



OUR Journal

Oregon Undergraduate Research

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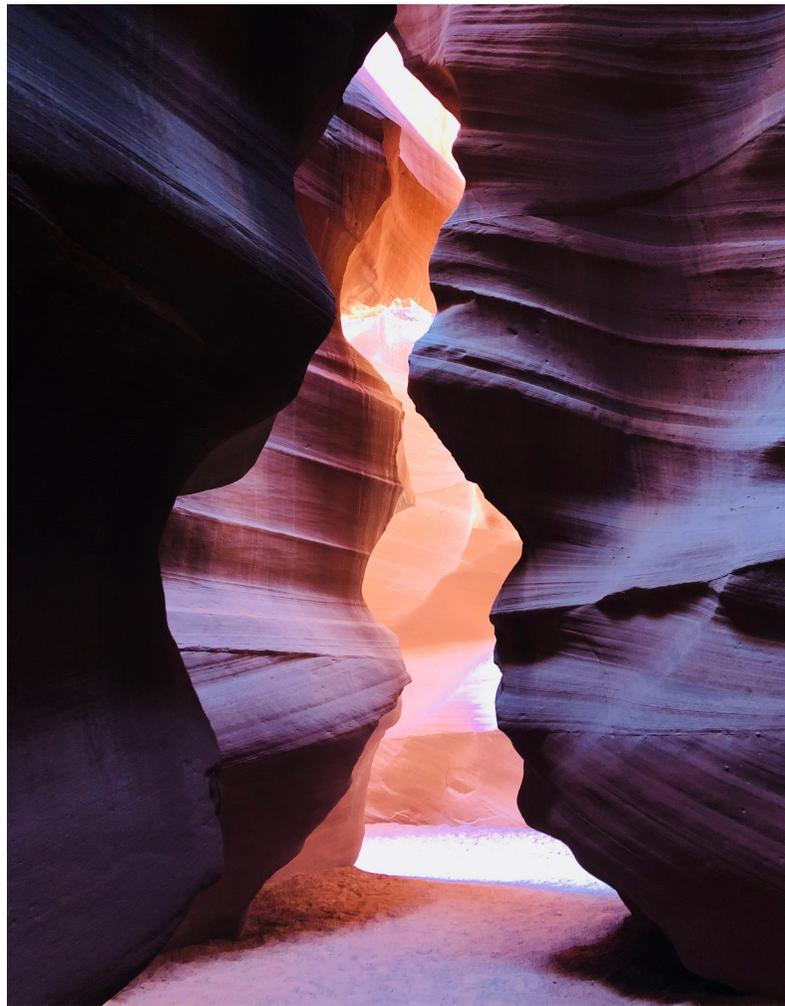
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Cover Art—“Light at Antelope Canyon”

Vinitha Gadiraju, Computer Science*

This photo was taken at Antelope Canyon in Paige, Arizona. The colors in the canyon are extraordinary and I find the interplay between light and dark truly breathtaking. When I am not in class or the research lab, I often find myself outdoors and taking photos. Photography is a form of self-expression and it takes practice and patience to get the “perfect shot”. I also believe that photography, like research, is a learning process that never ends.



* Vinitha is a senior at the University of Oregon majoring in computer science. After graduation this spring she will head to the University of Colorado, Boulder for a Ph.D in computer science. Vinitha serves as president of Women in Computer Science (WICS) and works to create safe spaces and mentoring programs for women in computer science at the University of Oregon. i



Letter from the Editor

Allison M. Zhou, Biology*

Dear readers,

A good friend of mine recently learned how to ride a bike. As I watched her learn about the physical aspects of a bike, balance on the bike, and then finally attempt to take her first ride, I found myself thinking about research. In many ways, learning how to conduct research is like learning how to ride a bike. It is a daunting task at first, but once you know what you are doing it is a freeing experience and research, like a bike, can take you many places. I learned to practice patience, precision, and persistence through my time as a research assistant in the Learning Lab at UO and being involved in research was one of the best decisions I made as an undergraduate. I will take the skills I learned with me well beyond graduation.

As this academic year comes to a close, it is a time of reflection and celebration for many students. The OURJ editorial board will say goodbye to Grieta King, Doug Sam, and myself at the end of this term. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my editors for their continued hard work and dedication to this research journal. I'd also like to personally wish Grieta and Doug the best of luck with their post-graduation lives. Finally, I'd like to give a very special thank you to our supervisor, Barbara Jenkins, of UO libraries. I greatly appreciate her unwavering support, kindness, and wisdom. My time as Editor-in-Chief is coming to a bittersweet end and I am happy to announce my successor, Joshua Pearman, who I know will work tirelessly for OURJ next year.

The present issue presents a range of undergraduate research spanning from abortion discourse to analyzing departures from heteronormativity in music and gender constructs through Chinese literature. I encourage readers to read this issue closely and take time to reflect on the theme of divergence from norms.

It has been my greatest pleasure to work as Editor-in-Chief of OURJ. Readers, thank you for your interest in and continued support of undergraduate research at the University of Oregon. The breadth and intellect of our student body never ceases to amaze me. I am always in awe of the incredible research that my peers are involved in and oftentimes spearhead. I know that research is a ride filled with wobbles and occasional crashes, but learning to steer, balance, and get back up is something all researchers do. I commend the authors featured in this issue for their perseverance and excellent work.

Now, without further ado, please enjoy the 13th issue of the *Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal*.

* Allison is a senior in the Clark Honors College who is graduating with a degree in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. She has been on the OURJ editorial board since winter 2016, and has served as Editor-in-Chief since June 2017. Allison also serves as Diversity Chair for the Clark Honors College Student Association and has worked part-time tutoring English for the American English Institute. This year she finished her honors thesis on infant attention to novel object distributions. After graduation, Allison will begin a year-long Fulbright grant in Taiwan. Please direct correspondence regarding this issue of OURJ to ourj@uoregon.edu. ii



Guest Editorial—“On Undergraduate Research”

James C. Mohr, College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor of History
and Philip H. Knight Professor of Social Sciences

For me, the ultimate goal of “research” is the creation of something new. That effort generally involves the exploration of something that no other scholar has explored or the re-exploration of a subject using fresh information or recently developed methods in order to gain new understandings. But the key word is “new.” At the undergraduate level, research projects rarely transform a field, or even a subfield. The vast majority of undergraduates have neither the time nor the background to make contributions of such magnitude, and they should not be unrealistically challenged to do so. But they can – and regularly do -- make original research contributions of more modest proportions, contributions that help them grow in intellectual ways that few other exercises can match. The idea of adding something that is uniquely yours to the total quantum of human knowledge is both empowering and exhilarating; and even if that addition is almost invisibly tiny, it is nonetheless a real contribution.

In my own field, history, an excellent research paper can often appear straightforward: a well-told tale, with some subtle insight. Readers who have never done historical research might even assume that the author simply found that story and recounted it. But anyone who has tried to write original history – that is, the history of something no other scholar has ever explored – knows very well that the process is far from straightforward. To piece together a well-informed narrative about some incident or event in the past – however small and closely focused it might be -- students must do a great deal of patient digging in original sources in order to figure out what they think is going on, they must acquire enough background information to embed their contribution in a larger context, and they must learn to interpret and evaluate the validity of their sources. They must then make difficult decisions about how to conceptualize and structure their story in ways that will allow it to convey historical implications and insights. They must make judgments about what to include and what to leave out, and they must determine where to begin the story as well as how and when to end it. They must be part detective, part philosopher, and part literary artist.

When all of those factors come together in a first-rate research paper, the result gives students not only the right to feel genuinely proud of their achievements but also the deep satisfaction of having successfully completed an intellectually difficult task. They correctly realize that they have brought into being something that was not there before, regardless of whether anyone else fully appreciates what they have accomplished. They have made an original contribution. No wonder so many UO graduates looking back on their undergraduate years consider a research project – however frustrating it might have been at the time -- to stand out as the most valuable experience of their education.



Meet the Editorial Board

STARLA CHAMBROSE

Starla is a freshman in the Clark Honors College majoring in Biology and History. She is interested in studying how the human genome can shed light on a variety of historical and demographic questions. She has a black belt in Taekwondo and completed the Oregon Music Teachers Association Piano Syllabus. In her free time, Starla enjoys going to sporting events, travelling, and watching Disney movies.

GRIETA KING

Grieta is a senior majoring in Advertising and minoring in African Studies. She studied abroad in Zanzibar, Tanzania. She enjoys painting, reading, taking care of her plants, eating delicious food, swimming, biking, hiking, and skiing. After college, Grieta plans to work in the mountains and do extensive hiking before pursuing a career working for a magazine publication.

JOSHUA PEARMAN

Joshua is a sophomore in the Clark Honors College majoring in psychology. He is a research assistant in the Social Affective Neuroscience Lab, and is working on developing research and data analysis skills to get into graduate school for Industrial-Organizational Psychology. Outside of academics, Joshua enjoys reading sci-fi novels and watching films.

