, and of the whole record implicitly received, on the hearts, the impulses, and the bent of character of the Scottish people, all through the centuries down to the union of the crowns.[8]

Here, Schofield captures the essence of the power that Blind Harry's writings have had on the formation of Scottish identity and nationalism. A minor flaw appears in his statement, however, in the line that reads "all through the centuries down to the union of the crowns," as though the influence of the Wallace story ended

with the suspension of Scottish independence in 1707. This is most assuredly not the case, as the following pages will reveal.

The early Scottish Wars for Independence (1296-1357) set the stage for William Wallace's sudden appearance in historical records. It would not be accurate to say that the legend of Wallace began when Blind Harry turned him into a literary hero, for he was a legend in his own time. By the end of the thirteenth century, the Scots were already discontent and ready for a fight. Weary as they were of the forced submission to the tyrant Edward [I] Longshanks—the English king widely considered a usurper of the Scottish throne—it appears that little persuasion was necessary to convince men to take up arms behind Wallace. The impressive following of Scots that Wallace gained in his lifetime provided the original foundation upon which succeeding myth was able to build over time.

Scottish historian and member of the Scottish National Party, Professor Christopher Harvie, believes that a combination of "English invasion, resistance by William Wallace and later Robert Bruce made patriots of the mass of the population."[9] While it is difficult to determine just how much of the Scottish population Wallace was able to rally to arms or even in sympathy for his cause, it took only a matter of months for a substantial army of both Highlanders and Lowlanders to join him in his fight. The fantastic stories surrounding Wallace's exploits and acts of bloody warfare sprung up almost as quickly as his army—one no doubt influencing the other to a certain degree—gaining him national fame, and bringing him to the attention of the power-hungry monarch, Edward I, who was content with nothing less than total control of Britain.

Wallace was not the first or only man to stand up against English tyranny. To Edward I, however, "Wallace symbolized the spirit of Scotland's resistance which could only be finally broken if the Scots themselves turned in the already legendary folk-hero to face the king's punishment."[10] According to tradition, it was in fact a Scot—a man loyal to English authority—who betrayed Wallace into English hands, but the death of their hero did not break the spirit of the Scottish rebels as King Edward had hoped. Harvie points out that it was Wallace's martyr-like death that now seemed to "give point and pride to popular resistance against English dominion. . . . It was greatly strengthened—and now the nobles who had failed to rally to Wallace would lead the resistance for the next six years."[11] The foremost of these nobles was Robert Bruce who famously led

the Scots to victory against the English at the Battle of Bannockburn only nine years after Wallace's death. Though Bruce finished what Wallace had begun, American author and specialist in medieval literature Stefan T. Hall maintains that "it is Wallace who will always be the nation's first voice, the chief spokesman, and Bruce's inspiration."[12]

The second period in which the story of Wallace increased in significance was the period which, for the purposes of this study, shall be referred to as the Scottish Renaissance and Revolution (1600-1746). After the reign of Robert Bruce, Scotland remained under the control of its own independent parliament until 1707. At this time, Scotland and England signed an agreement called the Acts of Union—a contract which, in its first three articles, disintegrated the Scottish Parliament and placed all Scottish governmental representation under English control.[13] The act was supported by many Scottish nobles who saw the economic benefits of allying themselves with England, but was despised by many of the common Scots who "resented the loss of sovereign independence" and the opportunity to return the throne to the Scottish House of Stuart.[14] Outraged, a cluster of Scots loyal to the House of Stuart, known as Jacobites, began a crusade which ended only with the defeat of the Stuart claimant to the throne, Bonnie Prince Charlie, at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. One modern writer bitingly remarked that the Acts of Union in 1707 caused "the deaths of thousands of Scots [to] fade into history as pointless sacrifice"—a comment which reveals just how deeply the feelings of betrayal run for some Scots even today.[15]

During the height of the Scottish Revolution, or Jacobite Rebellion, the Wallace myth took a back-seat to heroic tales about Bonnie Prince Charlie and the famous Rob Roy. However, throughout a pre-Revolution period covering most of the seventeenth century, Wallace's name appeared frequently in various works of literature and history. For example, an English translation of George Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (*History of Scotland*) first appeared in 1690, in which Buchanan described Wallace as "*the most flourishing Persons amongst the Scots*…for the glory of his former Exploits."[16] In 1638, Scottish poet Henry Adamson also included many passages about Wallace in his *Muses Threnodie*, in which he likened Wallace to classical heroes by writing, "*What braver Hector, or more brave Achilles, In Greece, or Phrygia, than Sir William Wallace?*"[17] In addition, just ten years later, historian and political theorist David Hume of

