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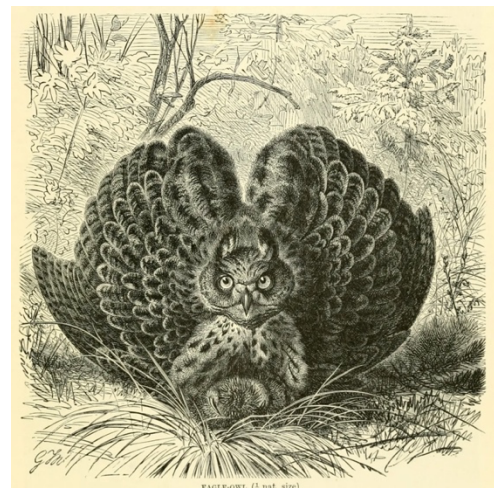
A curated collection of the strongest fourth-year papers from the Reading or Research seminars from History and Ancient Studies

This is the eighth year of our journal celebrating the best essays from our fourth-year capstone seminars. These seminars are a form of learner-centered instruction in which students take responsibility for exploring relevant scholarship, crafting a topic, researching and writing a final essay, thereby empowering themselves through independent study. They hone their skills of oral and written expression by sharing ideas and writing with other seminar participants and engaging in peer-review. The instructors guide students in their exploration of historiography in the fall and in their research in primary documents in the winter. These courses promote discussion of historical literature and research on specific historical periods and themes.

All History and Ancient Studies majors must complete at least one reading/research combination seminar; students in the History Research Specialization Option take two reading/research seminars. These classes are relatively small. This year, students returned to the classroom masked and vaccinated in the midst of a pandemic; it was still a little strange but back to normal-ish. The success of these papers is a tribute to the students, and emblematic of the resiliency of our majors.

These papers represent the best of those research papers; only one paper per class can be nominated, and not all classes had an essay nominated.

Congratulations to all of our authors!



Maglyn Gasteiger, "West of Centre: Saskatoon Women's Liberation and Socialist Feminism in 1970s Saskatchewan," HI 480: Canada in the 20th Century, Dr. Crerar

The Women's Movement of the 1970s has largely been characterized as a loosely strung together series of grassroots activists and groups. However, the story of women's liberation in Canada is often viewed through a national lens that clouds the particular conditions in which much of Canada's second-wave feminist activism actually occurred. The Saskatchewan-based group Saskatoon Women's Liberation (SWL) and its newsletter, *Prairie Woman*, moved away from the centre in both their radical socialist politics and physical location on the western prairies. As such, a close examination of the SWL's newsletter in the 1970s can provide significant insight into how grassroots feminist groups in Canada took an active role in shaping and determining their own identities within the broader movement. For the SWL, this process of identity formation was often constructed through their relationships with other feminists and socialists across Canada. In particular, the SWL positioned itself as distinct from other feminist groups on the basis of both region and ideology while the centrality of gender issues distanced the SWL from male-dominated leftist groups.

Background Scholarship:

Early scholarship on second-wave feminism focused largely on the more mainstream liberal side of the movement. This particular image of second-wave feminism is understood to be "predominantly white, middle class, and, to some extent, liberal in political outlook, shaped by similar social origins and advocating a homogenous or universalist view of womanhood."¹ While many of the criticisms about the treatment of class and race in the women's movement are justified, the fact that the scholarship has focused on this mainstream liberal facet of the movement has, at times, obscured the great variety of women and experiences that can be studied within second-wave feminism. More recent studies have argued, contrary to the broader national view of the Women's Movement, that second wave activism in the 1970s can be best understood as a "mass-based, grass-roots movement."² This perspective can also be seen from contemporary feminist theorists of the 1970s. In 1973, Jo Freeman wrote on the origins of the women's movement and highlighted the fact that the "women's liberation movement manifests itself in an almost infinite variety of groups, styles, and organizations," with a distinct divide between "reform" and "radical" feminism.³

This focus on grass-roots organization has been particularly important to scholarship that interrogates the hegemonic, white, middle-class image of second-wave feminism. Benita Roth argues in the introduction of her book *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* that "the second wave has to be understood as a group of feminisms" which, in her study, were constructed along racial and ethnic lines.⁴ It has largely been out of these studies of racial and ethnic minorities within the Women's Movement that an argument has emerged for understanding the second wave as a plurality of feminist movements. It is not only along racial and ethnic lines that these distinct feminisms developed. Ideology, class, sexuality and location all played their own roles in developing these unique feminisms, or, as Judy Rebick puts it, "Feminism has taught me that your view of the world depends in no small measure on your location in it."⁵

Popular narratives of the second wave of feminism tend to focus on a linear narrative of women's rights progressing consistently throughout the latter half of the 20th century until equality was achieved. This is best articulated in the stance of post-feminism, the argument that feminism has lost its relevance and use in society because all of its aims have already been achieved.⁶ This position, which came out of the 1980s and continued to hold currency into the 21st century, was a conservative reaction to the more radical elements of second-wave

¹ Joan Sangster, "Creating Popular Histories: Re-Interpreting 'Second Wave' Canadian Feminism," *Dialectical Anthropology* 39, no. 4 (2015): <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624-015-9403-4>, 383-384.

² J Zeitz, "Rejecting the Center: Radical Grassroots Politics in the 1970s — Second-Wave Feminism as a Case Study," *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 4 (2008): 673-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009408095422>, 677.

³ Jo Freeman, "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 no.4 (1973), 795, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2776604>.

⁴ Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3.

⁵ Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: the Making of a Feminist Revolution* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2005), xi.

⁶ "Post-Feminism." *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

feminism.⁷ Underpinning this argument is an assumption that women's rights had been achieved in an ever forward-moving trajectory that found completion by the mid-1980s. However, this linear narrative cannot be easily overlaid onto the experiences of smaller groups fighting for women's rights. Instead, groups such as the SWL faced a sort of backwards and forwards movement based on both local factors and broader social and political trends in society.

History of Women's Rights in Canada:

Early in the twentieth century, the prairie provinces played a vital role in moving forward women's rights in Canada. It was on the prairies that Canadian women took their first steps towards female suffrage during feminism's first wave. In January 1916, Manitoba became the first Canadian province to allow women the vote with Saskatchewan and Alberta following shortly after in the same year.⁸ Scholarship on the Canadian suffrage movement often points to the distinct position of prairie women in their society as a key factor in the West's early adoption of female voting rights. The role of women in farm labour and homesteading is often considered significant to the success of western suffrage movements and in Saskatchewan the suffrage movement was led by rural farm women.⁹ In this way, the success of first-wave feminist movements in Canada can be closely linked to regional conditions.

After the successes of the suffrage movement, there was a period of relative stagnation in the fight for women's rights and equal status in society. After the Second World War, anxieties about women's role in society led to an increased focus on normative gender roles through "a revived 'cult of the housewife'."¹⁰ Feminism's second wave came about as a response to these "lean years after the achievement of putative equality" and an increasing consciousness that "the system itself seemed to have an inbuilt propensity for institutionalizing gender (as well as other) inequality."¹¹ One of the key historical moments in the development of women's consciousness was the publication of Betty Friedan's 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* that identified the alienation of American housewives as the "problem with no name."¹² While this may have been the start of a new feminist consciousness, it isn't until around 1968 that scholars consider the women's liberation movement to have begun in America with a highly publicized protest at the Miss America beauty pageant.¹³ In contrast to the first wave's narrow focus on voting rights, this emerging feminist movement was concerned with a much greater variety of concerns from "bread-and-butter issues such as workplace and credit equality to such domestic concerns as marriage equality and sexual liberation, to overtly political agendas like electing more women to public office."¹⁴

In Canada, the timeline for second-wave feminism is similar to that of the American movement but with a few key differences. While Friedan's work was still significant north of the border, Canadian women had already begun to engage with the key issues of second-wave feminism through *Chatelaine* magazine throughout the 1950s and 60s. Valerie Korinek argues in *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*, that *Chatelaine* was full of "covert" feminist material that raised many of the issues that came to define second-wave feminism, such as women's status in the workplace, birth control, and even *Chatelaine's* own version of "the problem with no name" under the guise of "fatigue."¹⁵ The editors of *Chatelaine* even rejected a chance to publish Friedan's manuscript because they felt they had already covered much of the same ground in previous issues of the magazine.¹⁶ While the development of a feminist consciousness was already underway in Canada during the 1950s and early 60s, it was in the last years of the 1960s and into the 1970s that radical forms of second-wave feminist activism began to take shape in Canada.

In 1967, after years of agitation from women's groups, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women was announced, marking a watershed moment in the history of Canadian second-wave feminism. From 1967 to 1970, a committee appointed by the Privy Council investigated the conditions of women living in Canada and was asked to "recommend what steps might be taken by the Federal Government to ensure for women equal opportunities with

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Sarah Carter, *Ours by Every Law of Right and Justice: Women and the Vote in the Prairie Provinces* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2020), 1.

⁹ Ibid, 103.

¹⁰ Imelda Whelehan, *Modern Feminist Thought: From the Second Wave to "Post-Feminism"* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 7, <https://doi.org/10.3366/j.ctvxcrnp0>.

¹¹ Ibid, 4.

¹² Ibid, 9.

¹³ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴ Sangster, 677.

¹⁵ Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 296.

¹⁶ Ibid, 331.

men in all aspects of Canadian society."¹⁷ Notably, of the eight members of the committee, three were from Ontario, three were from Quebec and the remaining two came from New Brunswick and Alberta.¹⁸ Further, out of more than sixty consultants (including seven from outside of Canada altogether) Saskatchewan was not represented at all and fewer than 1% of submissions to the Royal Commission came out of the province.¹⁹ Overall, the list of sixty consultants largely represented Ontario and Quebec, with only five consultants from Canadian cities outside of the two provinces (two from Winnipeg, two from Calgary, and one from Vancouver).²⁰ In this Royal Commission, the centrality of national conversations about the status of women was clearly established.

History of the Saskatoon Women's Liberation:

Although Saskatchewan and the prairie provinces were not well represented in the Royal Commission, that does not mean that second-wave feminism had not reached the West. Women's groups were active in the region and by the winter of 1969/70 the Saskatoon Women's Liberation (SWL) had been founded.²¹ The SWL initially grew out a women's caucus within the Committee for a Socialist Movement and this socialist background would continue to inform the SWL throughout its existence. From the earliest days of the SWL, reproductive rights were a central issue in the organization. The SWL's first project was the establishment of a birth control information centre in the summer of 1970 and later abortion became a central rallying issue within the SWL's newsletter.²² In the fall of 1970, the Royal Commission's vision of a women's movement centralized around Ontario and Quebec was disputed by the SWL, which hosted the first National Women's Liberation conference in Canadian history in Saskatoon.²³

In 1974, the SWL began publishing a monthly newsletter in order to "bring together socialist feminists from various parts of the movement" and, in particular, to bridge the gap between the on-campus and off-campus women's centres in Saskatoon.²⁴ From 1974 to 1981, the *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter*, later renamed *Prairie Woman: A Newsletter of the Saskatoon Women's Liberation*, had a tumultuous run of publication. For the first two years of publication, the SWL newsletter consistently put out monthly issues updating women on local, national, and international developments in the women's movement.

Even in these early years of relative success, there were some clear financial issues facing the newsletter. At the general meeting of the SWL in July 1975, the newsletter's financial difficulties were discussed and the newsletter committee admitted that they owed money to two local facilities after the last newsletter's publication.²⁵ The SWL were very transparent about their lack of funds and financial concerns, sometimes even showing the actual deficits that the SWL had in the published minutes of the general meetings ("We have \$102.62 in our account with a bill of approximately \$105.00 outstanding for the August Newsletter").²⁶ Though the newsletter made it through these early financial woes, a lack of interest and participation would eventually kill the SWL's early momentum.

1975 was declared International Women's Year by the United Nations, and women across the world looked forward to a year when feminist issues would finally be addressed and pushed to the forefront. The January editorial expressed a sense of hope that 1975 was a year of change, encouraging women "to work as they never have, to speak out louder than before, to make demands on society we so unequally share, and above all, to realize their common goals and unite to achieve them."²⁷ However, this excitement quickly turned into a bitter disappointment. In Saskatoon, the summer of this supposed landmark year for women's liberation saw the SWL and its respective newsletter shut down. In June, the newsletter's funds had gotten "frighteningly low" and July was plagued by an "energy shortage" on the part of the "discouraged few" who were still working on the newsletter.²⁸ This decline in participation did not only impact the movement in Saskatoon. Between 1974 and 1976, there were many local women's groups that disappeared, and it got to the point that the movement was "often pronounced dead" during

¹⁷ Canada, *Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada*, (Ottawa: 1970), vi, publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.699583&sl=0.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid, 455-456.

²⁰ Ibid, 455.

²¹ "General Meeting Minutes," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (January 1975), 6.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter and Prairie Woman," *Rise Up: A Digital Archive of Feminist Activism*, accessed March 23 2022, <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/publications/saskatoon-womens-liberation-newsletter/>

²⁵ "General Meeting," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (July 1975), 6.

²⁶ "General Meeting Minutes," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (September, 1974), 7.

²⁷ "Editorial," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter*, (Jan 1975). 3.

²⁸ "Staff Report," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (June 1975), 5 and "Editorial," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (July 1975), 3.

these years.²⁹ The newsletter sent out a plea in July 1975, saying that “Unless we get more support this month for the next newsletter, we will be unable to publish the newsletter for at least the duration of the summer.”³⁰ They didn’t publish again until 1977, when the newsletter returned as *Prairie Woman*.

Throughout the remaining years of *Prairie Woman*’s publication, the newsletter would continue to have stops and starts. In May 1978, the newsletter announced it would start publishing bi-monthly instead of monthly and then the July/August issue announced a disbanding of the SWL for the remainder of the summer.³¹ By October of 1978, the newsletter collective had dwindled down to three women; Shelley Gordon, Lynda Shepherdson, and Maylynn Woo.³² The fall 1978 issue of the newsletter is stark and a little sad. There is no cover art, simply a blank page and multiple pages contain only a few lines of text and a graphic.³³ The artist of these graphics, Maylynn Woo described herself as “fast becoming [an] eternal pessimist,” while Lynda Shepard struggled to hold onto her quickly diminishing optimism.³⁴ In the editorial, this committee of three wondered if the “malaise of the newsletter” was “symbolic of the state of the women’s movement in Saskatoon.”³⁵ However, these dwindling numbers did not keep the SWL or *Prairie Woman* down for long. The next issue of the newsletter was published without interruption, and by the next autumn, the editorial page was proudly declaring any rumours of the “Demise of the Women’s Movement” to be “a bunch of unadulterated bullshit.”³⁶ Summers continued to be a lull period for the SWL and calls for membership and support were consistently sent out, but the Saskatoon women’s movement continued to hold on to life throughout the 1970s.

Regional Identity in Canadian Activism

With the localized nature of the women’s movement, province and region were some of the most significant factors that shaped the SWL’s sense of identity. In some ways, the concern with regional distinction was of a practical nature. Access to abortion, the most prominently featured issue in *Prairie Woman*, was often determined by local factors because of the legal conditions surrounding the issue. Performing an abortion, unless it was to save a women’s life, was made a criminal offence in the Canadian Criminal Code in 1869.³⁷ A century later, in 1969, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau liberalized abortion laws in Canada, allowing women to legally receive abortions with the approval of a committee of doctors.³⁸ While Trudeau’s decision was a significant step forward, the issue of access to abortions became extremely localized as hospital committees became the deciders of who could and could not receive abortions.

This structure still left women’s reproductive rights under the control of men and created significant access issues for women looking to get abortions. These barriers to access were criticized by the newsletter that spoke about the both the availability and cost of getting abortions. The situation in Saskatchewan was considered particularly bad and some women had to cross the border into the United States in order to obtain an abortion.³⁹ The importance of individual doctors and their personal concepts of morality became depressingly obvious in Saskatoon where the majority of second trimester abortions were performed by only one doctor during the 1970s.⁴⁰ The retirement of this doctor had a significant impact on the availability of abortions in Saskatoon, leading the women of the SWL to wonder, “Why should the task of providing a needed health service fall to one person alone?”⁴¹ By 1979, this retired doctor had been replaced by two new physicians willing to perform second-trimester abortions in Saskatoon, but the overdependence on individual doctors was still a significant problem.⁴² Since the availability of abortions was so dependent on the willingness of doctors to perform the procedure, regions with fewer medical resources, such as

²⁹ Shelly Gordon, “Articulation of the Women’s Movement,” *Prairie Woman* (February 1978), 8.

³⁰ “Newsletter Crisis,” *Saskatoon Women’s Liberation Newsletter* (July 1975), 4.

³¹ “Announcements,” *Prairie Woman* (May 1978), 15 and “Editorial,” *Prairie Woman* (July/August 1978), 3.

³² “Editorial,” *Prairie Woman* (October/November 1978), 2.

³³ *Prairie Woman* (October/November 1978), <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/publications/saskatoon-womens-liberation-newsletter/saskatoonwomensliberation-02-08-october-november-1978/>

³⁴ *Prairie Woman* (October/November 1978), 7.

³⁵ “Editorial,” *Prairie Woman* (October/November 1978), 2.

³⁶ “Editorial,” *Prairie Woman* (August/September 1979), 2.

³⁷ Joyce Arthur, *The Case for Repealing Anti-Abortion Laws*, Rev. (Vancouver: Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2009), 2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ “Meeting Minutes,” *Prairie Woman* (August 1977), 13.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Lynda Shepherdson, “The Recurring Issue,” *Prairie Woman* (March/April 1979), 14.

Saskatoon, had much more fluid experiences of fighting for reproductive rights that could be granted or taken away at any point.

During this fight for reproductive rights, the experiences of women from other provinces and territories were sometimes featured in the newsletter and comparisons were drawn to the situation in Saskatchewan. The figure of Otto Lang brought the northern territories into the conversation about abortion in Canada. As the Attorney General of the Northwest Territories and Yukon in 1974, Otto Lang "prided himself on the strictness of the laws governing abortion" and expressed disapproval of other Attorneys General who were more liberal with abortion policies.⁴³ Throughout the first two years of the newsletter, Otto Lang's anti-abortion platform was frequently discussed as he was positioned as an enemy to the women's movement.

There was also direct communication with women outside of Saskatchewan about the different situations they faced across Canada. In February 1975 a Manitoban woman wrote a letter to the SWL expressing her hope that "the Saskatoon women are not as complacent as Winnipeg women when it comes to taking action on the abortion issue."⁴⁴ Then, in 1979 with both a provincial and federal election coming up for the people of Saskatchewan, another letter from a woman in Manitoba warned about the cutbacks made by a newly elected Conservative government in the province, explaining that "I still am angry with the N.D.P. They have failed to even mount an effective attack on these cuts, but I feel that I would vote for them federally or provincially, simply out of fear of the worsening situation."⁴⁵ This comparison of experience not only warned the women of Saskatoon and prompted action, but it also invited readers to recognize similarities and differences in the experiences of other women across Canada.

Throughout the newsletter's publication there were ways in which the SWL attempted to reach out and connect with the national community. In an early issue of the newsletter, three members of the SWL recounted their experience of travelling to Vancouver and exploring the different elements of the Women's Movement they found in the city.⁴⁶ This article is something of a feminist travel log as the women recount their experience exploring the city while visiting sites such as the Status of Women Centre and the Vancouver Women's Bookstore.⁴⁷ Notably, the title of the article is "Peregrinations of Prairie Women," which foregrounds the regional identity of these women even as they connected with members of the women's movement outside of their own region.

Throughout the years, the SWL made a conscious effort to send members of their group to conferences and events all across Canada. Ranging from protests in Ottawa to a media conference in Edmonton, the SWL made sure at least one member attended and "represented Saskatoon."⁴⁸ There was often a sense of disconnect and a lack of communication between the SWL and other women's movement organisations during this era and the SWL felt they were "kept ignorant of happenings with the women's movement elsewhere in Canada."⁴⁹ As such, attendance at these conferences had the dual purpose of bringing news of the broader movement to the women of Saskatoon while also ensuring that the SWL was represented within the movement.

The language of "representing" the SWL and Saskatchewan can be found throughout these reports from national conferences. This focus on representation may have come as a response to a national women's movement that took little interest in Saskatchewan, an attitude that was clearly shown in the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. This sense of alienation and differentiation can also be seen in how some of these national conferences were reported. For example, when the 1978 National Gay Rights Coalition dismissed a resolution from the Prairie Gay Conference "guaranteeing lesbians at least 50% of the decision making power," this move was taken as "proof of eastern chauvinism- the attitude that the male dominated central Canadian organization is the only national coalition possible."⁵⁰

An attempt to move away from this eastern-centric view can also be seen in examples of national conferences that were held in western cities. For example, when elements of the national women's movement were trying to establish a "feminist news service" in order to facilitate communication across regional groups, there were Women's

⁴³ "Editorial," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (Sept 1974), 3.

⁴⁴ "Letters," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (Feb 1975), 2.

⁴⁵ "Letters," *Prairie Woman* (July/August 1978), 3.

⁴⁶ Maylynn Woo, "Peregrinations of Prairie Women," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (September 1974), 11.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "Staff Report," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (April 1975), 14 and "Abortion Law Repeal," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (June 1975), 4.

⁴⁹ "Feminist News Service," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (May 1975), 5.

⁵⁰ Wiesa Kolasinka, "Solidarity in the Face of Repression," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (Sept 1978), 3.

Press Meetings held in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.⁵¹ Further, Saskatoon was suggested as the location for the feminist news service's Western Head Office, a decision that would allow the women's movement of Saskatoon to take on a central role in representing the western, prairie feminist.⁵² As well, the creation of regionally focused conferences and events such as the Prairie Gay Conference was another strategy that decentred the national movement and gave greater significance to regional and western groups. These responses to "eastern chauvinism" demonstrate the importance of this western regional position as a factor in shaping the identity of the SWL.

The high rural population of Saskatchewan was one of the most significant differentiating factors between Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada during this period. In 1966, Saskatchewan was one of only two provinces whose populations were still mostly rural rather than urban.⁵³ By 1971, this had changed, but the two populations remained fairly equal. In the 1971 Canadian Census, there were still fewer than 50,000 more women living in urban centres than rural areas in Saskatchewan.⁵⁴ Compared to the national average that saw less than a quarter of Canadian women living in rural areas, Saskatchewan stands out.

This rural character of Saskatchewan was significant to the identity-forming process of the SWL. Within the symbolic imagery of the newsletter, there is an attempt to portray a particular woman of the western provinces. The 1977 name change to *Prairie Woman* is the most significant and obvious use of this identity as the name foregrounds a particular kind of womanhood that is intrinsically linked to life on the prairies. The category of "Prairie Woman" continued to be used in events such as the Prairie Women's Socialist Feminist Conference in 1977.⁵⁵ Covers of *Prairie Woman* also present this image of a more rural western femininity, frequently depicting women in coveralls as a visual catch-all for prairie women.⁵⁶ However, while the symbolism of Saskatchewan and the prairie region was significant to the SWL's identity, this interest was not necessarily reflected in the content of the newsletter.

In spite of the large population of rural women and the symbolic usage of their image, there is very little content within the newsletter that considers how this demographic was uniquely impacted by the issues of second-wave feminism. In February 1975, the SWL newsletter did publish a "farm women" issue, complete with a cover depicting two women on a cow being led by anthropomorphic ♀ sign riding a chicken.⁵⁷ As evocative as this cover is, only one two-page article on "Equality in Farming" is dedicated to an actual investigation of the particular issues women faced on farms.⁵⁸ In this article, Halina Zaleski highlights the particular conditions of farm women and several of the barriers they faced to equality. Zaleski discusses the physical isolation farm women faced and the fact that in "rural areas, there are no birth control and abortion information centres, no daycare, etc."⁵⁹ As well, this article touches on the issue of unpaid female labour on farms. Zaleski explains that part of the reluctance of farmers to pay their wives wages came from the fact that those wages could not be deducted from the taxable farm income as it could with hired hands.⁶⁰ Further, even though these farm women were significant contributors to the economic success of the family homestead, under Saskatchewan divorce laws farm women were "only entitled to the normal maintenance allowance."⁶¹ While many of the issues that affected farm women are raised in this article, the length of the piece limits the depth to which Zaleski can fully discuss them. This article serves as a brief introduction to the problems rural women faced but does not provide much analysis beyond this basic foundation of knowledge. The particular issues that rural women faced were not discussed or further developed in later issues of the newsletter and the SWL's treatment of rural women's issues remained superficial.

Zaleski herself notes the lack of farm women represented in the Women's Liberation movement. She describes herself scouring through "the mountains of literature available at the Women's Centre" only to find four short

⁵¹ "Feminist News Service," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (May 1975), 5.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵³ Statistics Canada, *1971 Census of Canada: population: vol. I*, catalogue number CS92-709-1971, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1972-1974, 10-1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 10-2.

⁵⁵ Shelly Gordon, "Articulation of the Women's Movement," 8.

⁵⁶ *Prairie Woman* (April 1978), <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/publications/saskatoon-womens-liberation-newsletter/saskatoonwomensliberation-02-04-april-1978/>

⁵⁷ *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (February 1975), <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/publications/saskatoon-womens-liberation-newsletter/saskatoonwomensliberation-feb-1975/>.

⁵⁸ Halina Zaleski, "Equality in Farming," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (February 1975) 8-9

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

newspaper clippings on farm women.⁶² The university library had similarly slim pickings, but for the ultimate evidence of rural women's underrepresentation in the women's movement Zaleski turns to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Out of the 176 recommendations that the committee made in order to improve the status of women in Canada, only one (#116) contained a recommendation on farm women.⁶³ Zaleski did not write as an outside observer of life on a farm as she herself was a member of the Self-Reliance and Hard Struggle Co-op Farm.⁶⁴ Zaleski was also an active member of the SWL. She was in charge of the financial report at general meetings and contributed to several articles before the newsletter's temporary shutdown in 1975. In spite of Zaleski's passionate arguments for the significance of farm women to the history of women's rights (citing the achievements of women such as Nellie McClung and Violet McNaughton), farm women did not become a particular focus of the newsletter.⁶⁵

Another important demographic of Saskatchewan women who are notably missing from the pages of the newsletter is Indigenous women. In 1971, there were over ten thousand Indigenous women living on reserves in the province, and that does not take into consideration any Indigenous women who had moved to cities or had their status taken away through marriage.⁶⁶ However, Indigenous women were very rarely discussed within the newsletter. In April 1975, the theme of the newsletter was racism in Canada, but this did not bring a nuanced look at the experiences of Indigenous women. They were mentioned very rarely in this issue, with no dedicated article. "Native peoples" were mentioned only three times in F. Osbourne's feature article about racism in Canada and always in conjunction with the experiences of other racialized people (particularly black Canadians).⁶⁷ While there can be important linkages made between different groups of marginalized people, the conflation of black and Indigenous experiences in Canada undermines the important historical and legal differences between these groups.

The only other time that the concerns of Indigenous women in Canada were addressed in the newsletter directly was in the summer 1978 issue with a press release from the Saskatchewan Action Committee (SAC) about Indian Rights for Indian Women (IRIW).⁶⁸ IRIW was fighting against the sexist and discriminatory laws that alienated Indigenous women from their treaty rights if they married a settler or non-Status Indian. Mary Two-Axe Early, an important leader in IRIW, explains the toll these laws had on women who "suffered banishment from their tribal roles, loss of family or tribal inheritance, and forfeiture of any ownership of property."⁶⁹ However, the primary issue that the SAC and SWL were concerned with was the fact that the representatives from IRIW were excluded from the National Indian Brotherhood's All Chiefs' Conference and proposed action against the NIB instead of a petition against the Indian Act itself.⁷⁰ The SAC wrote a letter to Minister Hugh Falkner "urging him to withhold funding unless IRIW is fully represented," at the conference.⁷¹ Rather than taking on the broader cause of discrimination against women in the Indian Act (even though the press release acknowledges that "the present Indian Act is in conflict with the federal Bill of Human Rights, in that it specifically denies Indian women the rights extended to Indian men"⁷²), the SAC and SWL focused on Indigenous male activists as the location of the problem. Further, at the end of the press release there is a note that states the "Prairie Woman Newsletter Collective agrees wholeheartedly with SAC in this matter," but does not directly support or engage with the IRIW.⁷³

The absence of Indigenous women from the newsletter does not reflect a lack of political interest on the part of these women; it instead reveals a disinterest on the part of the SWL in engaging with Indigenous women's groups. Throughout the years, the SWL often promoted other women's groups from around Saskatchewan as they developed. Saskatchewan Working Women (SWW) meetings were often included in the announcements section, an SWW member wrote an article for *Prairie Woman* in the Spring 1979 issue, and the founding conference of the group was covered in the newsletter.⁷⁴ However, there was no equivalent promotion and discussion of the

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 9.

⁶⁵ Halina Zaleski, "Equality in Farming," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (February 1975), 8.

⁶⁶ Statistics Canada, *1971 Census of Canada: Population: vol. I, catalogue number CS92-707-1971*, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1972-1974, 6-61.

⁶⁷ F. Osbourne, "It Does Not Happen Here," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (April 1975) 6-7.

⁶⁸ "Press Release: SAC Opposes Funding of Conference which Excludes Women," *Prairie Woman* (July/August 1978), 8.

⁶⁹ Mary Two-Axe Early, "Indian Rights for Indian Women." In *Women, Feminism and Development*, 1994, 430.

⁷⁰ "Press Release: SAC Opposes Funding of Conference which Excludes Women," *Prairie Woman* (July/August 1978), 8.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Agnes Ruest, "Saskatchewan Working Women," *Prairie Woman* (August/September 1979), 11 and Shelley Young "International Women's Day," *Prairie Woman* (March/April 1979), 20.

organizations led by Indigenous women. This was made particularly clear when *Prairie Woman* announced the founding of the Prince Albert Women's Liberation group in early 1975, but never discussed the Prince Albert-based Saskatchewan Native Women's Group.⁷⁵ One woman from the group, Priscilla Settee, explains that, while they were "hooked into the non-aboriginal women's movement in Prince Albert" they were not as connected to the movement in the rest of the province and members generally "did not think the non-Aboriginal women would value them."⁷⁶

While the SWL often focused on the keystone issues of the women's movement, the Saskatchewan Native Women's Group was instead more influenced by the particular concerns of Indigenous women in the region. The Saskatchewan Native Women's Group produced their own newsletter, *ISKWEW*, though issues of the publication are difficult to come by. The differing priorities of the two women's groups can be seen through the attention *ISKWEW* gives to female prisoners in an archived issue of the newsletter. The first page of the newsletter states that one of the key objectives of the Native Women's Counselling and Referral Centre was to provide a Native Counsellor for Indigenous and Metis inmates.⁷⁷ Later in the newsletter there is also a column explaining the functions of a court worker, providing readers an understanding of the legal rights and resources available "if a Native has been arrested and charged with an offence."⁷⁸ In Saskatchewan during this period, Indigenous women made up a disproportionate number of female prisoners. In August of 1966 over 70% of women admitted to two Saskatchewan prisons were Indigenous or Metis.⁷⁹ In the 1970s, the experiences of female prisoners were not a central issue for the feminist movement as a whole, but *ISKWEW* responded to the particular challenges Indigenous women in Saskatchewan faced and let that shape their objectives. By contrast, the content of the *Prairie Woman* only rarely touched on how important demographic groups, such as rural or Indigenous women, were uniquely impacted by issues of sexism and gender inequality even as markers of regional identity were actively used to shape the identity of the SWL.