DOUG SAM

Doug is a senior in the Clark Honors College studying environmental studies and geography and minoring in sociology. His research interests include environmental history and Indigenous geographies. He hopes to one day become a professor of geography. Doug also serves as the president of the Clark Honors College Student Association, on the UO common Reading Committee, and works for Orientation Programs welcoming new students to campus.

AMBER SHACKLEFORD

Amber Shackelford is a junior majoring in planning, public policy, and management with minors in environmental studies and political science. She plans on pursuing a graduate degree in urban planning and dreams of being a city planner in Portland, her hometown. In her spare time, Amber enjoys hiking, aerial arts, and planning vacations to faraway places.

SRAVYA TADEPALLI

Sravya is a junior studying political science and journalism and she is passionate about public policy and encouraging substantive political discourse and debate. Sravya placed 2nd at the USA World Schools Debate Invitational as a member of the South Oregon contingent in 2015 and now works as a debate coach for the Corvallis School District. She is also assistant news director at KWVA Radio, where she co-hosts a weekly roundtable show on Oregon politics.



Spitting Bars and Subverting Heteronormativity: An Analysis of Frank Ocean and Tyler, the Creator's Departures from Heteronormativity, Traditional Concepts of Masculinity, and the Gender Binary

Lizzy Elkins*, International Studies and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to investigate an emerging movement of rap and pop artists who actively subvert structures of the gender binary and heteronormativity through their music. The main artists considered in this research are pop/rap/R&B artist Frank Ocean and rap artist Tyler, the Creator, both of whom have claimed fame relatively recently. Artists like Ocean and Tyler make intentional departures from heteronormativity and the gender binary, combat concepts such as 'toxic masculinity', and hint at the possibilities for normalization and destigmatization of straying from the gender binary through lyrics, metaphysical expressions, physical embodiments of gender, expression of fluid/non-heteronormative sexualities, and disregard for labels in their sexual and gendered identities. I will discuss the history and context around music as an agent for social change and address privileging of the black heterosexual cisgender man as the central voice to pop/rap/R&B in the following research. This project will draw on Beauvoirian philosophy regarding gender as well as contemporary sources of media like *Genius*, record sale statistics, and album lyrics. By illustrating and evaluating how these artists subvert traditional concepts of gender and sexuality, I hope to also shine a light on how their music, which reaches millions of people who are less aware of or accepting of gayness, catalyzes social change and is significant in this current political moment, which is an era of increasing public tolerance of queer ideas and less binary gender expression.

INTRODUCTION

Music is a way for people to identify with movements bigger than themselves, to make change, and discuss their hopes for the future. Music is communion. It is a way for people to come together, share a sense of community, and foster a collective identity. It

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is immensely empowering for people who identify with specific life experiences to listen to something which stands for them. From the historical anthems of the poor black struggle in America, “The Message,” by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five and “Fight the Power” by Public Enemy, to the song that kickstarted the musical revolution of the 60s, “I Wanna Hold Your Hand,” by The Beatles, music is an invaluable tool to enact change and increase visibility for various social groups. A relatively new musical movement gaining traction is the emerging visibility of the LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming communities in the hip-hop/rap/R&B genres. Frank Ocean and Tyler, the Creator are spearheading this developing social movement in which artists deliberately disregard the gender binary, gender role norms, and normative heterosexual structures of mainstream American culture. The predominantly heteronormative rap and hip-hop industries should follow these artists’ examples because they are musical innovators committed to subverting structures of heteronormativity and masculinity that plague rap and the contemporary United States.

As feminist gender theory becomes widely discussed in current Western politics, the American public has gained awareness of non-traditional gender identity through social media, protest, and the internet. The unlikely overlap of hip-hop/rap/R&B and diversions from traditional concepts of gender is extremely important in this contemporary political moment. An overarching understanding of gender as a psychological construction of the self, rather than a physical expression of anatomy, is crucial in understanding this musical movement’s importance and for further comprehension of the significance of my research and its implications.

EMBODYING GENDER

One of the main theorists behind the concept of the dissociation of gender and sex is Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), a French feminist philosopher and existentialist. The work she was known best for was her manuscript exploring sexuality and gender, *The Second Sex*. Beauvoir’s main argument was that we actively make choices that affirm our chosen genders and that we have cogency in relation to our gender. Judith Butler, in her discussion of Beauvoir’s concepts of gender in *The Second Sex*, puts it succinctly:

To personify our gender, whether man, woman, or otherwise, is to be engaged in an ongoing cultural interpretation of bodies and, hence, to be dynamically positioned within a field of cultural possibilities... In other words, to be a woman is to become a woman; it is not a matter of acquiescing to a fixed ontological status, in which case one could be born a woman, but, rather, an active process of appropriating, interpreting, and reinterpreting received cultural possibilities (36).

In a para-Cartesian sense, gender is a modality of taking on or realizing potentiality. Gender in a Beauvoir-ian and Sartrean sense is the process of interpreting the body and giving it cultural form and context. Thus, if we integrate hip-hop/rap/R&B, renowned

for being misogynistic and stagnant in discussions of gender, and gender theory, seemingly diametrically opposed topics, we are effectively able to assess how modern musical artists break down traditional concepts of gender through music.

The artists discussed in the following research disregard traditional Western concepts of gender. In the confines of the gender binary, masculinity, or 'being a man', is often equated with power and suppression of weakness and emotionality. Members of the male sex are often told to 'man up' or 'stop being a such a girl' and are encouraged to disassociate themselves from entities which are traditionally linked to femininity. Men's clothing is often more muted in color and refrains from vibrant, 'feminine' colors such as pink or purple, often taking on dark hues, understated tones, and rustic looks. In the marketing and design of fashion, decor, and personal care for 'men', products are as masculine as possible, deliberately staying away from the feminine in personal care and home decor. Men are also discouraged, in their assumption of 'manliness', from wearing makeup and expressing weakness, hesitation, and self-consciousness.

The stereotypical sphere of labor traditionally associated with being 'manly' often encompasses physical labor and positions of power, whereas femininity is associated with devalued domestic spheres of labor. More 'men' are typically CEOs, construction workers and Hollywood directors, while women tend to be associated with jobs like nannying, nursing, social work, and artistry. Even though the United States moves towards a more egalitarian and equal job market, and away from a highly gendered working class, only 4.2% of Fortune 500 companies were headed by female CEOs in 2016 (Merelli), the US Senate failed to pass a bill that would increase pay equality (Paquette) in 2014, and in 2016 women made an average of 79 cents to a dollar their male counterpart would make (Paquette). There is an obvious and persisting dichotomy which exists between 'men' and 'women' in the current United States.

In her piece *La conciencia de la mestiza*, Gloria Anzaldúa reflects upon emotional boundaries that the gender binary imposes on men and women through the medium of tenderness. She looks at how the interpretation of emotional tenderness as weakness is a facet of contemporary and toxic manifestations of masculinity in the present gender binary:

Tenderness, a sign of vulnerability, is so feared that it is showered on women with verbal abuse and blows. Men, even more than women, are fettered to gender roles. Women at least have had the guts to break out of bondage. Only gay men have had the courage to expose themselves to the woman inside them and to challenge the current masculinity. I've encountered a few scattered and isolated gentle straight men, the beginnings of a new breed, but they are confused, and entangled with sexist behaviors that they have not been able to eradicate. We need a new masculinity and the new man needs a movement (106).

Anzaldúa's reflections on the fetters of the gender binary pertaining to different individuals is accurate. In individuals who assume this suit of toxically masculine gender expression, emotional stoicism and seemingly self-contradictory aggression are rampant. The contradicting character traits associated with toxic masculinity are just two consequences of the gender binary and our apparent incapability of breaking out of these chains of gender. This raises questions, the answers to which we will hopefully discover soon: What are we, and how do we act when we challenge the normative social constructions of 'woman' and 'man'?

Extremely binary gender embodiment and enforcement closes doors of opportunity to everyone and impacts everyone differently, through what clothes or colors one feels comfortable wearing, what activities one feels comfortable participating in (both inside and outside of the workplace), or whether one is willing to speak up.

In assuming our genders and taking part in the cultural dance of potentialities that accompanies this assumption and choice, we are "taking a responsibility towards ourselves" (Rich, 28) to embody those things with which we resonate deeply and outside of societal confines. As women, instead of assuming the self-sacrificing model of the mother, the meek bystander at the back of the classroom, or the passive coworker by the water cooler, in our assumptions of femininity and subversions of the gender binary we must throw off these "ethical models" (Rich, 28) which merely seek to oppress and repress, and which do not truly reflect anything biologically or essentially about any anatomical sex. This act of refuting the societal mechanisms and various constructions of gender in daily life is *specifically and definitively the act of subverting gender*.

Though queer sentiments (those ideals which push us away from gender into unnamed, non-binary, and unoccupied space), "queerness", and queer theory in general are often conceptualized as a phenomenon amongst white North American gays (Muñoz, 1999), I seek to break out of this repetitive track of queer theoretical perspectives only applying to the privileged section of queerness. Instead, I seek to stray away from the "vast majority of publications and conferences that fill out the discipline of queer theory [and which] continue to treat race as an addendum" (Muñoz) by considering both queerness and blackness, the two intersecting identities which I shall analyze and stress the importance of in the following pages.