Godscroft in his "*A General History of Scotland*" (1648) included a tribute to Wallace in poem form. He wrote: "*Of Wallace, and no more remains, Of him, then what an Urn contains. . . . His soul death had no power to kill, His noble deeds the world doth fill, With lasting Trophies of his name. His end crownes him with glorious bayes, And stains the brightest of thy praise.*"[18]

Other writers described the early wars and Wallace in a religious light—a not uncommon historical method for interpreting events. In 1627, a passage by Peter Hay went so far as to indicate that Wallace's rebellion was the will of God when he wrote: "*When wee reade of…VVilliam VVallace, what Miracles were done by small numbers against worlds of Men? It is the LORD, who stirreth vp the Heart, to persecute Pryde, and punish Tyrants.*"[19] In such troubled times, one can only imagine that Hay meant more with his talk about "small numbers" and "tyrants" than just repeating well-worn folk-tales. Feelings against English oppression were on the rise, so dissatisfied Scots looked to the past for guidance and inspiration while looking to their faith for validation and encouragement.

As these literary references indicate, Wallace's name and myth were not completely abandoned in the years preceding and throughout the Revolution, but no better evidence of this fact exists than the appearance of a new translation of Blind Harry's *Life of Sir William Wallace* in 1722. This new edition by poet William Hamilton translated the antiquated phrasing of Blind Harry's original work into the vernacular of the ordinary person. Additionally, Hamilton's edition paraphrased the original, making it a more reasonable length for casual reading. The great advantage of these changes was that Wallace's story was able to evolve and adapt in order to remain relevant to the needs, situations, and attitudes of post-Union Scots. That this sudden concern with an updated edition of the story of Scotland's favorite freedom-fighter fell directly at the height of the Jacobite fight against English domination is almost certainly more than mere coincidence. Even after the rebellion was put down in 1747 and Scotland began to settle into a compliant partnership with England, the Hamilton edition of *The Wallace* continued to inspire people well into the next century.

The late eighteenth century ushered in a philosophic, artistic, and literary movement known as the Age of Romanticism (1780-1860). This movement was "characterized by reliance on the imagination and subjectivity of approach, freedom of thought and expression, and an idealization of nature" in which creative vision "was praised over reason, emotions over logic, and intuition

over science—making way for a vast body of literature of great sensibility and passion."[20] Charles Baudelaire, a nineteenth century French poet and critic, defined this phase of ideology as "precisely situated neither in choice of subject nor exact truth, but in the way of feeling."[21] Though his words were intended to explain a broader mindset, they were also amazingly appropriate for explaining the phenomenon that occurred during the nineteenth century in regard to Scottish nationalism and the Wallace myth.

The years of the Enlightenment—the period roughly between 1650 and 1750—and its focus on scientific fact and stark, academic reality had "reduced romance to childish ignorance," but the desire for something more than scientific fact became a Europe-wide craze by the late eighteenth century.[22] One of the areas in which Romanticism thrived was literature, both poetry and prose; that is, this was the era of the fictional novel and romantic verse. Moreover, according to writer James Kerr, "Historical romance becomes a field in which perceived contradictions in history can be recreated and resolved. It is a…verbal realm apart from history…where the ugly facts history throws in the way of the writer can be made into appealing, or at least consoling, stories about the past."[23] It was this newfound freedom to admire a more creative version of history that gave rise to a cult-like treatment of Wallace, a trend which has been given the title "Wallaciana" by modern historians such as Graeme Morton.[24] To understand this time period is to understand the notable surge in Wallace's appearance in both art and literature.