Ideological Identity in the Woman's Movement

Rather than the unique needs of women in the prairies, the newsletter's ideological commitment to socialist feminism was what often took precedence within the pages of *Prairie Woman*. From its inception, the SWL defined itself as a socialist feminist organization. Socialist feminism was a subset of second-wave feminism that focused on a more revolutionary approach to women's liberation. Socialist feminists saw the oppressive powers of the patriarchy and capitalism as intertwined and argued that "Women's liberation is not possible without socialism but socialism must not be allowed to occur without the liberation of women."⁸⁰ In the United States, socialist feminism remained a fairly underrepresented group in the mainstream American women's movement, however "separate streams of black, Latina, Asian, and American Indian feminisms arose and almost always shared the base socialist feminist perspective."⁸¹ Britain had a more active socialist feminist movement during the 1970s, and even drew a crowd of over a thousand women to the fourth annual British Socialist Feminist Conference in Manchester in 1978.⁸² In her article "Socialist Feminism: The Legacy of the 'Second Wave'," Linda Gordon describes socialist feminism as "strong in its episodic power and weak in continuity,"⁸³ a statement that rings true when looking at the highs and lows of the SWL.

In her study of popular feminist journalism in Canada, Joan Sangster argues that while many later papers of the 1980s were explicitly socialist feminist, "papers founded in the 1970s often tried to cast a politically wide net."⁸⁴ However, *Prairie Woman* and the SWL proved to be an exception to that trend, acting as an openly socialist feminist group from the outset. The editorial policy from 1974 states that the purpose of the newsletter was to "be a vehicle for discussion and debate leading towards a solid feminist socialist analysis of our oppression," and argues that their "efforts must be directed towards ending this oppression, rather than learning to cope with it."⁸⁵ Rather than trying

⁷⁵ "Prince Albert Women's Liberation," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation* (January 1975), 15.

⁷⁶ Rebick, 80.

⁷⁷ *ISKWEW*, (Prince Albert: Saskatchewan Native Women's Movement, 1975), 2.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 8.

⁷⁹ Canada, *Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada*, (Ottawa: 1970), 380, publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.834259&sl=0.

⁸⁰ "A feminist without socialism lacks analysis... a socialist without feminism lacks strategy," *Prairie Woman* (June 1977), 10.

⁸¹ Gordon, Linda. "Socialist Feminism: The Legacy of the 'Second Wave.'" *New Labor Forum* 22, no. 3 (2013): 24.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1095796013499736>.

⁸² Welehan, 61 and Trish Blackstaffe and Ruth Tallon, "British Socialist Feminist Conference," *Prairie Woman* (April 1978), 11.

⁸³ Gordon, 21.

⁸⁴ Sangster, 387.

⁸⁵ "Editorial Policy," *Prairie Woman* (May 1977), 1.

to appease a larger and more general audience of women, the newsletter remained committed to its political philosophy, even if it did not align with readers.

In January 1975, the newsletter published a reader's letter that expressed concern that the October 1974 issue had represented the local women's centre as a "radical-socialist" group.⁸⁶ This reader felt that the newsletter had gone against its intended objective, which she assumed was to make women aware of fundamental issues in the women's movement. I also assume that it is to educate them in reference to current events affecting women in particular, to point out various activities going on in the Centre itself and create an interest which would involve more women in the Centre and spark more support for the movement itself.⁸⁷ The newsletter collective was quick to correct the woman, including a response with the published letter. This response clarified that the SWL newsletter was a "an offspring of Women's Liberation, not the Women's Centre," and had "always followed a socialist philosophy."⁸⁸

As the concerned reader had noticed, much of the content within the newsletter directly engaged and aligned with a socialist feminist ideology. Throughout the articles there are frequent mentions of how intertwined capitalism and patriarchy are and discussion of the functions of the nuclear family as a unit of production meant to devalue women's labour. In early 1975, the newsletter announced a "Feminist Socialist Discussion Group" for "women who are especially interested in the political implications of Women's Liberation, especially as they relate to socialism."⁸⁹ Further, on February 18 1975 Charney Guettel, a member of the Communist Party and author of *Marxism and Feminism*, spoke to an on-campus group about her political philosophy and how the struggle for Women's Liberation was part of the struggle for socialism in Canada.⁹⁰ From the very beginning, the SWL made no attempt to hide their more radical stance and ideological position on the question of women's liberation.

In an anonymous article called "a feminist without socialism lacks analysis...a socialist without feminism lacks strategy," the author describes her own experience of finding both feminism and socialism ideologically incomplete when separated from one another. When she first came to feminism, she realized that while "Most of the men [she] knew were certainly in a position of benefitting from the traditional convention of marriage... in the larger scheme of things, they were in a situation just as powerless as women."⁹¹ After "Capitalism was identified as the enemy,"⁹² the author turned to socialism, but once again found disappointment when women's issues were consistently side-lined within the male-dominated left.⁹³ From these experiences, the author came to the conclusion that women's liberation needed to be based in a socialist ideology while also arguing for the "necessity of an autonomous, separate, independent women's movement."⁹⁴ This article makes clear an important aspect of the SWL's position, the argument that neither feminism nor socialism could stand on its own, and instead must be worked together into a shared political philosophy and ideological identity.

In the return of the newsletter in May 1977, the SWL newsletter collective decided to approach the question of ideology head on. The cover of this issue is a large ♀ with a fist punching through it and the words "There will be no Women's Liberation without Revolution/There will be no Revolution without Women's Liberation."⁹⁵ The first page of the newsletter is a reprinting of the Editorial Policy from 1974, followed by a declaration of the new structure of the SWL. This restructuring was an important element of the new era of the Women's Liberation Movement in Saskatoon which had "only recently re-emerged through [a] solidification of politics and direction."⁹⁶ Though the SWL eventually came to the conclusion that the "structure-lessness" of the women's movement was one of its strengths, the lack of organization and consistent leadership was identified as a weakness in the women's movement prior to 1977.⁹⁷ The questions addressed in the return issue of the newsletter continued to be important

⁸⁶ "Letters," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (January 1975), 2.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ "Feminist-Socialist Discussion Group," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (Feb 1975), 4.

⁹⁰ Rosemary Ruppe, "Charney Guettel on Marxism and Feminism," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (March 1975), 20.

⁹¹ "A feminist without socialism lacks analysis... a socialist without feminism lacks strategy," *Prairie Woman* (June 1977), 9.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Prairie Woman* (May 1977), <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/publications/saskatoon-womens-liberation-newsletter/saskatoonwomensliberation-may-1977/>.

⁹⁶ "Structure of Saskatoon Women's Liberation," *Prairie Woman* (May 1977), 2.

⁹⁷ Shelly Gordon, "Articulation of the Women's Movement," 8.

to the SWL as they sought to find the solution to their previous failures through a greater focus on structural organisation and ideological identity.

In early 1978, the SWL held the first Prairie Women's Socialist Feminist Conference at which the conversation was dominated by questions of what it meant to be a socialist feminist group. An important element of defining the socialist feminist was to renegotiate her position in relationship to other forms of feminism and socialism. In the 1978 conference two of the keynote events were centred around "Bourgeois Feminism VS Socialist Feminist" and "Women and the Worker's movement."⁹⁸ These two events demonstrate the extent to which the identity of the SWL was defined in relation to other aspects of the movement. *Prairie Woman* defined the bourgeois feminist as "the group fighting for the equality of women while maintaining the class structure of society."⁹⁹ When looking back at the decline of the women's movement during the 1970s, *Prairie Woman* questions their previous approaches to the concept of sisterhood, arguing that, by "treating Sisterhood as a reality rather than a goal we tended to down-play our political differences."¹⁰⁰ While the revived version of the SWL still felt that "in practice [we] often struggle for the same gains, and therefore work as socialist-feminists with all women," the SWL identified a need to draw clear distinctions between these two kinds of feminism.¹⁰¹

Gender Identity in the New Left

Like bourgeois feminists, unions were often treated as both allies and ideological others. Union fights were frequently discussed in the newsletter and supported by the SWL. In the September 1974 issue, the newsletter drew attention to the struggle of the University Employees Union for better wages. The newsletter's coverage focused on the wage gap between male employees with less education and experience and the largely female workers in the Library, Food Services and clerical positions.¹⁰² The initial offer from the university proposed pay increases of anywhere from \$60 to \$200, with the larger pay increases going to workers who were already earning more.¹⁰³ The newsletter argued that this offer would only increase the wage gap. Significantly, while the issue of equal pay was discussed within this article, the SWL seems to consider the union the unit of organization through which to remedy pay inequality. The University of Saskatchewan Employees Union countered with the suggestion of a blanket pay increase of \$125 per month to all employees, which was generally supported by the SWL.¹⁰⁴

Unionism continued to be supported as a way of achieving better pay and rights when women were faced with a sexist work environment. In the winter 1978 issue, *Prairie Woman* interviewed a group of waitresses about their working conditions and the blatant sexism they faced in the workplace. One of the questions asked of the waitresses was whether they intended to unionize, and a frustrated waitress "answered 'yes' to unionization. She went on 'Unskilled male laborers (no training) make \$5-7/hr and I, with some training, am still working for \$3.25/hr. We need to be unionized,'"¹⁰⁵ In this example it is clear that both the waitress and the interviewer for *Prairie Woman* viewed unionization as a potential tool for solving the issue of equal pay for equal work.

However, the SWL's relationships with male-dominated unions and socialist movements became increasingly tense as women's issues were continually pushed to the side in these organizations. While unions have a long history of radical and socialist politics, there was often a conservative reaction to feminist activity within these circles. Even as the University of Saskatchewan Employees Union agreed to hold out for a universal pay increase, they also made it clear that there was no intention to push the university to provide daycare for female employees.¹⁰⁶ Both the writers and readers of *Prairie Woman* expressed frustration with the "role women have been delegated in the left organizations."¹⁰⁷ One reader even wrote a letter to *Prairie Woman* declaring that she didn't know "of any organization that consistently doesn't shove women's issues into the category of lesser areas of work."¹⁰⁸ While the

⁹⁸ "Conference Agenda" *Prairie Woman* (February 1978), 7.

⁹⁹ Gail Osachoff, "Bourgeois Feminism VS Socialist Feminism," *Prairie Woman* (February 1978), 10.

¹⁰⁰ Shelly Gordon "Articulation of the Woman's Movement," 8.

¹⁰¹ Gail Osachoff, "Bourgeois Feminism VS Socialist Feminism," 10.

¹⁰² "University Employees Union Crisis," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (Sept 1974), 8.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Angela Bishoff, Debbie Woolway, and Pam McFie, "Only Foxy People Need Apply: Cocktail Waitressing in Saskatoon," *Prairie Woman* (December/January 1978/79), 13.

¹⁰⁶ "General Meeting Minutes," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (September 1974), 6.

¹⁰⁷ "Letters," *Prairie Woman* (January 1978), 2.

¹⁰⁸ "Letters," *Prairie Woman* (November 1977), 2.

SWL had some political alignment with the unions, the disinterest of male unions in women's issues created a distinct distance between the SWL and the union movement.

The women of the SWL learned of a particularly illuminating example of misogyny within the union movement in the summer of 1979 when Anja Lane gave a talk about a recent INCO strike in Sudbury Ontario. Anja Lane had come to Saskatoon to raise funds for a documentary that would explore the vital role that miners' wives played in the eight-and-a-half month-long strike that protested massive layoffs in the mining town.¹⁰⁹ Even as Lane celebrated the activities of the Wives Supporting the Strike Committee (WSSC) she also revealed some of the gendered tensions between male unionists and female political activity. Lane explained that There was a sense of distrust among some of the men who blamed women for the failure of an earlier strike in 1958 and when the WSSC got involved in the strike, "a lot of the men didn't want their wives involved."¹¹⁰ Even husbands who did not carry this historical resentment did not want their wives to "become women's libbers," through active participation in the strike action.¹¹¹ For many of the women in the SWL, this story would have been an unsurprising affirmation of their existing frustrations with the male-dominated left.

For the SWL, this tumultuous relationship is best understood through their interactions with the NDP and how the rhetoric around the party changed over time. Although the SWL generally showed little faith in the mainstream political parties of Canada, the NDP was the one party with which they actively engaged and at times supported in elections. The early issues of the newsletter seem to have a certain amount of optimism about the NDP's more progressive and leftist background. One of the 1975 issues of the newsletter remarked that the "The policy of the federal New Democratic Party supports safe, legal abortion as a right for women, and the removal of abortion from the Criminal Code."¹¹² In May 1977, when two provincial ministers (Minister of Social Services, Herman Rolfe and Minister of Health, Wes Robbins) expressed opposition to an increased availability of abortions, the SWL wrote a letter to the Premier of Saskatchewan, Allan Blakeney, saying "To the best of our knowledge, we feel that at no time in the past, or indeed within recent months, have you declared that their position reflects official NDP policy," and requested clarification on the NDP's stance toward abortion.¹¹³ Later that same year the SWL planned to contact the new health minister that replaced Robbins to ask if his stance on abortion "more accurately reflects that of his party."¹¹⁴ When first confronting anti-abortion sentiment in the NDP, the SWL appears to have been willing to accept the two ministers as bad apples who did not represent the official position of the NDP.

Some of this initial optimism may be reflective of the history of the NDP (and its precursor, the CCF) in Saskatchewan. The 1944 election of the Saskatchewan CCF is considered the first elected socialist government in North America and remains a significant event in the history of Saskatchewan. It is possible that the historic associations with the CCF may have positively affected the SWL's early perceptions of the NDP. However, the all male-cabinet of Blakeney's NDP government did not often meet the expectations of Saskatchewan's socialist feminists. As the SWL received increasingly frustrating non-answers to the question of abortion law and the accessibility of abortions in Saskatchewan, they began to lose faith in the NDP's message. In August 1977, an article on the NDP's first policy convention since 1969 was simply titled "Women's Issues not a Priority" and January 1978 saw another unimpressed article titled "Feminist Disappointment at NDP Convention."¹¹⁵ The writers of these articles noted the absence of feminist issues on the agenda and were "disheartened by the failure of "feminist" and other "radical" resolutions to get passed."¹¹⁶ Both of these articles reflect a waning faith that the NDP was ever truly aligned with the women's movement.

In May 1978, with both federal and provincial elections upcoming, *Prairie Woman* dedicated an issue to the question: NDP or no NDP? Support for the NDP was conditional at best within this issue of the newsletter. While most of the socialist feminists who were interviewed said that they would likely vote for the NDP, the general consensus was that the party only earned these votes by being "the least of the evils" with the caveat that socialists

¹⁰⁹ "INCO Wives," *Prairie Woman* (August/September 1979), 8.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² "Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose," *Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter* (May 1975), 9.

¹¹³ *Prairie Woman* (May 1977), 5.

¹¹⁴ Colleen MacMillan, "Rid of Robbins," *Prairie Woman* (September 1977), 13.

¹¹⁵ Sarah Wilson, "Women's Issues Not a Priority," *Prairie Woman* (August 1977), 12 and Gail Osachoff, "feminist disappointment at NDP convention," *Prairie Woman* (January 1978), 13.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

should keep their expectations of the NDP low.¹¹⁷ It was fear of a Conservative government more than faith in the NDP that motivated radical feminists to support the NDP in this election. One woman explained that “there is a serious risk of the Tories getting in” if people did not vote provincially and a letter from Winnipeg in the following issue of *Prairie Woman* warned of the cutbacks faced in Manitoba after the election of a Conservative government.¹¹⁸ In 1979, *Prairie Woman* finally got a definitive answer as to whether the NDP would support the greater availability of abortions in Saskatchewan. The SWL had sent letters to every NDP MLA in Saskatchewan asking about their stance on abortion.¹¹⁹ Of the seven responses the SWL received, not a single one supported the liberalization of abortion laws.¹²⁰ Thus, by the end of the 1970s, these groups no longer had any sense of shared identity and the NDP effectively lost the support of SWL except for in the direst of circumstances.

Conclusion:

Through various relationships with fellow feminists and socialists, the women of the SWL were able to actively participate in the construction of their own identity. Recent scholarship on second-wave feminism has begun to investigate a greater variety of feminisms that developed during the second wave, rejecting the idea of a single hegemonic experience within the women’s movement. These distinct branches of second-wave feminism are intrinsically linked to the layered identities that women have but questions of regional and ideological identity have rarely been a focus of these studies. This study of the prairie based, radical SWL explores the active role that these regional and ideological identities had in the development of a grassroots feminist group.

In a country and movement that was often centralized around Ontario and Quebec, the SWL gave their prairie identity important symbolic value, even though *Prairie Woman* was not always concerned with the particular conditions of women on the prairies. As a result, the SWL’s connection to regional prairie identity comes across as quite superficial and the contents of their newsletter seems to have been influenced by the SWL’s position as a prairie feminist group in only minor ways. Instead, the articles in *Prairie Woman* were more directly influenced by the ideological questions the SWL struggled to balance in its socialist-feminist identity. While the SWL allied with both bourgeois feminists and male socialists, the processes of differentiation between the SWL and these allies allowed the group to better understand what they were by highlighting that which they were not. In many ways, the SWL’s understanding of what it meant to be socialist feminist was built as a response to what just feminism and socialism on their own lacked. Throughout the history of the SWL and the publication of *Prairie Woman* difference and otherness were consistently highlighted as important elements in the identity of the local feminist group and allowed them to build their own distinct understanding of themselves within Canadian activism and politics.

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¹¹⁷ Rosemary Rupps, “NDP or Not NDP,” *Prairie Woman* (May 1978), 3.

¹¹⁸ Ibid and “Letters,” *Prairie Woman* (July/August 1978), 3.

¹¹⁹ Debbie Woolway, “MLAs Respond to Abortion,” *Prairie Woman* (March/April 1979), 15.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

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Charlie Hamilton, "The Jewish Confederacy: The Prevalence of Anti-Semitism in Northern Print Media," HI 445: the Era of the US Civil War, Dr. Weiner

Introduction

Anti-Semitism towards Jewish people has long been prevalent within the United States. Historical and academic examination, however, tends to focus on the more well-known cases and instances of American anti-Semitism, like the rise in anti-Semitic organizations during the period before World War II, or American isolationist policies that barred Jewish immigration from Nazi Germany, for example.¹ Nevertheless, widespread prejudice towards Jewish Americans existed in America long before the interwar years, and in fact, a rise in anti-Semitism appears to have taken place during a period in which America was most divided.

In researching the prevalence of anti-Semitism during the Civil War, I came across an event that piqued my interest; a military order from one of the Union's most accomplished and beloved figures, future president and Union war General Ulysses S. Grant. As Stephen V. Ash explains in his article "Civil War Exodus: The Jews and Grant's General Orders No. 11," at the beginning of the war, the Republican government attempted to undermine the Southern economy by restricting the sale of cotton to foreigners.² However, with such a demand for cotton worldwide, the Union government lifted restrictions to allow the sale of cotton in Union-occupied territories of the South.³ As General Grant's armies marched farther into Confederate territory in 1862, "hopeful buyers" flocked to places like the Mississippi Valley, but "with enormous profits to be made...the whole affair rapidly degenerated into something close to an orgy of corruption."⁴ Businessmen and speculators, many of whom were Jewish, began travelling back and forth between Union-occupied territories trying to sell cotton. This interfered with Grant's war efforts, and he used this opportunity to enact General Order no. 11.⁵ As John Mendelsohn puts it, Grant's "general animosity" towards the interference of businessmen turned into "a malevolent strain of bigotry," as rather than trying to halt only those using the war to take advantage of the cotton trade, his anti-Semitic prejudice became the basis of the order.⁶ His order ultimately expelled all Jews from his military district, including those who only lived in the Union-occupied territory and had not partaken in the cotton trade.⁷ Anti-Semitic stereotyping of 'greedy' Jewish people justified Grant's actions and led him to believe they were posing a threat to the Union, possibly even attempting to infiltrate their army to pass information to the Confederacy.⁸ Therefore, if the leader of the Union military and future President of the United States held these kinds of prejudices, just how prevalent was anti-Semitism during the Civil War, and why?

The most useful source to answer this question of prevalence lies in popular print media. Newspapers are a useful primary source for historical research because they generally tend to reflect the accepted societal norms and values of their time, allowing us to gain a glimpse into the past. As Lorman A. Ratner and Dwight L. Teeter Jr. illustrate in their book *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters: Newspapers and the Coming of the Civil War*, newspapers and print media were especially influential and served an important role during the Civil War. As the authors explain, in the years before the conflict, "newspapers were able to grow from 'in group' reading matter for political and financial elites into real mass media" thanks to "rapid population growth and urbanization, [as well as] revolutions in printing and transportation," ultimately "provid[ing] a forum so millions of people could learn about and participate in political debate."⁹ With a boom in the market for mass print media, however, "competition among newspapers was intense," so "catering to readers' tastes as well as to their prejudices and opinions made newspapers a vital force, both in shaping and reflecting the attitudes of the reading audience."¹⁰ Thus, newspapers, served an important role during the Civil War, as they emerged as the first form of mass media as well as a place for Americans to formulate views and participate in politics. On top of this, in order to be successful, newspapers would generally appeal to the

¹ Mike Milford, "Veiled Intervention: Anti-Semitism, Allegory, and Captain America," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 20, no. 4 (2017): 605.

² Stephen V. Ash, "Civil War Exodus: The Jews and Grant's General Orders No. 11," *The Historian* (Kingston) 44, no. 4 (1982): 506.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, 507.

⁵ Ibid, 508.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 508-509.

⁸ Ibid, 509.

⁹ Lorman N. Ratner, and Dwight L. Teeter Jr., *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters: Newspapers and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 1-2.

¹⁰ Ibid, 8.

audience and market to which they were selling their publications, ultimately making print media a valuable source for understanding the accepted societal norms, beliefs, and values of the past.

However, what makes print media so valuable to the historian is also its biggest downfall in using it as a primary source, seeing as newspapers are inherently partial. Despite the incredible societal transformations that widespread accessibility to print media created, "they pose[d] a danger to public welfare."¹¹ As Teeter and Ratner explain, this danger came from individual editors' and journalists' distortions of telegraphic dispatches and from placing and interpreting the accounts into regional and political contexts."¹² Newspaper publishers carried their own particular viewpoints and pushed their own political beliefs and agendas, which was especially true during the Civil War era. As a result of this, "the newspapers' words often were published with no sense of responsibility that would have provided readers with a full and fair view of what had happened and why."¹³ As the country began to split along sectional lines, this split meant that the ways print media described, interpreted, and presented news depended on their location and the kind of political views the journalist or editor held and were trying to promote.¹⁴ Nevertheless, these biases helped to inform my research, as various patterns concerning political allegiance and location began to appear when researching how print media presented and characterised Jewish people to the American masses during the Civil War.

In going through hundreds of newspapers from across the United States during the Civil War years, instances of anti-Semitism were much more prevalent in newspapers that supported Lincoln's Republican government, and from publications based in northern states. The use of anti-Semitism in these publications was highly politically charged and employed in various ways to garner support for the views of the Union government and its war effort. Ultimately, I identified two main tactics that Union print media utilised to promote their own political beliefs with anti-Semitic rhetoric. The first of these tactics consist of alluding to ideas of deliverance, as popular Northern media claimed regular Southerners, and in some cases the entire country, were victims of a Jewish conspiracy during the war. To justify these conspiracies, Union print media outlets employed stereotypes that depicted Jewish people as scapegoats for Union failures and made anti-Semitic accusations that implied Jews were plotting to overrun and take over the South for themselves. By doing so, these publications would attempt to unify the Northern population in support for the Union war effort by suggesting the South and the entire country needed saving from a common enemy, that being Jewish people.

The second way popular northern print media made use of anti-Semitic rhetoric to push their own political agenda was through religious history. Whether it be regarding slavery or the rebellion, Republican-supporting newspapers often included columns from Christian leaders that attempted to relate biblical stories to their present situation in the Civil War. These stories almost always, in one way or another, depicted a situation or an analogy that alluded to the South and the rebellion as being comparable to the actions of Ancient Jews. These Christian religious stories usually included Jews' history of defying God by owning slaves, or their killing of Jesus Christ, for example, all as a means of vilifying the Confederacy.

This paper will first begin with a chronological overview of the historiography on the topic of anti-Semitism in the United States during the Civil War. This will illustrate how and why historians overlooked this field of research, as well as why this particular research, as it pertains to anti-Semitism within Northern print media, is important to this field. Following this will be a section of some essential context regarding Jewish immigration into the United States prior to the Civil War period in order to better understand some of the historical context that led to the use of anti-Jewish rhetoric within these media outlets. Following this will be an examination of various Republican-supporting publications during the Civil War and their varying uses of anti-Semitism to promote their own political wartime agenda. Finally, a section on how Southern newspapers responded to the anti-Semitic charges towards the Confederacy will illustrate the contrast between how Union and Confederate print media characterised Jewish Americans, which, in turn, reveals much about the differences in how Northern and Southern society viewed and treated Jewish Americans during this period. Overall, this paper will argue that Union print media appealed to Northern society's widespread Jewish prejudices by employing anti-Semitic rhetoric as a means of promoting the Republican government and the Union war effort.

¹¹ Ibid, 17.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid, 19.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Historiographic Overview

An overview of the historiography of this topic reveals that the existence and prevalence of anti-Semitism during the Civil War was mostly overlooked by historians until after World War II. The reason for this is due to the persistence of anti-Semitism in American society itself, as for many decades Jewish historians attempted to use Jewish experience in the Civil War as a means of battling discrimination and to legitimate their place in American society. As Adam Mendelsohn explains in *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader*, prior to 1950, Jewish historians completely omitted the prevalence of anti-Semitism during the Civil War in trying to formulate a narrative that "instill[ed] pride and create[d] a common past, and to counter the charges that Jews were unworthy of their American freedoms."¹⁵ Wary of the growing anti-Semitism in the country, Jewish historians' "accounts of the war provided opportunities to demonstrate the loyalty of American Jewry, to recount episodes of Jewish bravery, and to extol the contribution of Jews to the war effort."¹⁶ For example, Max Kohler's 1897 article "Jews and the Anti-Slavery Movement" focuses on promoting Jewish people's impartiality on the controversial topic of slavery. Kohler speaks to how Jews as a community took "no action on either pro or con of the slavery question," but those individuals who did hold slaves or were abolitionists were only "join[ing] their fellow Christian fellow-citizens" depending on where they resided.¹⁷ Isaac Marken's 1909 article "Lincoln and the Jews" is similar in its focus on the links between Abraham Lincoln and the American Jewish community during the Civil War. Marken goes into depth about Lincoln, describing him as a "gaunt figure" who "towers above all others in the galaxy of American heroes," and how he had various Jewish friends, often defended Jewish people, and may have been of Jewish descent himself.¹⁸ Rather than focusing on the actual anti-Semitism itself, Marken is more interested in legitimating Jewish people as Americans by linking them to one of the country's most famous leaders. Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx's 1927 book *A History of the Jewish People* follow a similar pattern. The authors mention things like how "Jews of the north and the south fought alongside their compatriots," how "naturally the northern states had the larger number of Jews" who "threw themselves with zeal into combat," as well as how "the Jews of the south occupied prominent posts in the Confederate army and government."²⁰ Instead of mentioning anti-Semitism or taking sides in the conflict, the authors continue to stress Jewish-Americans patriotism and role in the war on both sides. Ultimately, these historical examinations of the Jewish experience in the Civil War are highly romanticised and are more useful for understanding the time period they were written than the actual historical content itself. As anti-Semitism remained prevalent in American society, Jewish historians used the Civil War as a means of pushing back against discrimination and exclusion.

However, after World War II and the atrocities by Nazi Germany, a shift in the historiography of the Jewish experience during the Civil War took place. As Adam Mendelsohn explains, a new interpretation would emerge as a Jewish historian named Bertram Wallace Korn published *American Jewry in the Civil War* that "shed the romanticism of his predecessors" by carefully "analyzing Northern and Southern antisemitism."²¹ No longer interested in trying to legitimate Jews' place in American society, Korn's examinations of the prevalence of anti-Semitism during the Civil War was groundbreaking and "planted the seeds for a new era of serious scholarship."²² Ultimately, it is the works of these historians that my research will build upon, as all have broadened the field by providing fresh analyses on the prevalence of anti-Semitism during the Civil War.

Korn's 1961 book *Jews And Negro Slavery In The Old South, 1789-1865* is an example of how these new interpretations of the Jewish experience during the Civil War informed my research. Though this source examines Jewish Southerners and their relationship to slavery, by using personal memoirs and letters his publication provides insightful context. For example, due to the more rigid southern racial caste system, white Jews in the South experienced more success (especially as slave owners) and less discrimination than their counterparts in the North,

¹⁵ Adam Mendelsohn, "Introduction: Before Korn: A Century of Jewish Historical Writing about the American Civil War," in *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader*, edited by Adam Mendelsohn and Jonathan D. Sarna, 1–26. NYU Press, 2010, 2.

¹⁶ Ibid, 3.

¹⁷ Kohler, Max. J. "The Jews and the American Anti-Slavery Movement." *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, no. 5 (1897): 143, 149.

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¹⁹ Isaac Marken, "Lincoln and the Jews," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, no. 17 (1909): 109–111.

²⁰ Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx, *A History of the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1927), 677.

²¹ Mendelsohn, *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader*, 17.

²² Ibid.

which helps explain why evidence of antisemitism in Northern media is much more prevalent.²³ Other sources from this new generation of scholars include Gary L. Bunker and John J Appel's 1994 article entitled "'Shoddy,' Anti-Semitism and the Civil War." This source explores how the term "shoddy" became a popular anti-Semitic slur used to represent unpatriotic Jews and to scapegoat them for economic and military supply failures in national magazines like *Vanity Fair* and *Harper's Weekly*, ultimately providing valuable insight into the existence of anti-Semitism in media during this period.²⁴ In a separate example, Gary Phillip Zola's 2014 book, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry, a Documentary History*, examines Abraham Lincoln's unique relationship with the American Jewish population. Unlike earlier historical interpretations, however, Zola does not overlook the various forms of anti-Semitism that Lincoln pushed back against. Zola emphasises events like Congress trying to pass laws that made it so only appointments for Christian regimental commanders were possible, Ulysses S. Grant's General Order No.11, and how an organised Christian endeavour towards the end of the war tried to amend the Constitution by making Christianity the official religion of the United States.²⁵ Thus, unlike his predecessors, Zola does not understate the existence and prevalence of anti-Semitism in American society in his analysis of Abraham Lincoln's relationship with Jewish people.