FRANK OCEAN, TYLER, THE CREATOR: SUBVERSIONS AND EMBODIMENTS OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Breaking down this gender binary is important and impending. Subverting heteronormative and hegemonic conceptions of gender and sexuality are beneficial to the heterosexual/cisgender majority of the United States in addition to the marginalized groups who identify with the queer experience. Understanding the disembodiment of sex and gender is a key concept that, when utilized with the act of subverting and challenging gender, can make radical and beneficial change for everyone. Thus, the

actions of the artists discussed in the advancing pages are important and worthy of a deeper analysis in order to illuminate how they are making huge strides in changing the social dynamic of the US.

Singer-songwriter Frank Ocean is best known for his Grammy award-winning album, *channel ORANGE* (2012), and recent release, *Blonde* (2016). *channel ORANGE* won a Grammy in 2013 for best urban contemporary album and peaked at #2 on the Billboard 200 chart, maintaining a spot on the chart for 43 weeks. On its best date, *channel ORANGE* was listened to more than Justin Bieber's *Believe*, Adele's *21*, and Katy Perry's *Teenage Dream* (Billboard). Ocean's second studio album, and third album altogether, was later released in 2016, titled *Blonde*. According to the Nielsen Year-End Music charts, *Blonde* was one of only six albums in 2016 with over 200K in album sales in its first week. *Blonde* peaked at #1 on the Billboard 200 and maintained a position on the chart for 73 weeks. *Blonde* logged the third largest album debut of 2016, coming behind Beyonce's *Lemonade* and Drake's *Views* (Caulfield, Billboard). I choose to include these dates because they illustrate Ocean's initial popularity and the maintenance of his popularity over a long period of time and through his recent diversions from societal norms.

Ocean is immensely popular. His music is diverse. When rapping or singing about love interests, his earlier albums focused on women, and his most recent album and released singles focused mostly on men. This shift and subsequent maintenance of his popularity through this diversion from heteronormativity and masculinity is significant because it models the potential of American public opinion to shift towards acceptance.

Ocean came out in a post on his Tumblr in 2013. The post consisted of two paragraphs he published discussing his attraction to men and women and his first love, which he revealed was a man. Ocean's deliberate ambiguity is a key trait of his music and sexual identity. He has often said that he prefers to stay away from labels like 'bi' or 'gay'. Ocean's note, however ambiguous it was, is significant because it demonstrated the spectrum-like possibilities of gender, attraction, and sexuality through blurred lines. In a piece for *Fader*, writer Alex Frank reflects upon Ocean's "coming out" note and its impact on his own perceptions of sexuality:

His phrasing, which did not commit to the strict confines of gayness, was read by some as wishy-washy cowardice, but I like to think of it as a landmark moment for anyone who has a blurrier, more fluid vision of their own identity... For me, Ocean's post symbolizes the entire potential of the internet in a single moment: a self-published, identity-forging, community-building piece of content. He could not have set a better precedent for regular young kids sharing their lives online—gay, straight, bi, trans, questioning, whatever.

Ocean is a key player in this new wave of artists who actively subvert structures of masculinity, the gender binary, and heteronormativity. This is simply one example of his

impact on this emerging acceptance and consensus of the acceptability of being non-cis het in pop/rap and R&B. Ocean subverts heteronormative structures more effectively through his lyrics, which have changed considerably from his first album to his most recent one. This is an interesting shift that helps illuminate a trend in the rap/pop scene towards acceptance as more rappers challenge the norm.

A pop-culture connection which readers may be able to make with Ocean's journey of self-actualization and with the struggle of being a black man who is queer is the movie, *Moonlight*. *Moonlight* parallels this struggle, winning the *Best Motion Picture - Drama* at the 74th Golden Globe awards in 2016. It was the first film with an all-black cast, one of the first LGBTQ+ films to win such a large recognition, and the second-lowest grossing film domestically to win the Oscar for Best Picture.

Ocean's first official musical release was his mixtape, debuting in 2011 titled *nostalgia, ULTRA*. The album is significantly different than Ocean's later work when it comes to musical themes. *Nostalgia, ULTRA* includes songs such as "Songs for Women", "Lovecrimes", "Bitches Talkin'" and "American Wedding", which are all notable for their lyrics and themes wherein Ocean sings about his sexuality in a heterosexual sense. The mixtape contains so many more discussions of Ocean's romantic endeavors with women, "bitches," and females than of his progressively more ambiguous sexuality in *Blonde*. *nostalgia, ULTRA* is much more heteronormative than *Blonde*, which is significant in the fact that Ocean's whole fanbase has not totally changed. His fanbase has just grown, meaning he is influencing the same people that started listening to his heteronormative music, the longstanding die-hard fans, and also those fans who are not as familiar with old Ocean.

"Novacane", "Songs for Women", and "American Wedding" are three solid examples which demonstrate pre-*Blonde*, closeted Ocean's objectifications of/discussions of his attractions to women which conform to the heteronormative universal standards for rappers. In his song, "Novacane", Ocean reflects on a "drug-fueled tryst" (Rap Genius, Novacane) with a porn star/dentist-in-training. The song accurately demonstrates the heteronormative, typical point of view in rap/R&B wherein women are objectified and sex is glorified. These traits are common in rap but not desirable:

"Bed full of women, flip on a tripod, little red light on shootin'"

"I blame it on the model broad with the Hollywood smile /

Stripper booty with a rack like wow"

"Pretty girls involved with me /

Making pretty love to me, pretty, pity pity /

All the pretty girls involved with me /

Making pretty love to me, pretty, pity pity” (Novacane, Ocean).

In an article for *Genius*, writer Chris Mench breaks down a single released by Ocean soon after the release of *Blonde*; “Chanel”, released in early 2017, is in blatant and striking contrast to *nostalgia*, *ULTRA* era Ocean:

The boastful first few bars of Ocean’s new song might be the coldest, gayest, and most securely masculine flex in the history of rap. Elegant and mellow, the song’s lyrics read as a deliberate ode to duality and non-heteronormative binaries – an ambition, that since the death of Prince Rogers Nelson, is sorely missed in black music.

Other than his lyrics, Ocean’s subverting of heteronormativity and masculinity are visible in his music video for the song “Nikes”. The song’s title makes a nod to traditionally masculine staples of many male rappers’ style: Nike shoes. This music video itself has been heralded as Ocean’s most visibly queer work to date (Complex). The video features scenes of Ocean sitting on the ground by race cars (a recurring motif and representative of masculinity with which Ocean struggles), decked out with heavy eyeliner and glitter. Interspersed through the video are shots of nude bodies (all seemingly androgynous, surrounded by material items in a nod to the song’s message). There’s a point at which two models are lying on a bed of money - and one of them, ostensibly male, is wearing red lipstick, red nail polish, a silver chain, and heavy makeup. There are scenes of strippers wearing heavy makeup and angel wings dancing on poles. The heavy sex appeal of the video is muddled (or heightened, depending on your perspective) by the constant interspersing of androgynous bodies, ambiguously masculine figures with few clothes on and angel wings, makeup, and frequent and obvious ventures and departures from the hypersexual and hyper-heteronormative trend of rap.

Ocean again subverts binary conceptions of sexuality and heteronormativity in particular with his song *Chanel*, wherein he discusses his love interest, his “guy” being pretty like a girl, and having a dualism similar to the logo of Chanel, which is two C’s back to back, overlapping, and facing away from each other. In this song, Ocean discusses his hyper-masculinely presenting (yet very feminine) gay lover and their relationship in relation to his own sexuality; though his lover has feminine facial features, he’s known for attempting to display and defend his masculinity by fighting. Ocean’s *Chanel* is an invitation to reflect upon the duality of our own gender expression and sexuality, and a reflection upon those subversions and embodiments of gender by those people in his own life as well.

Cars are a recurring motif in Ocean’s music, from *nostalgia*, *ULTRA* to *Blonde*. A typical symbol of masculinity, Ocean’s car obsession can be seen in almost everything he does. A nostalgia-tinged piece that Ocean published on his *Tumblr* in 2016 is written from the perspective of a young blonde girl sitting in a modded BMW E30 (one of

Ocean's favorite cars). Ocean has reflected publicly on his obsession with cars and how it represents a sort of alienation from masculinity to him. Late in the piece, Ocean says, "Raf Simmons once told me it was cliché, my whole car obsession. Maybe it links to a deep, subconscious straight boy fantasy. Consciously though, I don't want straight - a little bent is good." Ocean's articulation of this fanaticism in the note he published shows how deeply his queer identity runs, and indeed, Ocean seemingly finds it "easier to access his memories through the figure of the young girl, whose seat belt invokes a gut memory of entrapment" (*The Daily Beast*).

