

LEGACY

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A Publication of the Sigma Kappa Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta
& the Southern Illinois University Carbondale History Department

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Christopher Schilling

Between “Women’s Wuk” and “Men’s Wuk”: The Gender Dynamics of Early American Rice Cultivation in Relation to African Culture

Rice appears to be a simple and rather small grain, yet it tells a story that goes beyond its use as food; it tells a story of human interaction. From Asia, to Africa, to the Americas rice is a grain with an interesting story that blends economic possibilities and cultural legacies into a tapestry of the human condition. What follows is the story of how rice cultivation in America provided an opportunity for African-Americans of the South Carolina Lowlands and the Georgia coast to maintain a cultural link to Africa; first in the time of slavery, and then the period that followed. This cultural legacy largely surrounds the gender roles assigned to the cultivation of rice. Both male and female African-Americans throughout American history had often referred to many aspects of rice cultivation as being either “women’s wuk,” or “men’s wuk,” implying a cultural view of how gender roles should be applied to agriculture.

The presence of both female and male tasks in American rice cultivation is directly linked to Africa, and yet its significance goes beyond a mere division of labor. Slavery greatly limited cultural traditions among enslaved Africans on a number of fronts. First, multiple ethnicities were forced together. Plantation slavery, as an oppressive system based on control and maintaining high levels of productivity, also exerted much external pressure on slaves and their culture. Yet, despite the numerous pressures to abandon gender-based traditions in the cultivation of rice, a culture existed where women and men were the possessors of specific knowledge systems. This can be seen through an examination of both written and oral sources. There has been a great deal of study on the role of African people in the development of American rice culture, but what this paper will examine is how rice cultivation in America provided an opportunity for the survival of traditional African gendered divisions in labor.

There have been several historical studies on the origin of American rice cultivation. Peter Wood and Daniel Littlefield have both provided demographic studies of South Carolina, which show the impact of rice cultivation on population rates and ethnic heritage. Littlefield’s exami-

nation of African ethnic diversity in America demonstrated a connection between ethnic diversity among slaves and the fact that plantation owners were aware of ethnic diversity among slaves, and that they had preferences for slaves from rice-producing regions of Africa.¹ Judith Carney then took the field further by arguing not only that rice cultivation benefited from an African knowledge system, but that it was through slaves that rice was introduced to the Americas.² One of her arguments for this is based on the African tradition of gender-specific tasks associated with rice cultivation in Africa also being present in the Americas. Carney argues that Africans were able to use their knowledge of rice to negotiate the more lenient task system, as well as for the freedom to maintain certain cultural traditions.³ Historian Max Edelson provides a different view; he argues that rice cultivation originated from a blend of European and African initiative, but that the longevity of African traditions in America is the result of the task labor system. Edelson argues that the separation of physical and cultural space on the task labor plantation system allowed African slaves to maintain and develop their own cultural standards.⁴ Building upon these prior historical studies, this paper will argue that there was a tradition of gender-specific tasks for the cultivation of rice, and that this tradition stands as evidence for a lasting African cultural legacy among African-American societies of the Georgia and South Carolina Lowcountry.

In order to fully appreciate how the presence of an African tradition, and, specifically, a female knowledge system, developed into a broader African-American cultural tradition which held rice in esteem, it is first important to outline how gender was used in the cultivation process. Women in West Africa, and upon the rice plantations of South Carolina and Georgia, were largely responsible for sowing the rice seeds, in a process that involved using their feet to coat the seed in a protective layer of soil, clay, or in certain parts of West Africa, cow dung.⁵ Women were also responsible for milling the grain, which involved the use of a mortar and pestle to separate the husk from the rice grain. The mortar and pestle technique for milling rice that was used in America derives entirely from Africa; although a mortar and pestle technique was used in Asia, there is no evidence for contact between these Asian cultures and the plantation societies of the American South.⁶ Therefore, the presence of the West African style of mortar and pestle stand as evidence to the central link between American rice and Africa. There are other key aspects of African-American culture that stand as important evidence for both the cultural link between African rice and American rice, and these will be addressed latter in this paper. For now, the focus will be on how gender division was preserved in the cultivation process.

Cultural survival in any society requires mechanisms for passing on important elements of that culture. A common mechanism for the passing on of important cultural traditions is through language. The Gullah people of South Carolina and Georgia are known for the telling of stories with a mixture of African and African-American elements. Perhaps most famous of these stories are those involving Brer Rabbit and the various other trickster characters. These stories were, however, more than mere entertainment, but were also used as tools for both preserving the African cultural heritage and passing on important lessons about the Gullah culture.⁷

There are a series of stories involving the Devil, the Devil's daughter, and a man named Jack wanting to marry the Devil's daughter. In one telling of this story there is an interesting exchange of rice knowledge being passed from the Devil's daughter to Jack. The story used in this paper was told by Joseph S. Shanklin, a student at the Port Royal Industrial and Agricultural school. There is nothing in the story which informs the reader of when exactly this story was created, but based on the fact that it was told by a student around 1920, it seems likely that the story originates from an older telling. This is likely also due to the deep oral tradition within Gullah communities, where elders often told stories to the young.

Once upon a time there was a man who had name Jack. He had want to marry to the Devil daught'. He told him the only way he would let him marry to his daught', if he plant rice an' make it in one day. So the Devil daught' hear them talk about the rice. So the Devil daught' told him how to do it. So Jack told the rice, "Drop, drop!" So the rice drop. And he told the rice to grow. So the rice grow. And told the rice, "Cut!" So the rice cut. And he told the rice to bunch. And the rice bunch. And he told the Devil he was t'rough. The Devil give him his daught'. And so Jack got his wife.⁸

This story provides an interesting use of the trickster tale as a way of also telling about an important gender dynamic associated with rice. On first glance, it appears to be a simple story involving two love-struck characters tricking the Devil so that they can get married, and yet there is a larger element at play. A female knowledge system is being offered to the male. The supernatural elements aside, this story is informing the hearer or reader what elements of rice cultivation belong to women, and which belong to men. To understand this we must first establish that there was a division of labor, which translates into a cultural tradition.

Before we can hope to understand the cultural dynamics of American rice cultivation, we must first view them from their African origins. The origin of rice in the Americas is an area of contention among historians, with some arguing that Europeans introduced the grain, while others contend that African slaves introduced it. As we have seen, Judith Carney stands as a staunch proponent that American rice originated from African slaves, but for our purposes let us set this debate aside and instead focus on how the presence of rice cultivation in America and the older presence of rice cultivation in Africa created a scenario where African rice culture was able to play a significant role in the development of an American rice culture.

Slaving ships throughout the history of the slave trade reported accounts of West African peoples engaging in rice cultivation. In the records of the slaving ship *Sandown*, a description of rice-growing practices among the Baga peoples of modern-day Guinea were described as having a clear division of labor among men and women. The log states that “women & girls transplant the rice and are so dexterous as to plant fifty roots singly in one minute.”⁹ Europeans not only acknowledged the existence of an African skill-set in rice cultivation, but also that much of this skill-set was associated with women.

These ship journals not only tell us that there were documented accounts of gender divisions for rice cultivation in Africa, but they also inform us that many slaves from Africa encountered the rice grain as a source of food. Whether from rice producing regions or not, slaves encountered rice as a food staple during the infamous “Middle Passage.” In the journal for the *Sandown* slaving ship, there are numerous accounts of the ship stockpiling rice supplies from the African coast. On November 12, 1793 the ships log reports taking onboard “one ton and a half of red rice.”¹⁰ The mention of red rice in slaving ship logs indicates a known distinction between the African strain of *Oryza glaberrima*, red rice, and the Asian strain of *Oryza sativa*, but more importantly it indicates that rice was an important food staple for consumption during the “Middle Passage.”

Judith Carney uses this point to illustrate that while not all slaves were experienced in the cultivation of rice, many became familiar with the grain during the “Middle Passage” even to the point of taking the grain from the ship and planting it in their provision gardens on plantations. She uses this as evidence for her claim that American rice derived from African slaves, but for our purpose we can use this evidence to show, at minimum, that many African slaves had some form of contact with the rice grain before their arrival in America.¹¹ This is important as it adds credence to the idea that African knowledge and beliefs for the cultivation

of rice were able to diffuse among the various ethnic groups that made up the American slave population.

Even with this initial introduction to rice, the presence of gender roles in rice cultivation still requires further exploration. It has been established by past historians, such as Peter Woods and Daniel Littlefield, that there was both a larger number of slaves being imported from rice producing regions of Africa, and that plantation owners preferred slaves from these regions. Even with this fact it is also known that many slaves, even from rice producing regions, were not experienced cultivators of rice. It would, therefore, appear that the use of a gender division in rice cultivation would have relied on a relatively small population's influence. The barriers that cultural difference created between slaves pale in comparison to the hardships of slavery, and for this reason the establishment of cultural links between different African ethnic groups does not seem that far-fetched. The harsh realities of slavery created an incentive among African slaves of all cultural backgrounds to establish support systems which would alleviate the burdens of living in a foreign and brutal environment. This was especially necessary in the area of agriculture, as this was the main area of contention between the slaves and their overseers.

The presence of a knowledge system that could alleviate the hardships of agricultural labor would then become a significant component of the newly developing culture. If even one slave on a rice plantation had experience with growing the crop, it stands to reason that the knowledge would be shared. The issue is how this knowledge was shared among different ethnic groups with different languages. Daniel Littlefield postulates that Ibo women, who made up a significant portion of the female population in South Carolina, may have also served as a sort of cultural and linguistic bridge among different African ethnic groups on the plantation. Due to their region of origin being located between the Niger-Congo language groups and the Bantu language groups, they could have served as linguistic and cultural translators on the plantation.¹² While this is possible, it also seems likely that the presence of any person already experienced in growing rice (such as a person from the West African rice-producing regions of modern-day Senegal or Guinea) on a slave plantation would have helped pass on how to grow rice. Agricultural practices do not necessarily need to be verbally explained but can simply be demonstrated. Gender divisions in the planting of rice, along with the presence of African growing technologies, stand as evidence that the knowledge systems were transferred either by demonstration or verbally. As time went on and the Gullah language group developed, the sharing of rice knowledge became more transparent and allowed for the development of new cultural traditions for passing on the traditions, such as the use of folk tales.

Based on the established presence of African systems for growing rice in the American South, it then becomes necessary to examine how these cultural links survived slavery. To accomplish this we must examine the very nature of the rice plantation, starting with its geographic location. In many ways, the South Carolina Lowcountry presents an inhospitable landscape, but one also full of economic possibilities. The environment presented English colonists with many difficulties in the form of swamp land, and yet they viewed its warm climate as an opportunity for agricultural experimentation. The growing of rice in South Carolina, whether introduced by African slaves or English colonists, became a staple crop that flourished in the hostile malarial swamps of the Lowcountry. The dangers of malaria and the uninviting nature of the swamps, which served as the base for rice growing, resulted in a separation between plantation owners and their African slaves.¹³ Judith Carney believes the adoption of the task labor system was likely the result of negotiation between slaves and their overseers for the knowledge of growing rice. However, it seems more likely that the actual negotiation for the task labor system was between the slave owners and the environment.¹⁴ The task labor system allowed slave owners to assign specific tasks to their slaves, which then allowed them to avoid the dangers of directly overseeing their labors in the rice fields. A task varied from person to person, and place to place, but one former slave named Uncle Ben Horry (who we shall hear from again later in this essay), described a typical task in South Carolina as being based on a specific size of land being worked within a specific task; such as harvesting rice at one acre per day.¹⁵ This in turn allowed the slaves a certain level of freedom from plantation owners, a freedom that gave them an opportunity to utilize African traditions for growing a crop that was familiar to at least some of the slaves.

The division of labor between women and men in the cultivation of rice could, if viewed with a modern-day Western perspective, be seen as a mechanism for male authority, but let us try to view it from the perspective of African slaves. Taken from their home and culture slaves were forced into the brutal and unfamiliar conditions of American agriculture, yet with rice they were able to find something familiar. It is a fact that not all slaves on rice plantations were directly familiar with the practice of rice cultivation, but if given the opportunity to establish a connection to an African cultural tradition that, moreover, functioned in terms not dictated by their overseers, the adoption of the tradition would be empowering.

This sense of empowerment also carries over to the use of gender tasks. For example, Genevieve Wilcox Chandler (a member of the W.P.A. Federal Writers Project), conducted an interview in the 1930s about the life of a Gullah woman named Cindy Lance, who knew how to cultivate rice

in South Carolina, demonstrated the empowerment women had through rice cultivation. The interview contains a pride-filled description of the work that Cindy Lance and all women rice planters did in the past, and still performed in the early decades of the twentieth century. "She plant the rice seed... she hoe 'em two, three times in briling sun." The interview also describes the hard but empowering work that "Mom" Cindy did in the rice fields.¹⁶ This description of the female domain of labor demonstrates the historical legacy of female-specific labor, as the interviewee is not just telling the story of the work one woman performed on rice fields, but is also telling the story of all female rice planters.

For men, the task of preparing the land for cultivation was dangerous, and clearly defined as a male task. Uncle Ben Horry emphasized the significance of male slave work in the development of rice in his interview with Genevieve Chandler. He described the strenuous labor involved in turning the swamp into a productive rice field during slavery, and declares "ditching", the building of canals, to be "man task."¹⁷ Throughout his interview we find in Uncle Ben Horry a description of the harsh nature of rice cultivation in and out of slavery, but also a certain level of pride at his "male" role in the process. The gender divide in the cultivation of rice was both an opportunity to apply an African tradition to alleviate the harsh demands of the work and an opportunity to exert cultural power in a system of cultural and physical subjugation.

To further examine the use of gender division as a means of practicing cultural power we now turn to the hoe. The hoe, used for the maintenance of rice fields, brings with it many cultural identifiers. First, the hoe which was used by slaves in the rice fields is designed in the same fashion as those used in African rice fields.¹⁸ Perhaps more significant than the hoe's likely African origins, are the gender characteristics associated with it. Duncan Heywood makes mention in his book *Seed From Madagascar* that during his time growing rice, his male field laborers always refused to use the hoe, claiming it to be "woman's wuk."¹⁹ This belief is also described in *A Woman Rice Planter*, where Elizabeth Allston Pringle provides a depiction of her time overseeing a rice plantation in South Carolina toward the end of the nineteenth century. In it she describes how "men now think it beneath them to handle a hoe; that they consider a purely feminine implement."²⁰ This short passage provides a great deal of insight into not only how gender division applied to the tools of the trade, but also to the point that the use of gender-specific tasks may not have always been allowed.

Pringle's use of the term "now" to describe the male refusal to use the female hoe indicates that there may have been a time when gender divisions were not allowed on all plantations. This actually follows something that

was recorded in a letter from James R. Sparkman to Benjamin Allston (Mary Allston Pringle's father) in 1858, where he states that "men and women are all engaged together in the planting, cultivation, and harvesting of the crop." He then goes on to say that the only gender division that exists is that the men alone prepare the field for planting.²¹ It is possible that as a result of the separation between slaves and their owners that James Sparkman did not know that there was in fact a gender division for rice cultivation, or perhaps his description is correct and slaves under the constraints of slavery were forced to abandon their tradition of dividing labor among gender lines. The fact that he felt it was necessary to assert that there was no gender division on his plantation would indicate that the question was raised based on the presence or knowledge of a tradition of employing gender divisions in rice cultivation. Based on the writings of Pringle, Heyward, and the interviews of the Federal Writers Project, we know that the tradition of gender division survives this period of possible forced integration. The survival of gender divisions in rice cultivation indicates that when given the choice, African-Americans engaged in the cultivation of rice chose to do so according to the West African tradition of gendered tasks. The question then becomes: how did the tradition manage to survive periods where the constraints of slavery could have severed the tradition from the people? It is here that we return to the importance of the tale of the Devil's daughter.

In the folk tale of the Devil's daughter, recorded in 1919, we find a description of what it takes to grow rice. When Jack tells the rice to "Drop Drop" he is describing the process of planting the rice in the soil.²² The planting process involved using one's foot to bury the rice seed in the soil, a technique found in both West Africa and America to be a female task.²³ Even in the age of mechanization there still remained a female element to the planting process, as described in *A Woman Rice Planter*: "young girls, with bare feet and skirts well tied up, danced and shuffled the rice about with their feet until the whole mass was thoroughly clayed."²⁴ After the rice had been clayed, which means covered with a protective shell of soil, Pringle describes how it was then planted with an ox driven rice-drill, which does the actual planting in the field.²⁵ This demonstrates that even with the presence of a machine, a female skill was still needed to complete the task of planting. The fact that the Devil's daughter shared this skill with Jack demonstrates a cultural legacy of female knowledge in certain rice growing tasks.

An interesting component of this folk tale is not only what is told, but also what is not told. The Devil's daughter does not tell Jack how to prepare the field, because as we have seen this is an aspect of rice production that belongs to the male participant. Jack already knew how to prepare

the field, but what he needed to be taught was how to grow the crop. If we view this story outside the context of a story of the supernatural, and think of it as a mechanism for preserving a cultural legacy, then we are left wondering why a man would need to know how to perform the female tasks of rice cultivation. It is possible that this story speaks to the conditions of slavery, where men were forced to perform female tasks. The story could be providing a form of cultural permission for the violation (of gender norms among Africans) to occur due to circumstances beyond the participants' control. As we have seen, there are reports that men performed the female role. Moreover, as Judith Carney has noted, there were times during slavery where the sheer demand of production forced the gender division to be violated, especially in the case of milling the grain.²⁶ It seems likely that what this story is depicting is that the power over growing rice belongs to women, but that this power can be shared with men so long as the gender tradition is remembered.

There is, however, more to the gender division than just the practice of cultivation; there is also evidence that the female knowledge system for rice extends to other aspects of the crop's use. Rice was, and still is, more than a mere crop to be grown; it is a cultural symbol. The fact that it was a crop that slaves were forced to cultivate under the harshest of conditions might preclude the grain's celebration among African-American communities, and yet there is evidence that it did become a celebrated component of Gullah culture. We find this in the fact that it is included in numerous folk tales, like the *Devils Daughter*, and the fact that the grain was celebrated in song. In a song collected in Lorenzo Dow Turner's *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect*, we find another example of how rice was celebrated, as well as another example of how this celebration was maintained within a female knowledge system. The following song was sung by Julia Armstrong on St. Simon Island, Georgia at some point during Turner's research in the 1930's:

*"New rice and Okra
I've come, I've come.
Eat some and leave some,
I've come, I've come,
Beat rice, beat, bang, bang,
I've come, I've come"*²⁷

This song, as sung by a female from a Gullah community, provides further example of how rice played a significant role in Gullah culture. The terms "beat" and "bang" are likely references to the process of separating the husk from the grain, which involves the use of mortar and pestle, both

of African design. This song, as sung by a female from a Gullah community, also provides further evidence for the role of women in maintaining the cultural knowledge of rice. In the song, Julia Armstrong is both informing people to eat rice (and okra, also a food with African-American cultural significance), and also that she, the female possessor of knowledge, knows how to plant rice ("leave rice"), and mill rice ("beat rice, beat, bang, bang").²⁸ The song's mention of eating rice provides evidence for another important element of rice culture: its use as a food.