After Blind Harry, the writer whose name is most often linked to the romanticized figure of Wallace is the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns. Burns, born in 1759, wrote during the initial phase of the Age of Romanticism, and the influence of the movement is evident in much of his work. For his skill as a romantic writer, and also for his fierce nationalism, he became one of Scotland's best loved poets. According to author Arthur Herman, "The first books [Burns] read were a biography of Hannibal and [the Hamilton edition of] *The Life of William Wallace*, lent to him by the local blacksmith. 'The story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice in my veins,' Burns recalled, 'which will boil along there till the flood gates of life shut in eternal rest.'"[25] The most famous of his patriotic poems, "Scots, Wha Hae," written as an imagined speech by Robert Bruce to his troops at Bannockburn, opens with these lines: "*Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled, Scots, wham Bruce has aften led, Welcome to your gory bed, Or to victorie!*"[26] The poem begins

with descriptions and language specific to the stories of Wallace and Bruce. As it progresses, though, the language becomes less era-specific and more applicable to any situation of perceived tyranny. Much of Burns' patriotic poetry was inspired by the tales of William Wallace as told by Blind Harry, and he was able to translate the Wallace story into something that would be relevant to his fellow Jacobites. Several lines of the poem are taken directly from one of Harry's couplets:

> Burns: Lay the proud usurpers low! Tyrants fall in every foe! Liberty's in every blow![27]

> Blind Harry: A false usurper sinks in every foe; And liberty returns with every blow.[28]

Burns wrote to his publisher of this particular poem, saying that he had been inspired by "the accidental recollection of that glorious struggle for Freedom, associated with the glowing ideas of *some other struggles of the same nature, not quite so ancient*," in reference to the existing power struggle.[29] The poem was set to a traditional Scottish tune and became what remains one of Scotland's best loved anthems.

However, in regard to the political significance of Burns's poems in the late 1700s, most Unionists did not consider his writings to have any importance at all. Jacobitism was all but dead and the two rival countries were, at least at the upper levels, getting along. The idea that Scotland had been better off on its own was considered by Unionists to be ignorant, divisive, anti-progressive, and essentially lower-class sentiment. Professor and author Richard Zumkhawala-Cook believes that by this point, "the working-class 'people's poetry' of Robert Burns and the anthems of the Jacobins [were] celebrated publicly for their Scottish character because, for the most part, they had become politically harmless to Scottish and English landowners."[30] Evidently, Unionists were able to overlook Burns's seemingly archaic political convictions to simply appreciate the lovingly beautiful descriptions of Scotland and its historical characters which dominated most of his work.

Not all Scots who idolized Wallace were anti-Union, however, and their influence helped to counter-balance the opposition. Well-loved Scottish writer and contemporary of Burns, Sir Walter Scott, was a firm believer that Scots could maintain their own identity, independent spirit, and national pride while

working as England's partner within the larger institution of Great Britain.[31] His writings, such as *The Waverly Novels*, "romanticized Highland life and its clan system, exoticizing its members as primitively passionate, melodic, at times even heroic, but ultimately as too provincial to be aligned with modern modes of political and cultural progress."[32] Thus, historical figures like William Wallace and their anti-English, anti-tyranny rhetoric took on an even more distant, fictional, nostalgic—and ultimately safe—quality.

The most popular form of Romantic artwork pertaining to the nineteenth-century Wallace cult came in the form of monuments and statues. As Scotland settled not-so-easily into unionization with England, it found itself at this time facing an identity crisis. This crisis resulted in patriotic over-compensation in an effort towards national self-preservation. At the same time, however, England was beginning to embrace certain aspects of Scottish culture for political reasons. As Scottish nationalism appeared to largely die out during the nineteenth century, perhaps England felt less threatened by certain aspects of Scottish culture—especially those aspects which could be useful to Romanticism, such as folklore and legend. Ironically, one of the Scottish traditions which evidently suited certain Unionist agendas was the Wallace myth, a fact perfectly illustrated by the sudden appearance of numerous tributes to the Scottish champion. However, Unionists never attempted to turn Wallace "English"—he remained primarily a Scottish hero, thus tributes to him remained largely within Scottish borders.

Throughout the nineteenth century, monuments dedicated to William Wallace sprang up around Scotland. One of the first statues to be unveiled was a twenty-two foot tall, red sandstone statue of the medieval hero in Dryburgh [Figure 1].[33] Erected in 1814 by David Stuart, the Earl of Buchan, Wallace is portrayed as a large, bearded warrior with armor, shield, and helmet. From his place aside a cliff, he gazes over the River Tweed, leaning on a sword as tall as him. This representation seems to be of "Wallace the Warrior:" the costuming—a plain kilt and cloak—is unremarkable, while the broadsword and shield seem to be the important features, emphasizing the militaristic rather than the romantic. At thirty-one feet including its base, the sheer size of the statue may put the viewer in mind of the ancient Colossus, demanding both fear and respect for the nation it represents.