A subtler nod to Ocean's queerness is a twelve second interlude between tracks on his recent visual album, *Endless*. In the interlude titled *Ambience 001: A Certain Way* one can hear a snippet of dialogue from the legendary drag queen Crystal LaBeija, pulled from the 1968 pageant documentary *The Queen* (Rolling Stone). LaBeija can be heard saying, "because you're beautiful and you're young, you deserve to have the best in life". Also, an interesting detail notable in Apple Music's listing of his album *Blond*, is that Apple Music lists the album as *Blonde* and the cover art says *Blond* (the word blonde refers to a fair-haired woman and the word blond refers to a fair-haired man). This mixing of *Blonde* and *Blond* was not unintentional and is a subtler representation of Ocean's deliberate straying from the gender binary and confines. Is the album *Blonde* or *Blond*? Ocean shows that it is both, representing important duality in his art that is further modeled by his lyrics.

However obvious and significant Ocean's subversions may seem (from rapping about his male-identifying-yet-feminine love interest in "Chanel" to wearing makeup in the "Nikes" music video) others raise arguments that highlight artists who are less ambiguous and more openly queer than Ocean and his compatriots. In an article for *Fader*, writer Michael Arceneaux, who has written for *Time* and *The Guardian*, argues that Ocean's deification as a queer symbol is merely because white America has a tendency to romanticize and magnify black sexualities. Arceneaux claims that "this mode of exaggerated praise.... [is] indicative of a perception about black people's relationship with sexuality and gender than what he's [Ocean is] actually offering fans... It can often feel as if there is a clamor for representation to the point where people are willing to magnify moments that are actually minuscule. All levels of progress should be celebrated, but within reason". Another common argument is that artists like Mykki Blanco, Young M.A., LE1F, and Syd the Kyd are more openly subverting structures and accurately representing queer communities than Ocean, and thus should receive more praise, attention, and credit for advancing the queer cause and for breaking down the binary.

However, the significance of Ocean is not in his potential as a 'queer icon' or the fact that his message may not resonate with the LGBTQ+ communities as much as Blanco or Syd the Kyd. Instead, Ocean's importance lies in the fact that he is *extremely popular*. No other artist presenting gender-deviating themes, except maybe Tyler, is as popular as Ocean, and no one is subverting binary and heteronormative structures in the US with

as much attention from the American public. Frank's popularity rivals that of Kanye West and Kendrick Lamar - artists who are straight/cis and who discuss their sexualities through a heterosexual lens. The fact that Ocean is subverting structures of heteronormativity is important especially because he does so with a great deal of popularity and because he works inside the confines of specific musical genres historically associated with objectification of women, hyper-masculinity, and 'toughness'.

The rap/pop genres are notorious for their concepts of hyper-masculinity and heteronormativity. Because rap originated in poor black neighborhoods and stemmed from slaves' lyrical rhyming games, there is history and context around why rap has the tradition of being so heteronormative. Craig Jenkins, in an article for *Vulture*, discusses the paradox of liking rap as anything other than a straight cisgendered man:

To be a rap fan that identifies as anything other than male and straight is to wade against a current pushing back at your very being, to be constantly driven by your heart to decisions your mind ought to reject. Artists accept your patronage, but twist the knife by peppering music with insults and slurs, and interviews with attempts to create distance from hate and discrimination even as they flirt with the very linguistics of the stuff. When J. Cole uses 'faggot' three times in a song, he says he did it to 'spawn better conversations' about homophobia in hip-hop. Travis Scott called a hometown audience 'a bunch of queers' for being too quiet at a show and explained that he was just 'a li'l turned up.'

Jenkins's reflections on the homophobic culture of rap are spot on - the industry has been like this since the beginning. The privileged voice in the worlds of pop and rap is the one of the straight, black, cisgendered man, and the seemingly inherent homophobia and misogyny is audible in everything from the Gangsta Rap of the late 80s to early 2000s (Tupac, Ice Cube, B.I.G, N.W.A., 50 Cent, etc.) to the mumble rap of today (Travis Scott, Cardi B, Migos).

It boils down to the historically placed pressure on black men to maintain an image of hypermasculinity. This pressure to maintain the image of hypermasculinity is accurately portrayed and discussed by bell hooks in her book, *We Real Cool*. hooks claims that in patriarchal culture, males are taught a role that restricts and confines, and when race and class enter the picture along with patriarchy, black men then endure the worst impositions of gendered masculine patriarchal identity (hooks, x). According to hooks, "At the center of the way black male selfhood is constructed in white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy is the image of the brute—untamed, uncivilized, unthinking, and unfeeling". hooks discourse also delves into rap music specifically and why it is so concentrated with violence, misogyny and aggression:

When black males have not been able to achieve in the world of sports, they have looked to the world of music as a site of possibility, a location where alternative masculinity could be expressed. Certainly, the musical culture of blues and jazz had its roots in the black male quest for a vocation that would require creativity and lend meaning to one's labor. (hooks, 22)

Yet what makes contemporary demonization of the black male different from that of the past is that many black males no longer challenge this dehumanizing stereotype, instead they claim it as a mark of distinction, as the edge that they have over white males. Black males who reject racist sexist stereotypes must still cope with the imposition onto them of qualities that have no relation to their lived experience. For example: a black male who is scrupulously honest may have to cope with coworkers treating him suspiciously because they see all black males as con artists in hiding. Nonviolent black males daily face a world that sees them as violent. Black men who are not sexual harassers or rapists confront a public that relates to them as though this is who they are underneath the skin. In actuality many black males explain their decision to become the "beast" as a surrender to realities they cannot change. And if you are going to be seen as a beast, you may as well act like one. (hooks, 45)

This complex relationship between black men and their conception of self is further built upon by Jamison (2006). Jamison reflects on the nuanced relationship between African Self-Consciousness, hypermasculinity, rap, and cultural misorientation. Jamison claims that in order to be considered 'real' men, many African-American males are put in a position where they must distort their African manhood in order to conform to the "cultural dictates of the European worldview" (Jamison, 46).

Indeed, black compulsive masculinity demonstrated in the hypermasculine genres of rap, pop, and R&B is a direct result of the black males' incapability to mitigate a sense of inferiority as placed upon them by systems of oppression, and specifically slavery, in the United States, and their own identities; "The falsification of African consciousness has created a reactionary masculinity in many African-American males who seek to imitate their white male counterparts" (Jamison, 46-47). Therefore, when we take rap artists who are known for being particularly nasty in the realms of sexism, masculinity, or violence, and apply the theoretical framework for analysis laid out by the above, we're presented with men who assimilate and assume these identities and traits in order to cope with, mitigate, and reconcile the many contrasting identities that they have been forced into and perceived as by White society over the course of the past three hundred years. The American obsession with aggressive and unhealthy expressions of black sexuality (hooks, 64) and masculinity is problematic, further enforces toxic concepts of masculinity, gender expression (especially binary gender expression) and is a legacy that still affects black men and women to this day - as is evidenced by contemporary rap/pop/R&B.

Thus, this shift in certain subgenres of rap is brand new, important, and should be modeled by the rest of the rap/pop industries in order to further social progress and to shed the fetters of the legacies of slavery and racism that plague the contemporary United States and majority of western society. Pop artists' significance in developing queer visibility cannot be understated, and in fact, many artists like Ocean are on the forefront of the movement making impacts more radical and with different audiences. Brockhampton, Kevin Abstract, Young Thug, Jaden Smith, Mykki Blanco, Syd the Kyd, iLoveMakonnen, Taylor Bennett, and so many others are doing the same thing as Ocean, just with different platforms and differing degrees of influence to their vastly different audiences.

Not only is it beneficial to marginalized and non-marginalized groups when it comes to embracing non-binary expressions of gender and heteronormative practices, but from a business perspective, it's economically smart to seek the inclusion of other social groups. Integrating queer ideas and subverting heteronormative structures is a win-win even from a purely capitalistic point of view. It pushes for social change and allows for monetary growth in a subgenre of music which is seeing a bump in popularity and sales, opening up the floor to many new discussions and opening up paths of upward social movement for those members of society who are impacted by this music, empowered by it, and with whom it resonates.

Some may argue that this shift towards acceptance of non-heteronormative expressions is impossible and an exploitation of those who were previously targeted by the rap community; i.e. those who the slurs specifically target, have targeted, and those who have been mocked by the genre for years. Objectors argue that the industry is inherently queerphobic, misogynistic, and objectifying. Some argue the industry has made millions of dollars like this with little to no consequences, it will never change because there is no motivation to—sexism and heteronormativity are too far embedded in the art. We can't have everyone be happy—especially in this impossible reconciliation between rap/pop/R&B and the group of people who have been marginalized by the industry's use of slurs.