The legacy of a female knowledge system for rice goes beyond the cultivation of the grain, but carries over to how the grain is used as a food. This, like the use of gender division, has its origin in West Africa, where even today the cooking of rice holds cultural meaning that goes beyond its use for sustenance. As Judith Carney points out in *Black Rice*, in modern-day Senegal a meal is not considered complete unless it includes rice.²⁹ This belief is interesting in that it can also be found to this day in the coastal regions of South Carolina and Georgia. Josephine A. Beoku-Betts conducted research on the role of food preparation as a mechanism for maintaining Gullah culture among women in the 1980s and early 1990s. In an interview conducted by her in 1989, Carla Bates, a Gullah woman, stated that "many people feel if rice isn't cooked, they haven't eaten."³⁰

This statement, and others like it, provides an interesting cultural link between West Africa and Gullah communities of South Carolina and Georgia. As Carney points out, there tends to be a link between food staples and culture when that cultural group is heavily reliant on one staple food.³¹ While it could be argued that the similar cultural attributes given to rice in Africa and Gullah communities could simply be a matter of that crop serving as the staple crop in both communities, there is a problem with this argument in the case of South Carolina and Georgia, where there also existed other staple crops. The preparation of rice-based dishes in Gullah communities (as well as in other Southern African-American communities) typically incorporates various staples, such as peas and corn, in the creation of dishes that incorporated ingredients that were both available and culturally significant.³² What we find is that rice alone does not encompass the entirety of food culture, but, rather, one important ingredient in the link between African-American culture and food.

The use of gender division in the cultivation of rice is not merely a convenient method for planting the crop, but is also an exercise in the use of cultural tradition to resist the pressures of slavery. What we find in this seemingly insignificant grain is the power of culture; what could have been viewed negatively has been transformed into an important link to an older African tradition. Rice was not just another grain being grown on slave plantations; it was a grain that provided a link to slaves' African

cultural identities. The existence of an African female knowledge system allowed slaves to more successfully grow the crop, while also allowing slaves to keep the crop as their own. After the Civil War the era of the large rice plantation in South Carolina and Georgia was drawing to a close, and yet smaller rice fields continued to be grown within African-American communities.³³

Rice, as a crop and food, served as a mechanism for building community through tradition. The tale of the Devil's daughter provides an opportunity for the gender division of rice to be preserved through the telling of a trickster tale. The story could have substituted rice for any other crop, or product, and yet the story contains a crop that allows for the man Jack to beat the devil by using the female's knowledge of rice. It is possible that the Devil in this story is representative of the slave owner or slavery itself, and that the female sharing her knowledge of rice is representative of an ancestor from Africa providing Jack with a means for both growing rice in the new land, and for maintaining a link to African tradition. We find rice's significance through its presence in folk tales like that of the Devil's daughter, as well as in the Gullah kitchens of the past and present. When a meal is said not to be complete without rice what is being argued for is that a meal is not complete without tradition. The history of rice cultivation in America provides a great deal of insight into traditional African agricultural practices transformed American agriculture, but also demonstrates how agriculture has been used as a means for preserving culture. Mothers continue to teach their daughters how to prepare rice for meals, and the legacy of rice continues. Culture has an endearing quality; it is something that survives the worst of conditions through the perseverance of the human spirit. While rice might seem a small and insignificant grain, it also has the power to feed the hungry stomach, as well as the hungry spirit.

Notes

- 1 Daniel Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 113.
- 2 Judith Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 6.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 100.
- 4 Max Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 84.
- 5 Carney, *Black Rice*, 110.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 111, 112.
- 7 Patricia C. Nicholas, "Storytelling in Carolina: Continuities and Contrasts," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 20:3 (September, 1989): 233.

- 8 As told by Joseph S. Shanklin in *Folk-Lore of the Sea Islands, South Carolina, Memoirs of The American Folk-Lore Society*, edited by Elsie Clews Parsons, Vol. XVI (New York: G.E. Strechert & Co., 1923), 52, 53.
- 9 Samuel Gamble in *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica: The Log of the Sandown, 1793-1794*, edited by Bruce L. Mouser (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 76.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 86.
- 11 Carney, *Black Rice*, 156.
- 12 Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves*, 145.
- 13 Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise*, 83.
- 14 Carney, *Black Rice*, 100.
- 15 Uncle Ben Horry in *Coming Through: Voice of a South Carolina Gullah Community from W.P.A. Oral Histories Collected by Genevieve W. Chandler*, edited by Kincaid Mills, Genevieve Peterkin, and Aaron McCollough (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 92.
- 16 *Ibid.*, interview by Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, 266, 267.
- 17 Uncle Ben Horry, interviewed by Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, in *Coming Through*, 99, 100.
- 18 Carney, *Black Rice*, 109.
- 19 Duncan Clinch Heyward, *Seed From Madagascar* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 31.
- 20 Elizabeth Allston Pringle, *A Woman Rice Planter* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992 reprint, originally published in 1913), 78.
- 21 James R. Sparkman to Benjamin Allston in *The South Carolina Rice Plantation: As Revealed in the Papers of Robert F.W. Allston*, edited by J.H. Easterby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1945), 346.
- 22 As told by Joseph S. Shanklin in *Folk-Lore of the Sea Islands*, 53.
- 23 Carney, *Black Rice*, 110.
- 24 Elizabeth Allston Pringle, *A Woman Rice Planter*, 12.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 13.
- 26 Carney, *Black Rice*, 127.
- 27 Julia Armstrong in Lorenzo Dow Turner, ed., *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), 257.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 Carney, *Black Rice*, 31.
- 30 Josephine A. Beoku-Betts, "We Got Our Way of Cooking Things': Women, Food, and Preservation of Cultural Identity among the Gullah," *Gender and Society* 9:5 (October, 1995): 543.
- 31 Carney, *Black Rice*, 31.
- 32 Frederick Douglas Opie, *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 29.
- 33 Mart A. Stewart, "Rice, Water, and Power: Landscapes of Domination and Resistance in the Lowcountry, 1790-1880," *Environmental History Review* 15: 3 (1991): 59.

Justin Emery

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Muscular Christianity,” and Masculinity in Victorian Britain

Introduction: “Muscular Christianity” and Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The term “muscular Christianity” refers to an understanding of masculinity popular during the late nineteenth century in Britain. A simplified understanding of this ideology is that those who advocated it thought a Christian man should be physically fit and engaged in physical, manly activities, especially sporting activities. At the same time, “muscular Christianity” entails much more than this. Norman Vance, whose book *The Sinews of the Spirit* is a classic treatment of this ideology, dislikes the term for this reason and even refuses to use it in his book, preferring the term “Christian manliness” instead. The problem with the term, says Vance, “is that it draws attention more to muscularity than to Christianity.”¹

Although I agree with Vance, for convenience and clarity’s sake I will continue to use the term “muscular Christianity” in this essay. It was not, in fact, coined by Charles Kingsley or Thomas Hughes (the two men most closely associated with formulating the ideology of “muscular Christianity”) but by T.C. Sanders in a review of Kingsley’s book, *Two Years Ago*.² Sanders characterized “muscular Christianity” in this way: “His ideal [Kingsley’s] is a man who fears God and can walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours – who... breathes God’s free air on God’s rich earth, and at the same time can hit a woodcock, doctor a horse, and twist a poker around his fingers.”³ Obviously, Sanders saw in Kingsley’s vision of Christianity an intimate relationship between manly physical activity and godliness. In his book, however, Norman Vance focuses on the Christian and spiritual rather than physical dimensions of Kingsley and Hughes’s ideology. While it is true that physical activity was important to “muscular Christianity,” it must be put in the proper context of the ideology as a whole. Vance does this when he says that, for Kingsley, physical manliness was “the basis at least for a higher manliness: it is also an index and a condition of psychological, moral and spiritual health.”⁴ For Kingsley and Hughes, physical activity was a part, but not necessarily the essence, of their understanding of masculinity.

This essay, however, is not primarily about “muscular Christianity,” but about another understanding of masculinity – one that is in some ways similar to, but also is significantly different from “muscular Christianity.” This study is about Charles Haddon Spurgeon’s views of masculinity. Spurgeon was an influential Baptist preacher during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, he was so influential that the Metropolitan Tabernacle was built in London to house his weekly congregation, which drew an average weekly attendance of five thousand.⁵ Spurgeon’s influence did not stop with his local congregation, however. In his essay “‘A Man of God is a Manly Man’: Spurgeon, Luther and ‘Holy Boldness,’” Andrew Bradstock gives a good summary of the extent to which Spurgeon’s writings were in demand, both during his lifetime and after:

His printed sermons had a regular weekly readership of 25,000, with those on special topics selling as many as 350,000, and his Sunday messages were cabled every week to New York for inclusion in large-circulation newspapers in the United States. Translated into 40 languages and into Braille, Spurgeon’s sermons were read throughout the world, to the extent that by the time of his death in 1892 more than 50 million copies had been sold worldwide, a figure which has since more than doubled. When his numerous books, pamphlets, tracts and other writings are also taken into account, Timothy George’s claim in the early 1990s that, ‘a century after his death, there are more works in print by Spurgeon than by any other English speaking author, living or dead’ becomes almost believable.⁶

As Bradstock stated, Spurgeon’s influence did not stop after his death. Affectionately known as the “Prince of Preachers,”⁷ Spurgeon is still looked to for inspiration and wisdom among Christians today, as is evidenced by a new book, published in 2012, by Steven J. Lawson, entitled *The Gospel Focus of Charles Spurgeon*.⁸

Given this amount of influence by Spurgeon, both during his lifetime and after, it is surprising that his views on masculinity have not been studied more than they have been. The most comprehensive view of Spurgeon’s understanding of masculinity is Bradstock’s essay quoted above. Aside from this, at best, Spurgeon may be given a brief mention in a study on “muscular Christianity.” Perhaps this is because Spurgeon never formally set out to advance a theory of masculinity; however, the theme of being manly, or what a real man should be, appears constantly in his writings. Whatever the reason, this is unfortunate, not only because

of the extent to which Spurgeon was listened to and read, but because something about Spurgeon – his message, his personality, or, perhaps, his understanding of masculinity – resonated with his generation of men. Not only did Spurgeon attract huge numbers of people to the tabernacle every week, but in his congregation, there were twice as many men as there were women.⁹ This was atypical of Victorian church-attending practices; as Callum Brown has statistically shown in *The Death of Christian Britain*, women and children far outnumbered men among those attending churches over the past few centuries. This was even more so the case among Protestant Nonconformist congregations. Throughout the period between 1650 and 1980, for example, women outnumbered men in terms of church membership in most Congregationalist and Baptist congregations often by a factor of about two to one.¹⁰

This essay, then, seeks to understand Spurgeon's view of masculinity and compare and contrast it with other conventional Victorian ideals about masculinity such as "muscular Christianity." In his essay, noted above, Bradstock asserts that Spurgeon held to "a model of manliness which is at once a reflection of that espoused by Hughes and Kingsley and one moderated in part by his own brand of Puritanism."¹¹ Although Bradstock overemphasizes the role of physical strength in Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity and incorrectly links this with Kingsley and Hughes, I agree with much of his overall argument. This essay shall expand upon Bradstock's essay, providing more evidence for the similarities between Spurgeon's view of masculinity and "muscular Christianity." Yet it also emphasizes that the role of physical strength is not a point of contact between the two ideas. Although the two ideals of masculinity have similarities in how they manifest themselves in everyday life, there are important differences which result largely from Spurgeon's theology.

This essay will begin by examining Spurgeon's borrowings from seventeenth-century Puritans in his theology, contrasting them with the liberal theological influences on the ideology of "muscular Christianity." After this, it will define what Spurgeon considered a true man to be: one who is reconciled to and relies upon God but does not have an overly submissive disposition toward his fellow man; one who is active and engaged in the world; and one who overcomes the enemies to the Christian faith – the devil and the world. Finally, as the essay defines Spurgeon's conception of masculinity, it will also compare and contrast it with Kingsley and Hughes's ideas of "muscular Christianity."

There is also another aspect to this essay. In his book *The Sinews of the Spirit*, Norman Vance says that Kingsley's understanding of masculinity "was the basis of his practical work as a pastor, teacher, and reformer, and the essence of his life and experience."¹² The same is true of Spurgeon.

Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity shaped how he lived, and I hope to demonstrate how these ideas manifested themselves in Spurgeon's life. As such, this essay is somewhat biographical, as I seek to introduce the reader to England's most influential nineteenth-century evangelical preacher.

Spurgeon and the Puritans

Before discussing the specifics of Spurgeon's view of masculinity, it is important to understand the intellectual foundations upon which Spurgeon based his ideas about everything, including masculinity, and to see how these inherited ideas differed from the inherited ideas of those who advocated "muscular Christianity." Although it is impossible to overestimate the importance of the Bible in Spurgeon's thinking, here I will focus mainly on Spurgeon's Puritan theological roots. Suffice it to say that Spurgeon believed the Bible to be God's infallible revelation to man.¹³ Of course, this belief itself closely connects Spurgeon to the Puritans, but we shall see how the Puritan writers of the seventeenth century had a significant influence in other ways as well upon the "Prince of Preachers."

Born in 1834, Spurgeon grew up, like many Victorians, on a steady diet of Protestant Biblical teaching.¹⁴ As a child, Spurgeon's mother seems to be the primary religious teacher of the house, not because his father was indifferent to Christianity, but because his preaching engagements often meant his absence from the Spurgeon home.¹⁵ It was during his youth that Spurgeon first became acquainted with the Puritans and their theology. Of his childhood, Spurgeon said, "I was privileged with godly parents, watched with jealous eyes, scarcely ever permitted to mingle with questionable associates, warned not to listen to anything profane or licentious, and taught the way of God from my youth up."¹⁶ The way of God Spurgeon was taught included the Puritans. He recollects,

It was the custom on Sunday evenings, while we were yet little children, for her [Spurgeon's mother] to stay at home with us, and then we sat round the table, and read verse by verse, and she explained the Scripture to us. After that was done, then came the time of pleading; there was a little piece of Alleine's *Alarm*, or of Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and this was read with pointed observations made to each of us as we sat round the table; and the question was asked, how long before we would seek the Lord.¹⁷

Both Richard Alleine (1634-1668) and Richard Baxter (1615-1691) were Puritan preachers and authors in the seventeenth century.¹⁸

Although introduced to them as a boy, Spurgeon continued to read the Puritans as he grew older, began his own ministry, and published his own writings. Spurgeon unashamedly considered himself a Calvinist and sought to preach like the Puritans he admired.¹⁹ He said, "I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else."²⁰ Calvinism was also taught at the pastors' college founded by Spurgeon.²¹ In speaking of the college, Spurgeon again reveals his Puritan theological roots, at least rhetorically. "We endeavour to teach the Scriptures, but, as everybody else claims to do the same, and we wish to be known and read of all men, we say distinctly that the theology of the Pastors' College is Puritanic."²²

Different from Spurgeon's Calvinism was Charles Kingsley's theology. Kingsley's theology was intensely concerned with this world and rejected, as Vance puts it, "the traditional dichotomies of church and world, body and soul."²³ In fact, according to Vance, this is why Kingsley was not a Calvinist, because "the older generation of Calvinist Evangelicals... followed... [St. Augustine] in stressing the total depravity of ordinary human nature and the necessity for holy contempt of the world."²⁴ Kingsley criticized Calvinism in his novel, *Alton Locke*, portraying the main character's mother as an "otherworldly" Baptist.²⁵ Kingsley was a Christian socialist, "more at home," says Vance, "in the English Pelagian tradition of practical good works in terms of the present world."²⁶

In his book, Vance looks at the influence of four men on Kingsley and Hughes's thought - S.T. Coleridge, F.D. Maurice, Thomas Carlyle, and Thomas Arnold. Kingsley and Hughes did not agree entirely with all four of these men; neither did all four agree on what could be labeled a unified system of thought. Thus, unlike the case with Spurgeon and his borrowings from seventeenth-century Puritans, it is difficult to attach a simplified label to the ideas Kingsley and Hughes inherited from these four men. However, it is clear that these men did not hold to Calvinistic theology, and neither did Kingsley or Hughes. Maurice, for instance, did not believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment.²⁷ Vance calls the ideas that Kingsley and Hughes inherited from these four men a "traditionalist-radical school of thought," in which there were elements of orthodox and liberal Christianity.²⁸

Spurgeon had a tendency to use the disdainful term "modern thought" for new ideas that did not align with his orthodox Biblical doctrines. He clearly rejected F.D. Maurice's theological thought (one of Kingsley's and Hughes's influences), for instance, when he wrote,

The improvements brought forth by what is called 'modern thought' we regard with suspicion, and believe them to be, at best, dilutions of the truth, and most of them old, rusted heresies, tinkered up again and sent abroad with a new face put upon them, to repeat the mischief which they wrought in ages past. We are old-fashioned enough to prefer Manton to Maurice.²⁹

Spurgeon would have certainly considered Maurice to be diluting the truth with his unbelief in the doctrine of hell, and the man he prefers to Maurice is most likely Thomas Manton, a seventeenth century Puritan.³⁰

The distinction between Spurgeon's Puritan theological roots and Kingsley and Hughes's orthodox yet liberal ones is important because it shows that the three men, although beginning from different starting points, arrived at a fairly similar understanding of masculinity regarding the manifestation of it in daily life (as we shall see later). This is not to say that there were no points of contact between Spurgeon's Calvinism and the liberal Christianity of Kingsley and Hughes. Indeed, as Protestant Christians, there was much they agreed upon. However, there were obvious differences between the two systems of thought. The distinction is also important because, as will be discussed later, Spurgeon's theology was the single most significant factor in his understanding of masculinity.