Figure 1

In Aberdeen, a large iron Wallace in medieval chain mail strikes a dramatic pose with arm outstretched atop a stone base [Figure 2].[34] Erected seventy-four years after the Dryburgh statue, the effects of Romanticism on the design of the Aberdeen statue are immediately apparent when the two are compared. With arm outstretched, Wallace's gesture is almost theatrical, his clothing is twelfth-century English chain-mail, and his sword is small and manageable; these features differ greatly from the descriptions written by Blind Harry. In keeping with the trends of the time, the artist seems to portray "Wallace the Medieval Knight," whose noble quest was to rescue his people as an Arthurian knight might rescue a damsel in distress. Creating a medieval-knight persona for Wallace was simply another way in which the myth was re-created and adapted to fit the culture and concerns of the late-Romantic period.

Figure 2

    The crowning glory of this so-called Wallaciana was completed
in 1869 after eight years of construction, and remains a very popular
center of nationalism: the Wallace Monument at Stirling [Figure 3].[35]
Interestingly, the men responsible for the building of the Monument
were English and Scottish Unionists who supported the unification
of Great Britain under English control. During the Monument's
1861 dedication ceremony, the Earl of Elgin pronounced, "If the
Scottish people have been able to form an intimate union [with the
English] without sacrificing one jot of their neutral independence
and liberty — these great results are due to the glorious struggle
which was commenced on the plain of Stirling and consummated
on that of Bannockburn."[36] With a few carefully chosen words, the
Earl recreated the story of Wallace's rebellion as a tale of Scottish
triumph in retaining its identity — completely dismissing the
real object of Wallace's anger: English tyranny. In theory at least,
Wallace could now be a *British* hero — uniting all Scots and English
in a brotherhood of distinctive cultures. The Scottish Unionists used
the Wallace myth for its effectualness in rallying Scottish pride, not
Scottish rebellion — an example of how ambiguous historical figures
can be used outside their original context to further individual
agendas.

Figure 3

This use of Wallace's legend changed, perhaps in style but not in value, in the twentieth century. The alterations occurred especially as a result of the release of Mel Gibson's movie *Braveheart*—a romanticized and highly inaccurate version of Wallace's life—in 1995, and the subsequent campaigning methods of the Scottish National Party (SNP). Even as the world becomes much more global in the twenty-first century, many countries have been able to retain their own distinct cultures and traditions (real or imagined), though, in some respects, they are being forced to fight tooth and nail for them. The release of *Braveheart,* if nothing else, has certainly had an impact on popular culture and the portrayal of Scottish nationalism, both in Scotland and abroad. One has only to type "William Wallace" into any major internet search-engine and they will find numerous websites dedicated to both the historical Wallace figure and the *Braveheart* Wallace character. Online British newspapers and magazines include article after article on him, clan websites of any family name may include a piece on him, thousands of individual sites and blogs appear in the search results list, and everyone has a different opinion. Even in the "serious" writings to be found in reputable newspapers, journals, and databases, there remains a plethora of opinions on William Wallace as a national figure.

On 11 September 1997, after an almost 300 year absence, Scotland re-established its own Parliament. The late author and chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University, Magnus Magnusson, pointed out what he saw as a meaningful detail by stating, "It can hardly be coincidence that…the referendum which would ratify a new Scottish Parliament was held…seven hundred years to the day since Wallace's spectacular victory over the English army at Stirling Bridge."[37] If his suspicion was true, then it is a clear indication that certain significant aspects of history have not been lost on twenty-first century Scots. The Scottish freedom movement gained worldwide attention primarily after the release of *Braveheart* and the following reinstatement of the Scottish Parliament, causing some to speculate that the movie must have been the inspiration behind it.[38] There may be validity in saying that the movie was responsible for heightening the awareness of the nation to the issue of Scottish independence, but it would be simplistic to think that it was the only motivating factor in the decisions of Parliament.