But I disagree with that. There are so many artists who are doing what Ocean is doing, and even artists who have a history of homophobia (i.e. Tyler, the Creator) are shifting toward a more progressive stance as the LGBTQ+ and gender nonconforming communities gain visibility. It is important for all communities that we continue this paradigm shift away from heteronormative music and into a space where self-expression is freed from the confines of the gender binary. It is not counterintuitive for the queer community to start having a place in rap and pop, and it is not contributing to their oppression more even though the industry has a history of marginalizing them. The situation parallels the struggle of black feminists in the mid-late 20th century in America; the predominantly white mainstream feminist first and second waves disregarded (and sometimes even actively worked against) the voices of women of color (WoC), but as time progressed and more WoC were incorporated into the field of

feminism, progress was made on a national scale and WoC were able to gain visibility and more legislative power, including voting rights.

The same narrative is demonstrated by another artist. Tyler, the Creator's transition from heteronormativity and homophobia toward a more open concept of gender and sexuality occurred in the public eye within the last five years. Tyler is a 27-year-old rapper with his own fashion line, collaborations with some of the most popular brands in the United States (Vans, Converse, etc.), and best-selling music. His first official album was released in 2009, titled *Bastard* (a clever reference to his own upbringing) and his second and exponentially more popular album was released in 2011 titled *Goblin*. *Goblin* peaked at number five on the Billboard 200 on May 28, 2011, and stayed on the top 200 for 14 weeks (Billboard). *Goblin* was described by *Pitchfork* contributor Scott Plagenhoef as "bleak and uncompromising". To preface this discussion of his subsequent success, and to put Tyler as a person into perspective, Plagenhoef's *Pitchfork* reflection upon Tyler's accessibility as an artist is key:

To his core fans, Tyler is accessible and approachable, and not just on record. He's online constantly, forging a unique bond with his listeners.... He comes across as an everyday kid. He lives with his grandmother. He likes porn; he hates collard greens. This relatability and strong audience/artist bond, and the diaristic nature of his rhymes, make him as much emo as hip-hop... In short, he's made this record for alienated kids like himself. If you don't already like his music, you probably won't like *Goblin*. And that's apparently the way he wants it.

This is directly related to Tyler's use of slurs directed at the LGBTQ+ communities in his beginning albums (*Bastard*, *Goblin*, and *Wolf*). Tyler used to be renowned for his use of slurs and horrible language, in addition to themes of rape, stalking, abuse, drugs, and alcohol. His first few albums were raw, straightforward, and resonated deeply with American teens and young adults. Though wildly popular, relatable, and accessible, the rhetoric used in Tyler's early work is parallel to the way contemporary America's attitudes toward gayness have changed and is representative of how they will change in the future.

An oft-cited *New Musical Express* article by Daniel Martin claims that Tyler uses the word "faggot" and its variations over 200 times in *Goblin*. Coupled with its popularity, *Goblin* illustrates a theme in hyper-masculine and traditionally homophobic rap and a trend in the United States being cultivated by these artists. A trend rooted in the inescapable homophobia, misogyny and heteronormativity, wherein we move from an outdated, unfamiliar concept of queerness and into a less binary conception of gender and a more spectrum-like conception of sexuality. Tyler's early music is important, but more so is the paradigm shift which I outline.

Tyler's initially glaringly homophobic albums are important in comparison with his later, more popular, radically feminine and queer-themed work. His most recent release,

Flower Boy, was immediately received with enthusiasm and debuted at No. 1 on the R&B/Hip-Hop chart (August 2017) and *held the spot for a week*, subsequently maintaining a spot on the chart for another eight weeks. According to *Genius*, “[*Flower Boy*] [gave] the rapper his third chart-topping set after *Goblin* in 2011 and *Cherry Bomb* in 2015”. *Flower Boy* is filled with non-heteronormative themes. *Flower Boy* often and openly discusses Tyler’s coming out and his various love interests, who are men. In contrasting lyrics from *Goblin* and *Flower Boy* it is evident that Tyler has undergone a definite transition and process of self-actualization from *Goblin* to *Flower Boy*. In the song “She” off of *Goblin*, Tyler reflects on a man’s ‘intense lust for a woman’ to the extent that he watches her sleep and stalks her. Decidedly morbid, this obsession is glaring:

“One, two; you're the girl that I want /
 Three, four, five, six, seven; shit /
 Eight is the bullets if you say no after all this /
 And I just couldn't take it, you're so motherf*ckin' gorgeous /
 Gorgeous, baby you're gorgeous /
 I just wanna drag your lifeless body to the forest /
 And fornicate with it /
 But that's because I'm in love with you, c***”
 In another song from *Goblin*, Tyler spews slurs:
 “Another critic writing report/
 I'm stabbin' any bloggin' faggot hipster with a Pitchfork /
 Still suicidal I am”

This directly contrasts *Flower Boy*, where Tyler discusses “looking for ‘95 Leo” (in reference to Leonardo DiCaprio, in the song “Who Dat Boy”) and coming out of the ‘garden shed’ (on “Garden Shed”):

“Garden shed, garden shed, garden shed, garden shed /
 For the garden /
 That is where I was hidin' /
 That was real love I was in /
 Ain't no reason to pretend /

Garden shed, garden shed, garden shed /
 Garden shed for the garçons /
 Them feelings that I was guardin' /
 Heavy on my mind /
 All my friends lost /
 They couldn't read the signs”

Again, Tyler discusses coming out and his attractions towards men on another song, this time called, “I Ain’t Got Time”:

“How I got this far? Boy, I can't believe it /
 That I got this car, so I take the scenic /
 Passenger a white boy, look like River Phoenix /
 First... *happy birthday!*”

Though this progression towards a more accepting presentation of non-heteronormative sexualities is obvious in his lyrics, in simply contrasting the album art and physical presentations of Tyler on tour in *Goblin* to *Flower Boy* it is evident that this transition is a drastic one—A shift wherein the rapper has realized and assumed a less heteronormative and binary conception of gender and of sexuality is visible.

Tyler’s first album is important and distinctly different from *Ocean* in the way that Tyler has made such a noticeable transition from his expressions of gender and sexuality. His recent fashion line has bright, traditionally feminine colors and prints, which would normatively be outside the bounds of the traditional masculine clothing acceptable, and as demonstrated above, his recent music often discusses infatuations and attractions to various men.

Some may argue that Tyler’s utilization of the word faggot in *Goblin* and *Bastard* was just a re-appropriation of a slur by a gay man in order to reclaim his identity and the power of the word. I disagree. When Tyler used the word “faggot” in *Goblin*, *Bastard*, and every other album up until *Flower Boy*, he had yet to come out, and he used it as an expletive and a tool to shame non-heterosexual people. He was not defiantly re-appropriating it like other openly queer artists (such as Mykki Blanco). Though Tyler still claims he did not do it with malicious intent (he has been quoted many times denying homophobic intentions), his use of slurs directed at gay communities was not a linguistic appropriation as an act of reclaiming—it was weaponized use of a slur

And *that* is why this transition is so intriguing. Tyler and Ocean's examples highlight the fact that there is an emerging trend of artists in the rap/pop/R&B genres who have come from a place of hypermasculinity, homophobia (in Tyler's case), and misogyny, and who are making a very public transition and change into new identities, while also maintaining their fan base and gaining tens of thousands of new fans. They serve as an example and role model for the rest of the industry and for their fans.

Though there are other artists who have gone through less of a paradigm shift, who have not used slurs, and who are more outspokenly queer than Tyler and Ocean, their importance to this emerging movement again lies in their popularity. The coinciding of Ocean's transition, Tyler's self-actualization, and the awareness of the American public makes for a perfect storm wherein there is potential for true social change and subversion of binary conceptions of gender in everyday life. This change, and the potential that these artists present if mimicked by the American public and rap/pop/R&B industries, is important and *cannot* be ignored or undermined.

Undoubtedly, the artists discussed have risen to fame with the assistance of their heterosexuality, toxic masculinity, and misogyny. However, these artists are blatantly using their power, popularity, and voice to change the music industry and to impact the usually misogynistic and homophobic culture of the rap/pop/R&B world. Their transitions, to some extent, may contribute to and perpetuate these systems of oppression toward LGBTQ+ peoples or gender-nonconforming people, but they are working toward definite change by using their privilege and power, which is why they should be mirrored.

CONCLUSION

Visibility and involvement are integral to social change and radical progress. Again, the understanding of the disembodiment of sex and gender is a key concept that when utilized with the act of subverting and challenging gender can make radical change not for just nonconforming people, but also for those who are gender-conforming. By challenging gender norms, stereotypes, and actions, non-oppressed and gender-binary conforming individuals can also benefit. The importance of subverting the gender binary *cannot* be understated, and as musical industries, rap/pop/R&B should strive towards being more inclusive, more queer, and less heteronormative for the greater public good and for added economic incentives. Visibility is progress and the active work of subverting the gender binary that Frank Ocean, Tyler, the Creator, and fellow artists are doing is integral to furthering gender equality, enacting less strict confines of the gender binary, and remedying the misogyny, homophobia, and hypermasculinity which plague rap and similar contemporary American musical genres.