All in all, after World War II, a new era of scholarship that more critically examined the Jewish experience during the Civil War emerged. These historians were no longer occupied with attempting to legitimize Jewish people's place in America, but rather to firmly examine how and why Jewish people faced discrimination in the United States during the Civil War period. Ultimately, it is the work of these authors and this new generation that my research will build upon. Despite the field of anti-Semitism during the Civil War gaining much more attention recently, its lack of critical examination for nearly eighty years after the conflict has left much uncovered. Thus, an examination into the use of anti-Semitic rhetoric to promote Civil War-era political agendas in northern print media is a contribution to this underdeveloped yet continually broadening field.

Historical Background

To understand why anti-Semitic rhetoric became a means of promoting political agendas in the North, it is first essential to understand the historical context of Jewish people in the United States. In the years leading up to the Civil War, the United States experienced massive immigration from Europe. As Raymond L. Cohn illustrates in his book *Mass Migration Under Sail: European Immigration to the Antebellum United States*, between 1815 and 1860, various social, economic, and political factors led many to flee Europe during a time when the United States welcomed newcomers.²⁶ In the early 19th century, European society and its economies were experiencing pressure from massive population growth, while the United States' recent push westward combined with growing urban population centers left a scarcity of labour "relative to land and other resources."²⁷ During these years, "a total of 5.2 million Europeans immigrated to the United States."²⁸

Accompanying these waves of European immigrants was a substantial Jewish population. According to 1870 data from the United States Census Bureau *Statistics of Churches In The United States at the Censuses of 1870, 1860, and 1850*, the Jewish population grew exponentially during these years. Though these censuses did not record total population numbers, they did record the total number of churches, which provides insight into the growth of these populations as well as an idea of which areas of the country experienced the most Jewish immigration. In 1850, the total number of Jewish temples in the United States was thirty-seven, and within the decade, this number more than doubled to seventy-seven.²⁹ The location of these synagogues is of importance as well, as the majority of them recorded in these censuses resided in northern, eventually Union-supporting states. In 1850, twenty-five of the thirty-seven Jewish temples were in the North, six in soon-to-be border states, and the other six in what would become the Confederacy.³⁰ The 1860 census follows a similar pattern, as fifty-three of the

²³ Bertram Wallace Korn, *Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865* (Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: American Jewish Historical Society, 1961), 67-68.

²⁴ Gary L. Bunker, and John J Appel, "'Shoddy,' Anti-Semitism and the Civil War," *American Jewish History* 82, no. 1/4 (1994): 43-47.

²⁵ Gary Phillip Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry, a Documentary History* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014), 1-4.

²⁶ Raymond L. Cohn, *Mass Migration Under Sail: European Immigration to the Antebellum United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 6.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 49.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 6.

²⁹ U.S Census Bureau, *Statistics of Churches In The United States at the Censuses of 1870, 1860, and 1850*, 1870, 513.

³⁰ *Ibid*.

total seventy-seven synagogues resided in the Union, with only sixteen in the Southern Confederacy, and the rest within the territories.³¹ Ultimately, these numbers reveal that the Jewish population was continually rising during these massive waves of immigration from Europe, and importantly, the majority were settling in the North.

Furthermore, as Christina Hassenstab and Sabrina Ramet examine in their article "The Know-Nothing Party: Three Theories about its Rise and Demise," this influx of immigrants sparked a moral panic in the United States, reflected in the rising success of nativist political parties in the years prior to the outbreak of the Civil War.³² As their article demonstrates, most of these immigrants came from Ireland and Germany, settled in Northern urban centers, and the now third and fourth generation Protestant immigrants from England, who made up the majority of America's white population, began organizing nativist organizations such as the Know-Nothing Party and the anti-Catholic American Party.³³ Fearing the cultural, social, and economic ramifications of these European foreigners, nativism and discrimination towards immigrants became commonplace. Seeing as most immigrants were Irish Catholics, nativist sentiment targeted these groups.³⁴

Nevertheless, as Michael Barnett illustrates in his book *The Stars and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews*, Jewish Americans were also ostracised by this growing nativist sentiment in the pre-Civil War years. As Barnett explains, European Jews found America such an appealing place to immigrate to because, "unlike many European states, the United States had no national church," meaning immigrating Jews would have "relative security."³⁵ Barnett stresses the word "relative," however, because "when Christians emigrated from Europe to the United States, they had not left behind their prejudices."³⁶ Using a case study of all the Jewish "'reform societies'" that emerged throughout the 1840s and '50s, Barnett argues that Jews who arrived in America were "not met with acceptance, but rather rejection," from the rise in nativism, and therefore they "began trying to purge themselves of everything that might cause Christians to doubt whether Jews could fit in."³⁷ For example, many Jewish synagogues during these years changed their day of worship from Saturdays to Sundays, replaced Hebrew biblical texts with English ones, and removed the separation of men and women during congregations all as a means of trying to 'fit in' with Americans and their Christian traditions.³⁸ Thus, with the growing Jewish population, the success of Nativist politics, and the fact that Jewish reform societies were on the rise, it appears the United States was ripe with anti-Semitism at the outbreak of the Civil War, especially in the North.

Northern Newspaper Primary Source Analysis

With this historical context in mind, it becomes apparent why anti-Semitic rhetoric was so prevalent in Republican-siding newspaper publications from the Union. One of the prominent ways these publications employed this discriminatory language was by using stereotypes to frame the Union war effort as a fight against a Jewish conspiracy. As Elizabeth Varon points out in her monograph *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War*, in 1860 the North was extremely divided on various political and social issues such as abolition, racial equality, states' rights, and more.³⁹ Therefore, Varon argues, the 'deliverance' of white Southerners from a "Slavepower conspiracy" that caused "an economic backwardness, lack of opportunity, and absence of free speech" became an argument Republican politicians and media outlets employed to unify the North across a broad range of political beliefs.⁴⁰ Though Varon points to "Confederate falsehood and despotism" as the common enemy that could unite the northerners in support of the war effort, employing anti-Semitic rhetoric and claims of a 'Jewish Conspiracy' within Northern print media appears to be a means of accomplishing this same goal.⁴¹ Often, these newspapers characterised Jewish people as a threat to the security of the United States during the war, and used anti-Semitic stereotypes to justify these accusations.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Christine M. Hassenstab and Sabrina P. Ramet, "The Know Nothing Party: Three Theories about its Rise and Demise," *Politics and Religion* 6, No. 3 (2019): 570.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Michael N. Barnett, "The Making of a Prophetic People (Pre-1914)," in *The Star and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews* (Princeton University Press, 2016), 54.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid, 54-55.

³⁸ Ibid, 55.

³⁹ Elizabeth Varon, *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3-5.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid, 2.

An example of this is present in an article from the *Daily National Republican* entitled "The Jews," published in Washington D.C in 1861. In this article, the author uses anti-Semitic stereotyping to suggest that Jews were trying to buy power and control in the South. The article is about a Jewish banker from Charleston donating \$10,000 to South Carolina and makes sure to mention that "South Carolina, it seems, has abounded in Jews," who, in citing the donor, are "'ready and willing' to 'serve the state' 'by their means.'"⁴² The italicising of a quote about Jews serving the Confederacy, emphasising their presence in South Carolina, and scrutinising the Confederate government for accepting donations from a Jew are all meant to suggest the existence of some kind of Jewish conspiracy in the works. The anti-Semitic beliefs of the author are highly apparent as well, as they make sure to point out that "Jews at no period [have] been so well protected in their rights as under the United States government," obviously meant to imply that their support in the Confederacy is unpatriotic.⁴³

In a separate example from the *Daily National Republican* from January of 1863, an article entitled "General Grant and the Jews" gives its take on Order No.11 that exiled Jewish people from Union-occupied territories in the South. The author of this article vehemently defends General Grant, employing stereotypes to justify his actions. The article includes referring to Jewish people as "traders," "enemies," and even "parasites."⁴⁴ The author goes on to say that Jewish people are "most dangerous," and thanks General Grant, calling him an "American hero" as "nothing [his detractors] say or do can at all affect the estimate which a generous public has placed upon his actions, and which impartial history will confirm."⁴⁵ Not only does this article assume that the American public sided with Grant in his decision, but it also displays the author's anti-Semitism in the discriminatory names they use to describe Jewish people. On top of this, the author at various times throughout the piece refers to Jewish people as 'the enemy,' which ultimately is meant to suggest that Jewish Americans are the common enemy the Union is fighting against.

In other instances, northern print media employed anti-Semitic stereotypes to justify unsubstantiated charges of Jews trying to overrun the South and take advantage of the war monetarily. In an 1864 article from the *Republican* supporting *Cleveland Morning Leader*, entitled "Jews in the Confederacy," the author claims that "since the commencement of the rebellion, Richmond has been visited by swarms of Jews."⁴⁶ Using anti-Semitic stereotypes of 'greediness,' the article claims that Jews are "engaged in active business pursuits...seizing upon the advantages the times gave them, with the shrewdness characteristic of their race."⁴⁷ Furthermore, the author claims that Jewish people are using economic means to "overrun the Confederacy in all directions, especially where cotton was to be got."⁴⁸ In another article from 1864 for the *Chicago Tribune*, the author makes similar charges and uses almost the exact same language and anti-Semitic stereotypes. In this article, the author claims that "since the beginning of the rebellion, Richmond has been visited by swarms of Jews, coming from every part of the globe," and that "they have been attracted by the allurements of large profits" from "communities violently disturbed in all matters concerning commercial transactions."⁴⁹ The article even goes on to say that "sentiment has sprung up among the rebels against the Jews" as they benefited from "public misfortunes" by "elud[ing] commercial regulations enacted by the Confederate government" and "running away with their fortunes."⁵⁰ On top of this, this author further implies the existence of a Jewish conspiracy to monetarily take advantage of the war by stating that American Jews "have also been engaged in providing the rebel armies with equipment, ammunition, and provisions."⁵¹ These allegations towards Jewish people not only allude to some kind of Jewish conspiracy to take over the South, but they also allege that Jewish Americans as a class are somehow in cahoots with the Confederate Army to accomplish this goal.

⁴² "The Jews," *The National Republican* (Washington, D.C., January 21st, 1861), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ "Gen. Grant and the Jews," *Daily National Republican* (Washington, D.C., January 10th, 1863), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ "The Jews in the Confederacy," *Cleveland Morning Leader* (Cleveland, Ohio, March 26th 1864), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ "The Jews in the Confederacy," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois, March 24th, 1864), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

In addition, another tactic employed by Union-supporting newspapers to characterise American Jews as the North's common enemy was through scapegoating them for Union failures. Using Jewish stereotypes, these publications placed blame on Jewish people for the Republican government's shortcomings during the war, further alluding to some underlying Jewish conspiracy to undermine the Union. This is apparent in an 1861 article published in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled "The Purchase of Blankets in Europe-Boston Opposes the Outlay Abroad." This article is about a "scarcity of woollen goods, such as would be required for the use of the army during the winter campaign."⁵² The article states that the Union government ordered woollen goods from Europe, but fearing they would not arrive in time for winter, "agents were then sent out to purchase all the blankets to be found in the New England, New York, and Philadelphia markets," but "the number procured was relatively few."⁵³ According to the author, however, the reason for this is because "large amounts of goods have been bought up and stored away by speculators, in the hopes that, as winter approaches, they will bring a higher price."⁵⁴ The author then goes on to say that "if this is so, the supply from England will prove a fortunate thing, and teach our American Jews that they should not attempt to acquire riches by the inhuman act of compelling our Government to submit to the exorbitant terms rather than that our troops should suffer."⁵⁵ In order to avoid criticizing the Union government for failing to provide the necessary resources to their troops, this article instead places blame on American Jews using the anti-Semitic stereotype of greediness to claim they are the ones behind the shortage of supplies.

A different example of using anti-Semitic stereotyping to frame Jewish Americans as the Union's enemy can be found in an 1862 article for the *Gallipolis Journal*, published in Gallipolis, Ohio. This article is about the sale of "50,000 lbs of bacon" auctioned off by the U.S Commissary at a military depot in Porkopolis, Ohio, near Gallipolis.⁵⁶ According to this author, "some Jews in Porkopolis appeared on the day of sale" and "entered into a written agreement" that "but one should bid," which in turn allowed them to buy the bacon for "1 cent per pound."⁵⁷ The article's sentiment with this is that "many persons present would have purchased in lots of from 500 to 2,000 lbs at 2 3/4th cents per pound, but was forestalled by the Jews."⁵⁸ According to this author, the "swindling Jews" are going to "sell it back to Uncle Sam at 6 cents...thus robbing our Government in her hour of need, which affords them protection and civil rights that no other nation on earth grants to them as a race."⁵⁹ On top of this, this article claims that "any means of despoiling Union men or injuring the Union cause, is to many of them a great source of gratification."⁶⁰ Once again, Northern newspaper publications employ anti-Semitic stereotypes of 'greediness' as a means of framing Jewish Americans as the Union's enemies. Although this article is about something as insignificant as the sale of bacon, like previous examples, it is presented in a way that is meant to suggest that American Jews are somehow in alliance with the Confederacy to try to undermine the Union war effort.

Ultimately, these examples illustrate the ways in which anti-Semitic rhetoric employed in Northern print media was a means of establishing Jewish people as a common enemy to the Union. Rather than risk alienating their audience with controversial subjects surrounding the Civil War like slavery or state autonomy, these publications appeal to widespread antisemitism in the North by placing blame on Jewish people for the country's turbulent times. Whether it be a conspiracy to use the war to get rich, overrun the South, or undermine the Union government, these newspapers all use some form of anti-Semitism to justify characterizing Jewish people as threats to the Union. All these claims of stealing, corruption, and swindling are completely unsubstantiated and not sourced, but nevertheless legitimised by a widespread belief in Jewish stereotypes. Overall, Union media outlets attempting to legitimately characterize Jewish Americans as enemies to the Union war effort and government reveals the prevalence of Jewish prejudice among Northerners and appears to be one of the anti-Semitic tactics employed by print media to promote their political agenda during the Civil War.

Moreover, anti-Semitism within religious storytelling and analogies appears to be another tactic employed by Union-supporting print media to justify the war effort on a moral basis. As historian Harry S. Stout explains in his

⁵² "The Purchase of Blankets in Europe-Boston Opposes the Outlay Abroad," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois, October 23rd, 1861), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Gallipolis Journal* (Gallipolis, Ohio, February 13th, 1862), *Chronicle America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

book *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War*, the secession crisis and the move toward war presented an ethical dilemma for Americans. As Stout illustrates, the underlying reasons for the Civil War on both sides of the conflict were by no means ambiguous and “abstract political arguments would not suffice” in convincing the public to commit and support killing one another.⁶¹ Therefore, Stout argues, using a vast amount of sources from political speeches to popular literature, that each side of the war would attempt to “establish a legitimate identity as a moral ‘nation,’” and to do so, “both sides needed to enlist God in their cause as both justifier and absolute guarantor of their deliverance.”⁶² Ultimately, in an internal war as violent and politically decisive as the Civil War, justifying each side's views and actions through Christianity became critically important.

In these circumstances, it becomes apparent how anti-Semitism became a useful tool for Northern print media to justify the Union government's morality within their political and military agenda. During this period, newspapers would often target the majority Christian population by including speeches and sermons from Christian religious leaders like reverends and preachers. In attempting to justify the Union's moral justification for their stance against the Confederacy, these sections would vilify the South by relating their current situation in the Civil War to biblical stories and religious history. Often, these published articles almost always align and compare the South to biblical stories of Jewish people defying Jesus Christ and God. By doing so, Northern newspapers were able to promote the Union war effort by appealing to widespread Jewish prejudices within a majority Christian population, while also allowing these publications to legitimate and promote their own political stance through religious, and therefore, moral justifications.

Evidence of using anti-Semitism within religious justifications of the war can be found throughout northern newspapers published during the Civil War. For example, an 1861 sermon from “The Rev. Theodore F. White,” published in the *New York Herald*, reveals how Union print media appealed to widespread anti-Semitism to vilify the South and legitimate the Union's morality in their fight against them. In this publication, this reverend dives into the religious history of the Jews, claiming that “God's ancient people” represent “circumstances strikingly similar to our own.”⁶³ According to Reverend White, “like the Jews, we are a nation of liars and deceivers...like the Jews, we are a nation of oppressors...[and] like them, we have become our own worst enemies, and are now suffering the righteous consequence of God.”⁶⁴ Throughout the piece, the reverend is referring to Jews becoming slaveholders and not trusting God's judgement, going on to claim, with anti-Semitic stereotypes, that “no nation on earth, not even the Ancient Jews, have ever been more governed by the love of money than our own, or more ready to make every sacrifice for its procurement, even the sacrifice of every principle of honour, of morality, of humanity, or religion.”⁶⁵ Using the religious history of Jews holding slaves, this article characterizes Southern slaveholders and the Confederacy as being exactly alike. They use anti-Semitic descriptions, claiming that like Jews, Southerners are liars and deceivers for placing profit (through slavery) over morals. Thus, this article uses Jewish stereotypes and Jewish history as a means of vilifying the Confederacy and justifying the Union's moral supremacy.

Furthermore, in an 1861 recorded sermon entitled “Discourse,” from the *Bradford Reporter* in Townsend, Pennsylvania, a Presbyterian minister relates the biblical stories of Ancient Jews breaking God's laws to Southern states breaking the laws of the Constitution. The section states that to “disrespect [God's] authority and his law” is a “sure way to bring ruin upon any nation-especially upon a Republic where law is the only recognized power,” and “the history of the Jews is a memorable example” of this.⁶⁶ The sermon points to “the sins of Israel which provoked the Lord to anger” such as “covenant-breaking,” which is the splitting of the religious unity through opposing a secession of leadership, and relates this to the breaking of the “solemn promise” by “all parties” to uphold “the constitution of our country.”⁶⁷ Just as God punished ancient Jews for covenant-breaking, he also punished Americans because the South “offend[ed] the union and the harmony of the United States” by seceding and “breaking the tie that bonds us together,” that tie being the Constitution.⁶⁸ The author goes on to state that “the

⁶¹ Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York, New York: Viking, 2006), 20.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 25.

⁶³ “The Rev. Theodore F. White,” *The New York Herald* (New York City, New York, January 5th, 1861), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ “Discourse,” *Bradford Reporter* (Towanda, Pennsylvania, January 17th, 1861), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Jews were...an exception among the nations on earth, but no exception has allowed them to disregard their obligations to God," and "we regard our country as an exception among the nations," but there is no exception "that authorizes us to make ourselves higher laws, to contravene the common law [God] has given us."⁶⁹ In this scenario, Jewish history is once again used to undermine the morality of the Confederacy. This sermon relates the Constitution to God's laws, and the breaking of the Constitution through Southern secession as being the equivalent to Jews breaking God's testaments through things like covenant breaking. In doing so, the author frames the Union as morally superior for trying to uphold the authority of the Constitution while simultaneously blaming the war on the South for breaking this higher law, just as the ancient Jews did. Thus, biblical religious history in which ancient Jews opposed God is once again used as a means of denouncing the South and reassuring the Union's morality.

This use of relating ancient Jews and their history to Southerners in the Civil War is a reoccurring tactic employed by Northern media publications to denounce the South. A clear example of this can be found in a poem by Lieutenant Enoch G. Adams of a New Hampshire division for the Union army.⁷⁰ This poem, entitled "Poor Ulric!," published in the *Hammond Gazette* from Point Lookout, Maryland, relates the Confederacy to the equivalent of Jews crucifying Jesus Christ.⁷¹ The poem is ultimately about God assisting the Union in their fight, mentioning that "when Jews with malice equal to their pride, like thieves, creation's Lord had crucified," eventually ending with "Rebels and Jews are in one category, and cannot cloud him in his stainless glory."⁷² What this poem and its publishing is meant to suggest, is that like the ancient Jews turning on God by crucifying Christ, Southerners turned on the United States by seceding. Nevertheless, this poem represents once again the ways in which Northern print media used religious history to substantiate their morality, while also appealing to anti-Jewish prejudices.

A similar example can be found in an article published just over a month after the Civil War ended and mere days after President Abraham Lincoln was shot in 1865. In this article entitled "A Sermon" from the *American Citizen* published in Butler County, Pennsylvania, the author attempts to comfort the nation as it "trembles amid grief and fear" due to Lincoln's assassination as well as years of "Union men and women killed" by their "'Southern Brethren.'"⁷³ The author asks to "look in vain the page of modern history for a parallel," which he determines is "the deliberate murder of the Son of God himself by his own people, the Jews."⁷⁴ The article goes on to talk about how "in the murder of Jesus, Jews killed their best friend," just as "the rebels have slain their best friends."⁷⁵ Overall, the author's main comforting point is that the Jews who killed Jesus "cannot see the necessity of it yet," but "God suffering his son" was the "price of our redemption," and claims that "without the shedding of blood" in the Civil War, therefore, "there is no remission."⁷⁶ Though this article is not explicitly anti-Semitic, it is still catering to anti-Jewish prejudices. In this analogy, Jewish people are the Confederate rebels, and the Union is Jesus Christ. It is the Confederates and their sympathisers, just like the Jews, who turned on their brethren, causing the death of the Union President and thousands of Union soldiers. Nevertheless, the author relates the bloodshed of those in the Union as essential for the betterment of the country, just as Jesus Christ dying was necessary for the redemption of humanity. Again, examples of Jewish actions in Christian religious history become a way of criticising the Confederacy while morally justifying the Union's role in the Civil War.

Relating the Confederacy to Jews to justify the North's superior morality through religious history was not only through the story of Jesus, however. In an 1863 article for the *West Jersey Pioneer*, published in Bridgeton, New Jersey, entitled "The Duty of the Christian in the Present Crisis," the author tackles the question of "'can a Christian be a soldier.'"⁷⁷ Once again, Christian religious history in which Jews appear to be in the wrong is put to use to answer this question. To justify a Christian killing in a war, the author points to the story of a biblical figure Paul the Apostle. In this story, "more than forty Jews had banded together to kill Paul," leading Paul to gather up an army to

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Enoch G. Adams, "Poor Ulric!," *Hammond Gazette* (Point Lookout, Maryland, March 31st, 1864), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Woodruff, E., *American Citizen* (Butler, Butler County, Pennsylvania, May 31st, 1865), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ "The Duty of the Christian in the Present Crisis," *West-Jersey Pioneer* (Bridgeton, New Jersey, January 31st, 1863), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

fight the “bloodthirsty Jews.”⁷⁸ The author then goes on to ask the reader “would Paul have told his military escort, if attacked by the forty Jews, ‘you must not fight?’”⁷⁹ The author’s answer is “certainly not; therefore it must be right for soldiers to fight in defence of justice and the [Union] Government...the government which gives protections to Christians and secures their rights to worship God.”⁸⁰ In this analogy, the Jews are the aggressors towards Paul and his Christian soldiers, just as the South are the aggressors in the Civil War. The author relates Paul fighting in defence of God and Jesus to Christian soldiers fighting in defence of the Union and its government. Thus, the author argues that it is the duty of Christian men within the Union to fight and kill in self-defence against the Confederacy, just as Paul the Apostle fought in self-defence against the Jews. In yet another religious historical analysis, aligning Jews with the South is used as a means of morally justifying the actions of the Union Army.

Overall, these examples reveal a recurring theme within the existence and prevalence of anti-Jewish discrimination in Northern print media. Though not all are explicitly anti-Semitic, all in one way or another use biblical stories to equate Jews to the South and the Confederacy. Doing so reveals a number of things. Continually aligning Jews with the Union’s enemy illustrates how these publications were appealing to widespread anti-Semitism to defame the South and push the Northern Republican political agenda. Furthermore, by using biblical stories in which the authors depict Jews as morally in the wrong, like the crucifixion of Jesus Christ or the story of Paul the Apostle, these publications are attempting to morally legitimise the Union’s actions in the war. Through religious analogies in which the Union is meant to represent the Christian actor and the South as the Jew, these newspapers are suggesting that God is on their side and in their favour. The constant alignment of the Confederacy to Jews is revealing of how the prevalence of anti-Semitism in the North was a powerful tool for Union media to gain support for the government and military effort.

Southern Newspaper Primary Source Analysis

These attacks from Union supporting newspapers that employed anti-Semitism as a means of justifying and promoting the Republican war effort did not go unnoticed by Southern newspapers. In many cases, their responses to these charges actually defended Jewish people’s place in America and called out the Union for being prejudiced. Bertram Wallace Korn, one of the most important Jewish historians in this field of study as mentioned previously in the historiography section of this paper, explained why Jewish Americans experienced less discrimination in the South in comparison to the North in his 1961 book *Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South*. Korn, using personal memoirs, letters, and diaries, among other records, explains how only a small fraction of the Jewish population lived in the South, leaving their presence much more unnoticed.⁸¹ Furthermore, “slavery played an unacknowledged role in this question of Jewish status in the Old South” as “Southern society fostered a caste system” that determined “all-pervasive division was between the races.”⁸² Therefore, seeing as Jews were white, they not only experienced higher levels of success as slave owners but also as business owners, merchants, and politicians.⁸³ Their relative success in the South is also represented by the fact that various Jewish Americans achieved high honours in the Confederacy. Successful men like Confederate cabinet minister Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate Army officer Major Raphael J. Moses, and Georgian Senator Solomon Cohen were all Jewish, and all men were slave owners.⁸⁴ Comparatively, very few Jewish Americans were able to achieve such levels of success in the North, despite their much larger population, and as Korn puts it, “whether so many Jews would have achieved so high a level of social, political, economic, and intellectual status and recognition, without the presence of the lowly and degraded slave, is indeed dubious.”⁸⁵ With a much more rigid caste system and the “status and security from the very presence of a large mass of defenseless victims who were compelled to absorb all of the prejudices that might otherwise have been expressed more frequently in anti-Jewish sentiment,” Jewish Southerners were not as overtly discriminated against as their Northern counterparts.⁸⁶

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Bertram Wallace Korn, *Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865* (Elkins Park, Pennsylvania: American Jewish Historical Society, 1961), 66.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 67.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 66.

That being said, it becomes apparent why Southern newspapers, in response to Northern newspapers' use of anti-Semitic rhetoric as a means of vilifying the Confederacy, often defended Jewish Americans' place in America. For example, in an 1862 article from the *Wilmington Journal*, published in Wilmington, North Carolina, the author attacks the anti-Semitic rhetoric of a Union supporting newspaper. The article is in response to a publication from the *Richmond Examiner*, who were sharp critics of President Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government.⁸⁷ The *Examiner* had allegedly made charges of "Jewish spies and extortioners [travelling] to and from the Confederacy," once again alluding to some kind of Confederate- Jewish conspiracy on the basis of anti-Semitic discrimination.⁸⁸ However, the *Wilmington Journal* article not only denounces these accusations but defends Jewish people's place in America and attacks the Union media for dispersing such discriminatory charges. The author claims to "feel sorry for the *Examiner*," pointing to the fact that "the Jews in this country are at least as loyal to its interests as any other class of foreigners, perhaps more," going on to argue "we are indebted to the Jews for all our religion and much of our laws."⁸⁹ The author continues, saying "[Jews] are to be found in high positions in our department of state, and form in the fields of active military service."⁹⁰ Not only does this author defend Jewish people and condemn the *Examiner's* anti-Jewish rhetoric, but they go on to call out the "Northern newspapers abound with incentives against these people," in comparison to Jews "not be[ing] complained about in the South, where [they] were among the very first to open their houses to the sick and wounded, and to come forward to the aid of the South with men and money."⁹¹ This author defends Jewish Americans, acknowledges their success in the Confederacy, challenges charges of a Jewish conspiracy in the South, and attacks the Union-supporting newspapers for promoting anti-Jewish rhetoric. Overall, this article not only demonstrates how the South were more accepting of American Jews, but also confirms that Northern newspapers continually printed anti-Semitic prejudice for their own cause.

Another example of a Confederate newspaper defending American Jews while accusing the Union of being anti-Semitic can be found in an 1861 article from the *Yorkville Enquirer*, published in Yorkville, South Carolina. Entitled "Patriotism of the Jews," this article continues to defend Jewish Americans against various stereotypes and discrimination coming from the Union. The author brings up how "the Jews of [New York] and [Baltimore] are under surveillance by Federal detectives...they are believed to be disloyal to the Lincoln Government, and are suspected of furnishing material aid to the Rebels."⁹² While never directly referencing Northern print media, these Union allegations of a Jewish-Confederate conspiracy the author is speaking about reflects the kinds of anti-Semitic allegations often published in Republican-supporting papers. The author goes on to criticise these charges, pointing out that many Jewish Americans are bravely fighting for the Confederacy, and how "besides men, they have contributed money to the cause."⁹³ In addition, the author goes on to reference other anti-Semitic claims of Jewish people conspiring to undermine the Union by taking advantage of the war monetarily, pointing out that "prices charged for indispensable articles [by Jews] are not half as exorbitant and unreasonable as those charged by Christians speculators."⁹⁴ These quotes from a Confederate supporting newspaper not only exemplifies that there was widespread distrust and discrimination towards Jews in the Union but also goes on to defend them by honouring their contributions to the war effort and pointing out the hypocrisy of these anti-Jewish stereotypes.

A final example of Confederate newspapers defending Jewish Americans can be found in an 1861 article from the *Edgeville Advertiser*, published in Edgeville, South Carolina. This article, entitled "The Israelites of South Carolina," praises the Jewish population of the South while simultaneously attacking the North for their prejudices. The author states that "here, in South Carolina (as we believe everywhere in the South), our Israelite fellow-citizens have promptly thrown their whole weight to sustain the State in the great contest which she is engaged, to save her liberties and institutions from the ruthless despotism of the Northern people."⁹⁵ The author points out that the Confederacy gives "an equal right to enter into all offices of our Government," and that in "the late Senate of the

⁸⁷ "To The Editors of the Journal," *Wilmington Journal* (Wilmington, North Carolina, January 9th, 1862), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² "Patriotism of the Jews," *Yorkville Enquirer* (Yorkville, South Carolina, October 3rd, 1861), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ "The Israelites in South Carolina," *Edgefield Advertiser* (Edgefield, South Carolina, February 13th, 1861), *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.