Redeemed Masculinity

The Puritan roots of Spurgeon's theology and his belief in Biblical inspiration directly influenced his view of masculinity, especially the first characteristic of it. For Spurgeon, there was no true masculinity apart from restoration with the Creator. Spurgeon believed all people were severed from fellowship with God and in rebellion against Him. In a sermon from 1883, Spurgeon, preaching on Romans 3:22-23, said:

All men have evil hearts, albeit their hearts may not all be equally inclined to the coarser vices in which some indulge, yet there is in every sinner the black spot of alienation from God, forgetfulness of God, love of sin and dislike to God when He is thoroughly known. And, to get this out of the heart requires a Divine operation in every case. No man can make his own heart clean.³¹

In true Protestant fashion, Spurgeon claimed the only solution to man's alienation from God was through faith in Christ. In fact, restoring men and women to God was Spurgeon's lifelong passion and mission. In his autobiography, he stated, he would "rather be the means of saving a soul from death than be the greatest orator on earth.... To win a soul

from going down into the pit, is a more glorious achievement than to be crowned in the arena of theological controversy as *Dr. Sufficientissimus*.”³²

The idea that all people were separated from God meant that, for Spurgeon, a true man was one who was first reconciled to God. In his book, *A Good Start*, a book meant for young men and women, the first topic Spurgeon addresses is what it means to be “A Young Man in Christ.” In this first chapter, he states, “When I say that a man in Christ is a man, I mean that, if he be truly in Christ, he is therefore manly.”³³ For Spurgeon, the first and most basic condition to being a true man is being reconciled to God through Christ. Spurgeon continues:

There has got abroad a notion, somehow, that if you become a Christian, you must sink your manliness and turn milksop. It is supposed that you allow your liberty to be curtailed by a set of negations which you have not the courage to break through, though you would if you dared. You must not do this, and you must not do the other: you are to take out your backbone and become molluscous; you are to be sweet as honey towards everybody, and every atom of spirit is to be evaporated from you. You are to ask leave of ministers and church authorities to breathe, and to become a sort of living martyr, who lives a wretched life in the hope of dying in the odour of sanctity. I do not believe in such Christianity at all. The Christian man, it seems to me, is the noblest style of man; the freest, bravest, most heroic, and most fearless of men. If he is what he should be, he is, in the best sense of the word, a man all over, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot.³⁴

In this passage, Spurgeon gives several other attributes of what he considers a real man to be. He implies that a real man must have a backbone and that he is not overly submissive to church authorities. He explicitly states that a true man in Christ is fearless and brave. These attributes will be discussed later in the essay, but it can be seen that the most basic condition for true manliness is that a man be a Christian, and then he is “in the best sense of the word, a man all over.”³⁵

A True Man’s Relationship to God

Not only is a true man reconciled to God through Christ, but for Spurgeon, a true man also relies upon God, and God in turn is a source of a man’s manly attributes. The idea of reliance upon God is a constant throughout his writings. It was, admittedly, an ideal he thought all people

should strive for, regardless of gender, but there was a special connection between relying on God and true manliness for Spurgeon. "I believe that, in a man's life, the great secret of strength, and holiness, and righteousness, is the acknowledgment of God," Spurgeon said.³⁶ Trusting oneself to Jesus made a man brave and fearless. In his autobiography, Spurgeon let the reader see how this manifested itself in his own life. He tells a story about a heroic action he performed during a thunderstorm, giving the credit to Christ for his courage. He writes:

Some people are terrified at lightning, but ever since I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, I have had no fear in a storm, however severe it might be. I distinctly remember, while quite a lad, being in my uncle's house one night during a tremendous tempest. The older folks were all afraid, but I had really trusted myself with the Lord Jesus, and I did not dare to fear. The baby was upstairs, and nobody was brave enough to fetch it down because of a big window on the stairs. I went up to the bedroom, and brought the child to its mother... There was real danger, for a stack was set on fire a short distance away, but I was as calm as in the sunshine of a summer's day, not because I was naturally courageous, but because I had unshaken confidence in my Lord.³⁷

Despite the fact that a man should trust Christ, he should also be self-sufficient, working hard for oneself and not being overly reliant upon others. The virtue of self-sufficiency was very much present in Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity, both intellectually and practically.³⁸

Intellectually speaking, Spurgeon thought that a man should think for himself and come to his own conclusions. Indeed, this is how he became a Calvinist. Spurgeon held to the same ideas as the Puritans, and he did so because he thought they were objectively correct – that they corresponded to reality. Mark Hopkins addresses this issue in his book, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation*, arguing about Spurgeon that, "The paradoxical notion of a full-blooded, three-dimensional man drawing on an old cardboard cut-out set of borrowed ideas may be discarded. Spurgeon's Calvinism was consciously adopted, and not merely inherited."³⁹ This is important to note because it underscores Spurgeon's idea of masculinity. There would have been a contradiction between theory and practice if Spurgeon simply received a tradition of ideas without firmly believing them himself, for a man is intellectually self-sufficient, he thinks for himself, and he comes to his own conclusions.

The self-sufficiency of Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity did not stop with his theological thought; it also worked itself out in daily, practical life. This is best exemplified in Spurgeon's book, *John Ploughman's Talk: Plain Advice for Plain People*. In this book, through the discourses of a fictional man named John Ploughman, Spurgeon shares his insights about various aspects of life. Spurgeon made John Ploughman a man's man, exhibiting qualities Spurgeon thought necessary for a true man to have. Ploughman is a hard-working, no nonsense, rough-around-the-edges farmer, saying, "Jesus was a great worker, and his disciples must not be afraid of hard work."⁴⁰ So important was the idea of honest, hard work for Spurgeon that, through John Ploughman, he stated that people should not even take time out from working at their place of employment to discuss religious matters.⁴¹ Speaking about those who would wait around for God to take care of them and do nothing themselves, Mr. Ploughman said,

God helps those who help themselves. When I see a man who declares that the times are bad, and that he is always unlucky, I generally say to myself, that old goose did not sit on the eggs till they were all addled, and now providence is to be blamed because they won't hatch. I never had any faith in luck at all, except that I believe good luck will carry a man over a ditch if he jumps well, and will put a bit of bacon into his pot if he looks after his garden and keeps a pig. Luck generally comes to those who look after it.⁴²

A man must work hard, make his own luck, and not sit around and wait for God to provide while he does nothing.

Closely related to the idea of self-sufficiency is the idea of submission. For Spurgeon, a true man must submit to God, yes, but not to another man in any excessive amount. This idea manifests itself in the discourses of John Plowman. Mr. Ploughman states, "There is a time to do as others wish, and a time to refuse. We may make ourselves asses, and then everybody will ride us; but, if we would be respected, we must be our own masters, and not let others saddle us as they think fit."⁴³ As this quotation from Mr. Ploughman suggests, Spurgeon clearly understood that sometimes it is best to comply, and even be submissive, to other people. Elsewhere Spurgeon writes that a man must learn obedience before he can effectively lead.⁴⁴ It is still clear, however, that, for Spurgeon, a true man does not have an overly submissive attitude toward his fellow man, but is, as he says, his "own master."

First Point of Contact

Here we can draw our first parallel between Spurgeon's vision of masculinity and the ideology of "muscular Christianity," beginning with Spurgeon's insistence that a man be Christian. There is an element of "muscular Christianity" in Spurgeon's equation of manliness with Christianity. Vance says that, for Kingsley and Hughes, "the manliness and the Christianity were inextricably bound up with each other."⁴⁵ Vance sees this combination of manliness and Christianity as problematic and he discusses what he calls the "unstable and intellectually vulnerable" synthesis of these two ideas throughout his book.⁴⁶ However, my point here is simply to highlight that Spurgeon, Kingsley, and Hughes all held that true manliness entailed some sort of Christian faith.

Spurgeon's idea that a man should be his "own master" is also found in "muscular Christianity," although the notion of a man being self-sufficient and his own master may have had a slightly different meaning for Kingsley and Hughes than it did for Spurgeon. Norman Vance states this was an element of "muscular Christianity" when, discussing the unstable blend of manliness and Christianity noted above, he says,

It was inevitable that manliness and Christianity should be sometimes uneasy together. The entertaining and healthy activism of the manly hero, whether in fact or fiction, was bound to jar with the less vivid religious imperatives: patience and heroic martyrdom, self-abnegation and the discipline of the will. The secular hero is captain of his fate and master of his soul, confidently dominating the action. But sooner or later the Christian hero must acknowledge Christ as captain and master.⁴⁷

Vance argues that Kingsley and Hughes used their liberal Christian theology to try and make this "uneasy" blend of manliness and Christianity work.⁴⁸ Although there may seem to be a tension between the notions of a man relying upon and submitting to God all while being self-sufficient, Spurgeon acknowledges no such thing. A good example of how he deals with this tension can be found in a sermon he preached entitled, "The Best Burden for Young Shoulders." In the sermon, Spurgeon says,

Now, if you young people put your feet down where Christ put his feet, I am sure it will be good for you. You will grow up to be healthy Christians, and men of no ordinary stature. But if you do not begin with searching the word, but take your religion at second-hand from other people, and do what you see other people do, without searching,

why, you will lack that noble independence of mind and courage of spirit, and, at the same time, that complete submission to Christ, which make up the main elements of a noble-minded Christian.⁴⁹

Here, Spurgeon equates intellectual self-sufficiency regarding the understanding of Scripture, he calls it independence of mind, with “complete submission to Christ.” He is not, as Vance argues is the case with Kingsley and Hughes, creating a blend of secular masculine values and religious values. Rather, Spurgeon gives a justification for his equation, namely that by not having an intellectual self-reliance, the young man cannot submit to Christ in fullness because his religion is not his own, but he takes it “at second-hand from other people.”

A True Man is Active in the World Around Him

So far, this essay has argued that Spurgeon’s view of masculinity meant that a man was reconciled to, reliant upon, and submissive to God, but not overly reliant or submissive to other men. The next aspect of Spurgeon’s conception of masculinity that needs to be considered is his belief that a true man is not ostentatious and does not live merely in the world of intellectual ideas, but is actively engaged in the world around him. Or, to put it another way, a real man has a plainness about him, and he does not exalt himself above his fellow men in an effort to impress them.

In a sermon entitled “The People’s Christ,” Spurgeon argued that Jesus was “one of the people.”⁵⁰ In the sermon, certain aspects of Spurgeon’s view of manliness are revealed, for Spurgeon considered Christ to be the ideal man.⁵¹ Of Jesus, Spurgeon says, “and when He spoke, did He speak with smooth and oily words... No, He often spoke like the rough Elijah; He spoke what He meant, and He meant what He said. He spoke to the people as the people’s Man.”⁵² In the same sermon, Spurgeon comments, “Jesus Christ was one of the people in His doctrine. His Gospel was never the philosopher’s Gospel, for it is not abstruse enough. It will not consent to be buried in hard words and technical phrases – it is so simple that He who can spell over, ‘He that believes and is baptized shall be saved,’ may have a saving knowledge of it!”⁵³ Here we see Spurgeon placing value on plain speech that the majority of people can understand, and denouncing lofty, intellectual speech that the common man has difficulty comprehending. This theme recurs throughout his writings. It is, however, important to recognize why Spurgeon denounces lofty speech – it detaches a person from the real world, most notably from the people who live in it.

Simple language and plainness was also an attribute Spurgeon continually called for from preachers. His fictional character noted above,

John Ploughman, said, "No man should use bad language in the pulpit – and all language is bad which common people cannot make head or tail of...a truth is as comfortable in homely words as in fine speech."⁵⁴ Spurgeon, likewise, advised future preachers:

It is infamous to ascend your pulpit and pour over your people rivers of language, cataracts of words, in which mere platitudes are held in solution like infinitesimal grains of homoeopathic medicine in an Atlantic of utterance. Better far give the people masses of unprepared truth in the rough, like pieces of meat from a butcher's block, chopped off anyhow, bone and all, and even dropped down in the sawdust, than ostentatiously and delicately hand them out upon a china dish a delicious slice of nothing at all.⁵⁵

Once again, Spurgeon's reason for valuing plain speech and plainness in general was that it connected one to the world and the people in it. He regarded George Whitfield, the eighteenth-century Anglican divine who strongly influenced the First Great Awakening, as a Puritan forebear and as an example to be emulated for his plainness. In the same sermon quoted above, "The People's Christ," Spurgeon says, "I fear our college training is but a poor gain to our churches, since it often serves to wean the young man's sympathies from the people... It is good to be able, like some great minds, to attract the mighty. But the more useful man will still be he, who, like Whitfield, uses 'market language.' It is a sad fact that high places and the Gospel seldom well agree."⁵⁶

Second Point of Contact

This brings us to our second point of contact between Spurgeon's view of masculinity and the idea of "muscular Christianity." Like Spurgeon, Kingsley thought a man should be active in the world around him. Bradstock states it this way: "Spurgeon and Kingsley may have diverged substantially in their understanding of Christianity, but both thought it should make a difference in the world."⁵⁷ Kingsley's Christian socialism ensured he was active and engaged in the social issues of his day, but he also considered it right and therefore manly not to hide behind showiness. In language similar to that used by Spurgeon, Vance, partly quoting Kingsley, says Kingsley thought that "Christianity was not, or should not be, an exclusive religion but 'the only true gospel for the people', unlike the esoteric and aristocratic philosophy of fashionable teachers."⁵⁸

Kingsley also shared Spurgeon's disdain for lofty ideas and actions that separated men from the real world, including the clothing worn

by priests. Bradstock discusses this similarity, saying that Kingsley and Hughes both rejected Roman Catholicism and the Tractarian movement within Anglicanism because of their supposedly effeminate “behaviour, practices, and dress.”⁵⁹ Spurgeon also considered the dress of priests effeminate. Although this jab was meant for dissenting preachers only, Spurgeon certainly felt the same way about Catholics when he said, “They must be weak folks indeed who want a man to dress like a woman before they can enjoy his sermon.”⁶⁰ For Spurgeon and Kingsley, these attitudes and actions merely served to separate and elevate men over one another, which was neither manly nor righteous. As Bradstock says, “the true man proves himself by his simple earthiness, his involvement in the ordinary affairs of the world, his ability to communicate simply and naturally to the ordinary man.”⁶¹

Manliness and “Truth”

There is yet one more major aspect to Spurgeon’s understanding of masculinity we will consider. Aside from being reconciled to God, relying upon and submitting to God, not being overly reliant upon or submissive to man, and being involved in the real world, a true man is defined by his relationship to Biblical truth as Spurgeon understood it. Indeed, this was the defining mark of manliness for Charles Spurgeon and what clearly distinguishes his understanding of masculinity from “muscular Christianity.” A man’s relationship to truth included two aspects – knowing the truth and overcoming or standing firm against the forces that oppose the truth.

In his sermon, “Unto You, Young Men,” Spurgeon takes up the task of describing “*the model young man*.”⁶² One aspect of the ideal young man is that, according to Spurgeon’s understanding of 1 John 2:14, “The word of God abideth in him, by which,” says Spurgeon, “I understand that *he is one who understands the word*.”⁶³ As we discussed earlier, Spurgeon was not the type to simply inherit ideas indiscriminately – he did not believe the Bible to be true because he had been taught it growing up. He was not one who cared much for the outward appearance of a thing, but was very much concerned with the substance of a matter. Things must be real and genuine, regardless of how they appear on the outside. Thus, the true man must not only *believe* the Bible, he must *understand* and *comprehend* it.

This was not the only time Spurgeon equated knowledge of Scripture with manliness. In his autobiography, he recollects when he came to be Calvinist, saying,

Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the doctrines of grace [Calvinism] in a single instant... I can

recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths in my own soul – when they were, as John Bunyan says, burnt into my heart as with a hot iron, and I can recollect how I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man – that I had made progress in Scriptural knowledge, through having found, once for all, the clue to the truth of God.⁶⁴

It may seem that Spurgeon is simply using the progress and growth from childhood to adulthood, which everyone experiences, as a metaphor for his making progress and growing in Scriptural knowledge, but Spurgeon so often equated knowing Scripture with true manhood that it is likely he very literally meant what he said. “A man of one Book – if that Book is the Bible – is a man, for he is a man of God,” said Spurgeon. He went on, exhorting his flock (and, presumably, men in particular) to hold the Scriptures dear, saying, “Cling to the living Word and let the Gospel of your fathers, let the Gospel of the martyrs, let the Gospel of the Reformers, let the Gospel of the blood-washed multitude before the Throne of God, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ – be your Gospel and none but that.”⁶⁵

Overcoming Falsehood, the Wicked One, and the World

Not only must the true man understand the truth of Scripture, but, while living in the meta-narrative of that truth, he also must translate that understanding into action and overcome the forces opposed to the truth. In a sermon from 1864, Spurgeon identified four enemies to the Christian believer – “man, the world, the flesh and the devil.”⁶⁶ Here, we will focus on two of these enemies, the devil and the world, and show that Spurgeon considered a true man one who overcame or stood fast against the assaults of both.

As noted above, Spurgeon’s book, *A Good Start*, was written to help mold young men and women into godly people. Spurgeon does not paint a rosy picture of the Christian life for his young readers, but tells them they should expect hardships and enemies to their faith, one of which is the devil. In the struggle against this enemy, Spurgeon considers the ideal believer the one who has overcome the wicked one. Although he wrote to both young men and women, his habitual use of the male pronoun, continual references to strength, and combative language seem to indicate he had men in particular in mind when discussing combat with Satan. “Young men who are strong must expect to be attacked... Christian soldiering is no piece of military pastime; it is no proud parade; it means hard fighting from the day of enlistment to the day of reward,”⁶⁷ he says. According to Spurgeon, only the strong can overcome this enemy – “they

have overcome the wicked one. Then they must be strong; for a man who can overcome the wicked one is no mean man of war.... If any man has ever stood foot to foot with him he will never forget it: it is a fight that once fought will leave its scars, even though the victory be won."⁶⁸ Fighting the devil was necessary for all believers and, as the language suggests, for men in particular.

Not only must the man contend with the enemy, but he must also use the Bible to do so. In the sermon mentioned above, "Unto You, Young Men," Spurgeon lists several types of temptations young men commonly face - despair, riches, sexual licentiousness, pride, and fashionable living - and attributes them all to various forms of "the wicked one."⁶⁹ In the sermon, the young man's ability to overcome these temptations is directly related to his relationship to Biblical truth. Spurgeon either explicitly states the word of God abiding in the young man as the reason he is able to overcome these temptations, or the reason he gives is some sort of idea found in the Scriptures themselves, such as "a simple faith in Jesus."⁷⁰ In *A Good Start*, Spurgeon took an entire chapter to exhort young people to understand the Bible. Once again, it was the Scriptures that would enable a young person to overcome the wicked one. Spurgeon writes: "we are to believe in the doctrines of God's Word, and these will make us strong... Get the Word well into you, and you will overcome the wicked one."⁷¹ The strong relationship between knowing the Scriptures and overcoming Satan reinforces the idea that a true man is defined by his relationship to Biblical truth.

The second enemy to the Christian we will consider is the world. In his sermon, "God Is With Us," Spurgeon wrote:

You are in an enemy's country and this enemy is on the alert continually. You may sleep, but the world never sleeps! Its customs are always seeking to bind you with their chains. Its spirit is creeping over you while you are in the Exchange, or in the market, or even in the family! You will have much ado while you are in this state of temptation to stand your ground and unless you watch and pray the world will be too much for you.⁷²

In Spurgeon's eyes, the ideal man also overcomes this enemy. About this man, Spurgeon said,

Who is the man that ever overcame the world? Let him stand forward. He is a Triton among the minnows. He outshines Caesar. He outmatches our own Wellington, if he can say he has overcome the world. It is so rare a thing,

a victory so prodigious, a conquest so tremendous, that he who can claim to have won it may walk among his fellows, like Saul, with head and shoulders far above all. He will command our respect.⁷³

As with overcoming the wicked one, the man needs God's help to overcome the world. The fight with the world is "a fight about which the bravest might shake. He must remember that the Lord is on his side, and, therefore, whom should he fear; the Lord is the strength of his life, and so, of whom should he be afraid?"⁷⁴

Thus, to summarize, Spurgeon believed, first, that a man was a true man only if he is reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ. Once this is done, the ideal man relies upon and submits to God, all while not being overly submissive or reliant upon other men. In addition to this, the real man does not separate himself from his fellow human beings by thinking himself better than them or by using lofty speech designed to impress them. Finally, we saw that the defining characteristic of a true man for Spurgeon consisted in a man's relationship to Biblical truth – knowing it and overcoming the enemies of it. This essay will now consider Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity in light of one of the main characteristics of "muscular Christianity" – physical strength.

Spurgeon's Views About Physical Strength

The notion of strength is common to both Spurgeon's view of masculinity and the idea of "muscular Christianity." The continual exhortations to combat with the enemies of the faith, the militaristic language, and the notion that the ideal man overcomes the wicked one and the world all imply that Spurgeon thought a man must be strong. It is the proportion of and type of strength that Spurgeon calls for from men, however, that differentiates his understanding of masculinity with the ideology of "muscular Christianity." Although, as I stated earlier in the essay, physical strength was not the defining characteristic of this ideology, it certainly was important to both Kingsley and Hughes. Spurgeon, however, thought physical strength unimportant to true manhood; the type of strength Spurgeon thought true men should display was more of a spiritual nature.