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Women's Biological Threat to Confucian Social Order: An Examination of Gender Constructs through an Analysis of Pre-Modern Chinese Literature

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ABSTRACT

Cultural views embedded within an array of pre-modern Chinese literature unveil social and gender constructs designed to promote Confucian social order. Confucian culture prioritizes the reproduction of sons, in order to maintain ancestor worship and social order, whereas literature from this period does not celebrate the female's biological role in reproduction. Instead, women's biological role in reproduction is characterized as unfavorable and disrupting to social order, while the social role of motherhood is idealized and represented as stabilizing to social order. Consequently, the biological processes associated with female reproduction are ranked on a hierarchical scale reflecting women's social position that conforms with Confucian gender hierarchies and social mores. An interpretation and analysis of traditional Chinese literature reveals that the positive aspects associated with the social role of motherhood override the negative aspects associated with the biological role. Within this construct, the biological role of motherhood was restrained by depictions of pollution and represented as inferior to the social role. Furthermore, female reproductive power was framed as secondary to men. These societal views parallel Confucian social and gender hierarchies that promote the female role of biological reproduction as a threat to social order.

Even though Confucian culture prioritizes the reproduction of sons to maintain ancestral worship, many pre-modern Chinese texts depict the female biological role in reproduction as inferior to the male role and destabilizing to social order. The female role in reproduction is represented by the biological and social attitudes surrounding motherhood in Confucian culture, demonstrated by divisions in maternal roles.

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Furthermore, substances associated with female biological reproductive processes are consistently depicted as polluting and harmful to social order. An analysis of societal views surrounding female reproduction and divisions of maternal roles reveals the pervasive moral authority of Confucian social and gender hierarchies in pre-modern China. The moral authority of Confucian values informs the social position of women, which is imitated by and reinforced through the cultural perception of male and female reproductive processes. Among an array of pre-modern Chinese texts compiled from different periods, not one passage, including those written by women, celebrated the female role in reproduction.

DIVISIONS IN MATERNAL ROLES: BIOLOGICAL VS. PROPER SOCIAL MOTHERHOOD

When examining women's role in reproduction within pre-modern China, the article "Reproductive Hierarchies" discusses the biological and social functions of motherhood in relation to social status. The article acknowledges that pre-modern China permitted a range of reproductive freedom and privilege; however, reproductive decisions were dependent on the interests of the kin group and determined by a woman's contribution to the patriline (Bray 340). This is supported in the *Book of Rites*, a foundational Confucian educational text that outlines etiquette appropriate to maintain social order. The section titled "The Pattern of the Family," in the *Book of Rites*, states that "the purpose of marriage was to produce heirs for the lineage and continue the ancestral cult" (358). Thus, the biological role of motherhood signifies the obligation to fulfill the ritual duties of creating a multi-generational family. Despite this reproductive purpose assigned to women, the biological role of motherhood is described as coming "at the price of depletion, pollution, pain, sickness, and sin" (343). This characterization of the biological role of motherhood links the biological processes of women during reproduction to pollution and sin. Confucian culture balances this unfavorable view of women's biological role in reproduction by idealizing the social role of motherhood. The social ideals of motherhood are structured within class differences, which differentiate the motherly tasks between elite and non-elite women. The article reinforces the social ideal which holds that an elite mother's most important contribution was the moral education of a child. The emphasis on elite mothers' social roles suggests that a "woman's greatness was based on how well they raise children [through intellectual cultivation]," rather than their biological capability to nurture a child (347). While elite women were assigned the maternal responsibility for the moral upbringing of a child, non-elite women in the household were assigned the negatively-viewed burdens, including the material tasks of motherhood. This is further reflected by the elite ideal of feminine beauty in late-imperial China. Beauty was defined by a slender physical frame expressing the refinement and moral purity desirable for an elite mother. However, non-elite women, such as maids and concubines, are described as robust and naturally fertile, well-designed for easily giving birth (350). These divisions in maternal responsibility suggest that "proper motherhood" is represented "not by giving birth, not

by suckling or changing diapers, but by giving the child a proper moral upbringing” (349). The social role of motherhood is thereby respected and idealized, while the biological role of motherhood is subordinated and made to be unfavorable. Overall, the article suggests that a woman’s biological role in reproduction is tainted with negativity and disdain, which is reflected in the division of maternal roles within women’s social hierarchies. This conversely promotes the social role of motherhood and frames the biological role with less respect and admiration. The division of reproductive and maternal roles between non-elite and elite women corroborates this social hierarchy.

Selections from *Exemplary Women of Early China*, with texts from as early as 79 BCE, survey attitudes about women’s social and biological role in reproduction. This text demonstrates the trend of negativity surrounding female reproduction, while outlining Confucian gender ideals for women. One such selection involves a mother, Jiang Yuan, who conceives a child in an unnatural, inauspicious way. Yuan’s pregnancy is regarded as “unnatural and loathsome” and therefore burdensome (Liu 3). Yuan chooses to abandon the child in a narrow lane; however, supernatural occurrences prevent the child from being harmed, motivating Yuan to keep her child. It is interesting how Yuan’s choice to abandon and sacrifice her son is tolerable and sanctioned because of the unnatural circumstances of the pregnancy. However, her initial choice to abandon the child is viewed as acceptable because it contributes to protecting the community and preserving social order. However, when Heaven intervenes and protects the child, Jiang Yuan recognizes the child’s potential. When the son grows older, he ascends to minister of agriculture after learning skills from his mother and moves on to establish the kingdom. In conclusion, Heaven reveres Jiang Yuan’s role as a social mother who raised her son to excel and rewards her with a multitude of food (4). From this selection, it is apparent that the inauspicious conception associated with her pregnancy contributed to both her desire to sacrifice the pregnancy and her choice to abandon the child. However, Heaven’s intervention reverses her decision and Jiang Yuan’s role as a social mother to her son characterizes her as virtuous. An additional selection from this collection emphasizes this role of social mother through Jiandi, mother of Xie. Although Jiandi mistakenly gives birth to Xie, she validates her decency by teaching Xie moral principles and being mindful to Confucian ritual. Jiandi and “her capacity to instruct” is respected, underscoring her role as a social mother (5). These selections further demonstrate how a mother’s social role is idealized and overrides a mother’s negative biological role in pre-modern Chinese texts.

Although Confucian culture prioritizes a woman’s biological role as a method to reproduce heirs for the lineage, the biological processes associated with childbirth are treated as polluting and harmful. “The Power and Pollution of Chinese Women,” reveals how the most polluting or damaging substances were those associated with reproductive processes of women, such as menstrual blood and birth fluids. Although men were considered to contribute to and produce polluting substances, their role is less immediate than that of women due to biology. By default, women share proximity to

uncleanliness due to their direct affiliation with birth. The hierarchy of impure substances places women's reproductive processes at the top. Thus, biological processes are biased and labeled through a lens compatible with social constructs of gender in Chinese society, and such constructs were designed to promote Confucian social order. The double standard on how substances are ranked on a hierarchal scale of pollution is demonstrated in various ways. The article recognizes that urine, feces, and pus are undeniably dirty; however, substances such as menstrual blood and birth fluids receive a more severe ranking in terms of what is unclean. Substances, such as menstrual blood, "cannot be alleviated by soap and water" and require a ritual process of extensive cleansing (Ahern 172). Menstrual blood is recognized as the "flesh and bones" of a child, and semen is assigned the equally critical ability to start the growth of a child. Yet menstrual blood is considered to be more harmful and polluting than male substances such as semen. The assigned labels of dirtiness are also associated with deities of birth, where "little low goddesses" are considered less clean and ranked lower than other gods because of their associations with childbirth (182). This implies that events like childbirth are attached with notions of negativity, regardless of the occasion being considered as a happy event, since childbirth threatens the stability and integrity of the family (188). Consequently, events like childbirth are framed with anxiety and negativity because of the potential disruption to the order and stability of the family. The dirtiness of women's bodily substances is directly linked to their bodies, as when the womb is described as a "vessel of contamination" (179). A woman's physicality is thus linked to intrinsic dirtiness, while no such associations existed for a man. Furthermore, the double standard is replicated in the treatment of male and female offspring. Male offspring fit within the social hierarchies and are considered less dirty, while female offspring require a more extensive cleansing process after birth (185). This double standard echoes the hierarchies of polluting substances and gender, which were constructed in relation to paternity. In an investigation of perceptions of the human body and polluting substances, "substances that cross bodily boundaries were considered to be unclean," such as pus from sores, which may be "indicative of disorder within the body, such as an imbalance or excess of poison" (184). If one expands this concept to birthing processes, birth is considered more polluting because "birth entails the crossing both bodily and familial boundaries. Blood flows from the mother's body, and the family must be redefined to include the new member" (185). When gender constructs are introduced, bodily substances are ranked on a hierarchal scale that imitate gender hierarchy within Confucian society. This gender hierarchy upholds negative impressions of childbirth and other female reproductive processes, where bodily substances are interpreted and perceived as polluting and destructive.