United States, [Jews] furnished two senators...and both of these Senators were from the South, and both of them have been vindicating the rights, interests, and liberties of the South."⁹⁶ Though not outright attacking the North for being anti-Semitic, the author does intend to imply it. He points out that Jewish Americans have chosen to support the South due to the North's 'ruthless despotism,' how the Confederate government offers religious tolerance, and how the only successful Jewish politicians have come from the South.⁹⁷ Undoubtedly, these are meant to be slights at the Union and implies that Jewish Americans are more tolerated and successful in the South. The entire article praises Jewish Southerners and their contributions to the Confederacy and ends with "in expressing these opinions, we know that we echo the feelings of the great body of our people."⁹⁸ This, once again, reveals that Southern society was generally more accepting of Jewish people, as the author directly references that he believes his views on the place of Jews in Southern society to be held by most of the Southern population.

Ultimately, examining how Southern newspapers characterised Jewish Americans and responded to the Union's accusations of Jewish-Southern conspiracy reiterates that Union- supporting print media attempted to appeal to widespread anti-Semitism in the North to promote their own political and wartime agenda. All these articles from Confederate-supporting newspapers not only defend and praise Jewish Americans, but also call out the Union, whether it be the newspapers, government, or society, for being discriminatory towards Jewish people. In the examples of Union newspapers, Jewish people are almost always the villain, whether that be through religious historical stories or as stereotypically accusing them of trying to conspire with the Confederacy or to take advantage of the war monetarily. In these examples from Confederate print media, Jewish people are praised for their patriotism and defended against the anti-Semitic discrimination from the North. This is undoubtedly a result of, as Bertram Wallace Korn argued, the fact that Southern Jews, due to their smaller population and the rigid racial hierarchy of the South, were able to obtain much more success and face less discrimination. Nevertheless, contrasting how Southern print media and Northern print media characterised Jewish Americans demonstrates there was a sectional difference in Jewish tolerance, further emphasising that anti- Semitism was highly prevalent in Northern society by the onset of the Civil War.

Conclusion

In conclusion, an analysis of how Northern print media employed anti-Semitic rhetoric during the Civil War reveals much about the values and beliefs of American society during this period. Newspapers offer a glimpse into the past and they tend to reflect the accepted societal norms and beliefs of the time and place in which they came from, however, they are also biased and highly politically charged, which was especially true during the Civil War. Nevertheless, these biases within print media brought forth by political and geographical allegiances demonstrates sectional differences in regard to the prevalence of anti-Semitism in American society. In the decades before the Civil War, a massive wave of European immigrants into the United States transformed the social makeup of the country. With the North more urbanised and populated, many of these immigrants settled in Union states. The result was widespread discrimination towards these immigrants in the form of various nativist movements. Included within these European immigrants were Jewish Europeans, and census data shows that most were settling in Union states in the decades prior to the Civil War. With an increasing population of Jewish immigrants in the North, this gave way to widespread Jewish prejudices, which various Civil War era policies like General Grant's Order Number 11, for example, represent. Even more illustrative of the widespread discrimination towards Jewish people in the North, however, was the use of anti-Semitic rhetoric within Union supporting newspapers. In Northern newspapers, anti-Semitic rhetoric became a means of promoting the Republican government and the Union war effort. These publications, using anti-Semitic stereotypes, attempted to align Jewish Americans to the Confederacy in various ways. Whether through charges of a Jewish-Southern conspiracy to undermine the Union and overrun the South or by comparing the actions of the Confederacy to the actions of Ancient Jews defying God or Jesus in religious history, these publications consistently attempt to use anti-Semitism as a means of vilifying the South.

Interestingly, analysing how Confederate supporting newspapers responded to these charges further highlights that anti-Semitism was more prevalent in Northern society. Seeing as the South had a much more rigid racial caste system than the North, due to the institution of slavery, the few American Jews living in the South experienced more success and less discrimination because they were white. This is emphasised by the fact that unlike in the Union,

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

many Jewish men were found in high positions in the Confederate government and army. Confederate newspapers represented this general tolerance of Jewish people by defending their place in America, condemning Union print medias use of anti-Semitic rhetoric and accusations towards them, and by calling out the North for their anti-Jewish prejudices. All in all, Northern print media's constant attempts to vilify the Confederacy by aligning them with Jews demonstrates that they viewed anti-Semitism as a viable tactic to gain support for the Republican government and Union war effort. Thus, Northern print media attempted to appeal to the values and beliefs of their readers through anti-Jewish sentiment for their own political agenda, ultimately revealing that anti-Semitism was highly prevalent throughout Northern society by the time of the Civil War.

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Tara Lukac, "The Pernicious Influences of Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines in the Rwandan Genocide," HI 497E: Africa since 1945, Dr. Grischow

Almost five decades after the Holocaust and the proclamation of "Never Again," the media was broadcasting live the crimes against humanity and the tragedy of the minority Tutsi that was taking place in Rwanda. Less than an hour after the assassination¹ of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana on April 6 until July 18, 1994, the massacre of the Tutsi began which was performed in a highly organized and brutal manner where there was an average of one murder every two seconds.² In this 100-day period, the world witnessed the massacre of 800,000 people of the Tutsi minority which was executed by the militia, the Interahamwe, and ordinary Hutu civilians. Moderate Hutus, along with many priests and nuns, were murdered if they supported or protected the Tutsi. The killers, armed with weapons or farm tools (i.e. machetes, knives), searched every corner of Rwanda to leave no one behind. Tiny Rwanda became a horrific place of "a stinking nightmare of rotting corpses,"³ where the degradation of humanity surpassed comprehension.

Rwandan media, in particular Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), played a significant role during the genocide as it did not condemn the ethnic violence but rather served as the feeding machine that pushed ethnic hatred, incited and spread violence, and called for the mobilization of the Hutu to exterminate the Tutsi and their supporters. This raises the question: to what extent did RTLM's extremist propaganda contribute in shaping societal beliefs and how did RTLM justify the massacre of the Tutsi in order to mobilize the Hutu to participate in genocide? This research paper argues that RTLM bears a direct responsibility in inflaming the ethnic cleansing through the deliberate and systematic use of propaganda that was based on genocidal rhetoric. Therefore, it served as a mechanism that contributed to the mass murder of the Tutsi minority. The paper will examine three factors to prove the extent of RTLM's responsibility in the genocide through the link between the broadcasts and the violence. First, I will outline how RTLM was created and who were its founders. Second, I will assess the content of RTLM broadcasts to discover the use of persuasive communication (fear-mongering, colonial-themed messages). Finally, I will integrate the listener's perspectives from the survivors and the perpetrators of the genocide to determine the extent of RTLM's responsibility in the genocide.

To understand the genocide and the role of RTLM, it is important to grasp the complex history of Rwanda from the colonial period as it created ethnic divisions between the Hutu and the Tutsi. Prior to colonialism, there was no evidence of division between the two groups as they spoke the same language, practiced similar religions, and even intermarried. As for labour and lifestyle, the Tutsi were cattle breeders while the Hutu engaged in agriculture. The ethnic division between the Tutsi and the Hutu began with the colonialists' implementation of the Hamitic hypothesis. This myth suggests that the Tutsi were physically and socially superior to the Hutu which defined a new racial national consciousness. The dichotomy of the Hamitic hypothesis was created by the Nile explorer John Hanning Speke who hypothesized that the "ancestors of the Tutsi" were the "carriers of the superior civilisation" from the "Galla of southern Ethiopia."⁴ The Tutsi were elevated by colonizers as superior beings as they were seen as intelligent and born leaders while the Hutu were perceived as simple folks. Further, the physical appearances of the Tutsi were idealized since they were considered African Caucasians⁵ with "'beautiful Greek profiles side by side with Semitic and even Jewish features, elegant golden red beauties.'"⁶ The Hamitic myth became a tool in shaping the political, social, and cultural relations between the Hutu and the Tutsi. The Hamitic myth pervaded the colonial period and into the Hutu 'democratic revolution' of 1959 to 1961. The revolution was a response to the end of the Tutsi monarchy on November 11, 1959, with the establishment of the First Republic in 1961, and Rwanda's independence on July 1, 1962.⁷ This reversed the oppressive Belgian system which favoured and privileged the

¹ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* Columbia University Press (1995), 223.

² Kyrsten Sinema, *Who Must Die in Rwanda's Genocide?: The State of Exception Realized*, Lexington Books, (2015), 113.

³ Dallaire, Roméo and Brent Beardsley, *Shake Hands with the Devil: the Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, Toronto: Random House Canada (2003), 1. People were hunted down, mutilated, stabbed, slaughtered, burned or buried alive, women and children were raped, mutilated, and subsequently killed.

⁴ Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, 7.

⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton University Press (2001), 94.

⁶ Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 54.

Tutsis, as Rwanda was now under Hutu domination, led by President Grégoire Kayibanda and the MDR-PARMEHUTU party (Mouvement Démocratique Républicain - Parti du Mouvement d'Émancipation Hutu). From this period onwards, the colonial ethnic ideology infiltrated into Rwandese everyday life where the ethnic divisions and confrontations with the Tutsi became more pronounced. In the post-revolution period, the Hutu dominated the government and military as Kayibanda promoted Hutu ethnic supremacy which led to a rise in violence, first against the Tutsi elite and their close circle. Between 1959 to 1967, around 20 000 Tutsi were killed while 300 000 Tutsi sought refuge in neighbouring countries.⁸

The shift in political dynamic was the overthrow of Kayibanda through a bloodless coup by Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana who established a single-party state under the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND). This shift is important because it resulted in the transfer of power from civilian to military hands. The Habyarimana regime favoured the "single party system" which was a totalitarian system with "the tightest [administrative control]"⁹ as the top military and political positions were given to the privileged Hutu elite who supported the extremist Hutu ideology. Moreover, Habyarimana reinforced Kayibanda's ethnic quota policy that restricted education and employment of the Tutsi to 9% which exacerbated ethnic divisions and caused further discrimination against the Tutsi.¹⁰ By October 1990, the Tutsi refugees in Uganda formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF); the group was formed "primarily [by] descendants of Tutsi families who had fled Rwanda after the Hutu Revolution."¹¹ The RPF launched an offensive invasion on Rwanda in October 1990 to gain the return of exiled Tutsi to Rwanda. This prompted a civil war between the MRND government and the RPF. To secure his reign and gain support for the civil war, Habyarimana promoted ethnic division through the use of propaganda by extolling the Hutu and accusing the Tutsi¹² within Rwanda of RPF crimes by labelling them as traitors to the regime and the nation.¹³

The civil war lasted until the signing of the Arusha Agreement on August 4, 1993, which brought a ceasefire to the war between the RPF and the MRND. The Arusha Agreement "called for a transitional, broad-based government, which was to be followed by multi-party elections,"¹⁴ the repatriation of Tutsi refugees, and the sharing of government and military positions with the Tutsi. Strong opposition to the power-sharing assigned by the Arusha Agreement came from a Hutu extremist group known as the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) which was dedicated to the Hutu cause of the 1959 revolution. The socio-political environment in Rwanda erupted in social envy and political hatred when on the evening of April 6, 1994, President Juvénal Habyarimana was assassinated which served as the catalyst for the genocide that erupted first in the capital Kigali, then spread across the country. Over the next three months, amidst the renewed civil war between the RPF and the militia (including the newly formed youth wing Interahamwe¹⁵), the mobilization of Hutu civilians to kill the Tutsi minority was validated as "[k]illing had become an act of self-defence because evil [...was threatening] to destroy [...the Hutu republic]."¹⁶

In the last three decades, the Rwandan genocide has received an extensive historiography from various historians, political scientists, scholars, and authors who ventured and devoted their research to answer the question, why did the Rwandan genocide happen. Scholars have analyzed the historical background of Rwanda, the socio-political environment, the moral reorientation through racialization, and the ethnic hatred towards the Tutsi. The wide-ranging scholarship and diverse trends in the historiography of the genocide points out that the radio program played a crucial role in fanning the flames of ethnic divisions and mobilizing Hutu civilians to partake in the genocide.

There are four major scholarly works in the historiography that focus on examining the role of RTLM and its influence on the Rwandan genocide. One year after the genocide, Jean-Pierre Chrétien and Reporters sans frontières published *Rwanda: Les Médias Du Génocide*. The study examines the role of hate propaganda in *Kangura*

⁸ Allan Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, International Development Research Centre (2007), 21.

⁹ Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, 76-77.

¹⁰ Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, 60.

¹¹ Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press (2006), 24.

¹² Even Hutus who do not support the MRND government and its extreme policies were targeted and persecuted.

¹³ The largest massacres and political assassinations of the Tutsi population occurred in Kibilira (1990), Bagogwe (1991), and Bugesera (1992). This was carried out by the local authorities and certain members from the ruling inner circle. "The Prosecutor V. Ferdinand Nahimana, Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, and Hassan Ngeze" Judgement and Sentence I United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, December 3, 2003, Historical Context, 7.

¹⁴ Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 24.

¹⁵ This translates to: "those who work together" or "those who attack together." Translation from Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 204.

¹⁶ Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, 226.

newspaper and RTLM from 1990 to 1994 through sketches and the journalistic style of language. The authors argue that these forms of media were appealing to Rwandans since they broke the strictly regulated media and censorship by using casual language, popular music, and grotesque imagery which was exploited by a close government circle for extremist purposes. This monograph is beneficial to my research because it concentrates exclusively on racist propaganda which helps to understand not only the development of ethnic politics but how they incited hatred through derogatory language and dehumanizing imagery. "The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide" by Christine Kellow and H. Leslie Steeves argues that political leaders recognized the potential to exploit Rwandese media dependency to incite and increase ethnic hatred and fear so that the massacres would not only be accepted but desirable.

The Media and the Rwanda Genocide edited by Allan Thompson brings forward a variety of approaches and opinions on the broader socio-political impact of local and international media in the Rwanda genocide. This edited collection of essays seeks to collect and define RTLM's influence and contribution to the genocide and the failure of international media coverage of the growing atrocities by "turning their backs"¹⁷ on Rwanda. Further, the purpose of the series of essays is to grasp the role of domestic and international media to shed light on what went wrong in order to avert future occurrences. The scholarly article "What Is the Relationship Between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda's 'Radio Machete'" by Scott Straus argues that radio did not cause the genocide but rather encouraged Hutu hardliners and advocated face-to-face mobilization which "helped those who advocated violence assert dominance and carry out the genocide."¹⁸ In this context, Straus looks beyond the simple framework of radio as he points out that the extremists controlled military units and militia which allowed them to exercise power in Rwanda which gives radio a secondary role in perpetrating the genocide. All of the above scholarship highlights that RTLM broadcasts played a role in promoting violence and ethnic divisions up to and during the genocide.

These scholarly works contributed to my understanding of RTLM's hate propaganda, but, my study situates itself in Straus' school of thought since he examines RTLM in the broader context through the complex socio-political environment of Rwanda. He argues that the radio was not the "primary driver of violence" but rather served as a "second-order impact"¹⁹ for elite Hutu hardliners to propagate its extremist ideology and induce Hutu support in partaking in the violence and killings for its political agenda. However, my research paper aims to expand on Straus' school of thought by examining to what extent RTLM broadcasts directly encouraged and justified participation in the extermination of the Tutsi.

Based on my research, I will demonstrate how the founders of RTLM conspired to use the radio platform to accommodate and change people's views in favour of its extremist agenda. To support my research question, I will also focus on an additional two sub-questions: first, how did RTLM rally the Hutus to support the regime and its extremist policies, and second, how did radio broadcasts justify the violence and killings that were carried out against the Tutsi. On that note, I will be analyzing RTLM's nationwide broadcasting program through these specific months: February, the end of March/beginning of April, May, and June of 1994 to pinpoint the strategy and the dynamics of the radio in order to reveal its contribution to the genocide. This period is of importance as it demonstrates RTLM's broadcasting before and during the genocide which in turn will show the involvement of RTLM in orchestrating the ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi.

This research will be based on the content analysis of RTLM transcripts which are accessible through the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies in Kinyarwanda, English, and French. In this context, I will be examining the transcripts that are available in both the English and French languages.²⁰ Moreover, my research will include oral testimonies and interviews with survivors, perpetrators, and RTLM animateurs. To locate these testimonies, I will refer to Aljazeera TV and the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) court case of December 3, 2003.²¹ By conducting this research, I will be able to put myself in a position to assess all sides at the time of the genocide. The main purpose is to identify similarities in themes and experiences in order to draw a conclusion on the extent and impact of propaganda on Rwandans. These testimonies are invaluable

¹⁷ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 6.

¹⁸ Scott Straus, "What Is the Relationship Between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda's 'Radio Machete,'" *Politics & Society* 35, no. 4 (2007), 631.

¹⁹ Straus, "What Is the Relationship Between Hate Radio and Violence?" 632.

²⁰ Since not all the transcripts are translated in English or French, I have referenced the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in order to assess the broadcasts.

²¹ The two directors for RTLM, Ferdinand Nahimana and Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, were found guilty of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, complicity in genocide, crimes against humanity. Judgement and Sentence, 356-358.

evidence and their experience will help me to determine the dominant narrative on how the founders of RTLM exploited the pre-existing socio-political environment to further instill fear and hatred which encouraged the systematic perpetration of violence against the Tutsi minority. The list of secondary sources in the bibliography will serve as a guide to understanding the complex socio-political environment in Rwanda, prior to and during the genocide.

Media played a vital role in spreading information and enlightening Rwandan society while shaping public opinion and promoting national identity. The radio was the primary source of news and had a large national reach in Rwanda due to the high illiteracy rate of 44 percent.²² On that note, this gave radio organizers great power in creating and managing the social movement of society. Another source of media was the infamous illustrated newspaper *Kangura* which advanced with an anti-Tutsi narrative.²³ But, due to the high cost of the newspaper, it was not as popular or effective in reaching a mass audience. For example, an issue of *Kangura* cost 100 Rwandan francs (US \$0.75) which equalled the average daily salary of workers in rural areas; it was even unaffordable for the director of a state agency, Office Rwandais d'Information (ORINFOR), who managed public media in Rwanda.²⁴ Further, the official government-owned radio station, Radio Rwanda, promoted government policies and often broadcast information to incite hate and prompt violence against the Tutsis. Radio Rwanda journalist Thomas Kamilindi testified at the ICTR court case that in March 1992 Radio Rwanda broadcasted unverified information that "the enemy *Inyenzi* were preparing to assassinate a certain number of Hutu leaders" in the Bugesera region.²⁵ This information was disseminated at least four times within a span of 24 hours which resulted in targeted massacres of the Tutsi residing in Bugesera.²⁶

With the signing of the Arusha Agreement in August 1993, any incitement to violence or ethnic discrimination was prohibited from being broadcast on official state-sanctioned media which led to the creation of the private radio station Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) by the extremist party CDR. RTLM adopted an interactive and informal style that contrasted the more dull broadcasting of Radio Rwanda. Moreover, before the genocide, statistics show that 58.7 percent of the urban population had a radio, which is significantly more than in rural areas where 27.3 percent of households had a radio.²⁷ By the time the genocide started, historians Mark Frohardt and Jonathan Temin noted that the government was providing free radios to its populace.²⁸

The main purpose of RTLM in Rwanda was to further advance with anti-Tutsi propaganda which was already set in place by Habyarimana's regime through *Kangura* and Radio Rwanda. This was also echoed by history professor Ferdinand Nahimana who argued that the "Tutsi were not indigenous to Rwanda."²⁹ Nahimana was one of the key founders, along with Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, of the comité d'initiative to set up RTLM in 1992.³⁰ Nahimana was the leading ideologist behind RTLM and affiliated with President Habyarimana's political party MRND while Barayagwiza was the primary founder and decision-maker for the Hutu radical party CDR.³¹ In addition, the CDR was an extension of Habyarimana's MRND party and it had links to death squads who were well-known for terrorizing opposition and

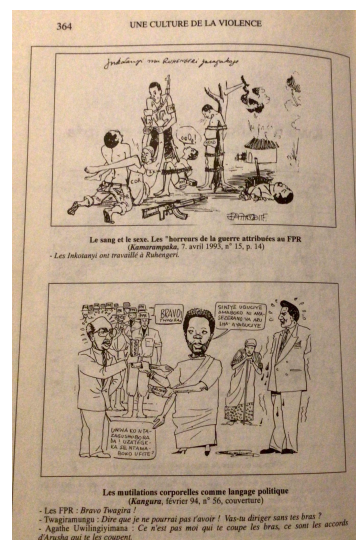


Image 1: Two images featured in two separate *Kangura* issues. Jean-Pierre Chrétien, Rwanda: *Médias Du Génocide*, Paris: Éditions Karthala (1995), 364.

²² Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 81. The census was conducted in August 1991. According to the chapter by Jean-Marie Vianney Higiro, between August 1991 and the outbreak of the genocide, the illiteracy rate rose by 10%, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* 81.

²³ Established in May 1990 and the last publication was in March 1994. Information for the publication was found in Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 62, 279.

²⁴ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 81, 73.

²⁵ Judgement and Sentence, 225.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Alison Des Forges, "Leave None to Tell the Story": *Genocide in Rwanda*, Human Rights Watch (1999), 76.

²⁸ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 390.

²⁹ Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide*, London: Zed Books (2009), 81.

³⁰ Judgement and Sentence, 2. Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 296.

³¹ Judgement and Sentence, 2.

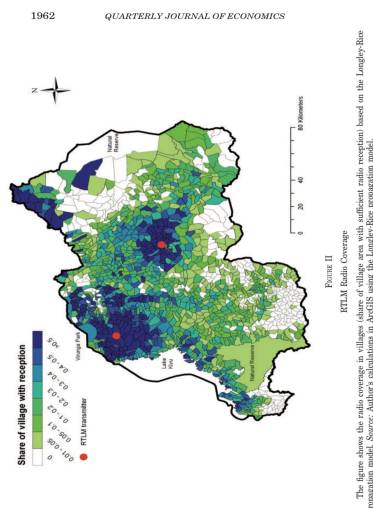


Image 2: RTLM radio coverage
David Yanagizawa-Drott, "Propaganda
And Conflict: Evidence From The
Rwandan Genocide," *The Quarterly
Journal of Economics* 129, no. 4 (2014),
1962.

murdering the Tutsi.³² The testimony of RTLM employee Georges Ruggiu confirms that RTLM was operated by Nahimana, Barayagwiza, and President Habyarimana since he was hired by them for the position of animateur. He revealed that everyone employed by RTLM was interviewed and approved by Nahimana.³³ That being said, it is evident that the groundwork of RTLM was set by powerful political members and the employees were carefully selected to carry out extreme anti-Tutsi propaganda.

RTLM was launched a month before the signing of the Arusha peace agreement and it started to reveal its true intent as it began to broadcast the radical policies of its founders which signalled that Rwandan elites were unwilling to respect the agreement. The station was set out to attract a mass audience which it did through the concept of interactive broadcasting. With interactive broadcasting, ordinary people were able to engage with the RTLM programs by phoning in to discuss various issues, exchange gossip, or share jokes with the animateurs and audience. By adopting an informal tone and referencing popular culture, the radio provided a sense

of belonging to its listeners as they were taken in as a part of the team. To attract a wider audience, RTLM played popular Congolese songs, and many witness testimonies confirmed that music was one of the reasons why RTLM gained popularity.³⁴ One of the most famous musicians was Simon Bikindi whose songs were mixed with new and traditional rhythms, and lyrics that referred to violence and racial hatred. Bikindi's rap lyrics were "mixed [in the] English, French and Kinyarwanda" language which drew the attention of the younger population.³⁵

RTLM broadcasting sought to advance CDR and MRND extremist policies by using propaganda tactics to persuade ordinary Hutu civilians that acts of violence towards the Tutsi were justified and necessary for the defence of the nation. In late October 1993, RTLM's propaganda tactics were identified and

contested by the Ministry of Information which was followed up with two meetings on November 26, 1993, and February 10, 1994.³⁶ The Ministry accused RTLM of misleading the population, instilling hatred, and causing ethnic division.³⁷ However, this was without merit since RTLM continued broadcasting these messages. Following Ruggiu's testimony, I discovered that Nahimana and Barayagwiza were in charge of hosting weekly meetings to discuss and prepare editorial policy, and provide daily instructions to the RTLM animateurs for the broadcasts.³⁸

The propagandists based their tactics on the book *Psychologie de la publicité et de la propagande*, and Lenin and Goebbels propagandist methods that include the "use of lies, exaggeration, ridicule and innuendo against the adversary" by suggesting that the adversary represents "war, death, slavery, repression, injustice and sadistic cruelty."³⁹ One of the methodologies suggests the system of connecting propaganda with real or hypothetical events that would not only provide credibility for RTLM but also fulfill the tasks of the extremist agenda. For example, one of the pre-constructed broadcasts that was announced as an emergency warning to the listeners was that there would be an RPF invasion and attack on the capital Kigali. The alert achieved its hidden agenda since the falsified warning led CDR members to attack and kill 70 Tutsi in Kigali because they were identified as a part of the RPF.⁴⁰ Moreover, the US Ambassador to Rwanda asked Barayagwiza for an end to the street violence but he replied

³² Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 24.

³³ Judgement and Sentence, 177.

³⁴ Judgement and Sentence, 149.

³⁵ Donald G. McNeil, Jr. "Killer songs: Simon Bikindi stands accused of writing folk music that fed the Rwandan genocide," *The New York Times Magazine*, March 17, 2002, 58. Gale Academic OneFile.

³⁶ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 284.

³⁷ Ibid., 284-285.

³⁸ Judgement and Sentence, 178.

³⁹ Ibid., 36.

⁴⁰ Judgement and Sentence, 105.

that there was nothing that he could do because party members were acting out of fear and anger to prevent the Tutsi invasion.⁴¹

The broadcasted alert was pure propaganda to incite violence and it engaged in ethnic stereotyping where the RPF were equated with the Tutsi in Rwanda. RTLM underlined to its Hutu listeners that "'les réfugiés tutsi rentrent et ils s'appellent des Inkotanyi mais il y a aussi des Inyenzi.'" ⁴² Inyenzi in Kinyarwanda translates into cockroach⁴³ which illustrates the dehumanization of the Tutsi. This derogatory language was used not only to distinguish the Tutsi from the Hutu, but it also insinuates that the Tutsi are pests that should be exterminated. It is evident that RTLM equated all Tutsis civilians with the RPF forces and as inyenzi, thus defining the entire Tutsi population as a dangerous threat to the Hutu. During the month of February, RTLM repeatedly stressed that "si les Inkotanyi récupèrent le pouvoir, ce sera la fin pour les Hutus."⁴⁴ In that sense, they started to shape propaganda about the Tutsi as the only enemy to the country and urged the Hutu to be vigilant and alert, and hence, RTLM foreshadowed the events to come.

RTLM continued to build its propaganda by drawing on the recent past to shape the Hutus' behaviour by reminding them of Tutsi hegemony and Hutu subordination before the 1959 Hutu revolution. RTLM drew on the events prior to 1959 to evoke anxiety and negative emotions in order to prepare the terrain and justify the upcoming violence against the Tutsi. One of the most vivid examples of a historical comparison that circulated at the end of March through April of 1994 was announced by the highly popular animateur, Kantano Habimana, "the thirst for power and blood for which the Tutsis of Burundi are known has just resurfaced."⁴⁵ Then, he continued convincingly:

What lesson can be drawn from what is happening in Burundi? Whatever the case may be, we must draw a lesson from the events of Burundi. Tutsi grandchildren who fled Rwanda gave themselves the name *Inkotanyi* and attacked Rwanda in 1990. They claimed they wanted to install democracy, but to date, it is obvious they want to take back power seized from them by the Hutus in 1959.⁴⁶

This RTLM broadcast demonstrates how historical comparisons were used to convince the Hutus that the Tutsis posed a threat to the Hutus' survival by alluding that the Tutsi not only wanted to reclaim their power but they also called for blood which instilled the fear of an armed rebellion against the Hutu. This particular broadcast recalled the memories of colonialism and the privilege of the Tutsi monarchy. In that way, the propagandists of RTLM implanted fear in the Hutus' minds that the post-colonial period could be reversed. For example, 69-year-old Tutsi Venant recalled that it "'made [people's] heads hot [ashyushe imitkwe]'"⁴⁷ while one farmer feared that the events of 1959 could be repeated.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Darryl Li suggests that RTLM's program "brought the past into the present, producing a more profound horror intended to prompt action."⁴⁹ In the following months, RTLM's broadcasts continued in the same fashion by implying that the Tutsis will "seize and hold on to power" over an extended period of 100 years.⁵⁰ With this narrative, RTLM drew on pre-existing fears by evoking the recent past to remind the Hutu of the consequences that if they do not take any precautions to secure their Hutu-led republic, the Tutsi and RPF would regain power.

Moreover, animateur Ruggiu ridiculed the power-sharing arrangements in the Arusha peace agreement by emphasizing that the Tutsi "who massacre the populace [... and] do not even represent over 10% [would be given] up to 50% of the posts" in the army and the government.⁵¹ He further emphasized his disagreement by stating that the Tutsi minority would "dominate the majority[,] both politically and socially."⁵² This emphasis sought to sway listeners into supporting the Hutu Power ideology that was against the multiparty system and the Arusha Agreement. It can be concluded that the extremists and RTLM worked together with a single purpose, to ignite and trigger Hutu fears to turn against the Tutsi.

⁴¹ Ibid., 106.

⁴² Kantano Habimana, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, February 1-2, 1994, 10.

⁴³ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 84.

⁴⁴ Kantano Habimana, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, February 1-2, 1994, 9.

⁴⁵ Kantano Habimana, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, March 23, 1994, 1.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁷ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 94. Original emphasis.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 94.

⁵⁰ Kantano Habimana, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, March 23, 1994, 12.

⁵¹ Georges Ruggiu, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, March 23, 1994, 15.

⁵² Ibid.

RTLM further maliciously conspired to weave a narrative to its listeners that thirteen young students were colluding with the RPF. In this particular case, on March 31, 1994, reporter Philippe Mbilizi singled out thirteen students from five schools in the Nyanza district as it was presumably revealed that they joined the RPF under Brigade Inziraguteba. The group of students was a mix of both genders, ranging from the ages of 13 to 18.⁵³ After publicly disclosing their personal information, Mbilizi warned "Donc chers auditeurs, vous avez remarqué que ces élèves sont très jeunes et peuvent être très dangereux. Nous devons dire que ceci confirme assez l'information qui a été diffusée sur les ondes de la RTLM, et selon laquelle le FPR aurait infiltré les écoles."⁵⁴ This example points out how RTLM used airwaves to persuade its audience that the information diffused by RTLM is reliable, accurate, and dependable since they had previously warned that the RPF was infiltrating Rwandan schools. In this way, RTLM's incendiary rhetoric alluded to its listeners to be vigilant about the RPF, even if it included young students.