In his essay, "'A Man of God is a Manly Man,'" Andrew Bradstock argues that physical strength actual did play a part in Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity. He bases his argument on a sermon Spurgeon preached about Martin Luther, where Spurgeon said Luther was "a Titan, a giant, a man of splendid mental caliber and strong physique."⁷⁵ From this sermon, Bradstock argues, "[t]here are, of course,

distinct echoes of the 'muscular Christianity' associated with his Anglican contemporaries Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes in Spurgeon's equation of manliness with courage, singleness of mind, and moral and physical strength."⁷⁶ It is true that both Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity and "muscular Christianity" held "courage, singleness of mind, and moral" strength as virtues men should strive for. At the same time, references to physical strength in Spurgeon's writings are very few and very far between. They do not appear enough to justify Bradstock's assertion that physical strength played much of a role in Spurgeon's understanding of masculinity.

To be fair, Bradstock insists spiritual strength was much more important to Spurgeon than physical strength. In this, too, he compares Spurgeon's view to "muscular Christianity," arguing:

In drawing a distinction between physical and moral strength, and subordinating the former to the latter, Spurgeon is again close, in his conception of manliness, to the views of other contemporary advocates of 'Christian manliness.' Despite the impression given by their detractors... Hughes, Kingsley and others equated manliness with strength in both the bodily and moral realms; and for Spurgeon, too, it is clearly in so far as a man displays strength of spirit that he may truly be called a man.⁷⁷

As evidence of Spurgeon subordinating physical to spiritual strength in his thought, Bradstock quotes Spurgeon as saying, "The man who is strong in the flesh is too often for that very reason strongly tempted to sins of the flesh."⁷⁸ Bradstock uses this as evidence that Spurgeon subordinated physical strength to spiritual strength; however, it should be used as evidence that Spurgeon did not consider physical strength important at all to a man's manliness. In fact, Spurgeon is saying physical strength could cause a man to give into temptation, which would mean he would overcome neither the devil nor the world, and thus, this man, though "strong in the flesh," would not attain to Spurgeon's ideal of manhood.⁷⁹ Physical strength was simply not a point of contact between Spurgeon's view of masculinity and "muscular Christianity." In the sermon so often quoted before, "Unto You, Young Men," Spurgeon stated a similar idea about the weakness of physical strength, saying, "all young men are not strong, nor doth the word of God abide in them all, nor have they all overcome the wicked one. Strong in muscle they may be, like Samson, but like Samson they are weak in moral principle, and ere long are found in the lap of a sinful Delilah, to their own destruction."⁸⁰

Conclusion

This essay has explored Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Victorian England's most influential preacher, and his views about masculinity. For Spurgeon, before any man could be considered an ideal man, he should first become converted to Christianity by placing his faith in Jesus Christ. All the attributes of true manliness for Spurgeon assume this vital condition. In his writings, he continually called for men to rely on God for strength and holiness and to submit to Him. Although submissive to God, a man should not have a submissive character or disposition toward his fellow creatures. Indeed, Spurgeon even considered asking for forgiveness from a priest unmanly.⁸¹ Another attribute of a real man for Spurgeon is perfectly stated by Andrew Bradstock when he says, "For Spurgeon... the true man lives out his faith in the world's camp, relating to real men, working as they do, speaking as they do, not affecting to rise above them or pretend he is not subject to like passions as they are."⁸² Along with his understanding of Scripture, this view of masculinity led Spurgeon to reject Catholicism because, as Bradstock terms it, of its "disengaged nature."⁸³ We also saw the importance Spurgeon placed on plain speech that the masses could understand and how he continually called for this type of preaching. We then looked at the attribute of manliness that most clearly distinguished Spurgeon's view from "muscular Christianity" - a man's relationship to Biblical truth. For Spurgeon, there was a close connection between mature manliness and understanding the Bible. He also considered a man who overcame the enemies to the faith - the devil and the world - to be extremely manly.

This understanding of masculinity had several points of contact with "muscular Christianity." Both ideas held notions that a man was self-sufficient and his own master. Also, like Spurgeon, Kingsley and Hughes wanted men to be involved in the real world. Both views of masculinity, likewise, valued strength. Physical strength played a significant role in "muscular Christianity," although less so than the moral or spiritual type. It played almost none in Spurgeon's thought, however. Rather, for Spurgeon, spiritual or moral strength was the sole strength called for from men.

Despite these similarities, Spurgeon's view of masculinity had noticeable differences from "muscular Christianity." The primary difference between the two views of masculinity lies in their theology. Spurgeon was a Calvinist, and, although they fit under the broad term of Protestant Christians, Kingsley and Hughes were not. Aside from his non-emphasis of physical strength, it was the Calvinism of Spurgeon that made his view of masculinity different from "muscular Christianity." Spurgeon saw the world differently than Kingsley and Hughes. His understanding of masculinity was directly tied to his understanding of the Bible and the

world it revealed – the depravity of man; the holiness of God; faith in Jesus Christ; the threat from man, the world, the flesh, and the devil to Christians; the idea that those who don't put their faith in Christ will suffer for eternity in Hell.⁸⁴ This was, as Bradstock has said, Spurgeon's "own brand of Puritanism" that made his view of masculinity unique.⁸⁵ This led Bradstock to comment, quite appropriately I think, "Clergy inspired by Kingsley and Hughes may have encouraged football and boxing in their boys' clubs to show that Christianity was not 'feminine', but ministers tutored by Spurgeon were more likely to devote themselves to preaching and church-planting."⁸⁶

Spurgeon's views on masculinity are important to study because they are still with us today. The notions of manliness I have outlined in this essay may seem outdated and archaic to our modern society, especially one where so many different ideas about gender in general and masculinity in particular abound. However, there are numerous preachers and authors today who advocate for this type of masculinity or some form closely related to it. In his autobiography, Spurgeon prophesied that Calvinism, which was on the decline in his day, would again see a revival.⁸⁷ Although not for his home country of England, his prediction, it seems, has come to pass.

In 2009, *Time* magazine published an article entitled, "10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now." The third idea on the list was "The New Calvinism," saying that, "Calvinism is back."⁸⁸ Along with the Calvinism comes the understanding of masculinity Spurgeon held, for, as we have seen, his understanding of masculinity was a product of his understanding of Biblical truth. One of the men named in the article, Dr. John Piper, a preacher from Minneapolis, Minnesota, has co-edited a book, first published in 1991, entitled *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. The authors of the various articles share a similar understanding of masculinity with Spurgeon. For instance, when Dr. Piper urges men to be "men of prayer, so that the Word of God will be opened to you, so the power of faith and holiness will descend upon you; that your spiritual influence may increase at home and at church and in the world," we see the same close connection between the Bible and masculinity we saw in Spurgeon.⁸⁹ In fact, Spurgeon has influenced many of those in the "New Calvinist" movement. A trip to Seattle's Mars Hill church website,⁹⁰ where Mark Driscoll (also named in the article) preaches, along with a quick search for Charles Spurgeon in the search bar, reveals that Driscoll's ministry is heavily influenced by Spurgeon. For both these men, who are leaders in the "New Calvinism" movement, masculinity plays an important role in their preaching and teaching. Like Spurgeon, the essence of their masculinity is tied to their understanding of Scripture. Thus, Spurgeon's view of masculinity is not a dead ideology, but one that still continues to influence men today.

Notes

- 1 Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 2.
- 2 Donald E. Hall, "Muscular Christianity: Reading and Writing the Male Social Body," in Hall, ed., *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 7.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 110.
- 5 Mark Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation: Evangelical and Liberal Theologies in Victorian England* (Studies in Evangelical History and Thought) (Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 2004), 128.
- 6 Andrew Bradstock, "'A Man of God is a Manly Man': Spurgeon, Luther, and 'Holy Boldness,'" in Bradstock, Sean Gill, Anne Hogan, and Sue Morgan, eds., *Masculinity and Spirituality in Victorian Culture* (Houndmills, England: Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000), 209.
- 7 Although many evangelical Christians today know Spurgeon by this name, see "About the Author," in *Joy in Your Life* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 1998), 174.
- 8 For information on this book, see Amazon, "The Gospel Focus of Charles Spurgeon [Hardcover]," http://www.amazon.com/The-Gospel-Focus-Charles-Spurgeon/dp/156769280X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1335624111&sr=8-1 (accessed April 28, 2008).
- 9 Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation*, 155.
- 10 Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000* (Christianity and Society in the Modern World) (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009, 2nd ed.), 156.
- 11 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 219.
- 12 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 107.
- 13 For more information on Spurgeon's understanding of the Bible, see Charles Spurgeon, "The Bible Tried and Proved," Sermon #2084, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Truth*, <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols34-36/chs2084.pdf> (accessed April 18, 2012). This website contains volumes of Spurgeon's sermons and I will reference it throughout the paper. Some of the language in the sermons has been updated by Emmett O'Donnell.
- 14 Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation*, 125. See Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind: 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 63-64, for a brief discussion of religious life for Victorian children.
- 15 As the Preface of the work states (p. xiv), Spurgeon worked on his autobiography during his life, but died before he had the chance to publish it. It was his wife and secretary who put the autobiography together after his death. Charles Spurgeon, C.H. Spurgeon *Autobiography: Volume 1: The Early Years 1834-1859*, ed. Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harrald (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1962, revised ed.), 44-45.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 43.

- 17 *Ibid.*, 43-44.
- 18 "Alleine, Joseph (bap. 1634, d. 1668)," Brian W. Kirk in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/366> (accessed March 30, 2012); "Baxter, Richard (1615-1691)," N. H. Keeble in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1734> (accessed March 30, 2012).
- 19 I am not indicating that there were no differences among the Puritans regarding theology, only noting that in general, the Puritans were Calvinist.
- 20 Spurgeon, C.H. Spurgeon *Autobiography*, 168. This chapter in his autobiography is entitled, "A Defence of Calvinism."
- 21 For more information on the college, see chapter 27 in Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 385.
- 22 Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 387.
- 23 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 30.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 *Ibid.*, 83.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 29 Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 387.
- 30 "Manton, Thomas (bap. 1620, d. 1677)," E. C. Vernon in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18009> (accessed April 1, 2012).
- 31 Spurgeon, "There is No Difference," Sermon #2608, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Truth*, <http://spurgeongems.org/vols43-45/chs2608.pdf> (accessed April 1, 2008), 2.
- 32 Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 197.
- 33 Charles Spurgeon, *A Good Start: A Book for Young Men and Women* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1898), 16.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 17.
- 35 For Spurgeon, this does not mean a mere profession of Christianity. In this chapter, before stating what a man in Christ is, he states what a man in Christ is not, thus attempting to distinguish between a man who is not in Christ but who claims to be and one who is "truly in Christ."
- 36 Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 206.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 186-87.
- 38 The term self-sufficiency must not be taken out of the context of who Spurgeon was and what it was he believed. Although Spurgeon thought God was in control of all things, he also thought man had certain responsibilities.
- 39 Hopkins, *Nonconformity's*, 132. For Spurgeon's full account of his conversion to Calvinism, see Chapter 13, "A Defence of Calvinism," in his autobiography.

- 40 Charles Spurgeon, *John Ploughman's Talk or, Plain Advice For Plain People* (Pasadena, CA: Pilgrim Publications, 1975), 17.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 53.
- 43 Spurgeon, *John Ploughman's*, 32.
- 44 Charles Spurgeon, "The Best Burden For Young Shoulders," in *Twelve Sermons To Young Men* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), 242. This is sermon #1291.
- 45 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 6.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*, 7.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 6-7.
- 49 Spurgeon, "The Best Burden," 246-47.
- 50 Charles Spurgeon, "The People's Christ," Sermon #11, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Truth*, <http://spurgeongems.org/vols1-3/chs11.pdf> (accessed April 28, 2012), 1.
- 51 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 218.
- 52 Spurgeon, "The People's Christ," 2.
- 53 *Ibid.*
- 54 Spurgeon, *John Ploughman's*, 22-23.
- 55 *Ibid.*, *Lectures to My Students* (London: Marshall, Morgan, & Scott, 1960), 74.
- 56 Spurgeon, "The People's Christ," 3.
- 57 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 217.
- 58 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, 84.
- 59 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 216.
- 60 Spurgeon, *John Ploughman's*, 29.
- 61 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 217.
- 62 Spurgeon, "Unto You, Young Men," in *Twelve Sermons*, 278. This is sermon #811.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 281.
- 64 *Ibid.*, C.H. Spurgeon *Autobiography*, 164-65.
- 65 *Ibid.*, "The Word A Sword," Sermon #2010, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Truth*, <http://spurgeongems.org/vols34-36/chs2010.pdf> (accessed April 28, 2012), 8.
- 66 *Ibid.*, "God Is With Us," Sermon #580, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Truth*, <http://spurgeongems.org/vols10-12/vols10-12.htm> (accessed April 21, 2012), 4.
- 67 *Ibid.*, *A Good Start*, 111.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 115-16.
- 69 *Ibid.*, "Unto You, Young Men," 282-83.
- 70 *Ibid.*, 282.

- 71 *Ibid.*, *A Good Start*, 106.
- 72 *Ibid.*, "God Is With Us," 6.
- 73 *Ibid.*, "Against the World," in *Joy in Your Life* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 1998), 58.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 59.
- 75 *Ibid.*, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* 29 (1883), quoted in Bradstock, "A Man of God," 212.
- 76 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 212.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 213-14.
- 78 Charles Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* 29 (1883), quoted in Bradstock, "A Man of God," 213.
- 79 Bradstock himself admits that Spurgeon thought physical attributes could be "potential hindrances to effectiveness" for a man. See Bradstock, "A Man of God," 219-20.
- 80 Spurgeon, "Unto You, Young Men," 277.
- 81 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 217.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 221.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 217.
- 84 These themes can be found throughout Spurgeon's writings.
- 85 Bradstock, "A Man of God," 219.
- 86 *Ibid.*, 220.
- 87 Spurgeon, C.H. *Spurgeon Autobiography*, 387-88.
- 88 David Van Biema, "The New Calvinism," in "10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now," *Time*, March 12, 2009, http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1884779_1884782_1884760,00.html (accessed April 23, 2012).
- 89 John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006), 55.
- 90 Mars Hill Church, <http://marshill.com/> (accessed April 28, 2012).

D'annette James Miller

The Herrin Massacre of 1922 and Local Memory

What makes a story good? Why do some stories endure for generations? These are a few of the questions that I am asking about one story in particular. It is a story that has continued to capture the imaginations of the people of southern Illinois for 90 years. It is a story that local authors, historians, and students continue to research and write about. In fact, author and retired associate judge of the Illinois circuit court, Brocton Lockwood, puts it this way:

... good stories have a life of their own. For example, biblical stories from 4,000 years ago are still entertaining. There are probably some stories that endure just because the right guy won. If Goliath had won, there would be no story of David. By the same token, if the Pinkerton men (strikebreakers) had won the fight at the mine, no one would perpetuate the story of the Herrin Massacre.¹

In this paper, I will examine the story of the 1922 Herrin Massacre and explain why it has retained a powerful hold on the local history and culture of southern Illinois. Surprisingly, many people in southern Illinois have never heard of the Herrin Massacre. But once you have heard of it, you are compelled to find out more. In fact, I had no knowledge of the event until a few years ago while taking Dr. Carr's course on the history of Illinois at Southern Illinois University. Required reading for the class was *Bloody Williamson* by Paul Angle, a book that has become the authoritative work on the Herrin Massacre. A few pages into the book and I was hooked on the gripping story of a mass murder that took place right here in one of the friendliest places in the state – southern Illinois. Whether you are hearing about the event for the first time, or have known about it all of your life, the Herrin Massacre remains one of the most shocking stories ever told.

Historians have written books about the Herrin Massacre and local authors continue to write novels based on the events of that bloody and hot summer day in 1922. Paul Angle's aptly titled *Bloody Williamson*, from 1952, is still found on the shelves of local book stores and continues to be the authority on the subject. It has been a bestseller in southern Illinois

since it was first published. In the book's introduction, former SIUC historian John Y. Simon writes, "Angle began his book with an account of the 1922 Herrin Massacre, the single most dramatic and appalling event in Williamson County's past."² With that said, let us take a trip back in time to that day in 1922 when all hell broke loose in Williamson County.

It was June, 1922. At that time, there had been a national strike called by the United Mine Workers of America. But William Lester, owner of the Southern Illinois Coal Company, refused to adhere to the conditions set forth by the strike. Although he was warned not to, Lester knew if he could keep his mine operating as usual, he could make a huge profit selling coal at premium prices due to a national shortage. Driven by greed, Lester fired the union men and continued to dig for coal at his strip mine with strikebreakers or "scabs" that he had brought down from Chicago. As news spread about the ongoing operations at the mine, about 500 angry union miners gathered there to put a stop to production - by force. A shoot-out ensued on June 21, leaving three of the striking miners dead. Provoked and enraged, they feigned a truce the next day and the scabs surrendered with the understanding that they would be led out of the county unharmed. However, they were taken captive and ordered to march toward Herrin. Along the way, the mine superintendent was taken from the group, shot and killed. The rest of the men were told to run for their lives into a wooded area while under gunfire. Before reaching the woods, the men had to scale a barbed wire fence while trying to flee. Those that did not fall dead at the fence were hunted down and either hung or shot. Later, other prisoners, including a World War I veteran, were forced to take off part of their clothing, crawl on their hands and knees and then walk barefoot on scorching pavement to the Herrin cemetery. An angry crowd of about two hundred kicked and beat them along the road. Even children yelled and threw stones at them. Once there, they were yoked together at the neck with a rope. More shots were fired at this small group of men. After falling to the ground, those still alive had their throats slashed. One man begged for water, but a bystander was warned by the crowd not to intervene. A man in the mob urinated in victims' faces as they lay dying. Nineteen bodies were eventually found by authorities and taken to a makeshift morgue in Herrin. For hours, people filed past the fly infested and stinking corpses, spat on them, and cursed them for taking their jobs. Some victims of the massacre were buried in a potter's field in the Herrin cemetery.³

This story would be shocking no matter where it took place. But the fact that these gruesome killings happened right here in southern Illinois, a hospitable place where folks are supposedly friendly, adds to the amazement. Immediately following the massacre, people all over the

country were horrified by newspaper reports of the incident. Williamson County, specifically Herrin, is still reverberating from the impact of this horrific event. People are still reacting to the massacre 90 years later. Why? To help answer this question, let us look first to the crime itself.

The unequalled brutality of the murders in the Herrin Massacre is one reason why this story lingers in our memories. From the beginning of time, man has hurt man. We find the first recorded murder in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, when Cain killed his brother Abel. The details of Abel's death are not given in the Scriptures, but the violence of the Herrin Massacre has been recorded in explicit detail. The Herrin Massacre murders evoke the same type of reaction as a horror movie: the grisly scenes play over and over again in our minds. The words of Herrin native and author John Griswold, in his novel *A Democracy of Ghosts*, are the most graphic I have read about the torture and suffering of the strikebreakers. Griswold's moving account of the murders stirs the imagination. He drew from contemporary eyewitnesses, news accounts, histories, and his own grandfather's letters to create the portions of historical fiction that follow.