CASES OF FEMALE'S ROLE IN REPRODUCTION AS POLLUTING AND SECONDARY TO MEN

Notions of internal pollution and negativity surrounding birthing processes are represented in Pu Songling's "The Painted Skin," from the seventeenth century, which

emboldens anxieties surrounding women and their polluting qualities. The story involves a Confucian scholar, named Wang, who takes a leisurely walk and encounters a lone, beautiful woman, and then offers his home to her (Pu 53). After growing suspicious of the girl, he looks through his studio window to discover a “frightful demon with a green face and jagged saw-like teeth” spreading its human skin onto the bed to paint it to appear as a young woman (55). This depiction conveys implicit attitudes about a woman’s beautiful exterior and their polluting interior and is intended to discourage men from acting on their desires. The depiction of the internal form of the woman as a demon resonates with the system of ideas which describe a woman’s body as a polluting, sinful vessel. The demon’s painted skin reflects male social anxiety for women to manipulate their exterior to create the illusion of decency. Additionally, the representation of the woman’s exterior as a beautiful young maiden who claims to be an ill-treated concubine upholds the social class divide between elite and non-elite women. The concubine’s beauty is external, and her fertile qualities and affinity with birth are the predominant, polluting forces. When the demon rips out Wang’s heart, the wife of the household, Chen, assumes her obligation to remain loyal. Chen seeks out a madman to help restore her husband’s life. The madman instructs her to ingest his phlegm. When it comes time to bury her husband’s corpse, Chen expels the phlegm of the madman into her husband’s chest cavity, and the substance forms a beating heart (59). This sequence of events is a metaphor for birth, as Chen’s husband has been reborn from the phlegm of the madman. This representation of birth reflects the hierarchy of polluting substances, where substances from a man are interpreted as less polluting and sometimes as purifying compared to the substances a woman releases in childbirth. The phlegm originating from the madman is the substance that restores the husband’s heartbeat. However, the rebirth is fertile only because Chen is absent of desire and wants to remain loyal by helping her husband. Pu Songling’s choice to represent the rebirth of the husband through the madman’s phlegm, rather than Chen’s reproductive capacity, reflects the polluting hierarchy that aligns with Confucian gender hierarchy. Chen’s biological role in this rebirth is omitted and treated as insignificant. Yet, the combination of phlegm from the madman and optimum social qualities from an elite wife, represented by Chen’s fidelity to her husband, provides the balance required to revive her husband and restore order. The overall story implies that a woman’s innate uncleanliness is linked to her reproductive processes, which promotes the attitude surrounding the inferiority of a woman’s biological role in reproduction, compared to the role of men.

The “Biography of the Great Compassionate One of Xiangshan,” from the eleventh century common era, contains Buddhist perspectives that give women an opportunity to challenge the Confucian gender paradigm and achieve a level of self-determination. However, this Buddhist rendering of the Miaoshan legend still appropriates key Confucian themes about reproduction, which project the power of reproduction onto men. In the beginning of the story, Miaoshan challenges her father’s desire that she marry in order to practice the Way and attain enlightenment (Yu 34). The father

disagrees and exiles Miaoshan. When the father becomes ill, a monk informs that the only remedy is the “arms and eyes” of one without anger (40). An envoy seeks such an individual, who is dressed like a hermit in Xiangshan, and the hermit sacrifices her eyes and arms to heal the King. When the king goes to seek out the hermit in Xiangshan, to express gratitude for his recovery, he discovers the hermit is his daughter. In an act of filial piety, “[Miaoshan] offered up her hands and arms to repay her father’s love” (41). To restore Miaoshan’s eyes and arms, the father must “lick my child’s two eyes with my tongue and rejoin her arms” (42). Miaoshan’s father’s desire to restore her limbs is viable due to the reproductive power underlying the father’s tongue, to make his “child’s withered eyes grow again” (42). This depiction is another symbolic rendering of birth, which is intended to highlight the reproductive capacity of a male through the phallic imagery of the father’s tongue. The symbolic imagery of the father’s tongue is interpreted as phallic because it resembles the reproductive power structure in birthing processes between males and females in pre-modern China that reinforce Confucian gender hierarchy. Miaoshan, due to her father, grows a thousand eyes and a thousand arms appearing “solemn and majestic in form, radiant with dazzling light, lofty and magnificent, like the moon among stars” (42). The pure and successful rendition of Miaoshan’s rebirth bears no resemblance to attitudes toward childbirth accomplished by women. Actual childbirth by women is consistently depicted as undesired, contaminating, and inferior. As a result of the immaculate rebirth of Miaoshan and the power of male sexuality, she becomes a bodhisattva and achieves enlightenment.

The fictional text by Li Yu, “A Male Mencius’s Mother Raises her Son Properly by Moving House Three Times,” continues to convey this attitude of women’s biological role in reproduction as secondary and negative. The story begins by describing a young man named Xu Wei, also known as Xu Jifang, who prefers the company of men due to women possessing “several objectionable features.” These objectionable features include the polluting process and negative consequences of childbirth. For example, after giving birth, women are “as vast as the sea” and women “stain their bed mat and clothes during menstruation” (Li 103). When Jifang meets Ruilang, a “matchless beauty” compared to himself, he desires him as his companion. The story inverts Confucian female gender ideals and applies them to Ruilang; for example, when Ruilang’s father requires Xu Jifang to pay a dowry prior to taking in Ruilang as his partner, which would be typical in arranged marriages by males to females (111). Also, Ruilang embodies all the social and physical ideals of a female as he assumes the social role of a woman. Ruilang is described as cloistered, being chaste and loyal to Jifang, and having bound feet, which are all ideal qualities for an elite female. Ruilang’s fidelity to Jifang is demonstrated when he castrates himself to show his appreciation and loyalty to Jifang (120). In Ruilang’s recovery, his wound is described as closing in less than a month and resulting in a scar “resembling a vagina” (121). Without his male organ, Ruilang is depicted as undistinguishable from female. This also implies; however, that Ruilang, now Ruilang, has no threat of internal pollution due to his initial existence as a male. Thus, Ruilang represents all the ideals of a social female without the associated pollution, making him

the perfect partner. Although Ruinang cannot reproduce children of his/her own, Ruinang's role as a social mother to Jifang's son, Chengxian, is emphasized and overrides her biological role of reproduction. Ruinang's role as a social mother is represented as impeccable, as she is devoted to her son's moral upbringing and motivates him to study and pass examinations. Thus, Ruinang represents a subversion of Confucian gender roles by assuming exclusively the ideal qualities and roles of a woman. However, Ruinang is still depicted as aligning to Confucian orthodoxy because Ruinang adequately fulfills the roles of a social woman, perhaps to an even greater extent than can be upheld by a biological female. Consequently, the emphasis on Ruinang's social role as a mother deemphasizes the biological role of women in reproduction.

An additional fictional text, "Liansuo" from seventeenth century China by the previously noted author, Pu Songling, complies once again with this trope surrounding an inverted view of reproductive processes performed by men. The scholar of the story, Yang, builds a companionate relationship with a female ghost who dwells in the graveyard next to his lodgings. In the conclusion of the story, the female ghost notifies Yang of her intention to live, "All I need is the essence and blood of a living man and it will be possible to come back to life" (Pu 205). The "essence and blood of a living man" is a material metaphor for a man's reproductive yang essence, semen, and its role in the ghost's rebirth as a human. The scholar Yang takes a blade and slices his arm to drip blood into the ghost's navel. Blood is referenced and believed to be a material contribution from women in reproductive processes, while semen is the male contribution, which initiates a child's growth (Ahern 172). The female ghost instructs that after one hundred days, Yang must exhume her remains from her grave. The imagery of the grave or tomb, which takes the resemblance of a pregnant woman's protruding belly, is intended to represent the ghost as the entity awaiting to be born inside the cavity of the grave. After the ghost's departure, "Over ten days later, Yang fell sick as predicted, and his belly swelled up so painfully he wanted to die" and he excretes a "foul substance" like mud. The time frame of ten days signifies the term of a pregnancy in China, which is the equivalent of about ten months, where pregnancy is counted from the month the mother becomes pregnant to the month the baby is born (Idema 558). Yang's belly swelling and his body leaking mud represents women during the phases of pregnancy and the polluting birth fluids that discharge from the body during this process. When scholar Yang exhumes the ghost's body, he discovers she had been revived by his efforts where "her breath came in and out, finer than a silk thread" (Pu 205). Scholar Yang assumes the polluting and burdensome biological processes of a female during pregnancy; however, the ghost's rebirth is still depicted as successful and immaculate because of his biological contribution as a male. Scholar Yang is able to revive the ghost due to the power implied in his material male essence and blood at conception, exemplifying the power underlying his biological reproductive capacity.