To accommodate the extremist agenda, RTLM continued to fabricate a false narrative and plotted broadcasts to the point that the Hutu understood the killing of the Tutsi as a means of self-defence. An excellent example of this is on April 3 when broadcaster Valérie Bemeriki speculated that the RPF and its supporters were subversive, "bent on creating divisions in our country, to cause unrest and kill people [...] given that the RPF's plan is to [...] overthrow [and assassinate] Juvénal HABYARIMANA."⁵⁵ However, the speculation proved correct since, on the evening of April 6, President Habyarimana's plane was shot down which brought immediate political instability and insecurity across the country. RTLM's conspiracy led Hutu citizens to believe that the RPF had overthrown the government and was coming back to regain power and take over the country. One Hutu farmer stated that "when RTLM broadcast that Tutsi have finished off Hutu, then we started being afraid."⁵⁶ The assassination of the President not only confirmed to the Hutus that all the RTLM broadcasts were legitimate but also ensured to RTLM that its hate propaganda was gaining momentum since the killings erupted in the capital and rapidly spread throughout the country. In that sense, RTLM was able to instill its ideology without facing any criticism. Thus far, RTLM's scheme was conceived in a way that moulded public opinion through the fabrication of scandals and conspiracies which worked towards fulfilling its extreme ideology.

This volatile political environment was exploited ruthlessly by RTLM as they started to more readily supply the Hutu with information on who should be eliminated, where they could be located, and how it should be handled. RTLM urged and encouraged the Hutu to kill by claiming that all the evil and suffering is a result of the Tutsis and that they should be exterminated. For example, on May 15, 1994, Habimana urged the Hutu to take up arms to "combattre les inkotanyi, en finir avec eux, les exterminer, les balayer dans tout ce pays ... parce qu'il n'y a pas de refuge, pas de refuge alors ! Il n'y en a pas, il n'y en a pas !" ⁵⁷ Further on May 17, 1994, animateur Cantano told his listeners where, when, and how to kill:

people who live down there near Rugunga, even though it is raining, go out. You will see Inkotanyi's straw-huts in the marsh where horses are kept. It is clear then that this place shelters Inkotanyi. **I think that those who have guns should immediately go to these Inkotanyi before they listen to Radio RTLM and flee. Stand near this place and encircle them and kill them because they are there.**⁵⁸

A Hutu perpetrator who was part of the RTLM audience stated that he simply followed what he heard from RTLM and acted upon the information that was aired.⁵⁹ On that note, RTLM successfully built a program where listeners would not question or doubt the validity of the broadcasts. RTLM organizers were able to instill the idea that it was justified to murder the Tutsi because they endangered the security of the Hutu. With the established groundwork, RTLM was able to more readily supply the Hutu with "search notices" that explicitly listed the names of targeted people, their location, license plates, and familiar agricultural elements were added to direct and guide the perpetrators. Tutsi survivor Mugabo Arnaud, who was fourteen during the genocide, confirms that RTLM and its radio announcers were "reading off a list of those Tutsi who had to be killed [...] by] tell[ing] their names and where

⁵³ Information on the students was found in Philippe Mbilizi, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, March 31, 1994, 29-30.

⁵⁴ Philippe Mbilizi, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, March 31, 1994, 31.

⁵⁵ Valérie Bemeriki, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, April 3, 1994, 6. Original capitalization.

⁵⁶ Thompson, ed, *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 133.

⁵⁷ Chrétien, *Rwanda: Les Médias Du Génocide*, 305.

⁵⁸ Cantano, RTLM, Kigali, Rwanda, May 17, 1994, 4. Original emphasis.

⁵⁹ Al Jazeera, "Rwanda: From Hatred to Reconciliation," Media | Al Jazeera, Al Jazeera, September 29, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/al-jazeera-world/2015/9/29/rwanda-from-hatred-to-reconciliation>, 32:15.

they lived. [...] the radio announcers would relate what was happening around the nation."⁶⁰ The so-called target lists were provided by the government and military to the animateurs who then announced them on air, which was a direct call to conduct the executions. One example reads, "these are the drivers who carry the RPF collaborators, Sebukiganda from Butete in Kidaho[,], Laurencia and Bakenyeli's wife in Bisongera."⁶¹ In addition, the animateur Valerie Bemeriki testified that after she announced the names of Tutsi priests Father Ngoga, Father Ntagara, and Father Muvaro, they were subsequently killed.⁶²

Apart from the search lists, animateur Habimana used the Hamitic myth to instruct the Hutu to identify the Tutsi by "'just look[ing] at his small nose and then break it."⁶³ This example is of significance since it advocates for violence and division of people on the basis of physical appearance. In these circumstances, ordinary Hutu civilians turned on the Tutsi which resulted in the subsequent execution of those people which was encouraged and facilitated by RTLM. It shows how RTLM's audience perceived and conceptualized RTLM's propaganda since it helps estimate the effects of RTLM on participation in the genocide. On that note, some perpetrators expressed that they did not have any remorse because they acted from an instinct of self-preservation as RTLM persuaded and convinced them that they were killing their enemies, not their neighbours and fellow citizens.

In addition, during the peak of the genocide, RTLM continuously broadcasted the most popular musician, Bikindi, featuring his anti-Tutsi songs known as "Bene Sebahinzi" ("Sons of the Father of the Farmers") and "Nanga Abahutu" ("I Hate Hutus"). Both songs became the anthem for Hutu Power and were regularly broadcast. In these songs, the Hutus were portrayed as the "héros éponyme des 'cultivateurs'" who answered to the songs "appel passionné à la mobilisation ethnique."⁶⁴ Furthermore, the song "Bene Sebahinzi" was aired on June 3 by Habimana with the purpose of "s'unir [les Hutu] pour vaincre les inyenzi-inkotanyi."⁶⁵ The lyrics of the song utilize familiar societal elements such as agriculture (related to farmers and cultivation) and a popular Congolese rhythm with an instrumental background. By playing these songs over RTLM, it continuously dehumanized the Tutsi and bolstered the Hutus' morale, as back then the Hutu believed that those songs were good as testified by multiple perpetrators.⁶⁶ In a sense, it made the perpetrators feel proud to be Hutu because by killing the Tutsi, they were securing the future free of inyenzi which made the killings justified.

In light of the evidence presented above, it can be concluded that the massacre was not a spontaneous act, but rather it was a dictated and planned genocide that was supported by extremist elites who used the radio platform to orchestrate the ethnic cleansing. RTLM was the sole voice of authority that informed Rwandans about what they needed to know since there was no other radio station operating to counter RTLM's extremist agenda. My findings suggest that the founders of RTLM were able to turn and mislead ordinary Hutu civilians in favour of their policies. An examination of RTLM's broadcasts and its founders demonstrates how an extremist ideology through the sheer efficiency of propaganda can be used to shift societal thinking and accommodate their radical ideology. Further, RTLM used derogatory words to distinguish and separate the Tutsi from the Rwandan ethnic population by drawing on the recent past. This raised fears about the atrocities under the Tutsi monarchy which in turn pushed the ideology of self-preservation that made the violence and killings justified. The assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana drastically changed RTLM's radio programming since the radio non-stop called for the extermination of the Tutsi. The selected months under examination were recognized as an escalation in hate speech, anti-Tutsi propaganda, and openly called for the mobilization of Hutu civilians to carry out executions of the Tutsi, under the guise of self-defence. The evidence shows that RTLM encouraged and pushed for action against the Tutsi by providing hit lists and descriptions which were consistently broadcast throughout the genocide and can be classified as a pattern of behaviour that mobilized the perpetrators and increased the scale of the killings. Because of RTLM broadcasting, the killings became so massive that Human Rights Watch researcher Alison Des Forges received many urgent and desperate telephone calls from people in Rwanda begging to "stop that radio."⁶⁷ The Rwandan genocide of 1994 is the first genocide that occurred in Africa and has been described as the most appalling event in modern African

⁶⁰ Samuel Totten and Rafiki Ubaldo, eds, *We Cannot Forget: Interviews with Survivors of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press (2011), 180.

⁶¹ Al Jazeera, "Rwanda: From Hatred to Reconciliation," 37:45.

⁶² Judgement and Sentence, 164.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Chrétien, *Rwanda: Les Médias Du Génocide*, 342.

⁶⁵ Chrétien, *Rwanda: Les Médias Du Génocide*, 341.

⁶⁶ Judgement and Sentence, 148-149; one Tutsi survivor states that the "music was good," Totten and Ubaldo, eds, *We Cannot Forget*, 158.

⁶⁷ Judgement and Sentence, 164.

history. It has been twenty-eight years since the end of the Rwandan genocide when the world witnessed how broadcast media can be a powerful tool in forming public perception and opinion, but the question that remains is whether we have learned lessons from the past and do we know how to identify extremist propaganda at both the individual and governmental level?

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Introduction

The ancestral cult and its presence are well established in Mesopotamian literature; however, there is a lack of scholarly discussion on the purpose and function of rituals such as the *kispum*. The *kispum* is a monthly offering of food to ancestors to sustain them in the afterlife. This paper seeks to explore the function and significance of the *kispum* within Mesopotamian religion during the Old Babylonian period with an emphasis on how the ritual maintained social cohesion and familial identity. The first half of the paper focuses on identifying the existence and requirements of the *kispum* through letters, prayers, administrative documents, and myths from the Old Babylonian period that describe it. Textual evidence is then compared with the findings of material culture from archaeological investigations of *kispum* rooms in the Old Babylonian period households of Lower Mesopotamia and Mari. After this, the focus shifts to how the evidence discussed indicates that the *kispum* ritual was a vehicle for social cohesion and familial identity in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia.

Ancestral cults were well-established in numerous ancient societies and researchers still seek to understand their purposes and effects on society. In Old Babylonian Mesopotamia, the ancestral cult took the form of the *kispum* ritual, a funerary offering performed monthly to sustain the dead in the netherworld. During this period, the *kispum* promoted social cohesion and maintained family identity by connecting the living family to its ancestors. To understand how these connections were formulated, defining the *kispum* and discussing the parameters of the ritual is necessary. Letters, administrative documents, and household sanctuaries identify where, when, and how the *kispum* ritual occurred.

Following the discussion on the *kispum* itself, this paper examines prayers and letters to identify how families used their ancestors to connect to different social groups, clans, and occupations. Through these connections, families defined aspects of their identity and understood their position in the world. The discussion also focuses on the differences between the royal and lower class *kispum* rituals to determine how these two groups used the *kispum* to solidify social hierarchy and, as a result, maintain social cohesion. Through the examination of textual and archaeological information, the societal effects of the *kispum*, which was maintaining social cohesion and familial identity, can be understood.

Defining the *kispum*

The definition of *kispum* developed and changed over time; however, this paper focuses on the Old Babylonian period, and therefore, only texts from this period will be discussed. Evidence for the definition of *kispum* comes from funerary offerings, prayers, letters, and administrative documents.¹ During the Old Babylonian period, the word was written in its older, Sumerian form as *ki-si-ga* or using some cuneiform representation of the Akkadian equivalent, *kispum*; both of these were used in Babylon and Ur.² Nevertheless, the semantic range remains stable insofar as the terms relate to funerary offerings.³

A phrase commonly seen in Babylonian texts is *kispam kasāpum*, which means "to make a food or drink offering". The word *kispum* derives from the verb *kasāpum*, so it is necessary to define *kasāpum* to understand fully what *kispum* means. The verb *kasāpum* is defined as "to break off a piece", "to be cut or broken", or "to chip something". In the context of the *kispum*, *kasāpum* refers to the breaking of bread for offerings as in, for example, the phrase 1 *ninda la- 'ta ina muḫḫi paššūri i-ka-sa-ap* translates to "he breaks a bread cake upon the sacrificial table".⁴ The sacrificial table in question was likely the altar involved in the *kispum* ritual, and researchers believe the text

¹ 'EPSD', accessed 20 February 2022, <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/nepsd-frame.html>.

² Given this alternation, the nature of Akkadian grammar, and the intricacies of cuneiform script, there are numerous variations in the original texts. Therefore, in the interest of clarity, only the lemma *kispum* will be used moving forward.

³ This is easily confirmed by consulting the previously adduced source.

⁴ Miguel Civil et al., *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: Volume 8, K*. (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2008), 242.

describes the first step of the *kispum* ritual, providing food offerings to ancestors.⁵ In other texts, *kispum* refers directly to offering bread to ancestors. From an Old Babylonian period text, the line *ninda ki-si-ga mu-na-ni-gar* means “to lay out bread for ancestral spirits”, the text thus indicating that the *kispum* involved laying out bread for the ancestral family.⁶

The term *kispum* does not only relate to offerings; it also appears in the context of ancestral care. In a letter from Mari, a farmer asked for help in collecting barley to send to Babylon for the *kispum* because the date of the ritual was approaching. One line of the letter, *ki-ma ti-du-ú ki-si-ga ú-ta-ak-ki-ba-am* translates to “as you know, (the day for) care of the dead has drawn near”. After this line, the farmer explained that the barley was for the ancestors. Here, *ki-si-ga* refers to care for the dead by providing food offerings.⁷

From these texts, different aspects of the definition of *kispum* are identifiable and together can reconstruct a workable definition. For the purpose of this paper, *kispum* can thus be defined as providing a ritual offering of food (such as bread) to a family’s ancestors in order to care for them. The definition of the word directly relates to the purpose of the ritual.⁸

The *kispum* Ritual

The *kispum* ritual was intended to support ancestors in the underworld and encompassed a monthly meal offered in private households and a bi-weekly meal in public for significant individuals such as kings.⁹ The ritual involved three steps: offering food (often referred to as *kispam kasāpum*), pouring water, and invoking the deceased’s name.¹⁰ These three steps were carried out at a specific time of the month, in a specific room within the home, and by one specified individual. From Old Babylonian period texts and excavated remains of households, the time, location, and requirements of the *kispum* are identifiable.

Textual Evidence

Why the Ritual Occurred

Several texts mentioning the *kispum* from the Old Babylonian period exist across Mesopotamia and provide information about where, when, and why the ritual occurred. One of the oldest tablet sources on the *kispum* is an incantation text that discusses appeasing angry ancestors who were causing trouble for living descendants. To appease the spirits, the family performed the *kispum* at their ancestors’ graves on the day of the new moon.¹¹ The family grave could be a possible location for the ritual, but archaeological evidence suggests the *kispum* occurred most commonly within the home. The text also indicates that the only way to keep ancestors from harming the living was to care for them by performing the *kispum* ritual.

The *ūm bibbulim*, the “day of darkness or disappearance”, 𒌦, the new moon, was referenced in numerous cuneiform texts from the 2nd to 1st millennia BCE over which the *kispum* ritual developed. In the Babylonian calendar, the *ūm bibbulim* occurs on the 29th or 30th day of the lunar month.¹² Ancestors returned to the realm of the living on this day because the last light of the moon opened the gates of the netherworld. Once ancestors enjoyed the *kispum*, they returned to the netherworld and the gates closed. The ability of ancestors to return to the realm of the living on the new moon demonstrates why the *kispum* occurred across Mesopotamia each month. A prayer recorded on tablet CBS 473 from Nippur dating to the 3rd day of the 4th month of year Ammi-ditana 33 asked the moon god Sîn to release the ancestors from the underworld so they might eat their bread offerings. The prayer suggests that the moon god Sîn was responsible for the *eṭemmu*, the spirit of an ancestor, leaving the underworld. Praying to Sîn, who guaranteed ancestors safe passage to and from the netherworld, ensured that ancestors arrived home for the *kispum* and received their offerings.¹³

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Akio Tsukimoto, “Peace for the Dead, or *kispu(m)* Again,” *Orient* 45, (2010): 102.

⁷ Renata MacDougal, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance and the Family Dead,” in *Continuing Bonds in Bereavement: New Directions for Research and Practice*, ed. Denis Klass and Edith Steffen (New York: Routledge, 2017), 265.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Karel van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria & Israel: Continuity & Change in the Forms of Religious Life* (Leiden: E. J Brill, 1996), 49.

¹⁰ Renata MacDougal, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance”, 262; Renata MacDougal, “Remembrance and the Dead in Second Millennium BC Mesopotamia” (University of Leicester, 2007), 149.

¹¹ Tsukimoto, 102.

¹² MacDougal, “Remembrance and the Dead”, 155.

¹³ Ibid., 128–131.

A letter to Hammurabi from Šamaš-īdāzir, an administrator to Bēlšunu, overseer of the southern Babylonian Empire, discussed wood not being available for the *kispum*, though barley and wine were. The letter suggests that they needed wood for a fire, which was part of the ritual. Researchers hypothesize that torches were lit and placed outside the home to guide the *eṭemmu* back to the ancestral home to engage in the *kispum* offering.¹⁴ Upon the ancestors' arrival at the house, the *pāqidum*, or one appointed (to take care of the dead), performed the three steps of the ritual, including pouring water, providing food offerings, and invoking the names of the deceased. If Mesopotamians used torches to guide their ancestors, it suggests that they felt a need to ensure their ancestors returned home for the *kispum*. The prayer to Šin also demonstrates that families took extra measures to guarantee that their ancestors passed from the underworld to the land of the living. The torches, prayers, and consistent performance of the ritual were likely implemented as safeguards because uncared for ancestors caused hardships to befall the family, as seen in Old Babylonian incantation texts.¹⁵

The Offerings and Timing of the kispum

The types of food offerings varied between households based on their status and wealth. In a Babylonian letter, a sister asked her brother for a sheqel's worth of garlic, onion, and fish to supply their ancestors with the *kispum* offering. These foods are representative of offerings provided for the *kispum* in lower-class households and differ drastically from *kispum* offerings at temples and palaces. From the temple of Ninkur, an administrative text (EMAR 452) recorded on the day of the new moon of the fifth month documented *kispum* offerings that consisted of birds, a gallon of barley, flour, figs, and pomegranates.¹⁶ Kings often had their subjects supply these offerings for their ancestors, making the *kispum* a public spectacle for the city. While kings performed the *kispum* privately inside the palace, they purposely involved their subjects in collecting and displaying the offerings for their ancestors to communicate their status and that their ancestors were of greater importance.

An abundance of luxury food offerings is not the only way royals separated themselves from lower-class *kispum* rituals. Mari administrative documents known as "the *kispum* texts" record the date, a list of food items provided as offerings, and the purpose of the offering. The date on the tablets suggests that *kispum* offerings occurred in intervals, with the royal *kispum* on the new moon and full moon and the family *kispum* once a month on the new moon. Royal *kispum* rituals occurred more frequently and with larger quantities of food.¹⁷ Possibly the kings of Mari engaged in the *kispum* more often to communicate that their ancestors deserved and required more offerings to sustain them in the afterlife.¹⁸ The *naptan šarrim* documents from Larsa, written during the reign of Rim-Šin I, document the first and sixteenth of the month as the dates for the *kispum*. They reserved the sixteenth for the royal *kispum* ritual and the first for royal and lower-class *kispum* rituals.¹⁹ Patterns for performing the *kispum* are consistent across Mari and Larsa, as the first of the month correlates with the new moon and the sixteenth with the full moon.²⁰ There are multiple texts describing the *kispum* ritual occurring on the same day and at least two indicating the same pattern for royal and lower class *kispum* rituals. References from different city-states such as Emar, Mari, and Babylon demonstrate that the practice of the *kispum* was widespread and well-established in Mesopotamia.

Before the new moon, family ancestors ascended to the living realm to join in a meal with their family. After the new moon, ancestors returned to the netherworld until the next month.²¹ Offerings consisted of barley and bread-based foods, but for the upper classes, there was more diversity. Textual evidence indicates when the ritual

¹⁴ Ibid., 157.

¹⁵ Ibid., 157.

¹⁶ Ibid., 167–169. Note that the reference glosses the fifth month as *apum*.

¹⁷ Sarah Lange, "The Next Level and the Final Stage: Consistency and Change in the Provision of Meals for the Dead in Their Different Stages of Existence and the Accompanying Feasting Acts of the Living, as Evidenced at Mari, Qanta, and Ugarit," in *Feasting in the Archaeology and Texts of the Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Peter Altmann and Janling Fu (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014), 107–108.

¹⁸ Ibid., 107.

¹⁹ Jack Murad Sasson, "Accounting Discrepancies in the Mari Nl.GUB [NIG.DU] Texts," in *Zikir Šumim. Assyriological Studies Presented to F. R. Kraus*, ed. G. van Driel et al. (Leiden, 1982), 326.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead", 174.



Figure 1: Ur. Table altar and pedestal at No. 1 Boundary Street outlining the bowls placed on the altar.

divided the inheritance and split their father's home into separate living spaces. Linear homes had a central indoor area, a courtyard, and a cultic space in the rear room of the house as in the bipolar model.²³ The rear room the bipolar and linear homes, holding family archives and tombs, suggests a physical location for the family to connect with their dead and perform the *kispum* ritual.²⁴ Altars and other physical installations for ancestral worship are located exclusively in the rectangular rear room, usually along the corner of the shorter wall. Discoveries of curtain rods suggest that hanging a curtain in front of the altar helped keep it private.²⁵ Adjacent to the altar was a hearth and its associated chimney. The term *išertum* appears in inheritance texts and can mean "dedicated", suggesting the cultic space was private and required to be in a specific location.²⁶ The dedication of the backrooms to ancestral worship explains why burials were also present in these spaces. A classic example of the Old Babylonian Period household sanctuary at Ur is from No. 1, Boundary Street. The ritual space in No. 1 includes a pedestal altar with multiple bowls placed on top of it (see figure 1). The altar is located directly above the family tombs, and the bowls on the pedestal likely held remains from a *kispum* meal.²⁷ The altar was placed on the short wall of the back room and hidden from the view of guests.

Household 4 on Paternoster Row, located in the southeast section of site AH in Ur, had similar features in terms of its cultic spaces. Room 4, located northwest of the courtyard, included a table

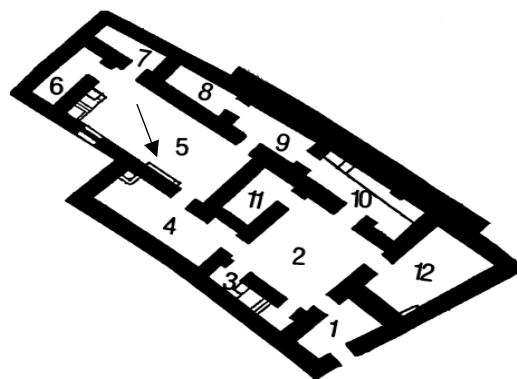


Figure 2: Ur. Plan of No. 4 Paternoster Row highlighting the bench discovered in room 5

²² Sara Tricoli, "The Old-Babylonian Family Cult and its Projecting on the Ground: A Cross-Disciplinary Investigation," in *La Famille Dans Le Proche-Orient Ancien: Réalités, Symbolismes Et Images: Proceedings of the 55e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Paris*, ed. Lionel Marti (Winona Lake Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 475, 47–48.

²³ Ibid., 52.

²⁴ Caitlin E. Barrett, "Was Dust Their Food and Clay Their Bread?" *Journal of Ancient Near East Religion* (2007): 36; Tricoli, 61.

²⁵ Ibid., 62.

²⁶ MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead", 205–207.

²⁷ Barrett, 36; MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead in Second Millennium BC Mesopotamia", 191.



Figure 3: Ur. Pedestal altar in Room 5 of household No. 4, Paternoster Row

altar with a panelling design in the north corner. Grave L/2 was entombed under the floor of room 4.²⁸ Here there are further connections between cultic spaces and the placement of graves. In room 5, a bench topped with baked brick was discovered (see figure 2). Benches are found in rooms joining the cultic space because family members not participating in the *kispum* could sit and observe the ritual. Room 5 was likely the original sanctuary before the house underwent a renovation and the cultic space moved to room 4, a new addition to the home (see figure 2).²⁹ Rooms 4 and 5 demonstrate the

permanency of the domestic cult in the household, and these rooms possibly served two separate households connected through family ties, as common with linear homes.

No. 1, Baker's Square had similarities to No. 4, Paternoster Row and No. 1, Boundary Street. In the linear home, the cultic space was identified in room 5, where the remains of a pedestal altar, a hearth, chimney, and burial below the floor were found (see figure 4). The house plan and renovations indicate an extended family lived in the home under the household head named Ningalnamni²edu, according to a cylinder seal discovered in room 4. Room 4, beside Room 5, appears to be a room dedicated to the household head, possibly a bedroom or space for only males. As Tricoli discusses, there is a connection between ritual spaces and dedicated spaces for the household head and heir because they oversaw the *kispum* offerings.³⁰ Rooms adjacent or joining the *kispum* room were often dedicated to the family leaders, as seen at No. 1 Baker's Square.

From the palace of Zimri-Lim in Mari, literary texts found in the main reception suite included incantations, ritual texts, and Mesopotamian legends. The *kispum* also took place in this reception suite, but other ceremonies occurred in the adjacent room. While not identical to household ritual spaces in Ur, there is a connection between the location of textual archives and the performance of *kispum* rituals. The textual archives and altars used for the *kispum* were discovered in the same room in the homes at Ur and the Zimri-Lim palace in Mari. The palace appeared to have two ceremonial rooms, likely because there was more available space than in lower-class households.³¹

Physical installations in the form of altars, hearths, family tombs, and occasionally benches occurring in one single space within the

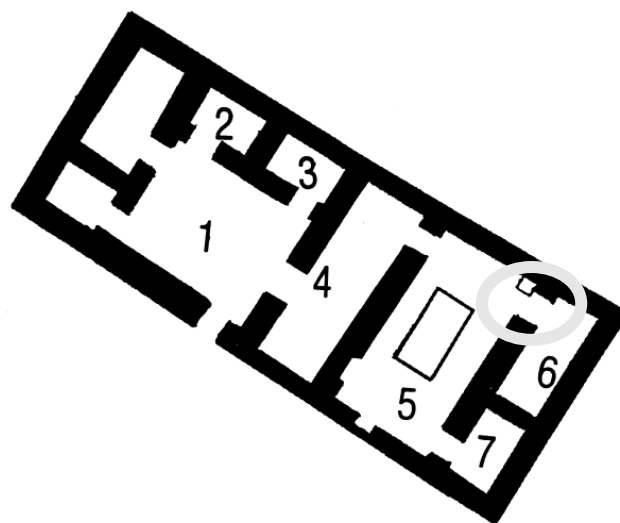


Figure 4: Ur. Plan of Boundary Street household No.1 highlighting the pedestal altar

²⁸ MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead", 219.

²⁹ Ibid., 217.

³⁰ Renata MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead", 217.

³¹ Lauren Risvert, "Memory," in *Ritual, Performance, and Politics in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 120.

households of Ur and the Zimri-Lim palace of Mari demonstrate the significance of the *kispum* to the Mesopotamians. For lower-class houses, there was limited space for daily activities, but the family still actively chose to dedicate a room to the *kispum* ritual and ancestral worship. To dedicate these spaces signifies the *kispum* was a necessity for the family and of importance.

Figurines

Funeral figurines or chair models are often present in households, palaces, and graves as part of funerary and *kispum* rituals. The Old Babylonian period text "The Messenger and the Maiden" describes funeral rites and gives insights into the steps in invoking the dead. The text describes a figurine of the deceased individual being wiped with bread and given water to drink. The figurine is then dressed and placed in a model chair, which allows the individual to enter the netherworld. The chair served as a physical location for a spirit to be during funeral offerings, and perhaps, the *kispum*.³² The *kispum*, while offered monthly to ancestors, is still considered a funerary offering by historians and archaeologists. Since similarities between the funerary rites described in this text and the *kispum* exist, the model chairs linked to *kispum* rituals may have served a similar purpose to those from the "Messenger and the Maiden" text.³³

In a ritual for the god Šamaš, similar steps believed to be part of the *kispum* exist. The priests swept the ground, sprinkled water, and put a chair out for Šamaš, in which the Mesopotamians believed Šamaš sat while they completed the sacrifice. For the family ghosts of Šamaš, the priests placed chairs on the left side of the room and provided them with *kispum* offerings. The priests then recited incantations and made a sacrifice to Šamaš.³⁴ Since the chairs appear to be part of the *kispum* offerings for the family of Šamaš, historians hypothesize that the chairs for the god's family ghosts served the same function as the model chairs found in cultic spaces within households. Since Šamaš' family sat in the chair as did the deceased during funerals, as the "Messenger and the Maiden" text implies, the chairs put out for the ancestors during the *kispum* were likely a place for them to occupy upon entering the realm of the living. When applying this text to the *kispum* rituals, one must be cautious because it discusses a major Mesopotamian god and his family rather than the ancestors of individual households. Similarities between state and family religion exist; however, the interpretation of model chairs as items for ancestors to occupy remains a conjecture of researchers.³⁵

Summary of Evidence

Texts from Babylon, Mari, and Larsa identify the timing of the *kispum* and its requirements. The lower classes' *kispum* occurred on the day of the new moon while the royal *kispum* took place on the new and full moon. The foods offered to ancestors differed, but bread was most common. For the royal *kispum*, Mesopotamians provided higher-quality offerings, such as fruits, meats, and barley-based meals.³⁶ Incantation texts suggest the ritual helped sustain spirits in the afterlife to keep them from haunting their living family members. By praying to the moon god Sîn and placing a torch outside the home, families ensured that their ancestors arrived home for their *kispum* offerings and did not become vengeful.

Archaeological evidence is challenging to interpret because it requires excavators to take on a new worldview and understand how Mesopotamian people felt or observed their world without heavy reliance on textual information. Excavations in Ur and Mari suggest the cultic space of the home was in the back room, where rituals were kept private. These spaces often had a pedestal altar and a hearth with a chimney. Family tombs were located below the floorboards of the cultic space, which may have been a practical choice as it kept the individuals they were concerned with nearby.³⁷ Royal palaces differed in this aspect, as family tombs were located outside the palaces; however, as with households in Ur, the storage of textual archives and the performance of the *kispum* occurred in the same room. Rooms adjacent to the household sanctuary were often under the control of the family heir, suggesting that a link existed between this individual and the *kispum*. Archaeologists have discovered figurines and model chairs in tombs, cultic spaces within the home, and palaces. Based on Old Babylonian period

³² Renata MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead", 183.

³³ Ibid., 183.

³⁴ Ibid., 264.

³⁵ Ibid., 186.

³⁶ Renata MacDougal, "Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance", 265; Tricoli, 65.

³⁷ Barrett, 36.

texts describing funerary rites, these models would seem to have been for the ancestor to sit in or possess, allowing the family to observe the presence.³⁸

The timing, location, and requirements of the *kispum* are identifiable from the discussed evidence. Distinguishing the parameters of the ritual helps to understand how the *kispum* maintained social cohesion and family identity.