Describing the prisoners' run for the woods, Griswold wrote: "The only other man who did not run lay in the weeds with gray matter bulging from his forehead."⁴ Of climbing over the barbed wire fence he said: "Men fell on the wire and screamed as it ripped their skin."⁵ Griswold wrote about the scene at the woods as though it were part of a Civil War battle: "Mutilated corpses sat and lay all around and were horrible to see. Shreds of flesh and hair stuck to the barbs on the wire."⁶ Afterwards, Griswold tells how the victims endured more humiliation and torture in town: "The crowd taunted and spit on the six bleeding men until a consensus was reached that they should be forced to crawl down Stotlar Street to the cemetery.... Young boys raced around the edges of the crowd and competed to find bigger and bigger pebbles to throw.... It took forty minutes to cover that mile in the humidity and heat, and the wounds of the six bled openly."⁷ Griswold continues with the scene at the cemetery: "He stretched out the hemp, made a small loop in each hand and slipped the clove hitch over the first man's head. He pulled it tight until the man's eyes bugged and he gagged."⁸ Griswold concluded the cemetery scene with more vivid descriptions of the massacre: "The first shot hit O'Rourke in the heel, and when he fell he dragged the others to the ground by their necks. Several people shot the men on the ground with pistols.... The mob watched some of them still struggling.... Jeremy knelt next to each body lying in the grass in the graveyard and slit the throats. The knife was dull."⁹ Through this literary work, the spirit of hatred behind the mob's cruel acts of violence still haunts us. Reading these passages from Griswold created a video of the massacre inside my head. I could see the violence as clearly as if I was

watching an R-rated movie. Because of Griswold's powerful and vivid narrative, the bloody Herrin Massacre continues to be as frightening and unforgettable today as it was then.

But it is more than the barbaric murders that keep local historians digging into the past. Another aspect of the crime that still exasperates people is the delay and final outcome of the subsequent trials. Even with the national outcry for justice, the local authorities dragged their feet. According to Paul Angle's synopsis of the Massacre's aftermath, there were eventually two trials and an investigation by the Illinois House of Representatives. First of all, the coroner's jury, half of whom were union miners, wanted the blame for the deaths to be put on either unknown persons or the mine's owner and officials. That verdict brought scorn and intense criticism from the national press upon the people of Williamson County. Then, two months after the massacre, a judge called a grand jury. It took a month for that group to hand down 214 indictments for the massacre victims, including those for murder, conspiracy and rioting. As one might expect, that action by the grand jury helped the county regain the respect of the national press. Next, the first trial began in November of 1922, five months after the murders. Eight men were charged with killing one of Lester's mine guards. In January of 1923, more than two months later, the jury found all eight of the defendants not guilty. The second trial began in February of 1923. This was a case against six men for the murder of a mine cook who was also a World War I veteran. Once again, about two months later, all six were found not guilty by the jury and newspaper editors throughout the country took yet another opportunity to condemn Williamson County.¹⁰

After two trials spanning five months, each and every man accused of murder in the Herrin Massacre was acquitted. How could this happen? Testimony by several eye witnesses should have sealed a "guilty" verdict for every one of those defendants. But according to author Brocton Lockwood, who based *Shades of Gray* "primarily on the recollection of four witnesses:

You can bet the farm that

1. The majority of jurors were bribed in the massacre trial
2. Most of the defense witnesses were bribed

Their stories were consistent with one another and with court records and news accounts. Their stories are consistent with the "Bloody Williamson" account; but they go much farther and provide greater detail than the written provides.¹¹

For years, Lockwood has poured over the testimonies of the massacre trials like judges, detectives, and others who are interested in cold cases. The Herrin Massacre is like a cold case. It is unresolved. Had there been convictions, then perhaps there would be a sense of closure and resolution to the case. But it has been left undone. It is an unfinished chapter in the history of southern Illinois. Therefore, it remains a story that is fascinating to read and write about. So what else have local authors written about the Herrin Massacre?

Through the years, historians have documented the facts about the Herrin Massacre with published books and dissertations. Most recently though, local authors have produced a variety of novels based on the event. I have already mentioned Brocton Lockwood's *Shades of Gray* and John Griswold's *A Democracy of Ghosts*. There is also *Cast A Long Shadow: A Saga of Three Generations of a Southern Illinois Family*, by Ruth Childers Seamands. In this novel, Seamands devotes a chapter on a fictionalized family's story of the massacre. Another local author and radio personality, Scott Doody, will soon release a book and photographic history on the massacre. However, Doody has a different opinion of the event and its impact:

I don't think it has retained any hold on the local culture, Dee. I believe the vast majority of the people in Herrin have no idea that mass murder was committed in their town. You talk to people about it and they have heard 'something' about it but they have no idea where the events took place or how they happened. The victims of the massacre buried in their own cemetery is an example of what I am talking about. The town sold their lots to unsuspecting people and no one is the wiser. How do you bury twelve people in your cemetery all on the same day, the result of a killing spree that lasted 24 hours, and the town's people have no idea it happened? I think one of the most amazing things... would be the fact that the local people really have no clue that one of the largest mass murders in American history took place on their streets and they don't know anything about it!¹²

Doody has also produced a three minute YouTube video that he claims speaks volumes about the attitude of the town. He says the Herrin cemetery has continued to sell lots to people in the Potter's Field where the massacre victims were buried. He believes this type of activity is tolerated in the community because "the generation that committed the murders or stood by and did nothing while they took place never talked about it

to the generations that live there today."¹³ Finally, Doody thinks "shame... kept them silent and so a very important piece of local history is probably gone forever."¹⁴

Is Scott Doody correct in his theory about the Herrin Massacre's impact on local history? Or, is his work and that of other local authors telling about the power of the story's hold on the local culture? Doody may have a valid point that the community's humiliation over the massacre could have prevented the story from being passed down to future generations. In fact, author John Griswold says "feelings about it still persist... mostly within the town, kept alive by treating history as something that must be whispered."¹⁵ But it is not whispered about at the Herrin City Library. I visited with a librarian there that is more than willing to talk openly about the town's claim to fame, about why it continues to have an impact on local history and why there have been attempts to keep it a secret.

Linda Banks has a wealth of knowledge and opinions to share about the Herrin Massacre. She is a Herrin native, a retired teacher of 35 years, and a librarian at the Herrin City Library. She spends her days in the library's history room sorting through materials and helping students like me find the information they need for their papers. She says the Herrin Massacre continues to be a very popular research topic for both college and high school students in southern Illinois. Like so many other local residents, Banks had not always known about the massacre, either. Even though she grew up in Herrin, she was in high school before she understood what really happened. I asked her why the knowledge of this tragic event came later in her life. "It was not mentioned (in history classes) too much," said Banks. She added, "There were still so many people living that were involved, they just kinda kept it hush-hush."¹⁶ Even though she acknowledges the fact that the story of the massacre has been suppressed by the community, she believes it still grabs people's attention because it was such an unusual event. "I don't know that there are any other places that something like this, or as big as this, has ever happened," said Banks.¹⁷ She thinks it is interesting to study the massacre because it was so different. In fact, Linda Banks and I talked about how local historians are still researching and writing about the Herrin Massacre. Why are authors like Brocton Lockwood, John Griswold, Ruth Childers Seamands, and Scott Doody still publishing works about this incident? She responded enthusiastically:

Because it is so different! Things like this had just not happened in the United States or any place. It was just a vicious thing! There were so many of them that were killed and laid in wooden boxes. It was brutal the way they killed them. That is uncalled for. It is sad.¹⁸

I made the statement earlier, and suggested to Banks in our conversation, that the Herrin Massacre is an unfinished chapter in the history of southern Illinois. However, she does not see it that way. To her, the Herrin Massacre is a closed case. "The generations of young people that have come along after it.... they don't have memories of it," she said.¹⁹ Perhaps this is yet another reason why local historians, like Scott Doody, keep visiting places like the Herrin City Library and cemetery, exhuming those memories from the past.

To insure that future generations know about the history of southern Illinois, we must keep telling them the story of the Herrin Massacre. As a journalist and former radio news reporter, I feel compelled to inform the folks that do not know about it. Regardless of the previous arguments that the story of the massacre has been repressed in the town's collective memory, I am convinced that it still assumes a central place in southern Illinois' local history and culture. Yes, many in Herrin have willfully forgotten what happened in 1922. But suppressing such a powerful story could have damaging results for the city. According to third-generation Herrinite and author, James Ballowe, the silence of the community over the years has only made the Herrin Massacre worse. Ballowe cautions us on the danger of staying mute about local history:

Herrin leaders were steadfast in their desire to purge the community's collective memory of the Massacre. They were successful. Today, without knowing where to look for the principal locations at which the Massacre took place... it is difficult to understand the magnitude of the relentless pursuit and slaughter by a few crazed individuals who lived in the otherwise stable community. Other than talking about the Massacre in the sanctity of their own homes and clubs, the entire community observed the mandate of silence. The history of humankind in this last century reminds us that inhuman acts of commission are compounded by attempts to omit their memory from human consciousness. The story of the city of Herrin cannot be fully understood without taking into account the Herrin Massacre and what it means not to remember its causes and its consequences.²⁰

Life is made up of choices and the consequences we experience because of those choices. Whether Herrin chooses to forget the Massacre, or perpetuate its memory, that choice is a reaction to the event. Southern Illinois, therefore, is still reacting to the Herrin Massacre... in one way or the other.

To fully understand the place of the Massacre in the local history of southern Illinois, we must not overlook the media's response to the event. Immediately following the incident and the trials' verdicts, the press in Illinois and outside the state blasted the town of Herrin in their editorials. On June 24, 1922, just two days after the killings, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* reported that the Massacre constituted "The most brutal and horrifying crime that has ever stained the garments of organized labor."²¹ Later, in his book on the Massacre, Chatland Parker described the impact the event had on the news media in 1923:

The "Herrin Massacre in Bloody Williamson County", Illinois - as it is termed by the general press - was and is now the most discussed crime or subject by individuals in all walks of life and through the entire press of the world. Due to the large number of men who were brutally murdered, the manner in which they were killed, and the fact that Union and Non-union men were involved, has brought the subject to the attention of the entire world.²²

News coverage of the occurrence did not stop there. In my research, I came across two examples of how the media has kept the story alive through the years. In 1982, the *St. Louis Globe* featured a story suggesting that the community was still reverberating from the effects of the Massacre over half a century later. The reporter begins, "Two generations later, memories of the violent summer of 1922 linger in this Southern Illinois town."²³ Donald Swinford, Herrin's mayor then, was interviewed for the article. Swinford said, "Some townfolk still are reluctant to talk with outsiders about the violence of June 22, 1922. When the past is recounted, people are left with the impression that Herrin is a bad city. That is not true today."²⁴ Concerning the attitudes held by residents about the Massacre, Swinford said, "I have heard things said publicly before that just astonish me that some people still condone the affairs of those years. But, by and large, the younger generation is a little shamefaced about the past."²⁵ The article concluded with the mayor's opinion that the story is better left alone, "I think the thing now is... we hate to see the past dragged up because it reflects on the current generation, which had nothing to do with it."²⁶

Ten years later in 1992, the press was still, as Swinford put it, dragging up the past. This version, from the *St. Louis Post*, begins, "This coal town in southern Illinois has recently weathered an anniversary it would just as soon forget."²⁷ Here we have yet another observance of the date on which the Massacre happened. In the article, we are given another example of a local resident who would prefer that the memory of the Massacre was laid to rest. The reporter writes, "Herrin residents would like to bury this

grisly part of their past. Bertha Goodrich, 80, a descendent of an immigrant Lithuanian coal miner, said it always burned her up that only Herrin bore the stain, when the mine involved in the massacre was just as close to Marion, Illinois."²⁸ This year marks the ninetieth anniversary of the Herrin Massacre. In light of that fact, I am wondering whether any local newspapers will publish a special feature on Williamson County's bloody past. If not, is it because the memory of these violent murders tarnishes southern Illinois' past? If remembrance stories *are* printed locally, will it simply be because publishers of those papers are looking to increase sales? What are local historians, authors, and reporters going to do with the story of the Herrin Massacre in 2012 and beyond?

Like it or not, the Herrin Massacre is a part of our past and it continues to hold a very important place in the history of coal mines and organized labor in southern Illinois. If we choose to ignore it, we omit a significant chapter of our local history. If we choose to research and write about it, as Scott Doody said, we are preserving the story of "one of the largest mass murders in American history" for future generations.²⁹ As Brocton Lockwood pointed out in his novel, *Shades of Gray*, "what happened was shocking enough to make our county's name infamous from coast to coast. Some might say the stain remains after all these years."³⁰ Yes, the stain of the Herrin Massacre does remain, but not just on one town. I view southern Illinois as one big community. The stain is representative not only of what happened in Herrin, but also of what happens anywhere in this country when passions go unrestrained during times of heated disagreements. As John Griswold wrote in *A Democracy of Ghosts*,

Herrin is America writ small. Never mind we have Italians, families from North England and Wales, Lithuanians, Polanders and even a few Syrians... the great mass of us are Pure Americans. Yet with all that unaccountable rash action out to the Lester place, we're seen as everything Americans don't like to claim.³¹

It is not easy, but it is necessary, to admit that an atrocity like the Herrin Massacre took place in our own back yard.

In his book about the history of the city, John Griswold wonders, "Can Herrin forgive itself for what happened? Does it want to?"³² But in this paper, I am asking why this story has endured for generations. If residents of Herrin wanted to keep things "hush-hush" because of shame or pride, clearly that desire has not been sufficient to prevent the continued investigative efforts of local historians. Like an illicit love affair, the story of the Herrin Massacre is too provocative to be kept a secret. Moreover, as concluded by author Chatland Parker, it was "a crime never

equaled in brutality.”³³ Additionally, after two trials and a congressional investigation, the cases were dismissed, leaving us to also question whether justice was obtained in Williamson County. Understandably, the shame brought about by the Massacre has caused the community of Herrin to be reluctant to discuss past or present issues surrounding the event. But burying the past is not a healthy way to remember our heritage. Local authors, historians and reporters realize that the Herrin Massacre is a fascinating story that must be told in order to fully comprehend this region’s way of life. Therefore, the Herrin Massacre continues to capture our imaginations and retain a powerful hold on the local history and culture of southern Illinois.

Notes

- 1 Brocton Lockwood, letter to author, March 18, 2012.
- 2 Paul M. Angle, *Bloody Williamson: A Chapter in American Lawlessness* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992 ed. with intro. by John Y. Simon, or. pub. 1952), xiii.
- 3 For information on the Herrin Massacre, see Angle, *Bloody Williamson*; Chatland Parker, *The Herrin Massacre: A Fair and Impartial Statement of All the Facts: The Trial, Evidence, Verdict* (Parker Publishing, 1923); and John Griswold, *Herrin: The Brief History of an Infamous American City* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009).
- 4 Griswold, *A Democracy of Ghosts* (Oregon: Wordcraft of Oregon, 2009), 129.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Ibid.*, 130.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 132.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Ibid.*, 133.
- 10 Angle, *Bloody Williamson*.
- 11 Brocton Lockwood, letter to author, March 19, 2012.
- 12 Scott Doody, e-mail message to author, March 14, 2012.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Griswold, *Herrin: The Brief History*, 87.
- 16 Linda Banks, in-person interview by author, Herrin City Library, February 27, 2012.
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 James Ballowe, *Herrin Festa Italiana Souvenir Book* (n.d.).
- 21 Angle, *Bloody Williamson*, 3.

- 22 Parker, *Herrin Massacre*, 1.
- 23 Terri Colby, "60 years later, memories of labor violence still linger in Herrin," *St. Louis Globe*, June 22, 1982.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 Paula M. Davenport, "Stain of 'Herrin Massacre' Lingers, 70 Years Later," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July, 1992.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 Doody, e-mail message.
- 30 Brocton Lockwood and Gary DeNeal, *Shades of Gray* (Fairfield, Illinois: Wayne County Press, 2011).
- 31 Griswold, *A Democracy of Ghosts*, 180.
- 32 *Ibid.*, *Herrin: The Brief History of an Infamous American City*, 87.
- 33 Parker, *Herrin Massacre*, 121.

Hannah Streicher

The Lady Vegetarian: Women's Involvement in British and American Vegetarian Movements during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

To many contemporary Americans, vegetarianism seems as if it developed out of the countercultural atmosphere of the 1960s and continued to grow from there. Tree-hugging, earth-loving, meat-abstaining hippies became legendary caricatures from this time period. Keeping this in mind, it may be surprising to learn that Benjamin Franklin adopted the vegetarian diet from age sixteen until he ventured on a fishing trip as an adult and saw that cod fish ate other cod fish. He thought if they ate flesh, why could men not eat flesh?¹ Vegetarianism as a dietary choice has existed in every era of American history, with many citing the same reasons people give today for adopting the meatless diet including ethical, environmental, and health concerns as well as religious practices. "Meatless Mondays," an idea originating during WWI, is still espoused today by many who wish to reduce their meat intake without completely eliminating it. To glean a better understanding of the motivations behind adopting a vegetarian diet, one can look at the example of women's involvement in various vegetarian movements which provides a unique history of vegetarianism.

Naturally, women participated in various vegetarian movements since the inception of the idea. Women possess the distinct privilege of bearing children. When it comes to food, their job is unique. First, they hold responsibility for feeding themselves and their fetuses while pregnant, and then they must choose what to feed their childre after they are born. This affords mothers certain responsibilities not innately given to men. For this reason, women view both food and their bodies differently. Thus, women's involvement in vegetarianism brought differing perspectives regarding the abstaining of meat products.

In earlier vegetarian movements, women chose the diet for religious, reformist, ethical, and/or health reasons. In Britain, some women also linked women's suffrage with vegetarianism. It was not until the 1960s, however, that ideals of feminism were truly linked with abstaining from meat products. Although most of these women did not embrace the feminist title, their actions were indeed feminist in nature, with many

connecting women's rights with vegetarianism. Women's motivations for adopting a vegetarian diet remained relatively constant from late Victorian Britain to the late nineteenth-early twentieth century United States. More recently, modern eco-feminist vegetarian leaders developed into a cohesive theory for what women vegetarians throughout history worked toward achieving.

Karen and Michael Iacobo argue in *Vegetarian America* that historians do not treat the history of vegetarianism in the United States with the same respect as other aspects of cultural history. The movement is often treated as a "quirk" and not as one in which many different types of people contributed.² Most of the early American vegetarians tended to be Christians, arguing various points against the eating of flesh and/or consumption of animal by-products. Some of these arguments included the sin of killing a living entity and the harmful effects of meat on the soul.³ Most recent scholarship on vegetarianism either gives a broad overview of the history of vegetarianism, vegetarianism in a certain country, religious vegetarians, or vegetarianism in a certain place and time. Most give at least some regard to female involvement, but none dedicate too much attention to the subject. One very ambitious work, *The Bloodless Revolution* by Tristram Stuart, sought to include every time period and culture involved in vegetarianism but completely ignored women's involvement in vegetarianism. Instead, Stuart focuses on the most "important" leaders of the movement, often using biographies. Critical theories, such as Carol Adams' *The Sexual Politics of Meat* discuss women's involvement more directly, but leave out a lot of the historical aspects and instead act as a window into modern expectations of feminists as vegetarians.

The idea of a meatless or vegetarian diet stems from the fourth and fifth centuries, B.C.E. in various Indian religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism. Around this same time period, Pythagoras in Greece espoused a vegetarian diet for ethical reasons. It was not until 1691, however, that a vegetarian cookbook written in English became available: *A Bill of Fare of Seventy Five Noble Dishes* written by Thomas Tryon. This was the publication that inspired Benjamin Franklin to avoid meat for a time. Throughout the 1800's, the British formulated vegetarian ideas, mostly among religious groups, and in 1817 some of these individuals immigrated to the United States and brought vegetarianism there. The notion of abstaining from meat also developed from concern for animals. For example, one of the first anti-cruelty laws passed in the United Kingdom in 1822, was aptly named The Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act.