Movies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries serve much the same function as Romantic literature did in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As unfortunate of a fact as it may be, movies

are the new books, and *Braveheart* has acted as a preservation of the Wallace myth in much the same way that Robert Burns's poetry did in its time. For a number of years, the SNP—the foremost advocate for the de-unionization of England and Scotland since the early 1900s—has attempted to keep the Wallace myth in the forefront of Scottish identity. The Party has used the movie *Braveheart* quite successfully as a publicity campaign tool. For example, in 1996, the SNP produced a campaign bill which featured the "familiar movie-poster figure of a dramatically tartaned and battle-wearied Mel Gibson in a campaign bill that read, 'We Need Independence Now More Than Ever!'"[39] During his term as SNP leader, Alex Salmond defended this utilization with the opinion that "the message is relevant today in that it is the Scots who are fighting for their independence the same way they are at the moment. . . . The allure of his supposed concern for civil rights, equity and self-determination fit snugly into contemporary political discourse."[40]

In 1998 the National Museum of Scotland opened its doors to an almost immediate complaint by SNP leaders: not a single artifact or reference to Wallace was to be found. Salmond responded to this apparent snub of Scotland's freedom-fighter by protesting that "for centuries, members of the establishment have been attempting to eradicate all traces of Wallace from Scottish history."[41] This accusation may be a bit overarching, but it is true that the Wallace cult faces its share of non-believers, and much of the derision focuses on Mel Gibson's movie. In an article for the newspaper *Scotland on Sunday*, Audrey Gillan voiced her fear that "*Braveheart* has encouraged Scotland's lack of knowledge about itself. Greedy for confirmation…our gluttony for feeding on myth and heathery legend reaches worrying proportions when it effects the entire socio-consciousness of a nation."[42]

Recently, the controversy over a thirteen-foot tall sandstone statue of William Wallace, carved in the likeness of Mel Gibson and bearing the inscriptions "Freedom" and "Braveheart" in bold letters, has been another source of publicity for the legend [Figure 4].[43] Said to be one of the most "loathed pieces of public art in Scotland," the statue was placed in the parking lot of the Wallace Monument in Stirling in 1997.[44] The sculpture is a high relief stone carving which portrays Wallace with the same hair, costuming, and weaponry as in the movie *Braveheart*. The decision by tourist officials to include the Hollywood portrayal of Wallace at the well-loved Scottish site has been considered by many to be "an act of almost unbelievable crassness and bad taste. . . . trivializing and kitschifying the memory

of Wallace."[45] However, the statue was enjoyed by as many people who hated it: Tom Church, the artist, acknowledged in an interview that "the purists didn't think too much of it but the tourists absolutely loved it."[46] In 2008, after it had suffered several thousand pounds worth of damage by vandalism, the "Freedom" statue was removed from the grounds of the Wallace Monument to make way for a new visitor's center. Despite numerous attempts to sell it and donate it, apparently the statue remains in the possession of its creator.[47]

Figure 4

Critics and even supporters of the freedom movement have condemned the use of the Wallace image by nationalists. Some consider the employment of archaic myths in modern politics to be "inappropriate and irrelevant" and "an example of how Scots tended to celebrate failure."[48] If these statements appear harsh and undeserved, it is only because they are. History of every kind, whether all the facts are ironed out or not, is never irrelevant. Americans do not say to Texas, "you celebrate failure" simply because they hold the Battle of the Alamo to be one of the greatest moments in Texan history. The Battle of Falkirk was Scotland's "Alamo," and William Wallace the Highlander's "Davy Crockett." This is not a celebration of failure or a sign of defeatism—it is a way that people honor courage, determination, and principle as a standard to live up to.

Much of the opposition focuses on the cruelty and violence of Wallace's campaign, questioning whether it is wise to "identify as our national hero a man who, however brave and honorable he may have been, has his hands red with English blood."[49] In this instance, *Braveheart* did nothing to help the cause of Wallace followers or to quiet naysayers. As only Hollywood can do, the directors of *Braveheart* brought out the bloodiness of Wallace's crusade in vivid and brutal fashion. As a result, attention turned to the graphic violence present in the original *Wallace* poem. Blind Harry made no effort to cover up the realities of Wallace's brutal campaign, causing an author in the early twentieth century, William Henry Schofield, to comment:

> The only spirit that quickens one in the *Wallace* is the spirit of patriotism; but so malignant is that spirit, so stimulating to cruelty and barbarity, that it seems like the spirit not of God but of the Devil. The spirit of hate animates the *Wallace* throughout, and no power on earth can cast it out, so as to make its body wholly clean.[50]