The Family and the *kispum*

The Role of the *pāqidum*

The responsibility of the *kispum* falls on the family heir as the one to succeed the father in the position of head of household, usually the eldest son; however, there are documented cases of female heirs.³⁹ The heir had different titles, including *pāqidum*, which means “the one appointed” to take care of the dead. This title bestowed the heir with ritual responsibilities in the matter of the *kispum*.⁴⁰

Inheritance texts and wills legitimized the religious roles of the heir and dedicate the cultic spaces within the house to them.⁴¹ From Mari, Emar, and Nuzi, inheritance texts mention the eldest sons receiving the *paššur sakkim/banšur za-gû-la*, the ceremonial table, as part of their new role. It is believed these ceremonial tables refer to the altars used in the *kispum*. As Tricoli has identified, these ceremonial tables or altars existed in the back rooms of Old Babylonian period houses where the *kispum* occurred. From Nippur, an inheritance text dedicated the *é ki-sè-ga*, meaning the *kispum* room, to the eldest son. A text also bestowed the *išertum* and *ki-tuš*, which seem to refer to the cultic spaces within the home, on the eldest son. The dedication of the ceremonial altar and the household’s *kispum* room links the *pāqidum* to the material culture associated with the *kispum*, indicating it was their possession and therefore, their responsibility.⁴²

During the ritual, the *pāqidum* sat in the sanctuary and had the chief position. At Ur, house hallways sometimes had benches that stretched outward from the *kispum* room. The seats were likely multi-functional, but one known use is for the family to sit and observe the *kispum* ritual. The benches physically separated the family from the *pāqidum*, possibly placing the family in an observant role as the *kispum* was the responsibility of the family heir alone.⁴³ If this is the case, the *kispum* mimicked daily life and reinforced familial organization as the heir oversaw some of the family’s affairs, making other family members subordinate to them.⁴⁴

The responsibility of performing the *kispum* was serious because failure to do so resulted in vengeful ancestors who caused hardships to befall the family. The family entrusted the *pāqidum* with carrying out religious responsibilities such as communicating between the living and deceased family members and performing the *kispum*.⁴⁵ The reliance of the family on the *pāqidum* allowed them to solidify their position of leadership within the household and possibly control other family members.⁴⁶

There are exceptions to the rule where females or second-born sons engage in the performance of the *kispum* or hold the position of *pāqidum*. In an Old Babylonian letter (British Museum 17495), a sister explains to her brother that she has not received garlic, fish, or onions and has nothing to offer their ancestors for the *kispum*. The author specifies that the *kispum* was for the household of the brother’s family, suggesting she was permitted to perform the ritual on the family head’s behalf.⁴⁷ It is possible individuals had permission to perform the *kispum* at the discretion of the family head or had sole responsibility. In these cases, the role of the *pāqidum* still reflected the same power but did not mimic the social hierarchy. The *pāqidum* was a meaningful role within the household; however, the *pāqidum* alone did not promote family identity.⁴⁸ The inclusion of the entire family in the *kispum* created family cohesion, identity, and memory.

³⁸ Ibid., 36–37; Renata MacDougall, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance”, 265; Tricoli, 65.

³⁹ Karel van der Toorn, “Second Millennium West Asian Family Religion (Mesopotamia, Emar, Nuzi),” in *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, edited by John Bodel and Saul M. Olyan (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 25.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 25; Renata MacDougall, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance”, 265.

⁴¹ Antoine Jacquet, “Family Archives in Mesopotamia during the Old Babylonian Period”, in *Archives and Archival Documents in Ancient Societies: Legal Documents in Ancient Societies IV*, ed. By Michele Faraguna (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2013), 70.

⁴² Renata MacDougall, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance”, 265; Tricoli, 65.

⁴³ Tricoli, 66.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁵ Barrett, 54–55; Renata MacDougall, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance”, 265.

⁴⁶ Tricoli, 61.

⁴⁷ MacDougall, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance,” 265–268.

⁴⁸ MacDougall. “Remembrance and the Dead,” 256–267.

The Role of the Ancestor

To understand the ancestors' role in Mesopotamia, it is necessary to discuss human composition. There were two parts of one's cosmic makeup, including the *tēmmum* and *eṭemmmum*. The *tēmmum* was the personality given to humans by the gods to carry out their divine work. Upon death, the *tēmmum* ceased to exist.⁴⁹ The *eṭemmmum* was the spirit or memory of a person which persisted after death. The *enūma eliš* explains the flesh and blood of the god Qingu created the *eṭemmmum*, the soul or spirit which resided in the netherworld after death.⁵⁰ The *eṭemmmum* was the part of the soul involved in the *kispum* ritual, and the remembrance of an individual's name allowed that person to return to the realm of the living in the form of a protective family spirit.⁵¹

Within Mesopotamia, ancestors were specific deceased individuals with living descendants who venerated and honoured them to sustain them in the afterlife. Becoming an ancestor was a privilege and only occurred when specific conditions performed by the living were met.⁵² Male family members became ancestors and were invoked by their personal name, while women who became ancestors were often referred to as "the wife of" followed by the husband's name. Daughters were only ancestors if they had been priestesses or remained with their patrilineal family.⁵³ Once an ancestor, an individual became active and influenced decisions about living family members, politics, and religion. To be invoked and receive their *kispum* offerings, the living had to call out the names of their ancestors.⁵⁴

The deceased ancestors affected the lives of the living in beneficial or maleficent ways depending on the continual offerings of the *kispum*. Curse inscriptions from Babylon suggest that forgotten ancestors became vengeful because the family ignored their history. Continuing to care for the dead to protect the family history is essential to understanding why the *kispum* was performed and how it maintained family identity.⁵⁵

Researchers believe the stories of ancestral spirits were transmitted orally through generations. From the oral stories, a memory of a shared past with ancestors developed, and families used their history to legitimize their roles in society and connect to kin groups.⁵⁶ The ancestors' position in Mesopotamian history is significant because they tied the living family to its past, which provided the living with a way to understand themselves and their role in the world.⁵⁷

Maintaining Social Cohesion

The practice of the *kispum* in the Old Babylonian period suggests the ritual was a mechanism of social cohesion as all people used their ties to their ancestors to promote familial identity, which brought a sense of belongingness, and their social position, which reinforced the social hierarchy. The known purpose of the ritual to the Mesopotamians was to sustain ancestors in the afterlife by providing them with food offerings and invoking their name so they did not become vengeful. The *kispum* maintaining social cohesion and family identity may have been a by-product of the ritual, as the living were likely not aware that the *kispum* promoted these ideas.⁵⁸

The family transmitted oral stories about its ancestors during the *kispum*, and the stories developed a social memory based on a shared past with their ancestors. The shared history provided the family with a need to continue their familial legacy, whether that be a social position or occupation.⁵⁹ Kings tied themselves to past royalty to legitimize their titles, and through *kispum* offerings, continuously reinforced their familial connections.⁶⁰ A second-

⁴⁹ Dina Katz, "Death they Dispensed to Mankind the Funerary World of Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Historiae* 2 (2005): 62–63 and Michaela Bauks, "'Soul-Concepts' in Ancient Near Eastern Mythical Texts and Their Implications," in *Vetus Testamentum* 66 (2016): 186–187.

⁵⁰ Katz, 62–63; Bauks, 186–187.

⁵¹ Bauks, 188.

⁵² Anas al Khabour, "Burials and Funerary Practices Along the Middle Euphrates Valley During the Early Bronze Age," in *Isimu* vol 20–21 (2017): 167; Katz, 58–59; Renata MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 67.

⁵³ Van der Toorn, "Second Millennium West Asian Family Religion," 29.

⁵⁴ Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria & Israel*, 49; Renata MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 67.

⁵⁵ MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 107.

⁵⁶ Al Khabour, 165–167; van der Toorn, "Second Millennium West Asian Family Religion," 25.

⁵⁷ MacDougal, "Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance," 265.

⁵⁸ Al Khabour, 165–177; MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 290.

⁵⁹ MacDougal, "Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance," 290, 295; Theodore J. Lewis, "Family, Household, and Local Religion at Late Bronze Age Ugarit," in *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity* ed. John Bodel and Saul M. Oylan, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 60–67.

⁶⁰ Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria & Israel*, 23.

millennium administrative text from Mari lists the names invoked in the *kispum* for the king, including Sargon and Narām-Sîn, both powerful Akkadian kings neither of whom were directly related to the king of Mari. Sargon and Narām-Sîn were well-known for their conquest of the Mesopotamia and their numerous building projects. By invoking powerful kings of the past and claiming them as ancestors, the kings of Mari legitimized their role.⁶¹ There is no evidence to suggest high officials or elites engaged the public in their *kispum* ritual, indicating the king reserved that right for himself. The elite and high officials likely used their ancestors to demonstrate why they belonged in their current position by other means, such as public addresses.

From the long and diverse lists of food offerings from the Mari *kispum* texts, it is evident that the ritual for the king was not a private affair. Civilians may not have entered the palace or witnessed the ritual, but they were likely aware of who the king's ancestors were and that they were required to bring offerings for these individuals. By asking for barley, doves, figs, and pomegranates, the king reminded his subjects that his ancestors required and deserved more elaborate offerings because they were past royal family members. It appears the social hierarchy even extended to the deceased members of society, where an ancestor's position in life and connection to their living family dictated the offerings received.⁶²

Kings could also use the *kispum* for propaganda purposes and to appease their subjects. The Hammu-rāpi genealogy published by Finkelstein in 1966⁶³ lists 27 names that include a clause for soldiers lost in battle, princes and daughters of the king, and all forgotten people. The text is not a king list but rather a composition meant to be recited at the *kispum* either annually or monthly. The genealogy list extended far past the king's blood-related ancestors and the dynasties that ruled before him. Through connecting himself to past and mythical rulers, the king tied himself to an exclusive ruling ancestral group. The connection made here is similar to that made by the kings of Mari by invoking Sargon and Narām-Sîn.⁶⁴

Lines 1 to 20 of genealogy name unknown kings, some of which were Amorites. The list spans centuries of rule, and the first recognizable name is Sumu. From the name Sumu, all known past kings are listed until Ammi-Īaduqa, the king who composed the text. Following the list of names, the text invites all royal children forgotten by their personal names and dead individuals forgotten by their families to join the king of Babylon in a meal to substantiate their needs.⁶⁵ Offerings for this type of *kispum* would be substantial, meaning the ritual had to occur in a large open space or courtyard. Ammi-Īaduqa likely recited this text at a public performance to reinforce his role as the caretaker of all of Babylon, uniting them as one family. Invoking forgotten individuals also suggests the king was not afraid of them seeking vengeance for not being having been sustained in the afterlife. It is possible the king was not worried because he was providing for them or because he was not directly related to these individuals, and that therefore, they would not seek to harm him. With or without fear, Ammi-Īaduqa was acting in his capacity as head of the kingdom by providing offerings for all deceased individuals and tying the families of Babylon together.⁶⁶ If the king cared for deceased individuals and promoted his kingdom as a linked family in which he ruled, his subjects may have felt more compelled to do as he asked, which to some extent, kept society united.

The Mesopotamian world was understood through family lineage, as the social status and occupation of one's father and grandfather dictated one's own. Mesopotamian ancestral worship tied the family to their past roles and made them proud to take on the same positions and occupations as their ancestors. By following the path of their ancestors, families obeyed the social hierarchy, which helped maintain social cohesion. Kings also used the *kispum* to legitimize their role, as they connected themselves to past rulers to demonstrate they had a right to their title. In some circumstances, the *kispum* may have been a political tool for kings to appease their subjects and promote their role as the ultimate family head.⁶⁷ The king accepting the role of caretaker of his people and invoking forgotten individuals and soldiers also promoted a united society that would always be cared for by the king.

⁶¹G. Jonker, *The Topography of Remembrance: The Dead, Tradition, and Collective Memory in Mesopotamia* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995), 225; MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 122.

⁶²MacDougal, "Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance," 290, 295; Lewis, 60–67.

⁶³J. J. Finkelstein, "The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 20, no. 3–4 (June 1966): 95–118, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1359643>.

⁶⁴Jonker, 225; MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 122.

⁶⁵MacDougal, "Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance," 124, 126.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 125.

⁶⁷Jonker, 225; MacDougal, "Remembrance and the Dead," 122–126.

Creating and Maintaining Family Identity

Performing the *kispum* as a family allowed Mesopotamians to bond in their shared lineage as they remembered their history, ancestors, and clan.⁶⁸ A prayer dedicated to the ancestral family or *eṭem kimtīya*, lists extended relatives, including the father, grandfather, mother, grandmother, brothers, sisters, family, kin, and clan. The process follows the most immediate family members, which living individuals remember, to members the living family may not have met but knew they were related to. The prayer suggests that Mesopotamians traced their family back at least three generations⁶⁹ or even five (see below).

Few *kispum* texts relate to elite and lower-class households because family history was transmitted orally; however, elite families with scribes occasionally recorded their prayers and *kispum* invocations. The text CBS 473, labelled the “Genealogy of Šamaš-nāṣir”, discusses multiple generations and includes an invocation of ancestral names but is first and foremost a prayer to the moon god, Sîn.⁷⁰ The text is similar to the Hammu-rāpi genealogy because it lists family members and then asks the invoked ancestors to join the living family in an offering of food and water. This text begins with the current family *pāqidum*, Sîn-nāṣir, pouring water for the moon god and asking Sîn to release his family from the netherworld so they may join him in the *kispum* meal. The family tree, as reconstructed by Wilcke, names five generations, including the females, as they were all priestesses except for Sîn-nāṣir’s mother and grandmother.⁷¹ Understanding that Mesopotamians traced their family back five generations indicates that they did so to connect themselves to specific social groups, roles, and histories, as the living family did not meet all five generations of ancestors. The *pāqidum* Sîn-nāṣir would not have known all of the family’s ancestors; his father or the previous *pāqidum* would have taught him the family history. Also, the offerings mentioned in the text are not lavish, as it only records bread and water. Sîn-nāṣir and his family were elite, which is significant because the text suggests that Mesopotamian families offered similar food and connected to their past in the same ways no matter their social class, except for royalty.⁷²

The *kispum* helped establish the extension of clans and brought a sense of belongingness to a social group.⁷³ Participating in family religion solidified one’s identity in one’s kin group, as all family members proclaim their attachment to a particular clan through their ancestors. Declaring devotion to a specific lineage is paralleled in marriage, as a woman had to pledge herself to her husband’s ancestors and family god to become part of his family.⁷⁴ The pledge suggests that ancestors were considered an active part of the family as wives needed to accept them to be welcomed in their new home.

The connection between the placement of the sanctuary and family graves is significant to note. In Old Babylonian period homes at Ur, Mari, and Babylon, graves were often below the floorboards of the sanctuary. The placement of graves suggests the Mesopotamians wanted to keep ancestors close to the family and their place of worship.⁷⁵ The private nature of the household cultic spaces suggests a level of seclusion for the family and that the *kispum* room was only meant for specific individuals to see, excluding guests from the space. The exclusion of non-family members truly made the *kispum* room a location for the family to practice their religion and remember their past together.⁷⁶ The installation of a sanctuary in households at Ur, among other Mesopotamian sites, also demonstrates the importance of this ritual because households were limited in size; thus, to dedicate an entire room to the purpose of the *kispum* suggests that it was a necessity for the family. Perhaps the *kispum* was more intimate and tied to emotions than previously considered. The *kispum* likely invoked emotions of grief and pride as families remembered their ancestors and what their ancestors accomplished within their lifetime.⁷⁷ Through these emotions, the family honoured and remembered their dead to collectively create and uphold their identity.

It is difficult to assess the validity and accuracy of this interpretation as it is impossible to be certain that this is indeed how Mesopotamians perceived the *kispum* without speaking with them. From the numerous texts,

⁶⁸ Ibid., 174.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 116.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 129.

⁷¹ Ibid., 129–130; C. Wilcke, “Genealogical and Geographic Thought in the Sumerian King List,” in *DUMU– E2–DUB–BA: Studies in Honor of Åke Sjöberg* ed. Behrens H, D.T Loding, and M. Roth (Philadelphia: University Museum): 558–571.

⁷² MacDougal, “Remembrance and the Dead,” 129–131.

⁷³ Ibid., 116.

⁷⁴ Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria & Israel*, 23; van der Toorn, “Second Millennium West Asian Family,” 30.

⁷⁵ Barrett, 36; MacDougal, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance,” 273.

⁷⁶ Tricoli, 64.

⁷⁷ MacDougal, “Ancient Mesopotamian Remembrance,” 290, 295; Lewis, 60–67.

archaeological evidence, ethnographic research, and the understanding of how people create family identity in the present world, the interpretation of social cohesion and family identity being central to the *kispum* is reasonable and accepted by numerous researchers of Mesopotamian rituals.

Conclusion

The *kispum* in Mesopotamia was a way for families to engage with deceased family, clan, and position in the world, allowing them to form a sense of identity through the ritual. The family identity and continual monthly reinforcement of said identity helped maintain social cohesion. The *kispum*, as understood by textual and archaeological information, occurred monthly on the day of the new moon when Mesopotamian ancestors were permitted to leave the netherworld and reunite with their families.⁷⁸ Ancestors were considered physically present in the home while receiving their *kispum* offerings, suggesting the family made personal connections with them. Through these connections, the living family linked themselves to their ancestors and history. Families used this link and connections they made with their ancestors to understand and reinforce their social position and occupation in society.⁷⁹

Performance of the ritual also reinforced positions in the familial hierarchy. Social roles, such as the *pāqidum*, placed the family heir at the centre of the family. The *pāqidum* was honoured as the ritual performer, and other family members were subordinate to them. Female ancestors were rare, as the privilege was extended only to priestesses and unmarried women. The rarity of female ancestors further reinforced the patriarchal society and the organization of the Mesopotamian world.⁸⁰ Kings also used the *kispum* to strengthen their royal status and position over their subjects by invoking highly accredited kings that were not blood relatives. Through elaborate offerings, kings communicated that their ancestors were of more importance than other families' because they were past royalty and ancestors of the current king. By placing themselves and their ancestors above others in society, kings across Mesopotamia also mimicked the natural social order through the performance of *kispum* ritual. In some circumstances, kings performed the *kispum* in public to fill their role as caretakers of the city-state and the people, as demonstrated by the Hammu-rāpi genealogy text. The connections between individuals and their ancestors during the *kispum* linked them to their current social position and reinforced that they belong in it because they did in the past.⁸¹

Assessing the accuracy of these findings is difficult because the texts do not directly state that the *kispum* was intended to maintain social cohesion and familial identity. Texts imply that the purpose of the *kispum* was to sustain ancestors in the afterlife by providing them with food. To understand the effects the ritual had on society, examining invocation and administrative texts related to the *kispum* is necessary because they identify the emotions and thought processes behind the individuals engaged in the activity. From the analysis of the textual and archaeological evidence related to the *kispum* here provided, it is evident that a connection between the ritual and maintaining social cohesion and familial identity exists. To further understand how the *kispum* promoted social cohesion and family identity, researchers must attempt to understand Mesopotamians' thought processes and how their society functioned.

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⁷⁸ Ibid., 290–296.

⁷⁹ Van der Toorn, "Second Millennium West Asian Family Religion," 25–27.

⁸⁰ MacDougal. "Remembrance and the Dead," 256–267.

⁸¹ Jonker, 225; MacDougal. "Remembrance and the Dead," 122–126.

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Nicholas Morrison, "Scoundrels, Swindlers, and Sleuths: The Victorian Press and the 1877 Trial of the Detectives"
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In 1877, a shocking scandal spread through the pages of newspapers across Britain. Four senior detectives of Scotland Yard had colluded with notorious fraudsters and aided them in escaping the law on multiple occasions. During the trial at the Old Bailey witnesses, including infamous conmen William Kurr and Harry Benson, gave testimonies which revealed the extent of the corruption present within the Metropolitan Police Detective Branch in what would come to be known as the "Trial of the Detectives." While this may seem like a simple case of police corruption at first glance, the so-called Trial of the Detectives and the newspaper coverage surrounding it reveals a great deal about the Victorian media and social issues.

This paper will analyse the press coverage of the Trial of the Detectives from the initial preliminary inquiry in June of 1877 until the conviction of the detectives in November 1877. This paper asks what the press coverage of the Trial of the Detectives can tell us about perceptions of the police and sensational journalism in Victorian Britain. This paper will argue that the Trial of the Detectives offered the Victorian public an ideal sensational news story that touched upon existing anxieties and grievances held about policing in late Victorian Britain. The paper will begin by providing a brief overview of the events and major figures within the Trial of the Detectives. The paper will then examine the sensational elements of the case which were highlighted by the Victorian press. It will then move to discuss how opinions of the police manifested themselves in the coverage of the trial in newspapers. The paper will conclude by exploring the links between perceptions of the police and the illustrated depictions of the Trial.

In order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Trial of the Detectives, this paper will consider the reporting on the Trial found in six major Victorian newspapers: *The Times*, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *Reynolds's Newspaper*, *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, *The Illustrated Police News* and *The Illustrated London News*. It will also examine a cartoon from the popular periodical *Punch*. Each of these papers and periodicals catered towards a specific class in Victorian society which shaped the ways they reported the Trial to their audience. *The Times* was written for a middle-class audience and reflected establishment attitudes. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, although it catered to upper class audiences, focused heavily on titillating and scandalous stories rather than fact-based reporting. *Punch* primarily catered to middle- and upper-class audiences and was known for its ridicule of sensational events as well as satirical social commentary on the contemporary fascination with crime and infamous criminals.¹ *The Illustrated London News*, a prominent illustrated Victorian weekly, reflected conservative middle-class values in its reporting and focused strictly on major political and social events. Due to its conservative audience, the paper tended to report less frequently on cases of crime or scandal when compared to other prominent Victorian weeklies.²

The radical *Reynolds's Newspaper* began its life as a Chartist newspaper before transitioning to an explicitly anti-aristocratic and anti-establishment weekly. The newspaper's cheap price and overtly political stories made it popular among the working class.³ *The Penny Illustrated Paper's* cheap price, condemnations of authority, and sensational stories indicate that it had a primarily working-class audience.⁴ *The Illustrated Police News* was another illustrated cheap weekly that focused its reporting on sensational stories of crime and the supernatural to cater to lower-class audiences.⁵ Comparing the articles in each newspaper allows for certain nuances and details to be revealed which demonstrate the Trial's connection to wider issues within Victorian society. By analysing the coverage of the Trial in newspapers, this paper is a cultural history because it seeks to examine how the coverage of the Trial of the Detectives reflected Victorian norms and ideals.

Before approaching the events of the Trial of the Detectives, it is important to take into account how newspapers reported on crime and formulated their articles. When covering a case, the prominent newspapers relied on crime

¹ Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensationalism Or, the Spectacular, the Shocking, and the Scandalous in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Anthem Press, 2003), 3.

² Anne Rodrick, "Melodrama and Natural Science: Reading the 'Greenwich' Murder in the Mid-Century Periodical Press," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50:1, (2017): 69.

³ Jenna Herdman, "The Prince and the Penny Chartist: The Great Exhibition and Reynolds's Newspaper," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 53:3 (2020): 315.

⁴ "Penny Illustrated Paper," British Newspaper Archive, accessed January 20th, 2022, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/penny-illustrated-paper>.

⁵ "Illustrated Police News," British Newspaper Archive, accessed January 31st, 2022, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/illustrated-police-news>

reporters who would sit in on the trials and take detailed notes of the proceedings. These reports would be sold from the crime reporters to various newspapers who would then put the description of the events into their papers. The reliance on the accounts of these crime reporters often led the accounts of trials in several newspapers to be duplicates of each other.⁶ However, a paper's editorial mission shaped the way the account of the trial was presented. Editors could emphasise certain pieces of information in their coverage of the trial while deliberately excluding others.⁷ While these nuances are incredibly minute, they provide historians with an opportunity to understand how newspapers constructed their own versions of the trial to cater to their readership. This paper will focus on these nuances to discover how contemporaries perceived the Trial of the Detectives.

The Trial of the Detectives was the culmination of a long collusion between high-ranking detectives in the Metropolitan Police Detective Branch and a group of fraudsters headed by William Kurr and Harry Benson. Kurr and Benson had been involved in a scheme to defraud wealthy individuals in France through a bogus newspaper titled *The Sport*. Recipients of this false newspaper received, with their copy of the paper, a letter from Mr. Hugh Montgomery who claimed to represent an organisation called "The Society for Insuring Against Losses on the Turf."⁸ One of these recipients was the Comtesse de Goncourt, a member of the French upper class. Goncourt was enthusiastic about the opportunity to make insured bets on horse races in Britain and began sending money to "Hugh Montgomery" through cheques he provided. However, her solicitor raised concerns when Goncourt attempted to send £30,000 in cheques to Britain which prompted an investigation by British authorities. Metropolitan Police detectives identified the group of fraudsters led by William Kurr and Harry Benson as the prime actors in attempting to defraud Goncourt.⁹

The initial probe into the group of fraudsters by police proved difficult due to sustained interference by several officers within the Metropolitan Police Detective Branch or "Scotland Yard." Chief Inspectors Nathaniel Druscovich and John Meiklejohn aided Kurr and Benson in evading capture on many occasions by providing them information about raids on their properties and alerting them to members within Scotland Yard and the Metropolitan Police that they could trust.¹⁰ The extent of the participation of other officers within Scotland Yard in aiding Kurr and Benson has been a major question to historians that will most likely never be answered. However, alongside Druscovich and Meiklejohn Chief Detective Inspector William Palmer, once a bodyguard for Queen Victoria, was also aware of the plot but in a lesser role. Senior Chief Inspector George Clarke, second-in-command next to Superintendent Williamson also played a minor part in the plot. However, like Palmer, he was only aware of the collusion rather than being actively involved in giving Benson and Kurr information to aid them.¹¹ After their eventual arrest in 1876 and sensational trial at the Old Bailey, William Kurr and Harry Benson came forward with "Flower Show Information" about the corruption within the Detective Branch.¹²

The information provided by Benson and Kurr prompted the arrest of Meiklejohn, Druscovich, and Palmer on charges of conspiracy in early June of 1877 and a preliminary inquiry was held at the Bow Street Police Court. During the Inquiry the prosecution revealed the extent of the collusion between the Scotland Yard detectives and the fraudsters. The prosecution relied heavily on the sworn statements of William Kurr and Harry Benson who gave detailed accounts of their encounters with the detectives they worked with.¹³ Their criminal background and witty attitudes in the court during the testimonies led to a mixed reaction from the public, who either condemned their actions or supported them. After the additional arrest of Clarke in September of 1877, the case headed to the Old Bailey.

During the trial at the Old Bailey, the prosecution revealed the extent of the corruption by relying on the statements of Benson and Kurr as well as a series of letters between Meiklejohn and William Kurr. The prosecution pointed out the personal tone of the letters, which were always addressed "Dear Bill," as well as the instructions for the letters to be destroyed upon receiving them.¹⁴ The defence of the detectives, led by several prominent defence

⁶ Rodrick, "Melodrama and Natural Science," 72.

⁷ Rodrick, "Melodrama and Natural Science," 72.

⁸ Donald Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld* (London: John Murray Press, 1998), 310.

⁹ Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld*, 311.

¹⁰ Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld*, 318-319.

¹¹ Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld*, 309.

¹² Thomas, *The Victorian Underworld*, 320 (This phrase was reportedly used by Benson and Kurr to indicate they had a wealth of information about the corruption within Scotland Yard).

¹³ Haia Shpayer-Hakov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Edwardian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 38.

¹⁴ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, "Trial of John Meiklejohn, Nathaniel Druscovich, William Palmer, George Clarke, Edward Froggatt," October 22nd, 1877 (t18771022-805).

barristers, criticised the reliability of the testimonies of Kurr and Benson due to their character as conmen and challenged the continuity errors found throughout their testimonies.¹⁵ After a twenty-one day-trial, the detectives Meiklejohn, Druscovich, and Palmer were found guilty and sentenced to two-years' hard labour. Clarke was found by the jury to be "not guilty" and was acquitted from the charges he faced.¹⁶ The immediate aftermath of the Trial had deep repercussions as the Home Office launched an inquiry into the Metropolitan Police Detective Branch. The Departmental Commission of the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force was formed in 1878 as a result of the inquiry which investigated the issues with the system of detection and offered plausible solutions. After the conclusion of the inquiry, the Criminal Investigation Department was formed in March of 1878 as a result of the events of the Trial.¹⁷ After two years of imprisonment, the three detectives were released in 1879 with little public attention.

Sensation for the Masses: Sensational Journalism and the Trial of the Detectives

The Trial of the Detectives occurred during the rise of sensationalism in the 1860s and 1870s. This period has come under discussion by both historians and literary scholars of the Victorian era. In his edited chapter, scholar Dallas Liddle analysed the reporting around the sensational disappearance of a prominent gentleman Benjamin Speke.¹⁸ Liddle outlines four key aspects of sensational literature that were adopted into reporting by the popular press regarding sensational events. Three of these are key to understanding how sensationalism shaped the coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in Victorian newspapers. First, the individuals involved are often pushed outside of accepted norms by psychological states such as madness, greed, and desire. Second, the individuals in the story are often members of the middle or upper class which places the drama of the sensation in the reader's own world.¹⁹ Lastly, the plot within a sensational novel was often told by an unreliable narrator who is often witty, coy, and withholds certain key information from the reader as the progress through the plot. Liddle also views sensationalist literature as having a breakdown of order, typical within a social or familial environment.²⁰ The coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in the press and the engraved prints included in illustrated weeklies emphasised each of these features in their coverage of the Trial which provides an opportunity for a fruitful analysis of Victorian sensationalism.

In addition to observations made by Liddle, a number of other historians have tackled the topic of Victorian sensationalism and the popular press. Christopher Pittard suggested that sensational crime fiction in *The Strand Magazine* was "purified" to cater to its middle-class readership.²¹ However, scholars began to reconsider the "pureness" of crime reporting and fiction in the popular Victorian press. Rowbotham, Stevenson and Pegg view the period between 1860-1885 as a "golden age" of crime reporting. The authors view this period as having been spurred by lawyers taking up careers in journalism, a phenomenon that, while not new during this time, expanded rapidly during the 1860s.²² This phenomenon, the authors suggest, led to journalism becoming increasingly focused on the legal process and reports of criminality. The authors of the reports could remain anonymous, they note, which led to an increase in opinion pieces on court cases as well as scandals.²³ However, while focused on legal matters, the authors state that newspapers often drifted towards sensational coverage of events in order to satisfy their audiences. This, in the eyes of the authors, led to a balance of both legal and sensational details appearing in popular crime stories which catered to all classes of readership.²⁴

¹⁵ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, "Trial of John Meiklejohn, Nathaniel Druscovich, William Palmer, George Clarke, Edward Froggatt," October 22nd, 1877 (t18771022-805).

¹⁶ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, "Trial of John Meiklejohn, Nathaniel Druscovich, William Palmer, George Clarke, Edward Froggatt," October 22nd, 1877 (t18771022-805).

¹⁷ Shpayer-Hakov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 38.

¹⁸ Dallas Liddle, "Anatomy of a Nine Days' Wonder: Sensational Journalism in the Decade of the Sensational Novel," in *Victorian Crime, Madness, and Sensation*, eds. Andrew Maunday and Grace Moore (Cornwall: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 91.

¹⁹ Liddle, "Anatomy of a Nine Days' Wonder," 97.

²⁰ Liddle, "Anatomy of a Nine Days' Wonder," 98.

²¹ "Cheap, Healthful Literature: *The Strand Magazine*, Fictions of Crime and Purified Reading Communities," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 40:1 (2007): 2.