In September 1847, an unknown source created the name "vegetarian," finally putting a name to those eating a heavy vegetable, no meat diet.

In this same year, a group meeting in a vegetarian hospital in Ramsgate, Kent, founded the extremely influential Vegetarian Society of the United Kingdom.⁴ Just a few years later, the movement spread to the United States, where the American Vegetarian Society was founded, with William A. Alcott as its first president. The International Vegetarian Union, created in 1908, united vegetarian societies across the globe while many organizations sprung up all over the world providing community to those adopting this diet.⁵

Women's involvement in the vegetarian movement in the United States is documented as early as 1853, when it was reported by the *New York Times* in an article entitled "Vegetarian Festival: Banquet at Metropolitan Hall." This article offers an early spectator's perspective on what vegetarians ate and discussed at this time, including the reform movement at large. Women attended this "festival," evidenced through the brilliant observation of the author who wrote "Strong-minded women helped weak-limbed men to manage heavy tureens of soup - rice and tomato." The author implied that the women who chose to involve themselves in the vegetarian movement possessed distinct qualities and were "strong-minded," different than the majority of women. These women did not fear expressing themselves or participating in the reform movements of this time period.

Indeed, several remarked on the linkages between vegetarianism and other reform movements of the time period. For example, American publisher, abolitionist, and 1872 Democratic Party U.S. presidential candidate Horace Greeley stressed the importance of incorporating all reform movements of the time including women's rights and temperance, as Greeley believed in their interconnectedness.⁶ This idea also arose in Edwardian Britain where progressives tied the women's suffrage movement to vegetarianism, especially through the route of food reform. A 1907 journal entry from the Vegetarian Society stated: "It is interesting to see how vegetarianism becomes related to progressive movements. Quite a number of the leaders in the Women's Suffragist movement are vegetarians."⁷ While the author goes on to suggest this is due to the meat in prison tasting badly, not all reform activists spent time in prison so this cannot be the sole cause.

Authors mentioned women more directly in other newspaper articles from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. An 1895 *New York Times* article entitled "Had a Strawberry Feast" referenced women who attended an opening "festival" at a "new Vegetarian Club" in New York that summer at an unnamed vegetarian restaurant on Twenty-Third Street. According to the *Cultural Encyclopedia of Vegetarianism*, the first vegetarian restaurant to open in the United States, appropriately dubbed

"Vegetarian Restaurant No. 1," was located in New York on Twenty-Third Street, so possibly this is the restaurant to which the article referred.⁸ The author wrote, "The young women, who were more numerous, looked as if ice cream tasted as good in a vegetarian restaurant as anywhere else at this time of year." Perhaps the author wanted to express that eating at a vegetarian restaurant is a different experience but these women treated it as if it were just like eating anywhere else.⁹

An 1890 issue of the *Pall Mall Gazette* also mentioned women dining at vegetarian restaurants in the article "Women as Vegetarians." The author wrote, "The customers at this restaurant are chiefly dressmakers and shopkeepers' assistants. Perhaps 25 per cent are women." Although neither the manager nor the author discussed further why they thought women patronized the restaurant more often, the manager said he thinks many stop by the restaurant out of convenience, not conviction. It is possible that either these women ate here because they worked or lived near by, or perhaps they participated in the wider vegetarian movement of the time. The manager also stated in the article that women pay less at the restaurant than men, inferring that they eat less than men. Interestingly, the author ends the article with a quote by the manager saying that all the complaints he hears are from women. It is apparent that both the author and the manager of this restaurant viewed both vegetarians and women disdainfully.¹⁰ These newspaper articles demonstrate a common theme of many newspaper publications at this time, which only mentioned women vegetarians but did not delve deeply into their motivations or shed any light on what exactly they did to participate in the movement. It is possible that this was due to a lack of interest in women in general, as the place of women in society was still largely that of second-class citizens. Also plausible is the possibility that these women did not vocally express their motivations for adopting a meatless diet and therefore the authors of the articles did not have anything to report on the matter.

Moving forward fifty years, one can see how women emboldened their methods in spreading feminist vegetarianism. In contrast to articles from the late 1800s about vegetarian restaurants, one can look to mid-twentieth century articles that enumerated some of the reasons women practiced vegetarianism, finally calling it feminist vegetarianism. By the 1970s, vegetarian restaurants had found greater popularity across the United States. In addition, women began to open expressly feminist businesses across the country during this time period. Both of these were the contexts in which the Bloodroot feminist restaurant and bookstore emerged.

Located in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the restaurant/bookstore is still open today. Serving all vegetarian food, the restaurant seeks to provide a space for men and women to discuss ideas and enjoy good food. Believing

that feminists should practice their ideas in every facet of life, the serving of meat was out of the question as these feminists believed in solidarity with animals. Their website provides a brief history of their business and one of the founders wrote "A lot of feminist bookstores were cropping up all over the country, but Selma [Bunks, one of the founders of Bloodroot] had always been interested in cooking and the way that food seems to bring people together. So, opening a restaurant seemed the logical choice."¹¹ A *New York Times* article from 1977 detailed the opening of the restaurant by Selma Bunks, Sam Stockwell, and Betsey Beaven. They discussed some of their early experiences with the restaurant, including male visitors whom they labeled a "special breed." They made it clear that they were not "men-hating feminists" and welcomed anyone to their restaurant but their main intent was to support women, providing a space for women to eat, read, and talk. The article mentioned in passing that the restaurant was a bit controversial for the time, even the name was deemed "distasteful." But the restaurant enjoyed success and is still thriving today.¹²

One of the earliest arguments women provided for abstaining from meat stemmed from the notion that meat is unhealthy and/or impure. Anna Kingsford, born in 1846, was one of the first women doctors in the United Kingdom and obtained her medical degree despite the ban on women attending British medical schools. She attended medical school in Paris where she wrote her thesis regarding the health benefits of vegetarianism.¹³ Her thesis, titled *The Perfect Way in Diet* provided not only medical rationale for the vegetarian diet, but looked toward natural history and ancient foods which largely excluded meat. She included a vast array of cultures, from Japan to Mexico to the Canary Islands then compared them to the British meat-centered diet.

Her conclusion: "We have it, then, clearly demonstrated by the foregoing analysis, that not only do vegetable substances contain all the elements necessary to nutrition and to the production of force and heat, but that they contain proportionately even more of these elements than are found in animal substances."¹⁴ Therefore, meat is not a necessary part of one's diet. The medical practice she founded catered especially to women's health issues. She recommended a vegetarian diet for many of her patients, particularly for beauty care.¹⁵ She felt passionately about animal rights, and believed that vegetarianism could solve seemingly any problem: "the vegetarian movement is the bottom and basis of all the movements toward Purity, Freedom, Justice, and Happiness."¹⁶

In the United States, women vegetarian activists voiced similar, medically-based opinions. Some of these advocates emerged during the World's Fair of 1893, held in Chicago, where vegetarians met to discuss ideas of vegetarianism through lectures.¹⁷ Women in particular seized

the opportunity to express their opinions. Alice Stockham, M.D., author of *Toxology*,¹⁸ a women's health book encouraging a vegetarian diet, contended that eating meat was morally wrong and could expose one to unclean food. "[F]rom the aesthetic point of view, I cannot believe it is either physically clean or morally right."¹⁹ So while she did not expressly state that meat was unhealthy, she did believe it to be unclean. Susanna Way Dodds, M.D. was another woman vegetarian who voiced her opinion at the World's Fair. Dodds, the fourth woman in the United States to become a doctor, advocated a vegetarian diet for health and environmental reasons. In her publication *Drugless Medicine* Dodds said "In short, there is neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper without it [meat products], in some form or other. Do the people wonder that they are afflicted with scrofula; and that it crops out, full-fledged, in a single generation?"²⁰ Here, she linked the eating of meat products with scrofula, better known as tuberculosis. But like most if not all women vegetarians at the time, Dodds did not expressly tie the vegetarian movement to women's rights. Nevertheless, she fought vehemently for women's rights including the right to wear pants, so she obviously felt that women should hold the same rights as men and therefore could have been labeled a feminist.²¹

A few years later, in 1901, a *Chicago Daily Tribune* article titled "Women for Food Reform" also discussed women in the United States who advocated vegetarianism for health reasons. This article mentioned several quotes from a woman who emphasized the role of women in feeding her children and the suitability of meat as a healthy food. Mrs. Dunlap said "I am convinced that one of the most important features in the education of every young woman is to know how to provide for a family in supplying the right kinds of food." Several other women stated in the article that they believed "we are eating too much meat." One of the women quoted in the article relayed an interesting story of a woman teacher losing her job for teaching vegetarianism in her classroom at the Armour Institute in Chicago, now known as the Illinois Institute of Technology. (Philip Danforth Armour, Sr., who had founded the institute, had made his fortune through meat packing). The dismissed teacher taught domestic science and came to the conclusion that meat-eating could be harmful through studying food statistics. While it is possible that other factors were at play leading to her dismissal, it is apparent through this incident that many did not endorse vegetarianism in the early 1900s but women seemed to be some of the first to openly encourage it.²² Notably, this was a time in the United States where muckrakers such as Upton Sinclair exposed the horrors of the meat-packing industry and inspired many to challenge the necessity and safety of consuming meat products.

Another argument in favor of vegetarianism falls under the broad category of women's liberation. One factor of this involved women cooking less meat in order to spend less time in the kitchen, as meat required extensive labor to cook. While Anna Kingsford's main focus in condoning a vegetarian diet was medically based, she also felt that giving up meat could free women from the kitchen. Kingsford believed that preparing labor-intensive, meat-filled meals kept women shackled as housewives which prevented them from pursuing personal interests.²³ Alice Stockham similarly thought that nuts could easily replace meat in one's diet, which would also help women spend less time in the kitchen preparing meat-centered meals.

The Women's Vegetarian Union founded by Alexandrine Veigélé in Victorian Britain expressed a related sentiment.²⁴ Although the Union was mostly small-scale with limited funding, membership increased from 200 in the first year to over 300 by the second year. The main objectives/ideas of the Union were as follows: women needed to live up to their motherly responsibilities to ensure the future of humanity in general, feed her children conscientiously so they may be "strong, intelligent, and humane" when they are older, and the freedom from preparing laborious, meat-laden meals in the kitchen.²⁵ Margaret Cousins, who spoke to the Vegetarian Society in 1907, elaborated on this topic. It was her desire, she stated, to

help women to free their hands and their minds in every possible way, for in the present absurd housekeeping arrangements a woman truly has 'no time to think'... and if she should get an hour of rest and quiet, she is physically so used up that she has no desire to worry her mind with intellectual and social problems.²⁶

Cousins argued that through omitting meat from one's diet, women would have more time to themselves. But as Leneman points out in this article, "labor-saving devices could have achieved that end as easily."²⁷ However, women possessing more time to themselves was not the only reason women advocated a vegetarian diet.

Another notion, falling under the umbrella of women's liberation, lied in the idea that humans and animals shared a bond, and the oppression of animals related to the oppression of humans, notably women. While not openly feminist, Kingsford also articulated her feelings on the similarities between the hidden mistreatment of animals for vivisection and the way men treated women in familial situations.²⁸ Alice Stockholm expressed a similar opinion: that animals and humans possessed a mutual tie with one another, and eating animals destroyed this sacred bond.²⁹ During the early

period of the vegetarian movement in Victorian Britain, men justified women's involvement in Vegetarian Society due to their domestic/maternal duties and their natural feminine qualities. These qualities supposedly opened women up to being more sympathetic to the plight of animals killed for human consumption, relating their plight to that of animals. Correspondingly, women adopted vegetarianism as an outlet to eschew traditionally masculine habits such as eating meat.³⁰

By the late 1800s, the amount of women involved in the Vegetarian Society was quite remarkable. The number steadily increased from 1874 to 1899, with many women choosing on their own to join the society without the influence of their husbands, who exemplified the increasingly emancipated woman. A writer for the *Vegetarian Advocate* stated his amazement at women's involvement:

That if the men were only *half as much* in earnest about the business as are the ladies of the Vegetarian society, and went about the work, as if they meant *doing* it, instead of talking about and telling others to do it, we should long ago have escaped from the wilderness which lies between Egypt and Canaan.³¹

The author thought that many men found women doing most of the hard work in the Vegetarian Society, with men doing most of the talking.

While women in Britain and the United States acted as feminists through vegetarian activism, women in the 1960s began to embrace the feminist title. The notion of "eco-feminism" emerged around this time as well. It is possible that this is partially due to feminist ideas developing more concretely, with feminist writers/activists such as Connie Salamone and Carol Adams tying women's rights to vegetarianism. While women vegetarians' motivations for advocating the diet during the 1960s remained relatively similar to women's motivations since the mid-1800s, the ways in which women expressed their ideas became bolder.

Also during this era of activism, women increasingly emerged as leaders of the vegetarian movement, including Francis Moore Lappé who wrote *Diet for a Small Planet* in 1971. Lappé, only twenty-seven at the time of publishing, encouraged Americans to eat plant-based foods instead of feeding these foods to animals and then consuming them. In the foreword, she stated: "I propose that our heavily meat-centered culture is at the very heart of our waste of the earth's productivity; and I invite you to explore the varied possibilities of nonmeat sources of protein."³² Even though Lappé's book did not delve into the gender question related to vegetarianism, *Diet* inspired vegetarians across the country including Connie Salamone who later became a leading activist herself.³³

Salamone was one of the first to staunchly oppose feminists eating meat. As an editor of a New York feminist newspaper, the *Majority Report*, her perspective on animal suffering led her to draw parallels between that and the women's struggle for equality. She founded a radical Vegetarian Feminists group in New York City, which boasted hundreds of members hailing mainly from the working class. Salamone emphasized the street-based mentality of her feminist group, which sought to break out of the routine of simply sitting around and talking about ideas rather than putting them to practice. Some of the methods she and her group employed included contacting local radio stations, street theater, and the distribution of pamphlets.³⁴ Even though Salamone's groups (she also founded a Vegetarian Activist Collective) floundered within the first ten years of their creation, her activism inspired many to start their own groups and continue the fight for not only animal liberation but women's liberation as well.³⁵

A *Wall Street Journal* article from 1973 featured a *Village Voice* interview with Connie Salamone. The *Wall Street Journal* author opened the article by describing Salamone's movement as the "latest off-shoot of women's liberation, the vegetarian feminists." *The Village Voice* quoted Salamone: "The basic premise of feminism is non-oppression of living beings by men, but a lot of women are still 'human chauvinists' and are guilty of raping females of other species, treating cows and hens like machines." She linked the suffering of women with the suffering of animals, and called upon women to relate their struggle with that of animals, similar to Carol Adams' arguments for eco-feminist vegetarianism. Both the author quoted in this article, and the author of the *Wall Street Journal* article were apparently men, and poked fun at Salamone's ideas. The author said "The *Voice* reporter, apparently still something of a 'human chauvinist,' had qualms about this vegetarian attempt to purify language. 'Like if you call a woman a pig,' he wrote, 'are you insulting the woman or the pig?'" He obviously misunderstood the "human chauvinism" idea and felt the need to belittle her ideas and this author had no qualms about spreading his ignorance.³⁶

While Salamone considered herself an ecofeminist, the theories of ecofeminism came to be truly formulated with the writings of Carol J. Adams in the 1980s. Eco-feminism does not necessarily fall into the category of one static entity, but instead is a fluid idea with authors contributing works consistently. Many critiques exist as well, within and outside of eco-feminism, providing an even richer picture of how it can be applied to everyday life. One of the main arguments of eco-feminism is "all forms of oppression are connected."³⁷ According to Adams, "Ecofeminism posits that the domination of nature is linked to the domination of women and both dominations must be eradicated."³⁸

Where did this relation between nature/animals and women originate from? Adams conducted interviews with women who identified as feminists, and stated that her interviewees claimed "trusting their body and learning from their body" contributed to this. "They saw vegetarianism as 'another extension of looking in and finding out who I really am and what I like.'"³⁹ Her interviewees related to being objectified and referred to as "pieces of meat," and the way the bodies of animals are ruined for profit much the same way a woman's body can be ruined to make a profit. This leads into the argument that a person must act according to one's personal beliefs. So if a woman truly believes this, she is not to consume meat products.

This also calls into the question whether or not a woman is to abstain from all animal products and espouse a vegan diet, or follow a more liberal vegetarian diet. Megan Metzelaar wrote to the *New York Times* in response to a 2002 article about the Bloodroot restaurant mentioned earlier. She wrote: "Meat isn't the only product created through the physical and emotional suffering of animals. We have exploited and abused billions of hens and cows in order to have eggs and dairy products in our refrigerators. Feminists ought to shun all animal products if they want to be taken seriously."⁴⁰ Adams stated something similar in *The Sexual Politics of Meat*: "Our meals either embody or negate feminist principles by the food choices they enact."⁴¹ She also answers to the question of veganism versus vegetarianism, stating that milk and eggs, produced from a female animal, should be referred to as "feminized protein" These quotes show a definite progression in the way women, especially feminist women, view the consumption of animal products. By the early twenty-first century, the standards for one to be a feminist vegetarian rose compared to previous centuries, and the ways in which vegetarians think about the subject are becoming more complex.

One of the central arguments Carol Adams described in *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, was the notion of the "absent-referent" and how the ways in which people use language plays an integral part in the subjugation of both animals and women. "Animals in name and body are made absent as animals for meat to exist." In other words, a cow becomes "beef," a pig becomes "bacon" or "pork," and the actual killing the animal experienced is absent. She argued that people discuss sexual violence against women in a similar way, applying the word "rape" outside of the context of a person (particularly a woman) victimized by rape, minimizing the effect of the word.⁴² Lori Gruen in the article "Empathy and Vegetarian Commitments" expressed a similar opinion, stating that it is crucial for a person to actually witness or at least truly acknowledge the methods of slaughtering an animal to understand exactly what it means for one to eat

that piece of steak, or whichever piece of meat.⁴³ She stated: "When we begin to identify non-human animals as worthy of our moral attention because they are beings with whom we can empathize, they can no longer be seen merely as food."⁴⁴ This is precisely what Adams' seems to be arguing with her theory of the absent referent, and calls upon some of the ideals that Anna Kingsford, Margaret Cousins, and Susanna Dodds (among others) promoted during their eras of activism.

The history of women in vegetarianism is rich and varied. It often paralleled other struggles women faced, and are facing in contemporary society. Women are still fighting to assert their unique rights concerning their bodies and equal treatment/pay in the workplace. Keeping this in mind, it is especially crucial to examine the ways in which women in the past grappled with these issues and formulated ways to incorporate feminist ideals in everyday life. To be a feminist vegetarian is to espouse some aspects of feminism in a way that is sustained through the innate human necessity to eat. In 2012, women as homemakers and mothers are still questioning how to feed themselves and their families in ways that are beneficial nutritionally, environmentally, and morally. Some feminists today stress the importance of local farming, as seen in the article "Locavores, Feminism, and the Question of Meat." "Feminist food activism requires us to shift these subsidies away from unsustainable monocultural operations and toward integrated closed system small farms."⁴⁵ The debate of whether or not feminists (men and women) should eat meat shall continue for as long as people are thinking about what they eat and what exactly that means.