In direct contrast to the earlier passage by Peter Hay, here Schofield questions the very heart of the Wallace myth. He seems to believe that Blind Harry's poem, if not Wallace himself, was tainted by such a thirst for English blood that no amount of time or poetic license could justify or redeem it. Perhaps he views Harry's *Wallace* as the driving force behind a continuing cycle of anti-Anglo sentiment. No matter the facts of the story, however, as an ambiguous historical figure, Wallace has made it easy for certain aspects of his legend to be glossed over with time. This has allowed Scots to remember him not as a violent murderer, but as a determined man who inspired the country he loved to freedom, however temporary that freedom may have been. Despite the negative feedback Wallace has received from certain groups in recent years, the legend is still wildly popular in everyday culture and in regard to the current Scottish freedom movement.[51]

In conclusion, the Wallace myth has been employed by many groups at many times, but none so obviously as during the early Wars of Independence, the Scottish Revolution, the Age of Romanticism, and the current Scottish freedom movement. Preserved through the writings of Blind Harry, the story of William Wallace has proven consistently important and inspirational to every generation throughout the last 700 years, even though the

way in which the legend is regarded and used to further the cause of Scottish freedom has evolved. During Wallace's life, his fame aided in rallying an army against England, whereas, during the 1600's, the re-appearance of the legend may have revealed the pride that Scots found in the Stuart's short-lived reign over England. Even after the unionization of the two countries, Scotland continued to raise up a Romanticized image of Wallace's bravery as a means of reaffirming national identity, while during the twentieth century the movie *Braveheart* and its exploitation by nationalist groups reacquainted a new generation with Wallace's timeless fight for Scottish independence. Like any legend, the life of Sir William Wallace—traitor, brute, warrior, martyr, freedom fighter, protector, and national hero—has become subject to the interpretation of time, culture, and political agendas. The story's success lies in its appeal: real or imagined, people love a hero.

Modern historians seem to feel the need to scrape away the dust-layers of the centuries, the layers that might cause people to look back at a particular figure with more respect in death than that person deserved in life. In their obsession with revealing the stark, ugly realities of the past, perhaps they have destroyed a part of what makes history beautiful. Nevertheless, centuries of tradition are not always so vulnerable, and even in the face of scrutiny, some well-loved legends will refuse to give in. In fact, "almost as fast as old myths are disposed of new ones seem to appear. . . . It is [however] heartening to know that, in an age of hi-tech brainwashing and processing, people remain human enough to dream and to fantasize—one of the few traces of individuality left to them."[52] Cultures from the beginning of time have established myth and legend for one simple reason: humans need heroes, and as long as they are needed, the legends will survive. On the tower of the Barnweill Monument—another nineteenth-century tribute to William Wallace—is written this inscription:

> Centuries have not diminished the luster of his heroic achievements; and the memory of this most disinterested of patriots shall, through all ages, be honoured and revered by his countrymen. . . . Ever honoured by the memory of the matchless Sir William Wallace. . . . From Greece arose Leonidas, from America Washington, and from Scotland Wallace, names which shall remain through all time the watchwords and beacons of liberty.[53]

Notes

(Title)   Robert Burns, *Poems and Songs* (New York: Cassell and Co., 1908). The inspiration for this poem was derived from a speech given supposedly by Robert Bruce to his troops before the Battle of Bannockburn against the English in 1314.

1   Michael Fry, as quoted in Arthur MacMillan, "Brave Wallace melts his people's hearts," *Scotland on Sunday,* 22 January 2006, http://heritage. scotsman.com/williamwallace/Brave-Wallace-melts-his-peoples.2744389.jp.

2   James MacKay, *William Wallace: Braveheart* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Co., 1995), 254-65.

3   Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture, and Iconography* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 233.

4   Graeme Morton, "The Most Efficacious Patriot: The History of William Wallace in Nineteenth-Century Scotland," *The Scottish Historical Review* (October 1998): 224.

5   J. Derrick McClure, "Wallace: The glowing star in Scotland's story," *Leopard Magazine*, August 2005, http://www.leopardmag.co.uk/feats/92/william-wallace (accessed 25 October 2009).

6   Blind Harry, as quoted in Graeme Morton, *William Wallace: Man and Myth* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2001), 48.

7   Stefan Thomas Hall, *The Role of Medieval Scottish Poetry in Creating Scottish Identity* (NewYork: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 184.

8   William Henry Schofield, *Mythical Bards and the Life of William Wallace* (London: Harvard University Press, 1920), 5-6.