²² Judith Rowbotham, Kim Stevenson, and Samantha Pegg, *Crime News in Modern Britain: Press Reporting and Responsibility* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 42.

²³ Rowbotham, Stevenson, and Pegg, *Crime News in Modern Britain*, 47.

²⁴ Rowbotham, Stevenson, and Pegg, *Crime News in Modern Britain*, 49.

Rosalind Crone, in her monograph *Violent Victorians*, examines the appearance of violence in popular entertainment such as illustrated newspapers, broadsheets, and street plays.²⁵ Crone demonstrates that descriptions of sensational cases were uniform across newspapers with little to no differences appearing in working-class, middle-class, and upper-class reporting on crime. Although Crone's analysis concludes in 1870 and focuses on violence, her argument is important because it highlights the uniformity of the Victorian press when reporting on sensational crime cases.²⁶ Scholars have continued to examine the relationship between sensational Victorian crime stories and its intended audiences. Clare Clarke's article examined how Israel Zangwill's *The Big Bow Mystery* published in the *Star*, appealed to broad audiences in the aftermath of the Jack the Ripper murders.²⁷ Edward Jacobs' piece challenges Crone's suggestion by suggesting that coverage in the press differed for the lower classes and was far more radicalised than Crone suggests.²⁸ This paper will join Crone and Clarke in its argumentation by suggesting that the Trial of the Detectives demonstrates a continued uniformity in sensationalism across all newspapers. Historians have concluded that while the papers often reflected their own editorial biases when reflecting on topics such as policing and politics, each of the papers focused on similar sensational tropes in their coverage of the popular criminal cases.

The coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in the Victorian newspapers contains several of the sensational tropes highlighted by Liddle. The theme of a person experiencing a negative extreme psychological state is prevalent throughout the news coverage of the Trial of the Detectives. Greed is the primary emotion emphasised by the press as the driving factor behind the collusion between the detectives and the swindlers. In the coverage of the preliminary inquiries by *Reynolds's Newspaper*, the article focuses on Kurr bribing Meiklejohn. The report describes how Kurr and Benson initially offered Meiklejohn a sum of £300 to keep them informed about the investigation into their group by Scotland Yard. However, it is pointed out that Meiklejohn became greedy and demanded that the conmen pay him £500 for his information rather than their initial proposed sum.²⁹ In another article covering the Trial itself, the paper again focuses on how Meiklejohn demanded more out of the convicts when they proposed their payment to him. In addition to the demands by Meiklejohn, the article also highlights the statement that Meiklejohn purchased a new townhouse in Lambeth with the money he received from the "swindlers."³⁰

The theme of greed is echoed in an article in *The Illustrated Police News* which discusses the details of the preliminary inquiry in September 1877. The article highlights the arguments of the prosecution through Kurr's testimony, which detailed how Meiklejohn demanded a large sum from the fraudsters in return for the information he had given them. In addition to focusing on the demands for money by Meiklejohn, the article also highlights statements from the lead prosecutor Mr. Poland that Meiklejohn purchased a new home with the money he had received from the convicts. The house, a decent middle-class townhouse in Lambeth, became a fixation in the coverage of the case. In a subsequent report on the Trial itself, *The Illustrated Police News* included an illustration of the house in addition to Meiklejohn's previous home in Derby in another issue (Fig. 1). In lower-class weeklies, the theme of greed manifested itself in their choice to focus on Meiklejohn's demands to be paid greater sums of money by the fraudsters for his actions. The papers build on his greed by highlighting Meiklejohn's purchase of a modest middle-class townhouse in Lambeth.

²⁵ Rosalind Crone, *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth Century London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 7.

²⁶ Crone, *Violent Victorians*, 7.

²⁷ Clare Clarke, "Something for the Silly Season: Policing and the Press in Israel Zangwill's *The Big Bow Mystery*," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 48:1 (2015), 123.

²⁸ Edward Jacobs, "Edward Lloyd's Sunday Newspapers and the Cultural Politics of Crime News," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50:3 (2017): 620 (Jacobs arguably limits himself by focusing his analysis exclusively in the Chartist period which would have had more radical reporting).

²⁹ "The Charges Against Detectives and a Solicitor," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, July 29th, 1877, 5.

³⁰ "The Trial of the Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, October 28th, 1877, 5.

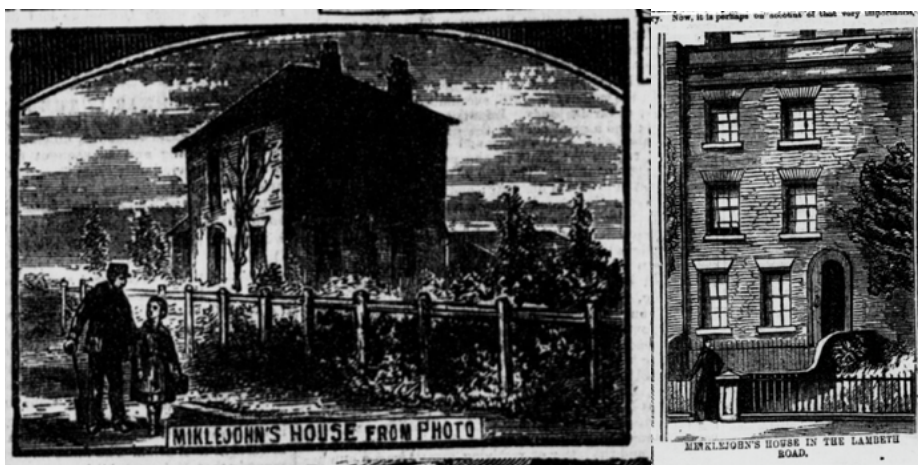


Fig. 1 "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 24th, 1877, 4; "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 10th, 1877, cover.

The focus on Meiklejohn's greed also manifests itself in the middle- and upper-class papers that covered the case. An article in *The Times* focuses on the testimony of Kurr regarding the bribery of Meiklejohn. It focuses on how Meiklejohn was given constant streams of money by Kurr and demanded more. Unlike the lower-class papers, *The Times* also provides the details of what type of items were given to Meiklejohn as bribes. One article details how Meiklejohn was given gold as well as various payments of £200, an element not mentioned in the lower-class papers.³¹ In *The Pall Mall Gazette*, a summary of the initial hearings at the Old Bailey emphasise Meiklejohn's greed. The article states that Meiklejohn received £500 from the convicts, to which he immediately purchased a new townhouse in Lambeth with the money he had received.³² The coverage in both lower- and upper-class papers highlight the greed of Meiklejohn in their narrative of events which connected to Liddle's suggestion of a person experiencing an overwhelming mindset and it demonstrates that sensational tropes were universal across papers regardless of class.³³

The salaries of the detectives also became a fixation for the press because they denoted class status of the detectives, who were assumed to be respectable members of the middle class. In *Reynolds's Newspaper*, an opinion piece on the case details the salaries of the detectives, which ranged from £300-600 per annum, as well as certain privileges detectives had in their position.³⁴ The mention of the salaries of the detectives is also mentioned in *The Illustrated Police News'* coverage of the case, which highlights the salaries of the detectives to the reader.³⁵ While coverage of the Trial in *The Times* does not focus as much on the salaries, they still include mention of Meiklejohn's salary during his time as an officer at Midland Railway.³⁶ The average salary for a member of the middle class in Victorian Britain was between £300-1,000 per annum.³⁷ By highlighting their salaries, the newspapers demonstrated to their audiences that the detectives were members of the middle class who had broken their respectability to partake in criminal activity. The figure of the "scoundrel," an individual who appears as a respectable member of the middle class but is in actuality a criminal, was a popular fear amongst contemporaries at the time and would have undoubtedly influenced the fixation the newspapers had with outlining to their readership that the detectives were members of the middle class.³⁸

One of the key aspects of the case that garnered widespread public attention was the presence of the convicted conmen Harry Benson and William Kurr in the courtroom. For Victorian audiences, Kurr and Benson were unreliable

³¹ "Charges Against Detectives," *The Times*, July 27th, 1877, 11.

³² "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

³³ Liddle, "Anatomy of a Nine Days' Wonder," 97.

³⁴ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

³⁵ "The Charge Against Detective Officers," *The Illustrated Police News*, September 15th, 1877, 4.

³⁶ "The Charge Against Detectives," *The Times*, September 17th, 1877, 9.

³⁷ Harold Perkins, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge Press, 2002), 29.

³⁸ Guy Woolnough, "A Victorian Fraudster and Bigamist: Gentleman or Criminal?" *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 19:4 (2018): 450 (Although written by a criminologist, this article analyses Victorian fears of how conmen could masquerade as respectable gentlemen).

narrators and their witty narratives added to the sensational nature of the case. Comments about the characters of Benson and Kurr as well as their characters are prevalent in lower-class weekly newspapers. In the coverage in *The Illustrated Police News*, the paper focuses on the character of William Kurr. An article covering the preliminary inquiry states that Kurr was only twenty-six years old but had been involved with gambling since fifteen.³⁹

The author also states that Kurr gave “smart” replies to Mr. Montagu Williams, Meiklejohn’s defence lawyer, when asked to give details about the relationship between Meiklejohn and Kurr.⁴⁰ In addition to describing how Kurr conveyed his testimony to the court, *The Illustrated Police News* also remarks on how certain details were alluded to by the convicts leading to the arrest of Clarke in late September. The paper states that the “bare statement” given by the convict Kurr contributed to the arrest of Clarke and the author insists that much more is to be revealed in the upcoming hearing.⁴¹ *The Illustrated Police News*’ choice to discuss Kurr’s criminal past and their description of Kurr’s testimony as being loaded with “smart” replies characterises Kurr as the sensational narrator of the case.

In an article in *Reynolds’s Newspaper* covering the preliminary inquiries in September 1877, the paper highlights a remark made by William Kurr when asked about his relationship with Meiklejohn. The paper states that Kurr remarked that Meiklejohn had told several individuals that Meiklejohn had said that he believed Benson was a remarkable gentleman who had dined several times with the Lord Mayor of London. The irony of this remark is further highlighted by the paper’s choice to add that there was laughter in the court after the remark was made.⁴² In another article covering the preliminary inquiry hearings in September, the author remarks that Kurr delivered his statements with a great deal of “levity and gaiety” as well as choosing to deliver his statements to the court standing with his arms crossed rather than sitting in the witness box.⁴³ Through their focus on Kurr’s witty delivery of his testimony and dramatic behaviour in court, the author of the article frames him as the quintessential sensational narrator.

In addition to both *Reynolds’s Newspaper* and *The Illustrated Police News*’ characterisation of the convicts as witty narrators, *The Penny Illustrated Paper* portrays Benson and Kurr as sensational narrators. In an article detailing the events of the Trial at the Old Bailey, the author describes Kurr’s appearance physically, highlighting the contradictory nature of his character. The author, at first, attributes positive attributes to his appearance stating that Kurr looked respectable and was clean shaven. The author then contrasts Kurr’s positive appearance by stating that he was in the dress of a convict.⁴⁴ Through the contrasting description of Kurr’s appearance the author presents Kurr as a sensational narrator, an individual that appears trustworthy but whose reliability can be called into question which coincides with concerns during the late Victorian era where contemporaries fixated on the contradictory nature of a “gentleman criminal,” a person who outwardly appeared respectable but at heart was a deviant criminal.⁴⁵ In an additional article detailing the Trial, the author grabs the reader’s attention with an opening question. The author states “Enter the Detectives! But where do they depart?”⁴⁶ They then discuss the criminal characters of Benson and Kurr as well as alluding that the men still have much to reveal in their testimonies against the detectives. By presenting the reader with this initial question combined with details about the characters of the convicts, the author plays on the sensationalist trope of the unreliable narrator, as highlighted by Liddle in his work, through presenting Kurr and Benson as the men who are detailing the story of the case to the courtroom.⁴⁷

The portrayal of the convicts as the classic sensational narrators is mirrored in the coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in middle- and upper-class papers. In a report on the initial preliminary inquiry hearings by *The Times*, the author details the witty statements made by Kurr in court during his testimony. On one occasion, the report states that the court erupted into laughter after Kurr deemed his scheme to be a “systematic investment business.”⁴⁸ In another report covering the preliminary inquiry, the author states that Kurr was dressed in the uniform of a convict prisoner.⁴⁹ A summary of the events of initial hearing at Bow Street in *The Illustrated London News* also make note of Kurr’s appearance in relation to his character. In the article, the author details the previous exploits of Benson and

³⁹ “The Charges Against Detectives,” *The Illustrated Police News*, August 25th, 1877, 4.

⁴⁰ “The Charges Against Detectives,” *The Illustrated Police News*, August 25th, 1877, 4.

⁴¹ “The Detective Case,” *The Illustrated Police News*, September 22nd, 1877, 4.

⁴² “The Serious Charge Against Detectives,” *Reynolds’s Newspaper*, September 9th, 1877, 5.

⁴³ “The Serious Charge Against Detectives,” *Reynolds’s Newspaper*, September 16th, 1877, 5.

⁴⁴ “Law and Crime,” *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 3rd, 1877, 282.

⁴⁵ Woolnough, A Victorian Fraudster and Bigamist,” 450.

⁴⁶ “Law and Crime,” *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 265.

⁴⁷ Liddle, “Anatomy of a Nine Day Wonder,” 97.

⁴⁸ “Charge Against Detectives” *The Times*, Friday July 27th, 1877, 11.

⁴⁹ “The Charge of Conspiracy Against Detective Officers,” *The Times*, July 20th, 1877, 12.

Kurr as infamous swindlers. Similar to the article in *The Times*, the author details their appearance, that they were dressed in the uniforms of convicts, and also mentions that there was significant shock as well as sensation in the courtroom when the spectators witnessed the prisoners enter.⁵⁰

An article in *The Pall Mall Gazette* covering the Trial at the Old Bailey also makes note of the characters of the convicts. Kurr is described as a man of "great ability and energy" who was full of wit and slyness. Benson, on the other hand, is described as a man who had come from a respectable family but had turned to a life of crime to support himself.⁵¹ After examining the descriptions of the convicts in middle- and upper-class newspapers, it is evident that they mirror lower-class papers in their reporting demonstrating that reporting across newspapers on sensational crimes did not change after 1870. All papers frame the convicts as the typical sensationalist narrator by highlighting Kurr and Benson's witty and sly attitudes when delivering their statements to the court.

The sensational elements found in the coverage of the Trial of the Detectives were universal across all newspapers and the events of the Trial offered the Victorians an ideal sensational case. The universality is evident in the portrayal of the detectives as middle-class men who succumbed to overwhelming greed through their accepting bribes from the swindlers. The narrative of the case presented to the public was told through unreliable narrators, Benson and Kurr, which further accentuated the sensational elements of the Trial.

Incompetent Detectives and Ingenious Convicts: The Trial of the Detectives and Opinions of the Police in the Press

While the newspapers contained similar sensational elements in their coverage of the Trial, their opinion of the detectives and policing differed. The Trial of the Detectives represents a moment when the police were brought into the spotlight, where contemporaries had the chance to express their grievances towards the system of policing and the detective force more generally. The relationship between the police and the Victorian public has been subject to a captivating debate between historians. The consensual school, spearheaded in the 1940s by early Whiggish scholars, views the development of policing in the nineteenth century as a step towards constitutional modernity that was widely accepted by the public.⁵² The conflict school, emerging in the 1970s in retaliation to the consensual school, argued that the development of the police was a class-based reassertion of state power and the relationship between the police and the public was tumultuous throughout the nineteenth century.⁵³

The formation of the conflict school led to an immediate response from scholars of the consensual school in a "neo-Whiggish" push back.⁵⁴ Historians, such as Philip Thurmond-Smith and David Taylor, proposed that while there was initial tension between the police and public, a favourable opinion of the police began to emerge at the beginning of the 1870s amongst all classes.⁵⁵ This suggestion faced immediate criticism from emerging historians of the conflict school who highlighted an existing tension between the police and all social groups leading into the beginning of the First World War.⁵⁶ Most recently, Churchill has proposed that public opinion of the police did not improve by the end of the nineteenth century and his work demonstrates a sustained opposition from members of both the middle and lower classes.⁵⁷ However, despite being fruitful, the scholarship on policing covers broad periods with sweeping conclusions. The Trial of the Detectives provides the opportunity for a rich case study and reveals that most contemporaries distrusted the police and viewed it as an institution in serious need of reform. This paper, therefore, joins the conflict school in its arguments because it does not see public opinion of the policing as having improved post-1870.

The role of the detective in Victorian society and public perceptions of them has been a topic neglected by historians. Haia Shpayer-Makov's important work *The Ascent of the Detective* is one of, if not the first, to examine

⁵⁰ "The Conspiracy Case at Bow Street," *The Illustrated London News*, August 25th, 1877, 185.

⁵¹ "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

⁵² See Charles Reith, *The Police and the Democratic Ideal* (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), 76.

⁵³ Stanley Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 6,7.

⁵⁴ For prominent works from the early conflict school see Robert Storch, "The Plague of Blue Locusts: Police Reform and Popular Resistance in Northern England, 1840-1857," *International Review of Social History*, 20:1 (1975): 62, 66, Caroline Steadman, *Policing the Victorian Community: The Formation of the English Provincial Police Forces, 1856-80* (London: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1984) and David Philips *Crime and Authority in Victorian England: The Black Country, 1835-1860* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), 86.

⁵⁵ Two prominent neo-Whiggish works are Philip Thurmond-Smith *Policing Victorian London: Political Policing, Public Order, and the London Metropolitan Police* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 202 and David Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town: The Development of the Police in Middlesbrough, 1840-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 181.

⁵⁶ For major works that responded to the Neo-Whiggish pushback see Stefan Petrow, *Policing Morals: The Metropolitan Police and the Home Office, 1870-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 127, 190, 290 and Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman: A Social History of a Labour Force in Metropolitan London, 1829-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 2002), 152, 186.

⁵⁷ David Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City: The Police and the Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 226.

the role of the detective in Victorian society and representations of them both in popular media and in the public sphere. Shpayer-Makov argues that the relationship between the public and police detectives was incredibly complicated, as a majority of the public disliked the idea of having plain clothes policemen roaming around major cities.⁵⁸

Since the publication of Shpayer-Makov's work, other scholars of the Victorian era have sought to examine representations of detectives in popular media. Jacek Mydla's chapter in the edited volume *Victorian Detectives in Contemporary Culture* examines how concerns regarding intrusion were manifested in the popular novel *The Moonstone*.⁵⁹ Most recently, a study by Samuel Joseph Saunders examines the links between portrayals of detectives in periodicals and how that representation transitioned into works of fiction. He argues that sensationalised reports of the detectives and crime in the nineteenth century press shaped their portrayals in works of detective fiction at the end of the century.⁶⁰ However, the focus on the public opinions of detectives in Victorian Britain has been primarily literary, focusing on how public opinion manifested itself in works of fiction or how the press shaped portrayals of detectives in novels. This paper strives to break away from the literary approach by English scholars and focus primarily on a cultural history approach that focuses solely on newspapers. It expands on the initial arguments of Shpayer-Makov by suggesting that the newspaper coverage of the Trial of the Detectives demonstrates that, in the eyes of the public, detectives were individuals who were viewed as untrustworthy and had the potential to be corrupted by the criminals they worked with.

The Trial of the Detectives occurred in a period of moral panic, where heightened fears of the "hardened criminal" dominated Victorian legal and political debates. One prominent area where these fears manifested was in the police force. Middle-class legislators feared that policemen were susceptible to being influenced or corrupted by encountering hardened criminals while they patrolled the streets of slums. However the detective, in the minds of the Victorian middle class, was the most vulnerable out of all the ranks of the police force when it came to being corrupted by immoral ideas and criminal behaviour.⁶¹ In their work, detectives often had to work alongside criminals undercover when investigating a case. By working with these "scoundrels," the detective risked becoming one of them.

The fears regarding detectives and their encounters with criminality manifest themselves in several articles written about the Trial of the Detectives in *The Pall Mall Gazette*. In their initial coverage of the Trial in October 1877, *The Pall Mall Gazette* places its blame on the sly characters of William Kurr and Henry Benson. At the outset of the article, the author establishes that Kurr is an intelligent conman with a colourful criminal past. Benson's character is also brought into the spotlight and the author describes him as a man who was raised in a respectable family but whose "heart and soul" were turned to committing fraudulent acts.⁶² After outlining the immoral characters of both Benson and Kurr, the author switches to examine the events of the case as well as how the detectives played into aiding in the Turf Fraud. The author portrays Meiklejohn's encounter with the fraudsters as a steady conversion process where his character was corrupted into becoming that of a criminal as Kurr befriended and bribed him with large sums of money.⁶³

By 1875, the author states that Meiklejohn was firmly under control of the fraudsters and that they desired to gain control of Clarke.⁶⁴ The author then narrates how Benson attempted to corrupt Clarke and gain influence over him. They state that Benson, on multiple occasions, attempted to bribe Clarke and con him by stating that he had important evidence that would benefit the detectives at Scotland Yard. After recounting Clarke's initial encounters with Benson in 1875, the author states that Clarke was eventually "seduced" by Benson's deceptive nature and agreed to aid the swindlers in escaping justice.⁶⁵ To the author of the report and the readership, the detectives represented men who had come under the negative influence of hardened criminals which in turn led to their eventual corruption. The summary of the events provides a narrative where Meiklejohn and Clarke's encounter with hardened criminals contributed to their gradual corruption and turn to criminality. The author's choice to present the

⁵⁸ Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 6.

⁵⁹ Jacek Mydla, "Sergeant Cuff and Spectacles of Detective Intrusion in *The Moonstone* and Its Adaptations," in *Victorian Detectives in Contemporary Culture: Beyond Sherlock Holmes*, eds. Lucyna Krawczyk-Zywko (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 28.

⁶⁰ Samuel Saunders, *The Nineteenth Century Periodical Press and the Development of Detective Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 1.

⁶¹ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 57.

⁶² "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

⁶³ "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

⁶⁴ "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

⁶⁵ "Law and Police," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

narrative of the case in such a way demonstrates that the middle and upper class perceived detectives as individuals who were susceptible to corruption through their work with hardened criminals. This viewpoint shows that the middle- and upper-class views of the detective were negative in nature.

The Trial of the Detectives was featured in other discussions regarding the nature of detective work in *The Pall Mall Gazette*. In an opinion piece written after the conclusion of the Trial of the Detectives, the fear that detectives could undergo moral corruption is the central focus of the article. In the article, the author begins by stating that, in order for a detective to be successful at his job, he must know a number of “knaves” who will aid him in his work.⁶⁶ They then present the reader a rhetorical question asking how likely an individual is to remain honest and moral if he is constantly colluding with criminals.⁶⁷ With the rhetorical question in the reader’s mind, the author then builds his case by arguing that the work of the detective is an incredibly demoralising career and comments that many of those engaged in it presently are undergoing a steady process of demoralisation.⁶⁸

The author views the Trial of the Detectives as evidence of this demoralisation and comments that more cases may emerge soon if something is not done to prevent these men from colluding with criminals. The state, the author pleads, must work somehow to cleanse the “dirty linen” within the police departments and dismiss those who have been corrupted.⁶⁹ By examining this opinion piece about the Trial of the Detectives, it is evident that the middle and upper classes held fears that detectives had the potential to be corrupted by the criminals they worked with and that they viewed the Trial of the Detectives as an example of the negative effects this collusion could have.

In addition to *The Pall Mall Gazette*, the prominent London newspaper *The Times* also featured discussions of concerns regarding the nature of detectives and their work. In an opinion piece commenting on the verdict of the Trial, the author discusses the gradual corruption of the detectives involved. The article begins by establishing the character of William Kurr as a notorious conman who was involved in countless frauds before his encounter with the detectives at Scotland Yard. The author points out that Meiklejohn had known Kurr for nearly four years prior to the Turf Frauds which allowed Kurr to sufficiently corrupt Meiklejohn and get him to partake in their schemes. Much like the summary of events in *The Pall Mall Gazette*’s article, *The Times*’ account provides a detailed timeline of events and explores the corruption of each officer involved. When discussing the character of Druscovich prior to his corruption, the author describes how Druscovich was the most “faithful and zealous officer.”⁷⁰ However, the author informs the reader that both Meiklejohn and Kurr worked together to sufficiently corrupt Druscovich into taking part in the scheme after careful persuasion.⁷¹

However, unlike *The Pall Mall Gazette*’s coverage of the events of the Trial, *The Times* takes a different approach when describing the corruption of Clarke. The author describes how Benson attempted to persuade Clarke to aid him and his group of fraudsters from escaping justice through bribes. However, the author states that the use of bribes against Clarke did not work and Benson turned to threatening to expose his group’s ties to prominent officers within Scotland Yard.⁷² Clarke still did not give into the demands of Benson and the author argues that Benson’s attempts to corrupt Clarke were largely unsuccessful.⁷³ This narrative of Clarke’s resilience is much different than *The Pall Mall Gazette*’s description of Clarke’s corruption, where the author states that Clarke had been “seduced” by the charming Benson.⁷⁴

Although *The Times* reflected fears in its reporting of the potential for detectives to be corrupted by the criminals they worked with, it also defended the detectives and criticised the assumptions of their guilt found in other papers. In an opinion piece titled “Preliminary Inquiries,” an anonymous author openly criticises the use of preliminary inquiries in major trials. The author uses the Trial of the Detectives as their main case study to support their argument. They begin their argument by stating that preliminary inquiries are tediously long which wastes the resources of the judicial system. The author then builds their argument by stating that the evidence brought against those accused is often disorganised in nature which hampers the quality of the case that is being presented to the court. The author insists that preliminary inquiries assume the guilt of the accused before a proper trial has been

⁶⁶ “The Trial of the Detectives,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 21st, 1877, 1.

⁶⁷ “The Trial of the Detectives,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 21st, 1877, 1.

⁶⁸ “The Trial of the Detectives,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 21st, 1877, 1.

⁶⁹ “The Trial of the Detectives,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 21st, 1877, 1.

⁷⁰ “London, Wednesday, November 21st, 1877,” *The Times*, November 21st, 1877, 9.

⁷¹ “London, Wednesday, November 21st, 1877,” *The Times*, November 21st, 1877, 9.

⁷² “London, Wednesday, November 21st, 1877,” *The Times*, November 21st, 1877, 9.

⁷³ “London, Wednesday, November 21st, 1877,” *The Times*, November 21st, 1877, 9.

⁷⁴ “Law and Police,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 24th, 1877, 8.

carried out which violates the very nature of English law.⁷⁵ The author's choice to use the Trial of the Detectives in their arguments serves to defend the detectives in an implicit way. It criticises suggestions that the detectives were guilty prior to the commencement of the Trial at the Old Bailey, something that was prevalent in both the written reports on the case and the illustrations in the popular press. By criticising the reports that suggested that the detectives were guilty, the author defends the accused detectives. The "Preliminary Inquiries" article in *The Times* highlights the divided perspective of the middle class on the police.

Through examining accounts of the Trial of the Detectives in both *The Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Times*, it is evident that the Trial was linked to wider middle- and upper-class concerns about the corruption of detectives and policemen due to their frequent encounters with hardened criminals. This is demonstrated through the descriptions of corruption found within the narratives of the events leading up to the Trial which portray the detectives as vulnerable men who were seduced into wrongdoing by the charming yet manipulative swindlers Benson and Kurr connect to broader concerns held by middle-class legislators about moral corruption, first highlighted by Petrow.⁷⁶ In addition, the negative portrayal of the detectives also connects to a broader shift in the Victorian press in how detectives were discussed by middle- and upper-class papers moving from an neutral portrayal to a more distrustful depiction of detectives as corruptible and immoral men.⁷⁷ However, in one case, the detectives were defended by an anonymous middle-class critic who believed that assuming their guilt was inherently wrong, which suggests that a somewhat favourable opinion existed between some members of the middle class suggested by Churchill.⁷⁸ The coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in *The Times* and *The Pall Mall Gazette* represents a divided opinion in the middle and upper classes about the detectives and the police.

In contrast to the coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in middle- and upper-class papers and magazines, which focused on their ability to be morally corrupted by criminals, the coverage of events in the penny papers reflected long-held negative working-class sentiments and fears. The relationship between the police and the working class in the Victorian era was overwhelmingly negative. The police, who were instilled with middle-class ideals, often clashed with working-class communities due to the differences in norms.⁷⁹ Activities such as gambling, drinking, and fighting were seen as everyday aspects of life by members of the working class but were viewed negatively by the police.⁸⁰ Working-class papers called for broader reform to the system of policing which stemmed from fears of crooked officers existing within the police force.⁸¹ In addition, the working-class papers also tended to sympathise with the criminals who exposed the detectives which marks a sharp contrast to the coverage in middle- and upper-class papers who viewed them as vectors of corruption.

The Penny Illustrated Paper's coverage of the Trial of the Detectives openly criticised the detectives involved while praising the convicts who revealed the collusion between the two groups. In an article detailing the preliminary inquiry, the author comments on Druscovich's inability to capture Benson and Kurr when they were vulnerable. The author cites an incident where Druscovich encountered Benson and Kurr at a train station in Scotland. They state that Druscovich had "the duty to arrest Kurr on the spot" yet chose to let them run away in separate directions.⁸² Druscovich's incompetence is further pointed out by the author as he remarks that the proprietor of the inn, where the swindlers were residing, stated that Druscovich forgot to make himself known as a detective which allowed crucial pieces of evidence against the conmen to be destroyed by accident.⁸³

In another article covering the preliminary inquiry at the Bow Street Court, the author comments on the public sentiment held towards the detectives and the swindlers. They state that William Kurr, in the eyes of the crowd that gathered at the courthouse, is the most "esteemable hero" and that there will be many readers who will prize the full-sized illustration of Kurr included in the edition of the paper.⁸⁴ The author also comments that a large mob gathered outside the court who hissed at the three detectives while cheering for Benson and Kurr.⁸⁵ They also remark that the issue of the crowds hissing and harassing the detectives became so uncontrollable that they had to

⁷⁵ "Preliminary Inquiries," *The Times*, October 10th, 1877, 5.

⁷⁶ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 57.

⁷⁷ Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 203.

⁷⁸ Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City*, 220.

⁷⁹ Philips, *Crime and Authority in Victorian England*, 86.

⁸⁰ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 128, 179, 240.

⁸¹ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 58.

⁸² "The Detection of Detectives," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, July 20th, 1877, 58.

⁸³ "The Detection of Detectives," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, July 20th, 1877, 58.

⁸⁴ "Kurr and the Detectives Portrayed," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, August 11th, 1877, 90.