Notes

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- 3 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 4 Vegetarian Society, "History," Vegetarian Society, <http://www.vegsoc.org/page.aspx?pid=827> (Accessed December 12, 2012).
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- 7 As quoted in Leah Leneman, "The Awakened Instinct: Vegetarianism and the Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain," *Women's History Review* 6: 2 (1997): 273.
- 8 Puskar-Pasewicz, *Cultural Encyclopedia*, 203.

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- 13 Helen Rappaport and Anna Kingsford, *Encyclopedia of Women Social Reformers*, CREDO reference, 2001.
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- 20 Susanna Way Dodds, M.D. as quoted in *Vegetarian America*, 188.
- 21 Iacobbo, *Vegetarian America*, 118.
- 22 *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922), "Women for Food Reform.: Illinois Federation Talks of Vegetarian Diet," October 17, 1901, 16.
- 23 Rappaport and Kingsford, *Encyclopedia*.
- 24 Gregory, *Of Victorians*, 166.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 167-68.
- 26 Margaret Cousins, as quoted in, Leah Leneman, "The Enlightened Instinct" 277-78
- 27 *Ibid.*, 278.
- 28 Rappaport and Kingsford, *Encyclopedia*.
- 29 Gregory, *Of Victorians*, 116-17.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 164.
- 31 As quoted in *Of Victorians*, 162.
- 32 Francis Moore Lappé, *Diet for a Small Planet* (New York: Ballantine Books, Inc., 1971), xi.
- 33 Iacobbo, *Vegetarian America*, 177.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 181.
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- 36 Backalenik, "Feminist Food for Thought."
- 37 Puskar-Pasewicz, *Cultural Encyclopedia*, 90.
- 38 Carol J. Adams, "Ecofeminism and the Eating of Animals," *Hypatia* 6:1 (1991): 125.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 128.

- 40 Megan Metzelaar, "True Feminists Shun All Animal Products," *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, December 1, 2002, CT5.
- 41 Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 178.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 43 Lori Gruen, "Empathy and Vegetarian Commitments" in *Food for Thought: The Debate Over Eating Meat* (Amherst, MA: Prometheus Books, 2004), 289.
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Daniel L. Messer

Big-Game Hunting in Victorian Culture: How Class and Race Are Expressed on the Hunt in the Dark Continent

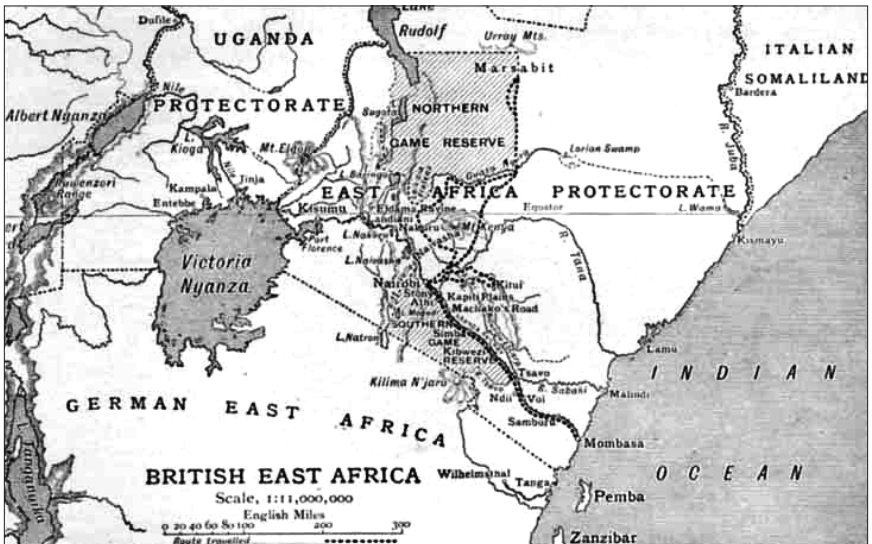


Figure 1. "Map of British East Africa in 1907," Patterson, *Man-Eaters of Tsavo*.

What is a safari? Safari is a Swahili word meaning journey and is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as, "Originally: a party or caravan undertaking an extensive cross-country expedition on foot for hunting or scientific research, typically in an African country (originally in East Africa). In later use: a party travelling, usually in vehicles, into unspoiled or wild areas for tourism or game viewing."¹ Who went on one? The elite of Victorian society went on safaris. Through going on safari, Victorian gentlemen sought to demonstrate their superiority over both the lower classes at home and the "savages" abroad. They also sought to demonstrate their superior manliness.

On the safari, we find classism and racism expressed in multiple ways. The two main ways class is presented can be found first in the game laws passed during the Victorian period and, secondly, in the high costs associated with under taking the trip itself. The poorest individual who

did not make a career out of hunting big game was a doctor and he had to both borrow money and practice medicine during the seven years he spent in South Africa. This gives us an idea of the lowest level of class that could afford to go on a safari. Lieutenant Colonel Patterson, the author of *The Lions of Tsavo*, only listed first-class ticket prices in his book, further lending the impression that only the affluent went on safaris. Finally, the Society for the Protection of the (Wild) Fauna of the Empire had among its 100 members, five earls, four viscounts, two barons, two dukes, a duchess, thirty-three military officers, fourteen members of parliament, an Austrian prince, and U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. Other members listed included individuals who identified themselves only as lord, members of the House of Lords, or individuals with sir or other honorifics in their names.

Racism can also be found in the game laws of much of colonial Africa, which discriminated both against the underclasses and certain native hunting practices. Further evidence of racism can be found in how the sources speak about natives. For example, famous British big-game hunter Frederick Courteney Selous wrote admirably of the Boers of South Africa for having “killed off as many of the natives, and generally prepared as much of the country for occupation by the white men, as the British.”² With statements such as this, we can glean the racist and patronizing attitudes of the authors as well as their negative descriptions of native hunting methods and their often holier-than-thou attitudes. This essay will then discuss trophies, their connection to the Victorian billiard rooms, and big-game hunting’s connection to the ivory trade.

Game Animals

It is impossible to talk about hunting in Africa without discussing the five most dangerous game animals found in Africa. These were the lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and buffalo. Each author puts these animals in a different order. Big-game hunter Kalman Kittenberger states that,

Personally, I have shot about 200 heads of the five most dangerous animals, so I think I am entitled to give my opinion for what it is worth. In districts where elephants are often disturbed and the hunter has to pick out the largest tusker of the herd, on account of the limits imposed, elephant hunting is undoubtedly the most dangerous sport. In districts where elephants have been undisturbed-and they are now few-the danger is much less. I give the lion second place; than the buffalo, and last the rhino and leopard.³

The African elephant, the largest land animal, is an obvious choice, weighing nearly six tons.⁴ The record size given in *Life-Histories of African Game Animals* is 11 feet, 6½ inches while the record size of the tusks is 250 pounds.⁵ However, “the largest pair known, the Kilimanjaro tusks, weighed 460 pounds (207 kg) and measured twenty-four feet (almost 8 m) in length.”⁶ The inclusion of the lion, likewise, makes logical sense given that the animal is the largest mammalian predator in Africa, with a record length of 10 foot 7 inches and record weight of 698 pounds.⁷ The lion is also on the list because of its size, its ability to conceal itself behind very little cover, the speed of its charge, and its tendency to fight rather than flee. Injuries inflicted by it always turn septic. Also, it has killed more people than any other animal on the list, and it can come to see man as prey.⁸

Other animals also make sense being included on this list. For example, the African buffalo measured nearly five feet tall and weighed 1,500 pounds.⁹ In addition, when wounded, it is known to double back and try to kill the hunter, meaning only a crippling or fatal shot can stop its charge.¹⁰ There are two types of rhinos the larger white rhino standing 6½ feet tall, 13 feet long, with a horn length of 62½ inches, and weighing between 3 and 5 tons, the black rhino was more common and the smaller of the rhinos standing 5½ feet tall, 11 feet long, with a horn length of 43 inches, and weighing 2 tons.¹¹ This size along with poor eyesight leading to charges at perceived threats puts the rhino on the list of the most dangerous game. The last animal on this list is the leopard. The leopard is on the list for its size of about 7 feet in length. It also has the ability to hide, being the smallest animal of the big five and therefore the hardest to hit, and its willingness to charge at hunters.

Class

Going on safari in Africa was a popular vacation for the upper classes in the Victorian period. The first Europeans to hunt in Africa in modern times were the Boers, the first white settlers of the Cape Colony, who are recorded hunting as early as 1652. By the end of the eighteenth century, the first Europeans to undertake hunting trips and return home to Europe arrived on the Dark Continent.¹² The accounts published these early hunters in addition to the start of quinine production in the 1820s would lead to the popularity of big-game hunting trips among the upper classes.

But why did the upper classes go hunting? They went hunting because since antiquity hunting for pleasure had been associated with the social elites. They also went on safari to prove that they were brave and manly. The famed hunter Frederick Courteney Selous summed this up best when he wrote, “any one who hunts big game ought to be prepared to take some

chances; after all, if the element of danger were entirely eliminated, where would the fun come in?"¹³

The safari was restricted to the upper levels of society by its restrictive cost. For example, in manpower alone, Lt. Col. Patterson recommended in his 1907 hunting narrative that one hunter on safari, in a three-month period, would need to hire a headman at 50 rupees a month, a cook at 35 rupees a month, a gun-bearer at 20 per month, a personal servant (or "Boy") at 20 rupees per month, two armed porters (or askaris) at 12 rupees per month, and thirty porters at 10 rupees a month.¹⁴ The total wages, per month, were 449 rupees or £29 18s 8d;¹⁵ this is the equivalent of £2,470.00 in 2010 British Pounds.¹⁶ To give some further sense of how prohibitively expensive these safaris were; this average cost amounted to more than half of a general English laborer's annual pay, who was generally paid between £68 and £75 a year.¹⁷

The expenses involved in a safari could be even greater. For example, when former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt went on his famous safari to Africa in 1909-10, he employed fifteen askaris, two hundred porters, in addition to multiple headmen, cooks, and servants.¹⁸ If we assume that the wages for the employees on a safari stayed the same, then the total cost in wages alone for Roosevelt's year-long safari exceeded 26,000 rupees in labor costs alone or more than £1,700 if the exchange rates stayed the same as well. If we were to calculate this as of 2010 British Pounds, the labor costs on Roosevelt's expedition would equal £138,000.¹⁹ Moreover, this figure only covers labor costs; items that further dramatically increased the cost of the trip included travel costs, the cost of game licenses, and the supplies required to protect your trophies from insects and the elements. Of course, the longer the safari lasted, the more the costs increased as well.

The cost of travel to and from the safari varied yet was still generally very expensive. For example, according to Patterson in his 1907 hunting memoir, the cheapest first-class, round-trip steamship ticket would still have set the safari hunter back nearly £1,650 in 2010 British Pounds. Indeed, it is telling that the only rates that Patterson provides throughout his memoir are for first-class accommodations. From this we can infer that the people who would be going on safari were those who would only travel first class. Patterson also gives the cost of train tickets as "the First-Class return fares from Mombasa to Nairobi, Kisumu and Entebbe are 92, 164¼, and 213½ rupees respectively."²⁰ The fares would come out to about £6 2s 8d, £10 19s, and £14 4s 8d.²¹

The cost of the hunting trip was further increased by the need to buy hunting licenses. The first gaming law in British colonial Africa dated from 1822, when the Cape Colony issued the Game Law Proclamation.²²

As time went on these laws became more complicated and extensive. In addition the costs of gaming licenses increased. In 1907 a hunting license for British East Africa cost £50, £5 more if the hunter wanted to have a chance to kill a giraffe.²³ This amounted to almost an entire year's pay of a general laborer in England. The issuing of additional licenses for specific game animals would become more prevalent as time went on. By 1913 a specific license was required to hunt "the white rhino on payment of £25. The Uganda colonial government only granted two or three licences a year for the white rhino, and even then only in exceptional cases."²⁴ If the hunting laws were broken the violator was fined. Kittenberger states that "a costly licence only allows two elephants a year and forbids the shooting of a bull whose tusks are under 30 lbs. each. Further, any underweight tusks are confiscated by the Government, while the hunter may also be fined for his rashness."²⁵ The hunter and Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society Peter MacQueen in his book *In Wildest Africa* published in 1909 records that,

The game license in British East Africa is two hundred and fifty dollars, and if the hunter enters Uganda it is two hundred and fifty dollars more, and in the Sudan two hundred dollars in addition, or seven hundred dollars through these three territories. Now in German East Africa the game license is only three dollars and thirty-three cents. The Germans, however, charge thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents for each elephant shot, ten dollars for each rhinoceros, six dollars and fifty cents for each buffalo or gnu, and one dollar for each of the smaller game.²⁶

Two things can be gathered from this passage. First, based on the license pricing information being in dollars, this book was aimed primarily at an American market. This means that the British were not the only persons going to Africa to hunt. Americans, Germans, Hungarians, Russians, French, and Portuguese hunters also went on safari. Secondly, the British were not the only colonial power in Africa enacting game laws, the Germans were as well. These sportsmen had one thing in common; they were all from the elites of their respective empires. This can be seen in that they were able to afford to buy the hunting licenses and pay for the other costs associated with going on a safari.

After getting to Africa the sportsmen would have had to either buy food, guns, ammunition, and other supplies from an agent or have previously shipped them. Regarding guns and ammunition, MacQueen recommends that,

The battery for each member, to be sufficient for all needs, should consist of a .450 express, a .303 sporting rifle, British model, and a 12-bore shot gun; and I should think that sufficient ammunition for a three-months' trip would be two hundred and fifty rounds of .450 (fifty hard and two hundred soft), 300 rounds of .303 (one hundred hard and two hundred soft), and five hundred 12-bore shot cartridges of, say, the 6 and 8 sizes, sufficient for a three-months' trip.²⁷

This battery of weapons was appropriate for 1909 when MacQueen's book was first published. Yet, prior to the "gun-revolution" of the middle decades of the nineteenth century, hunting was largely done with large-caliber, muzzle-loading rifles, and before that large-caliber, smooth-bore muskets. Even in 1872, for elephant hunting, the gun universally used was a large-bore, smooth-barreled, "duck gun" weighing 12.5 pounds, and taking over twenty drachms of black powder to fire a four ounce ball.²⁸ This amount of black powder "is substantially more than a triple the magnum load of a twelve-gauge in modern times."²⁹ I would like to take the opportunity to give 'the definition of "bore" is the number of pure lead balls that equated to the diameter of the gun. [So] a four-bore or gauge (the same) meant that it would take a quarter-pound, four ounces of round lead, about .91 caliber.'³⁰ By the 1920s, these large-bore rifles had gone out of fashion and had been replaced by magazine feed high-velocity rifles like the 7-mm. Mauser.³¹

Other supplies needed on the safari included specialized clothing, tents, and food. Regarding clothing, MacQueen recommended a pith hat (to ward off sun-stroke), some khaki suits, some puttees, gloves, three pairs of boots, one of which should be of the Norwegian style, warm cloths if the trip goes into the highlands, an overcoat again for if the trip goes into the highlands, and a mackintosh (or raincoat).³² Patterson added medicine to that list as well as "a small double-fly tent, three Jaeger blankets, a collapsible bath, a Wolseley valise, and a good filter."³³ As for feeding the safari MacQueen wrote, "the food for the caravan is mostly rice, of which the Headman gets three pounds per day; the cook, gun-bearer, "boy" and askaris, two and a quarter pounds; and the ordinary porters one and one-half pounds per day," as:

For the white travelers, there are plenty of chickens, which can be bought for eight cents apiece anywhere throughout the country. In a good hunting party there is no want of delicious viands made from antelope steak, for there are hundreds of Grant gazelles, Thomson gazelles,

kongoni (Jackson's hartebeest), Chandler's reed-buck, and the little paa, which forms a very toothsome morsel to the hungry hunter. The natives will eat all the *membra disjecta* of any of the wild game killed. They are especially fond of the entrails of the animals, which they roast over fires without removing the offal.³⁴

The nature of a safari being to hunt means that game that is shot, with the exception of predators, and game forbidden by the culture of the native members of the safari, could be used to feed the party. An example of forbidden game is the hyena which is considered unclean by the Mashunas, F. C. Selous records this reaction in *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa* after boiling down the carcass of a hyena he had shot, "the Mashunas and my own boys thought I had defiled the pot by cooking the unclean animal in it; and when the next day I boiled down a zebra, they actually would not drink the soup, as they said it would taste of hyaena."³⁵ As we see by this passage it was important for the sportsman to know about the dietary restrictions of his employees on the safari.

The best list of supplies for the preservation of trophies comes from Kittenberger who recommends,

For an ordinary expedition I would suggest taking the following implements and chemicals for preserving trophies: one or two dozens of large skinning knives for the big mammals, and three small ones for birds. Three scissors and tweezers of different sizes for the same purpose. Six to eight pounds of natrium arsenicum to preserve the skins, which I personally found to be far better than arsenical soap. Besides, huge quantities of this would have to be taken, for one lion's skin absorbs about 5 lbs.³⁶

Kittenberger further recommended that, after cleaning off most of the flesh from the future trophy's skin, it should be rubbed with one part alum to three parts salt. Then a five per cent solution of natrium arsenicum should be brushed onto the future trophy as an insecticide.³⁷ After the trophies (Figure 2 are trophies taken by Lt. Patterson) have been preserved they have to be shipped home at additional costs.

Once the trophies were brought back home, they could be put on display in the hunter's trophy room, at the hunter's club, donated to a museum, or even sold to a museum. During and after the Victorian era museums even sponsored safaris for the purpose of collecting specimens for display. The few notable hunters who went on collecting trips for museums include Frederick Courtenay Selous, who give specimens to numerous museums; Theodore Roosevelt, whose safari was sponsored

in part by the Smithsonian; C. G. Schillings, who collected for the Berlin Natural History Museum and other German museums; and Kalman Kittenberger, who collected for the Hungarian National Museum. The size of the safaris for the purpose of collecting specimens for museums tended to be much larger than those for sport; C. G. Schillings states that, "my caravan (in which I had never less than 130 men)."³⁸ This is almost 100 more men than the thirty-six Patterson recommends for the individual hunter. It must also be remembered that museums were founded by the elites of Victorian society. Some museums paid fortunes for specific trophies. When Lt. Col. Patterson decided to sell the skins and skulls of the Man-Eaters of Tsavo, he sold them to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago for \$5,000.³⁹ So it was very much possible to make a profit from big-game hunting.

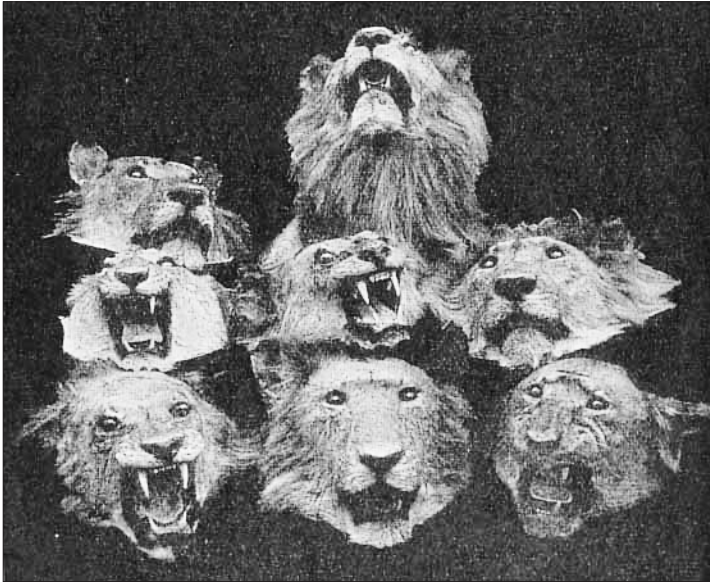


Figure 2: "Heads of the Eight Lions Shot by the Author [J.H. Patterson] in British East Africa", Patterson, *Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, ch. XXI.