9   Christopher Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 12.

10 David McCrone, ed., The *Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), 152-53.

11 Magnus Magnusson, *Scotland: The Story of a Nation* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003), 146.

12 Hall, *Role of Medieval Scottish Poetry,* 212.

13 "*That the Two Kingdoms of Scotland and England, shall upon the 1st May next ensuing the date hereof, and forever after, be United into One Kingdom by the Name of GREAT BRITAIN.*" Article 1 of the "Act of Union of 1707," http://www. statutelaw.gov.uk (accessed 1 October 2009).

14 "Consolidating the Union," http://www.parliament.uk/actofunion/uk_01_consolidating.html (accessed 22 October 2009).

15 "The 1707 Acts of Union," http://www.highlanderweb.co.uk/wallace/1707act.htm (accessed 22 October 2009).

16 George Buchanan, *The history of Scotland written in Latin by George Buchanan; faithfully rendered into English,* 1690, Early English Books Online http://eebo. chadwyck.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu (accessed 4 September 2009).

17 Henry Adamson, *Muses Threnodie: of Mirthful Mournings on the death of Mr Gall,* 1638, Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy.lib.siu. edu (accessed 4 September 2009).

18 David Hume, A *general history of Scotland,* 1648, Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu (accessed 4 September 2009).

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20 "The Romantic Era," http://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses (accessed 3 October 2009).

21 Baudelaire, as quoted in Hugh Honour, *Romanticism* (New York: Westview Press, 1979), 14.

22 William Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 127.

23 James Kerr, *Fiction Against History: Scott As Storyteller* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1.

24 Morton, *William Wallace: Man and Myth,* 48.

25 Robert Burns, as quoted in Arthur Herman, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2001), 20.

26 Robert Burns, *Poems and Songs* (New York: Cassell and Co., 1908), 232.

27 Ibid.

28 Blind Harry, as quoted by Robert Burns, *Letters* (Whitefriars: T. Davison, 1819), 77.

29 Burns, *Letters,* 70-71.

30 Richard Zumkhawala-Cook, *Scotland As We Know It* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008), 14.

31 Hall, *Role of Medieval Scottish Poetry,* 12.

32 Zumkhawala-Cook, *Scotland As We Know It*, 14.

33 *Dryburgh Wallace Monument,* http://www.braveheart.co.uk/macbrave/history/monument/drymon.htm (accessed 25 September 2009). [Image 1: "Wallace Statue at Dryburgh," personal photograph.]

34 [Image 2: "Wallace Statue at Aberdeen, http://www.flickr.com/photos/dgblackout/2556694459 (accessed 25 September 2009)].

35 [Image 4: "The National Wallace Monument at Stirling," *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland,* http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/42723/details (accessed 1 September 2009)].

36 Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (New York: Berg, 2002), 161.

37 Magnusson, *Scotland: The Story of a Nation,* 159.

38 Alex Salmond, as quoted in Riach, *Representing Scotland,* 195 The former leader of the Scottish National Party, Salmond, stated that "in 1995, *Braveheart* mania broke out, and it had a pretty powerful political impact. The SNP campaigned on the back of the film, and surged to 30 per cent in the polls."

39 Zumkhawala-Cook, *Scotland As We Know It,* 147.

40 Edensor, *National Identity,* 150.

41 Alex Salmond, as quoted by Edensor, *National Identity,* 164.

42 Audrey Gillan, as quoted by Edensor, *National Identity,* 153.

43 [Image 5: "Wallace Statue at Stirling," http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e9/William_Wallace_Statue.JPG (accessed 17 November 2009)].

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47 Ibid.

48 Michael Forsythe, as quoted by Edensor, *National Identity,* 154.

49 Edensor, *National Identity,* 155.

50 Schofield, *Mythical Bards,* 167.

51 "The annual 'Braveheart Conference' convenes hundreds of *Braveheart* fans for three days at Stirling Castle to celebrate the film and to offer tribute to William Wallace's legacy, no doubt part of the reason that the annual visitors to the Wallace monument increased from 66,000 to 167,000 the year after *Braveheart's* release." Zumkhawala-Cook, *Scotland As We Know It,* 147.

52 Ferguson, *Identity of the Scottish Nation,* 297.

53 Barnweill Monument Inscription, as quoted in Morton, *William Wallace: Man and Myth,* 82.

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