⁸⁵ "Kurr and the Detectives Portrayed," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, August 11th, 1877, 90.

mix the detectives in other police vans to confuse the crowd as to which van held the three detective prisoners.⁸⁶ The portrayal of the crowd at the Bow Street Court in the *The Penny Illustrated Paper* reflects common working-class behaviour towards policemen, who were often hissed at or harassed when patrolling working-class communities.⁸⁷

The praise of the convicts Benson and Kurr and the scorn of the detectives continue into the articles which discuss the events of the Trial at the Old Bailey. In an article covering the initial sessions, the author describes Kurr as a man of "considerable ability" as well as a man of great intelligence and determination. In contrast the author states that the detectives, especially Meiklejohn and Clarke, wore anxious expressions on their faces as the "sledgehammer" of evidence was delivered against them.⁸⁸ The author also comments on Kurr's intelligence, stating that he had "a better head on him" than any of the men in wigs and gowns who sat before him.⁸⁹ While one might assume these appraisals to be connected to earlier trends regarding the romanticisation of criminals such as highwaymen and thieves, the positive portrayal of Benson and Kurr focuses more to their actions in exposing the detectives and the incompetency of the Metropolitan Police rather than as Robin Hood-esque figures who evade the law and eventually face justice at the hands of the state.⁹⁰

In addition to commenting on the events of the Trial, the paper also targets the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Colonel Edmund Henderson, in a separate article. The author begins the article by comparing the police to the sun, claiming that there are several spots in both but regardless the public had warmed up to the presence of the police. The author then deviates to state that events of the Trial of the Detectives have demonstrated the negative elements present within the Metropolitan Police force which has lowered the public's trust in the efficiency of the institution. They conclude the article by asking the reader that, with the current state of the police as exposed in the Trial of the Detectives, when will anyone be able to walk the streets safely?⁹¹

In their article discussing the verdict of the Trial, *The Penny Illustrated Paper* continues to praise the convicts while scorning the convicted detectives. The author believes that trusted public servants like Meiklejohn and Druscovich engaging in acts of conspiracy deserves the most severe punishment. In addition, the author assures the reader that ruin and disgrace will follow the men after they are released back into the public after serving their sentence.⁹² As for the convicts Benson and Kurr, the author states that they trust that these men will be released into liberty after they have served their time.⁹³ Through an examination of *The Penny Illustrated Paper's* coverage of the Trial of the Detectives, it is clear that the working class held a negative sentiment towards the police. This is evident in the paper's praising of the convicts as witty and intelligent men which is matched with a condemnation of the detectives for their actions. The calls for reform of the Metropolitan Police match the climate of the period as working-class contemporaries pushed to reform what they perceived as a faulty system of policing.⁹⁴

The negative sentiments regarding the police and the praising of the convicts are echoed in the coverage of the Trial by *Reynolds's Newspaper*, a prominent radical working-class weekly. In a short article summarising the events of the preliminary inquiry in August 1877, the author criticises the actions of the detectives involved in the case. The author states that Meiklejohn is the "prime mover" in the business and that Palmer and Druscovich were too hesitant to stop the affair.⁹⁵ The author comments that if the charges against the men are discovered to be true, then it is possible that the detectives have arrested innocent individuals in the past to whom they could use the slightest evidence against to imprison them.⁹⁶ The author argues that the Trial demonstrates that the state of the police force is "far from satisfactory."⁹⁷ By viewing the police force as being dominated by crooked inspectors and in a parlous state, the coverage of the Trial in *Reynolds's Newspaper* connects to broader calls for reform to the Metropolitan Police by the working class.⁹⁸

⁸⁶ "Kurr and the Detectives Portrayed," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, August 11th, 1877, 90.

⁸⁷ Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City*, 218, 219.

⁸⁸ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 266.

⁸⁹ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 3rd, 1877, 281-282.

⁹⁰ Crone, *Violent Victorians*, 80 (Crone details the "cult of the criminal" which was prevalent in Victorian Britain. She highlights how the stories of criminals focused on them committing crimes and facing justice at the hands of the state which is absent from the descriptions of Benson and Kurr).

⁹¹ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 3rd, 1877, 281-282.

⁹² "Our London Letter," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 24th, 1877, 322.

⁹³ "Our London Letter," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 24th, 1877, 322.

⁹⁴ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 58.

⁹⁵ "The Charges Against the Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, August 5th, 1877, 5.

⁹⁶ "The Charges Against the Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, August 5th, 1877, 5.

⁹⁷ "The Charges Against the Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, August 5th, 1877, 5.

⁹⁸ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 58.

In addition to commenting on the state of the police force and the incompetence of the detectives, the paper also praised the characters of Kurr and Benson. In an article detailing the prosecution's investigation into Clarke's involvement during the preliminary inquiry, the author attributes positive comments to the characters of Kurr and Benson. During William Kurr's testimony against Inspector Clarke, the author states that Kurr stood erect in the witness box with his arms folded. The author also comments that he looked incredibly healthy and robust. When hearing questions from Mr. Poland, the lead prosecutor, the author praises Kurr's attentiveness to what was being asked of him. The author praises Kurr's choice to lean towards Mr. Poland when being questioned and comments that his corrections to details brought forward by the prosecution showed his extreme attentiveness and involvement in the Trial.⁹⁹ The positive characterisations of Kurr and Benson are continued in *Reynolds's Newspaper's* coverage of the Trial. An initial report on the Trial describes Kurr as a man of "great ability" and energy.¹⁰⁰ The descriptions attributed to Benson and Kurr by *Reynolds's Newspaper* bear similarity to those found in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* because their descriptions focus on their actions condemning the police officers, rather than their lives and punishment at the hands of the law.

In the aftermath of the Trial at the Old Bailey and the verdict brought against the detectives, *Reynolds's Newspaper* composed an opinion piece that detailed the paper's thoughts about the proceedings. The author begins by explaining the importance the detectives held within the fabric of society. They state that the detectives involved were individuals responsible for investigating issues of life and death as well as the protection of one's property from harm.¹⁰¹ The author then shifts to discuss the character of Meiklejohn who is portrayed as the "arch-rogue" who was in connection with "thieves, burglars, and malefactors of the worst description" for years.¹⁰² The author then states that although Kurr and Benson were deemed "as bad and black" as they could be by the Attorney General, their statements were matched with a wide variety of evidence that clearly proved the corruption of the detectives.¹⁰³

After outlining the characters of the individuals involved in the case, the author then shifts to discuss financial backgrounds of men on the detective force more generally. They discuss how detectives possess a salary of up to £400 per year with a "handsome" retiring pension. Detectives, the author points out, also receive rewards for capturing criminals or completing cases.¹⁰⁴ They also note that detectives are usually allowed certain privileges in their line of work such as staying in fancy lodgings or travelling to various locations around the country. Furthermore, the author states that detectives also received many "presents" from banks or wealthy individuals as gifts. In addition to legal means of acquiring money, the author remarks that the detectives may also receive bribes from criminals such as in the Trial of the Detectives. Regardless of illegal bribes, the author estimates the salary of a detective to be "a thousand per annum."¹⁰⁵ The author uses their estimates to state that the notion that detectives are overpaid for their line of work is false and the Trial of the Detectives demonstrates, in many ways, detectives should be paid far less.¹⁰⁶

The author then discusses the celebrations surrounding the convictions of the detectives by the general public. They ask the reader, that though the four detectives have been convicted, how many more "scoundrels" exist within the police department and are at large? The author then questions how many innocent persons, whose liberty had been sworn away by the detectives, are sitting in gaol. The author highlights how individuals, such as Meiklejohn and Druscovich, could trump up evidence against any person to imprison them against their will. The author then concludes his article by stating that scoundrels such as Meiklejohn may have knowledge of other past crimes that have remained unsolved.¹⁰⁷ The sentiments about the detectives found in *Reynolds's Newspaper* connect to broader attitudes regarding detectives held by the lower classes which suggested that detectives were corrupt and predatory members of the state who could place any innocent individual behind bars.¹⁰⁸ The coverage of the Trial of the Detectives in *Reynolds's Newspaper* demonstrates that the working class held a negative sentiment towards the

⁹⁹ "The Serious Charges Against Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, September 16th, 1877, 5.

¹⁰⁰ "Trial of the Detectives," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, October 28th, 1877, 5.

¹⁰¹ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰² "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰³ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰⁴ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰⁵ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰⁶ See Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 113, 120 (These complaints put forward by *Reynolds's Newspaper* accurately reflect the wages and rewards obtained by Victorian detectives).

¹⁰⁷ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4.

¹⁰⁸ Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 201.

police post-1870 because of its appraisals of Benson and Kurr as well as its condemnation of the detectives as crooked and incompetent.

The Trial of the Detectives was significant to Victorian audiences because of their complicated relationship with the police. The middle- and upper-classes held concerns that detectives had the potential to be morally corrupted by the criminals they investigated. This is reflected in the coverage of the Trial in both *The Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Times*. Both papers detail how Meiklejohn, Clarke, and Druscovich were ordinary men who were seduced into wrongdoing by the experienced conmen Benson and Kurr.¹⁰⁹ However, some still saw the detectives through a more favourable lens. The choice to portray the actions of the detectives in such a manner demonstrates a complicated opinion of the police.

In contrast, the working-class papers held far different concerns that were the product of the complicated relationship between the police and the working class. Notable working-class weeklies such as *The Penny Illustrated Paper* and *Reynolds's Newspaper* praised the convicts who gave testimonies against the detectives. The papers praised them for their intelligence and wit in the court sessions as well as their ability to recall certain events.¹¹⁰ The detectives, on the other hand, were met with harsh criticism. Their case was used by working-class reporters to highlight the possible corruption that existed within police departments which could have led to many innocent individuals jailed. It also served as a way for the working class to manifest their grievances about the wages and privileges allotted to detective officers. In addition, the papers also highlight the incompetence of the officers, showing that they failed to act against the criminals when they should have. The mostly negative sentiment found within the newspapers of the upper, middle, and lower classes covering the Trial of the Detectives indicates that popular opinions of the police did not increase positively starting in 1870. Rather, there was widespread dissatisfaction and distrust by the public.

In addition to the written reporting in newspapers, the illustrated prints included in each issue are important to consider when analysing perceptions of the detectives. Much like the written reports they accompanied, the illustrations contain various nuances which hint at the perception contemporaries held of specific individuals involved in the case. In her article "Serialisation, Illustration, and the Art of Sensation," scholar Elizabeth Anderman analyses the importance of examining sensational illustrations. She argues that in the past scholars have tended to neglect the importance of sensational illustrations. However, she insists that these depictions can be of significant value to scholars when considering how sensational literature was intended to be presented to the audience.¹¹¹

Anderman details how artists used techniques such as adding lines to an individual's face to highlight emotional intensity. Adding lines with expression could highlight emotions such as depression, shock or surprise. In contrast, an individual with a face devoid of lines meant that the person was pure, angelic, or was meant to be highlighted as a good individual.¹¹² Other scholars have focused on sensational illustrations beyond works of illustrated fiction. Catherine Anderson has considered how racialized figures are depicted in sensational illustrations.¹¹³ Louise Logan examined how vivisection was depicted in *The Illustrated Police News*.¹¹⁴ However, scholars have yet to conduct a study that examines how policemen, more specifically detectives, were depicted in sensational illustrations.¹¹⁵ This section aims to fill this gap by examining several depictions of the Trial as well as of the detectives and convicts involved in the case.

¹⁰⁹ "Trial of the Detectives," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 21st, 1877, 1 and "London, Wednesday, November 21st, 1877," *The Times*, November 21st, 1877, 9.

¹¹⁰ "The Detectives Detected," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, November 25th, 1877, 4 and "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 3rd, 1877, 281-282.

¹¹¹ Elizabeth Anderman, "Serialisation, Illustration, and the Art of Sensation," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 52:1 (2019): 28.

¹¹² Anderman, "Serialisation, Illustration, and the Art of Sensation," 31.

¹¹³ Catherine Anderson, "A Zulu King in Victorian Britain: Race, Royalty, and Imperial Aesthetics in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Visual Resources*, 24:3 (2008), 315.

¹¹⁴ Louise Logan, "Drawing Species Lines: Sensation and Empathy in Illustrations of Vivisection in the *Illustrated Police News*," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 53:1 (2020), 14.

¹¹⁵ Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, 142, 125 (Shpayer-Makov's work features images of policemen found in the popular press but she does not explicitly discuss these images or how they reflect broader sentiments about policemen).

It will argue that there is a sharp contrast between lower- and middle-class papers, as middle-class papers tended to depict more neutral scenes whereas lower-class papers focused on shaming the detectives while simultaneously praising the convicts who exposed the public to their actions.



THE BITER BIT: PHOTOGRAPHING A DETECTIVE IN NEWGATE.

Fig. 2 "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 265.

The Penny Illustrated Paper featured many illustrations in its coverage of the Trial of the Detectives. In one illustration labelled "The Biter Bit: Photographing a Detective at Newgate," the reader is presented with a scene of a detective getting his booking photograph taken as he is admitted to Newgate (Fig. 2). The detective, presumably Meiklejohn, sits slouched in a chair with a sombre expression on his face as he looks away from the camera toward the floor. The lines on his face accentuate his saddened expression giving it a melodramatic and sensational effect. In front of him, a photographer focuses the camera and a guard observes him as his photograph is taken.¹¹⁶ The cartoon, created during the Trial at the Old Bailey, portrays the detective in a negative light and reflects the unfavourable view of the police by the lower classes. It assumes his guilt through the saddened expression on his face accentuated by various lines,

which would have found resonance in working-class readers following the Trial.¹¹⁷

Images of the detectives also feature prominently on the front covers of the issues covering the Trial of the Detectives at the Old Bailey. On the cover of issue No. 846, the reader is presented with portraits of the detectives involved in the corruption. Most of the men bear neutral, serious expressions in their illustrations (Fig. 3). In contrast, the illustrations of the detectives in the following issue differ greatly. Here the reader is presented with the group of accused detectives sitting in the dock at the Old Bailey labelled "the Prisoners in the Dock" (Fig 4). It depicts Druscovich leaning back to take a sip out of a tankard, while Meiklejohn leans anxiously over the desk of the dock. Clarke, located at the end of the line of detectives, wears a worried expression which is accentuated by the many lines on his face. An interesting aspect of this illustration is the positioning of William Kurr's image. He is seen above the detectives, looking down towards the anxious detectives with a smug expression.¹¹⁸ The positioning of Kurr on the cover could be intentional as a way to highlight how the details of his testimony created anxiety amongst the detectives which bears resemblances to the written reports about his testimony and how it hammered down on the detectives.¹¹⁹ The choice to portray detectives as anxious individuals by *The Penny*



Fig. 3 "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, cover.

¹¹⁶ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 265.

¹¹⁷ Anderman, "Serialisation, Illustration, and the Art of Sensation," 31.

¹¹⁸ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, cover.

¹¹⁹ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 266.



Fig. 4 "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, cover.

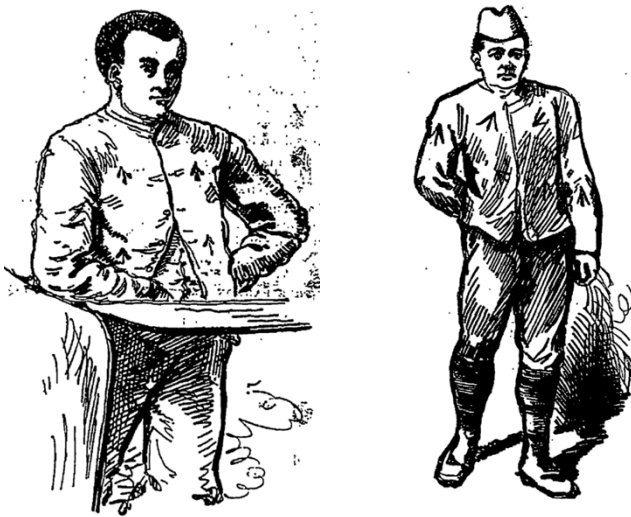


Fig. 5 "Kurr and the Detectives Portrayed," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, August 11th, 1877, 90.

Illustrated Paper reflects the negative opinion of the police held by the working class. By portraying them as anxious, the artist assumes their guilt in conspiring with the criminals to aid them in escaping justice.

In contrast to portrayal of the detectives, which are less frequent and depict the officers involved as anxious individuals, images of William Kurr and Harry Benson appear more frequently in *The Penny Illustrated Paper*. On the front cover of issue No. 846, the reader is given a full-sized illustration of Kurr. His image is in the centre of the cover and is the largest when compared to the images of the detectives which are arranged in smaller boxes around him. In the illustration, Kurr sits slouched holding a quill in his mouth with a focused expression as if he is in thought and his eyes are directed towards the left side of the cover (Fig. 5).

The choice to portray Kurr as larger than the detectives highlights how the paper attempted to cater to its audience. The placement of Kurr in the centre of the paper makes him the focus of the viewer's attention rather than the much smaller depictions of the detectives which surround him. Kurr's expression and posture also suggests that he is an intelligent individual, carefully recalling what was asked of him by the prosecution. His portrayal as an intelligent figure in the illustrations connects to the written descriptions of his conduct in the court by working-class papers, which praised him for his intelligence and focus when giving the court his testimony.¹²⁰ In addition to the illustration of Kurr on the front cover, the issue also contains additional illustrations of Kurr in a convict uniform. In the second, much smaller illustration, Kurr is standing with a hand in his pocket and is dressed in a convict's uniform and his face is in a neutral expression devoid of lines.¹²¹

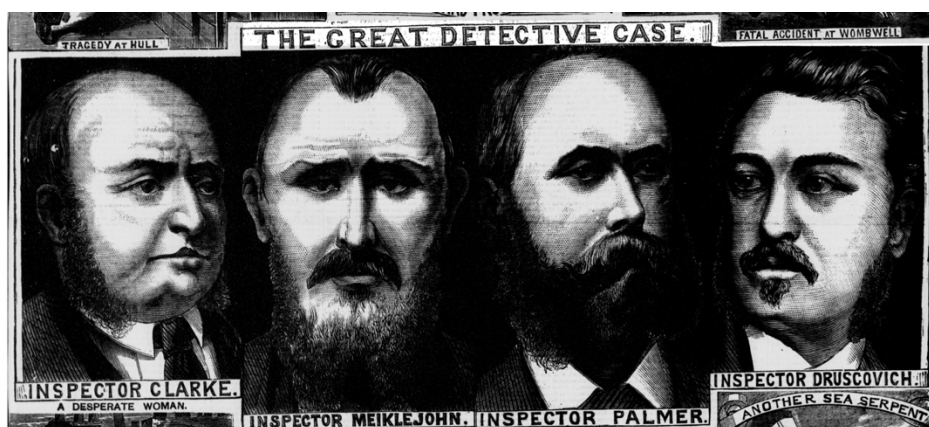


Fig. 6 "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 17th, 1877, cover.

In the following issue, No. 847, illustrations of Benson and Kurr appear again. Kurr, again, occupies a significant space on the front cover. Kurr is depicted with a slight smile on his face as he gazes downwards (Fig 4). In the issue itself, the reader is again presented with another smaller image of Kurr standing in the witness box in his convict uniform with a serious expression on his face with his hands placed on his hips. Again, his face is devoid of any lines in his illustration Benson is also featured in this issue, bearing a similar slight smirk as Kurr in his illustration (Fig. 6). The choice to portray Benson and Kurr multiple times is significant because, as the paper mentions, their readership would have "treasured them."¹²²

The depiction of Kurr and Benson in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* suggests a favourable perception of the convicts and a negative perception of the police. The lack of lines on the convicts' faces plays on the sensationalist trope of portraying inherently good individuals as angel-like, with no lines on their faces.¹²³ The illustrations in the working-class weekly, *The Penny Illustrated Paper* indicate a negative perception of the police through their choice to include numerous illustrations of the convicts which portray them in a positive light. This is in contrast to the illustrations of the detectives, which are less frequent and depict with shameful, anxious expressions which reflect

¹²⁰ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, November 3rd, 1877, 281-282.

¹²¹ "Law and Crime," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, October 27th, 1877, 265.

¹²² "Kurr and the Detectives Portrayed," *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, August 11th, 1877, 90.

¹²³ Anderman, "Serialisation, Illustration, and the Art of Sensation," 31.

the negative sentiments held by lower-class contemporaries that the police, especially detectives, were innately corrupt and untrustworthy.¹²⁴

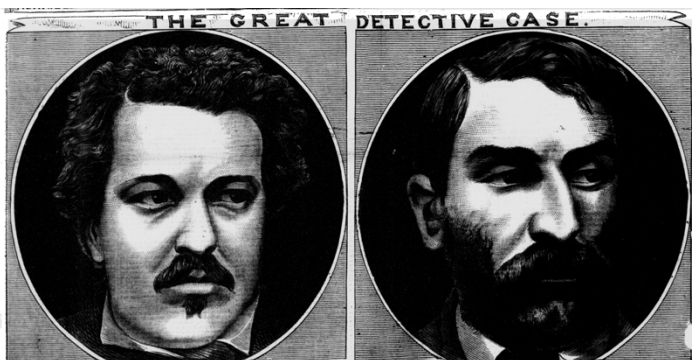


Fig. 7 "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 10th, 1877, cover.

portrait of Meiklejohn seems to depict him with a worried expression with his brows lowered and shading under his eyes to highlight the emotion. Drusovich's expression is interesting as well, as he glances to the left side of the page with a seemingly shocked or worried expression on his face.¹²⁵



Fig. 8 "The Conspiracy Case at Bow Street," *The Illustrated London News*, August 25th, 1877, 185.

The Illustrated Police News was another working-class weekly which attempted to present elements of the Trial through various illustrations. Despite being known for its sensational coverage of events, the illustrations depicting the Trial of the Detectives are much more "neutral" than those found in *The Penny Illustrated Paper*. However, they still contain several slight nuances which hint at the perspective of the newspaper on the events of the case. In the cover illustration of issue No. 718, portraits of the detectives are located across the middle section (Fig. 7). They bear stern expressions, which are accentuated by the contrasting shadows on them. Interestingly, the

The paper's illustrations of Benson and Kurr on the front cover of issue No. 717 is unique and serves as a contrast to the portraits of the stern detectives. In their portraits, Kurr and Benson have full facial hair with their heads unshaven. The two men are also not shown in convict uniforms but rather in what is presumably a suit. They bear serious expressions and their eyes glance off to the side (Fig. 8). This is the only illustration portrayed in this way found in illustrated papers.¹²⁶ Their portraits take up a majority of the cover, similar to the depiction of Kurr on the cover of *The Penny Illustrated Paper*. The choice to portray Kurr and Benson in such a way and the size of their portraits indicates a more favourable perspective of the convicts. To the reader, the two men do not appear to be convicts but instead stern gentlemen. This is a contrast to the depiction of the detectives, especially Meiklejohn and Kurr, who bear worried expressions on their faces which presumes their guilt which connects to the broader distrust of police detectives by the lower classes.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City*, 222 and Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 201.

¹²⁵ "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 17th, 1877, cover.

¹²⁶ "The Great Detective Case," *The Illustrated Police News*, November 10th, 1877, cover.

¹²⁷ Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective*, 201.

The illustrations of the Trial of the Detectives in middle-class illustrated weeklies are less numerous and depict far more neutral scenes. In *The Illustrated London News*' depiction of the preliminary inquiry, the viewer is presented with a detailed sketch of the courtroom during the examination of William Kurr. William Kurr is seen sitting in the

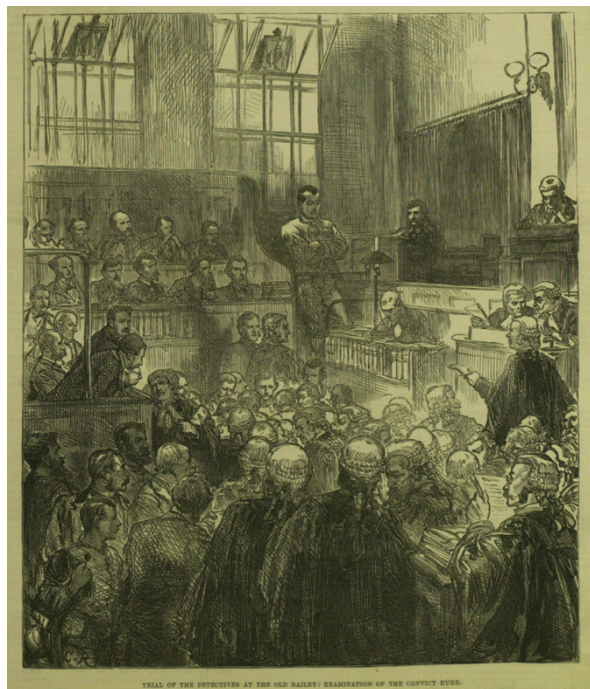


Fig. 9 "Trial of the Detectives at the Old Bailey," *The Illustrated London News*, November 3rd, 1877, cover.

The Penny Illustrated Paper and *The Illustrated Police News*. The paper does not present the reader with individual portraits of the convicts or the persons involved as found in the two lower-class weeklies. In addition, all of the individuals portrayed in the illustrations are presented with neutral expressions which is a contrast to the exaggerated expressions found in both *The Penny Illustrated Paper* and *The Illustrated Police News*. The more neutral portrayal of the court scenes and the events of the scandal suggest that a more conservative section of the middle class did not view the case in as much of a negative light as the working class did which connects to suggestions made by Churchill that some middle-class contemporaries held a favourable view of the police.¹²⁹

In addition to being covered in middle- and upper-class newspapers, discussion about the Trial of the Detectives also surfaced in the weekly satirical magazine *Punch*. It primarily catered to middle- and upper-class audiences and was known for its ridicule of sensational events as well as satirical social

witness box wearing a neutral expression, leaning towards the barrister to hear the question being asked of him. In the dock, the detectives wear neutral expressions as do the other members of the court (Fig. 9). In another illustration, portraying the Trial at the Old Bailey, the viewer is again presented with another court scene (Fig. 10). William Kurr leans against the back of the witness box with his arms crossed, looking distantly to the side. The court is shown to be packed with spectators and in front of Kurr legal officials sit with serious expressions on their faces as they examine documents. The detectives wear neutral expressions on their faces as they sit in the dock, with one of them leaning down to whisper something to their lawyer.¹²⁸

The images of the Trial of the Detectives found within *The Illustrated London News* contrast those found in both



BULL'S EYE ON BOBBY.

Mr. BULL (takes Policeman's lantern). "THANK YOU. I'LL JUST HAVE A LOOK ROUND MYSELF. STRIKES ME THE PREMISES AIN'T AS CLEAN AS THEY MIGHT BE!"

Fig. 11 "Bull's Eye on Bobby," *Punch*, August 25th, 1877, n.p.

¹²⁸ "Trial of the Detectives at the Old Bailey," *The Illustrated London News*, November 3rd, 1877, cover.

¹²⁹ Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City*, 220.

commentary on the contemporary fascination with crime and infamous criminals.¹³⁰ However, in their cartoon addressing the Trial of the Detectives, the magazine takes a more serious tone. The cartoon titled "Bull's Eye on Bobby" depicts the classic British character John Bull holding an oil lantern to a police officer (Fig. 11). The bobby, bearing a nervous expression, stands at attention near a door that is ajar with a sign on it that reads "Detective Department."¹³¹ Adjacent to the door, is a sign that reads "Scotland Yard Police." The caption on the illustration states that Mr. Bull has taken the lantern from the policeman and remarks to him "Thank You. I'll just have a look round here myself. Strikes me the premises ain't as clean as they might be."¹³²

The cartoon is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it satirises the Trial of the Detectives by poking fun at the nature of the case. However, the cartoon also reflects the fears of corruption that were held by the middle- and upper-classes during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is evident through the artist's choice to use John Bull, a personification of Britain, as the individual examining the offices at Scotland Yard. This choice of character demonstrates that fears about police corruption were widespread in Britain in this period and that the government would soon attempt to amend the problem by investigating the corruption within Scotland Yard. In addition, the date this illustration was published is also significant. The illustration was published on August 25th, 1877 during the initial preliminary inquiry months before the Trial itself.¹³³ This fact, combined with the nervous expression of the policeman in the illustration, demonstrates that the artist believed the detectives were guilty. In choosing this guilty portrayal of the policeman, the artist confirms the fears of their middle- and upper-class audience and also supports contemporary pushes for the state to purge the detective department.¹³⁴

When examined, the illustrations found within the illustrated weeklies allows one to tease out certain nuances which reflect the public perceptions of the police in the late Victorian era. *The Penny Illustrated Paper* contains enlarged as well as numerous depictions of the convicts which portray them in a positive light as intelligent and "good" men. This is a contrast to the depiction of the detectives, who are portrayed as going through stages of guilt with slouched postures and nervous expressions. The portrayal of the detectives in this manner is also found in *The Illustrated Police News'* depictions of the Trial. In their portraits, the detectives wear anxious expressions. The convicts, however, are portrayed as ordinary gentlemen on one of the covers which indicates a positive opinion of them. The portrayal of the detectives as guilty and anxious individuals coupled with the positive portrayals of the convicts demonstrates a negative opinion towards them by the lower class.

The coverage found in middle-class weeklies and periodicals represents a divided opinion on the police. The *Punch* cartoon assumes the guilt of the detectives and touches on wider concerns of police corruption in Britain. This is contrasted by the portrayal of the Trial of the Detectives in *The Illustrated London News* which contains neutral depictions of both the Preliminary Inquiry and the Trial at the Old Bailey. Unlike the working-class weeklies, *The Illustrated London News* does not focus on a single individual and those involved in the case wear neutral expressions on their faces. When compared, the illustrations in middle-class weeklies and periodicals reflect concerns of corruption in the police force as well as a tolerance of the police by more conservative middle-class individuals.

Conclusion

The Trial of the Detectives offered the Victorian public an ideal sensational news story that touched upon anxieties and grievances about policing in late Victorian Britain. To the Victorians, the Trial of the Detectives was a perfect sensational case. It featured members of the middle class, the detectives, who became overwhelmed by greed which led them down a path to criminality. The details of this case were then presented to the public by two unreliable narrators, Benson and Kurr, whose witty remarks were captured across all newspapers regardless of class. The events of both the preliminary inquiry and the Trial at the Old Bailey also opened up the public sphere to discussions about the anxieties and grievances the public held towards the police as well as detectives. A portion of the upper and middle class expressed their fears that detectives had the potential to be corrupted by the criminals they investigated while others took a more neutral stance or defended the detectives. In contrast, the lower-class papers highlighted the incompetence of the police force while simultaneously praising the convicts who delivered

¹³⁰ Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensationalism Or, the Spectacular, the Shocking, and the Scandalous in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Anthem Press, 2003) 3.

¹³¹ "Bull's Eye on Bobby," *Punch*, August 25th, 1877, n.p.

¹³² "Bull's Eye on Bobby," *Punch*, August 25th, 1877, n.p.

¹³³ "Bull's Eye on Bobby," *Punch*, August 25th, 1877, n.p.

¹³⁴ Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 58.

evidence against the detectives. The newspaper coverage of the Trial of the Detectives is a valuable resource that allows one to understand how contemporaries reflected on the scoundrels, swindlers, and sleuths involved in the case.

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