Professional Hunters and the Ivory Trade

As seen by Lt. Col. Patterson's sale of the Man-Eaters of Tsavo to the Field Museum, big-game hunting could make the hunter a nice profit; but what about hunting for the sole purpose of making money? The investment required to make money from big-game hunting was rather large. As I have already mentioned, the costs of traveling to Africa were

out of reach for large segments of the population. Often, in order for some of the hunters to help cover the expenses of a safari, they had to sell some of their trophies. Kittenberger writes that, "the Hungarian National Museum's payment for the collected skins came to very little, and I had to help myself out by selling my trophies."⁴⁰ Others had to practice their trade to pay for their costs. Doctor Emil Holub, over the seven years he spent in South Africa, had to pay for his safaris by practicing medicine in between them.

Others arrived better prepared and were able to make a living off of hunting. Perhaps the most famous of these hunters was Fredrick Courteney Selous who writes, "On the 4th of September 1871, I set foot for the first time upon the sandy shores of Algoa Bay, with £400 in my pocket, and the weight of only nineteen years upon my shoulders."⁴¹ By March of the following year Selous had made a profit of £100.⁴² Selous would go on to make career out of hunting and wrote the forwards to many of the books being used for this essay, in addition to writing three books of his own. The fact that at age nineteen Selous had £400 in his pocket tells us that he by no means came from humble origins, but that his family had some money.

The return on investment by those who could afford to make the trip to Africa, and were willing to risk their life could be immense. For example, James Chapman had a "store at Potchefstroom, where he exchanged manufactured goods for cattle and ivory at a profit of 75 to 150 per cent."⁴³ As we can see there was a profit to be made in hunting, while some had to perform other tasks to support themselves over the course of their trip. The real money in big-game hunting, however, was in the ivory trade.

The trade in ivory dates back to at least 900 B.C.E., but expanded rapidly during the Victorian era, when it was used for many luxury goods. Some of the goods were chess sets, piano keys, inlays for wooden instruments, art,

...buttons, napkin rings, magnifying glasses, puzzle-balls or puzzle-rings, knitting needles, bracelets, beads (sometimes given a black trim for mourning use), bodkins, basting-thread removal pins, darning eggs, thread spools and barrels, thimbles, billiard balls, pestles and mortars, dice cups, the knobs for canes, umbrellas and parasols, pillboxes, cosmetics containers, door knobs, whistles, droughts pieces and backgammon men, shaving-brush handles, picture frames and lining-pen handles.⁴⁴

With so many things being made out of ivory, is there any wonder that there was money to be made in the ivory trade? It is very interesting

to see that so many of these ivory items were consumed by women. Indeed, Michael Vickers points out in his book on the history of ivory that white women often worsened the treatment of Africans through their consumption practices:

White luxury involved African misery, and an early French traveller in Zambia asked ungallantly: O tender-hearted ladies of Europe, as your hands lightly caress the keyboard of your piano; as you play with your paper knife of handle of your umbrella; do you suspect what tears, what sufferings each piece on ivory has cost the wretched black man, can you imagine the horrible crimes and atrocities committed in its name?⁴⁵

It is important to note that only about twenty per cent of the ivory that made it on to the market came from hunted animals.⁴⁶ Furthermore, most of the ivory that the hunters returned with they had acquired through trade with the various African tribes they encountered. The demand for ivory led to a large decline in the elephant population and eventually prompted various colonial powers to attempt to prohibit the export of elephant tusks weighing less than ten pounds.⁴⁷ But even this regulation was only made to ensure that continued profits be brought in by the ivory trade.

Race as Expressed in the Hunt

As hunters pushed further into the interior of Africa, they left the areas under colonial control and encountered the territories of powerful African rulers. These powerful chiefs were able to grant or refuse permission to hunt in their lands, as well as enforce their laws. We see this in Selous's *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa*. Selous recounts that he and another white man on safari were fined over £360 by the rulers of Matabililand for killing over fifty hippopotami.⁴⁸ As we can see from this example, some African rulers had enough power to force European hunters to abide by their laws. Yet, when Arthur Neumann visited the lands of the Mthara to hunt, he refused to pay tribute to them, and he still hunted in their territory.⁴⁹ These encounters were not the most frequent; the hunters' most common interaction with Africans would be with the African members of his safari.

As I have mentioned before, the African members of the safari made the safari into a vacation for the European and American sportsmen. The Africans on the safari carried the sportsmen's gear, his gun, cooked his food, skinned his trophies while he supervised; there was even a position as the hunter's personal servant and in some cases the natives were used

as beaters. A beater goes ahead of the hunter for the purpose of driving game out of its hiding place. The highest paid position in the hunter's safari was that of the headman who only made 50 rupees a month (or about £3 6s. 8d.)⁵⁰ If the headman worked as a headman every month of the year he would make about £40, or about £18 less than a general laborer made in England.⁵¹ However, from most of my sources, where the safari lasted a year or more, often there were frequent changes among its African members. (Not to mention that to make £40 the headman would have to spend a year away from his home.) It is also important to note that the lowest paid member of the safari the porter made less than a pound a month.⁵² The Africans would assist the ivory hunter in the hunt as Neumann states, "one can do a good deal with thirty-five good men armed with Sniders in Central Africa."⁵³

However, using natives to hunt was frowned upon by many white sportsmen. Indeed, colonial laws were even passed that prohibited native members of the safari from helping white hunters make their kills. For example, *The Northern Rhodesia, Ordinance No. 19 of 1925* states, "no person shall except as hereinafter provided employ any native to hunt any game: provided however that a licence holder when hunting game may employ natives to assist him, but such natives shall not use fire-arms."⁵⁴ We can see by this that the laws were designed to relegate Africans to this subservient position in the safari.

These laws also were racist in their blanket prohibitions of indigenous methods of hunting. For example, the *Northern Rhodesia Ordinance No. 19 of 1925* banned the use of a "pitfall, snare, trap or engine or other contrivance for the purpose of killing or capturing" of big-game animals.⁵⁵ Forbidding the use of trips to hunt game was outlawing particular methods of hunting used by the Africans. The use of trips to hunt big game was seen as unsporting by the European hunter, because it took out the very element of danger that they craved. As Selous said, "any one who hunts big game ought to be prepared to take some chances; after all, if the element of danger were entirely eliminated, where would the fun come in?"⁵⁶ This law particularly targeted Africans because they were seen as one of the groups responsible for the depletion of the big game animals; this point is made by Schillings when he wrote,

The wicked sportsman, of whom you have read so much in books and newspapers, and who is really a good deal of a myth, is now at least regarded no longer as the sole cause of the disappearance of the African fauna, the guilt having been brought home at last to the chief-culprits the traders, pseudo-colonists, Boers, Askaris, armed natives, and all the other pioneers of civilization.⁵⁷

The use of pitfall traps also posed a danger to white hunters. The pits often were ten feet deep or more, well concealed, and placed on game trails.⁵⁸ This was not the only method of native hunting that the sportsmen despised; authors also castigated the use of poison for hunting, another practice of some African tribes, and other methods that they found to be cruel. Most hunting narratives from the turn of the twentieth century also disparaged the use of poison by the Africans to hunt game. The Africans are displayed in some cases as poor hunters; for example, when the King of Marutse led an elephant hunt only four elephants were killed by more than 10,000 shots fired into a herd of over a hundred elephants.⁵⁹ Not all methods of native hunting were seen as unsporting, admiration was shown by Kittenbergher for the natives who hunted lions with spears, while at the same time he expresses disdain for the lack of courage shown by the hunter using poisoned arrows.⁶⁰

Africans in hunting narratives were described as unsporting, primitive, superstitious, cowardly, unreasonable, cruel to women, prone to theft, lazy, childlike, as savages, and in the case of rulers tyrannical; meanwhile, the white hunter is presented as a pillar of reason, restraint, and a father-like figure to the natives in his safari. The hunter is also shown to be living up to the ideal that colonialism was what was best for the Africans. As I have already mentioned it was through hunting with the use of poison and traps that the natives of African were shown to be unsporting. These methods were seen as unsporting because they lacked the danger and skill, that killing big game with a spear, an unpoisoned arrow, or a rifle was supposed to require.⁶¹ Another unsporting and cruel method described by Kittenberger was the use of fire to blind and kill elephants.⁶²

The Africans on a safari were commonly described as cowardly. As Lt. Col. Patterson claims in *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, after he had wounded a lion, he and his hunting party approached the animal they thought to be near death. As the lion begin to pick itself up all of the party except for Patterson and his Indian servant Roshan Khan ran for the trees. Once Roshan recovered from his shock, he, too, fled for a tree; this gave Patterson the opportunity to kill the lion.⁶³ This example purports to show Patterson, as the only Briton in the safari group, as the only person who did not flee. Yet, it would also seem that in this case the Africans and Indians showed much more common sense than Patterson.

The Africans are depicted as savages and primitive also by the way that they dress and cultural traditions that they follow. The Africans are often described as wearing little to no clothing especially among the women of the tribe (as seen in Figure 3 on the next page). Some of the other behaviors that lead the Europeans to see the Africans as primitive savages had to

do with their superstitions and rituals. One of the ritual practices that would have disgusted the readers of hunting narratives was the eating of blood, required to make those undergoing the ceremony blood brother. Neumann became blood brothers with two men who were sons of tribal leaders. This was done by putting a drop of the other person's blood on a piece of meat from a sacrificial animal's heart and then eating the meat.⁶⁴

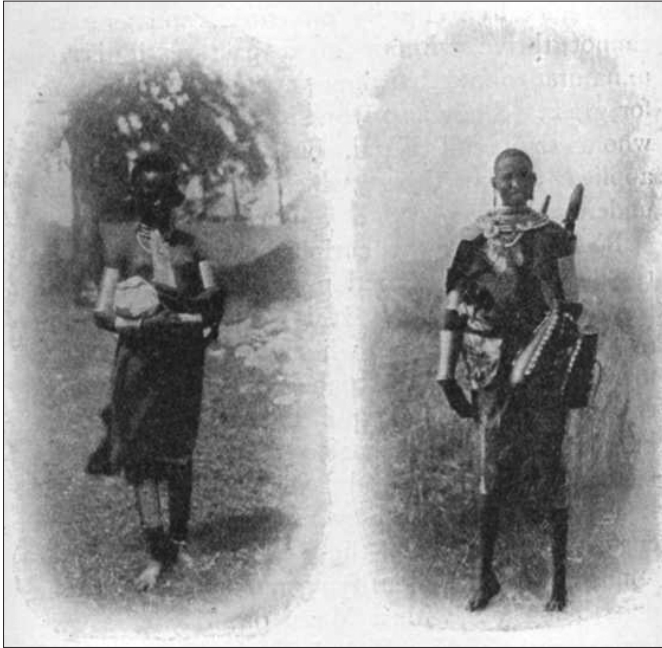


Figure 3. These photographs depict Masai girls; the figure on the left is clearly bare from the waist up. Patterson, *Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, 235.

Another superstition that sportsmen found to be a particular annoyance is described by Kittenberger as a threat to the hunter's lion and leopard trophies, 'I would advise the hunter to count these whiskers in the presence of his men, for many native tribes believe in their magic power and take them as "dawas."' ⁶⁵ A dawa is a type of magic talisman. Belief in magic in one form or another is depicted in many other sources and many other ways. The episode that Selous describes in *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa*, involving the death of fifty hippos, was so serious because natives of Matabililand believed that this offence would cause a drought.⁶⁶ Selous believed that he was unjustly fined. In this trail Selous comes across as both fatherly to his man John, and argues his case with reason, against the unreasonable acquisitions made by Ma-kwaykwi. Selous is shown to be fatherly by claiming to have ordered John to shoot

the sea-cow, when he writes in his book he had advised John not to.⁶⁷ Selous used reason when the Ma-kwaykwi,

After saying, "It is you, Selous, who have finished the king's game," he went on, "But you are a witch, you must bring them all back to life again. I want to see them-all, all. Let them all walk in at the kraal gate, the elephants and the buffaloes and the elands" - I stood up and called out, "All right; but when the lions come in, will you, Ma-kwaykwi, remain where you are to count them?" This caused a general laugh at Ma-kwaykwi's expense, and quite stopped his flow of eloquence.⁶⁸

This case also shows the tyranny of rule by native kings and the supposed lying nature of the native, because even though the king had told him that he was not in trouble he still had to pay a fine of over £60.⁶⁹ It comes from beliefs among certain native tribes that would lead Europeans to view them as both lazy and cruel to their women. Patterson writes, "as is the case with all other African races, the women of the Wa Kikuyu do the manual labour of the village and carry the heavy loads for their lords and masters, the bundles being held in position on their back by strips passing round the forehead."⁷⁰ The fact that the porters on a safari were men and carried heavy loads for the white hunter, doing what they may have perceived as women's work, and been seen by them as emasculating, and some not wanting to do so. This may have also helped contribute to the Europeans' general view that Africans were lazy. These views, when taken together, may well have been summed up best by Kipling's poem *The White Man's Barden*, whose opening stanza regards "natives" throughout the world as being "Half devil and half child."⁷¹ This phrase sums up how the sportsman viewed his native employees as children he had to care for and protect, but that they were not to be completely trusted.

This poem goes along with much of the language used to describe the natives. The hunters tend to refer to the native safari members using passive language such as "my boys," "my men," "my insert name of tribe here," or even "my savages." In addition, it is common for the white man to be addressed by the non-whites in Africa as Bwana Makubwa Swahili for Great Master, or other forms of Master, boss, or sir.⁷² This is reinforcing the belief that the hunter had that he was superior, while at the same time demonstrating to the natives that they were inferior. In addition, some of the sources contain racist theories that were common at the time. For example, Selous theorized that the Bushmen of Southern Africa were "probably descendants of the earliest type of man that appeared in Southern Africa; and they probably came from the north and spread down the western

side of the continent, long before the black races appeared upon the scene."⁷³ These theories embraced the theory of evolution and applied it to human society in the form of Social Darwinism. It is also common to find in hunting narratives the author ranking or comparing different native tribes; as Patterson does when he claims that the Kavirondo "are on the whole about the best of the East African Tribes."⁷⁴ It is also a commonly found claim that this tribe or another is dying out and describing how the women of the tribe look, act, or their place in the tribe.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the high cost of a safari rendered it unattainable to all but the highest levels of society. In addition the racial attitudes held at the time were reflexed on the safari. It also must be noted that both big-game hunting and the ivory trade played a big role in the elite culture of the Victorian period. However, by the 1930s big-game hunting trips were on the decline. This had probably something to do with the decline of Western imperialism as well as the connections between the safari hunt and elitist privilege. Growing distaste toward western racism also contributed. By 1961, when Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, visited India and participated in a tiger hunt, he was condemned worldwide for doing so.⁷⁵ Such was the extent of the decline in the popularity of safari hunting that took place. Yet during its prime, the safari was popular among many members of elite Victorian and Edwardian society, helping to prop up both empire and notions of white superiority over "natives."

Notes

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- 2 Frederick Courteney Selous, *Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia: Being a Narrative of Events in Matabeleland both before and During the Recent Native Insurrection up to the Date of the Disbandment of the Bulawayo Field Force* (New York: Negro University Press, 1969 reprint ed., 1896), 248.
- 3 Kalman Kittenberger, *Big Game Hunting and Collecting in East Africa 1903-1926* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 214.
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- 7 Bruce D. Patterson, *The Lions of Tsavo: Exploring the Legacy of Africa's Notorious Man-Eaters* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 114.
- 8 C. A. W. Guggisberg, *Simba: The Life of the Lion* (Cape Town, South Africa: Howard Timmins, 1961), 195.
- 9 C. T. Astley Maberly, *The Game Animals of Southern Africa* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963), 46.
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- 11 *Ibid.*, 10-16.
- 12 John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 86-93.
- 13 Selous, *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1972 reprinted, 1893), 432.
- 14 Lt. Col. J. H. Patterson, *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986 reprint ed., 1907), 325-28. The pay rate and titles of the caravan were written out from a table.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 328. An exchange rate of 15 rupees to 1 pound sterling is given as a footnote. The number of pounds, shillings, and pence came from the website: <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/>.
- 16 Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a UK Pound Amount, 1830 to Present", MeasuringWorth, 2011, <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/> (accessed April 1, 2012). Conversion rates are given only every 10 years. Since 1907 fell between 1900 and 1910, I averaged both the 1900 and 1910 figures.
- 17 Alan M. Stanier, "Relative Value of Sums of Money," <http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~alan/family/N-Money.html#Williamson> (accessed April 29, 2012).
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- 19 <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/> (accessed April 29, 2012).
- 20 Patterson, *Man-Eaters*, 335.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 328. For the exchange rate. And: <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/> (accessed April 1, 2012) for number of pounds, shillings, and pence.
- 22 MacKenzie, *Empire of Nature*, 312.
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- 27 *Ibid.*, 134.

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- 38 C. G. Schillings, *Flashlights in the Jungle: A Record of Hunting Adventures and of Studies in Wild Life in Equatorial East Africa*, Trans. Frederic Whyte (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905), 13.
- 39 The Field Museum, "Man-Eaters at The Field Museum Lions of Tsavo," The Field Museum, http://archive.fieldmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibit_sites/tsavo/maneaters.html (accessed April 19, 2012).
- 40 Kittenberger, *Big Game Hunting*, v.
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- 42 *Ibid.*, 9.
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- 44 Vickers and Chesney, et. al., *Ivory*, 140.
- 45 Andrew Roberts, *A History of Zambia* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1976), 139-40.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 12.
- 47 Schillings, *Flashlights in the Jungle*, 711-12.
- 48 Selous, *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa*, 135-38.
- 49 Arthur H. Neumann, *Elephant Hunting in East Equatorial Africa* (New York: Abercrombie & Fitch, 1966 reprint ed., 1898), 40-42.
- 50 Patterson, *Man Eaters*, 328. An exchange rate of fifteen rupees to one pound sterling is given as a footnote.
- 51 Stanier. The average wage is given at between £68 and £75.
- 52 Patterson, *Man Eaters*, 328. An exchange rate of 15 rupees to one pound sterling is given as a footnote, and the porter is only paid 10 rupees per month.
- 53 Neumann, *Elephant Hunting*, 135.

- 54 Northern Rhodesia, *Ordinance No. 19 of 1925, section 24*, cited in MacKenzie, *Empire of Nature*, 317-18.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 317.
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- 57 Schillings, *Flashlights in the Jungle*, 711.
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- 61 *Ibid.*, 22.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 101-2.
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- 70 Patterson, *Man-Eaters*, 245.
- 71 Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden*, The Literature Network, <http://www.online-literature.com/keats/922/> (accessed May 3, 2012).
- 72 Patterson, *Man-Eaters*, 250 and 263. On page 250 a Masai addresses Patterson as Bwana Makubwa, and on page 250 and 263 Roshan Khan addresses Patterson as Sahib (Sir).
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