ATTITUDES OF BIOLOGICAL REPRODUCTION EXPRESSED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WOMEN

Though the selected texts mentioned so far are all fictional and written from the perspective of men, selections from *Women's Script* are from an autobiographical source written by various women from the nineteenth century. The perspectives expressed in *Women's Script* continue to maintain and reinforce negative impressions about women's role in reproduction. The selection examined from this text depicts the "sorrows of pregnancy and motherhood," highlighting its hardships and providing warning that "even if [a woman] is fortunate enough to successfully bear her husband a son, her life will still be filled with anxiety and worry" (Idema 557). In "The Ten Months of Pregnancy," one author emphasizes pure suffering during pregnancy and does not mention anything positive about the process. The poem describes the baby as if invoking the image of a parasite: "the embryo has truly installed itself inside you" and "slowly it grows [inside you]" (558). The poem emphasizes pain and burden from pregnancy: "Had I known that being pregnant would be so painful, I would have shaved my head and entered a convent" (558). This expression is intended to amplify the negativity and disdain for the pregnancy experience comparing it to a "debilitating disease." Even when another author depicts herself breastfeeding as part of her relationship with her son, the graphic image is relentlessly negative: "Every drop [of his mother's milk] that he drinks is the blood of his mother, but he keeps on drinking till her body turns all yellow" (561). This conveys the image of her son as a parasite, sucking out her life-force. Women in this passage all describe the burdens during different phases of pregnancy, one woman describing it as "a paper-thin distance from dying" (559). These formulaic and bitter views, from authors in *Women's Script* who have experienced childbirth and reproductive processes, are consistent with the fictional portrayals which reinforce women's inferior and distasteful biological role in reproduction.

An interpretation and analysis of these pre-modern Chinese texts demonstrates that events like childbirth and other reproductive roles fulfilled by women are framed with anxiety and negativity because they disrupt potential social order. The overarching system of ideas about pollution, that describe women as being internally corrupt and contaminated, is likely the result of this anxiety that resonates with Confucian social mores and reinforces gender hierarchy. These collective attitudes toward reproduction in pre-modern China are deep-rooted and reveal the extensive influence of Confucian gender constructs and social ideals that emphasize social order. The Confucian interpretation of biological processes supports social hierarchies and norms, which influenced a vast array of societal views on human life in pre-modern China. It may be argued that the transition into the socialist era of modern China marked a significant departure from Confucian gender and social hierarchies and their hold on society. However, legacies from these impressions on biological processes in pre-modern China may contribute to modern taboos and superstitions associated with childbirth and menstruation, given the deep-rooted authority and history of Confucian values. Gender

and social constructs of reproduction in pre-modern Chinese society were created to reinforce social order. Therefore, Confucian social hierarchies and gender constructs underlie the societal views that characterize the female role in reproduction—and signify the female’s biological reproductive role as threatening to Confucian social order.

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Responding to the Hyde Amendment: Abortion Discourse, Race, and a Conspiracy of Silence

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ABSTRACT

This research project examines the discourse about abortion and reproductive justice in order to analyze how race shaped politics within the second-wave feminist movement. Specifically, I explore why more black women did not engage in the national debate about abortion in the wake of the 1976 Hyde Amendment, even when restrictive abortion legislation had a disproportionately negative effect on them. Historically, scholarship has focused either on women's liberation and feminism, or on civil rights and black liberation. This paper, however, connects those themes using an intersectional approach by examining reproductive justice in terms of women's multiple, intersecting identities, especially race, class, and gender. This multidimensional identity complicated black women's involvement in the second wave feminist movement, leading to a so-called "conspiracy of silence." Primary sources, including feminist publications, interviews, and autobiographies reveal that black women were largely absent from the mainstream pro-choice feminist discourse and mobilizations in the 1970s. Their silence and lack of involvement, however, was not because access to abortion was unimportant nor irrelevant to them. Rather, my research suggests that their silence was rooted in complex historical and ideological barriers as well as a failure of the mainstream feminist movement to consider their unique history, needs, and circumstances. This research project draws attention to the historical silences by reading "against the grain" with the aim to shed light on the complicated politics within the second-wave feminist movement and provide a framework for understanding why black women's voices were silenced in this sphere.

In the years surrounding the passage of the 1976 Hyde Amendment, which barred the use of federal funds to pay for abortion services, the independent feminist press warned about the return of the coat hangers, listed phone numbers to call adjacent to detailed scripts, and published photo upon photo of protesters. Meanwhile, black women's voices

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were largely absent from these publications and the black press remained silent about the issue all together. Although legal abortion was an important right for women regardless of skin color, and the Hyde Amendment's attack on federally funded abortions impacted women of color disproportionately, a "conspiracy of silence" plagued black women in the 1970s.ⁱ The divergent responses to the passage of the Hyde Amendment reflected a deeper rift in the second-wave feminist movement and suggests that restrictions on legal abortion did not have the power to unite feminists in a common cause.

The racist past of the American birth control movement, a failure on behalf of white feminists to incorporate black women, and complex ideological barriers proved too strong to successfully bridge the race divide within the feminist movement. Focusing specifically on publications in the alternative feminist press and the black press, as well as interviews and autobiographical narratives from black feminists, this paper examines why black women were largely absent in the abortion debate and mobilizations surrounding the passage of the Hyde Amendment. I outline first how the Hyde Amendment disproportionately impacted women of color, second, how black women were absent from the discourse, and third, the historical and ideological barriers that prevented black women from joining the abortion debate of the 1970s. The passage of the Hyde Amendment offers unique context for this research because it disproportionately affected women of color yet still could not diversify the movement. It is therefore an ideal event to focus on in examining racial politics within the second wave feminist movement, which raged from the 1960s to 1980s and focused heavily on reproductive justice.ⁱⁱ

While *Roe v. Wade* is often heralded as *the* landmark case in the legal history of abortion in the United States, the tension between abortion accessibility and restriction did not begin nor end with that infamous ruling. Abortion was first criminalized in the United States in 1867 and remained so until 1973, when the Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in *Roe v. Wade* that the decision to obtain an abortion was a woman's constitutional right under the 14th Amendment.ⁱⁱⁱ The impact of this decision on public health was undeniable; women obtained abortions at increasing rates while mortality from abortion dropped substantially due to a decrease in abortions performed illegally under unsafe and unsanitary conditions.^{iv} Women of color particularly benefited from the legalization of abortion. Prior to *Roe v. Wade*, low income women and women of color, categories that often overlapped, had the least access to skilled practitioners and were thus most at risk of nonprofessional and risky abortions, apparent in comparatively higher rates of death from abortion in the years before 1973.^v Legalization of abortion solved some of those issues. Yet, *Roe v. Wade* was not the end of the American abortion story.

Roe v. Wade addressed the problem of legality, but a new issue soon appeared for women seeking abortions: accessibility. On September 17, 1976, three years after women celebrated their right to legal abortion, the Hyde Amendment was added to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Department of Labor Appropriations

Act. This amendment prohibited the use of federal funds to pay for Medicaid abortions outside of extreme exceptions. Suddenly, low-income women who relied on Medicaid were unable to practice their newly won civil liberty without extreme financial hardships. While written in the color-blind language of poverty, in practice the amendment undeniably impacted black women disproportionately who had a poverty rate over three times that of white women in 1977 (31.3% and 8.9% respectively) and relied on Medicaid at the highest rates.^{vi} Black women were also disadvantaged geographically. Zip codes with higher black populations correlated with those with few abortion clinics and were more often than not located in states where the state government adopted the Hyde Amendment as well, removing all public funding for Medicaid abortions and leaving women to cover the full cost.^{vii} Poor women of color, the very women who benefited most from the legalization of abortion, were placed in a situation similar to what existed prior to *Roe v. Wade* as a result of this restriction.

The Hyde Amendment had clearly harmful impacts, specifically on low-income women of color. These women were now either unable to receive an abortion due to financial restrictions or had to find alternative means to pay for one. Data from before and after the Hyde Amendment shows a drop in abortion rates for non-white women beginning in 1976 while the total rate and rate for white women remains steadily increasing, suggesting that women of color were primarily impacted by the amendment.^{viii} According to the Guttmacher Institute, one in four women who otherwise would have received an abortion carried the pregnancy to term.^{ix} This posed additional economic strain on women who were already struggling financially.^x The majority of women, however, were desperate enough to find alternative means to obtain an abortion, evident in an increase in rates of self-induced and non-physician abortions.^{xi} Some women also proceeded to receive legal abortions, but often later than they otherwise would have because of the time spent finding sources of funding. This delay resulted in increased costs as well as health risks, with each week of delay increasing the risk of medical complications by 20% and risk of maternal mortality by 50%.^{xii} With restrictions in place, the Hyde Amendment worked against the progress made in *Roe v. Wade* by exacerbating the lack of abortion accessibility. The legislative measure created additional complications for women, disproportionately black, who already struggled financially and had benefited most from *Roe v. Wade*. Based on their especially vulnerable position, one might assume that black women would feature prominently in the pro-abortion discourse following the passage of the Hyde Amendment. My research, however, reveals that this was not the case.

A look at the national discourse about abortion at the time surrounding the passage of the Hyde Amendment reveals a paradox: while black women were most impacted by the restrictive legislation, they were largely absent in the pro-abortion feminist mobilization and open dialogue. The alternative press reveals that the second-wave feminist movement at large emphasized reproductive freedom and access to abortion. Nearly every issue during the mid to late 1970s of *New Women's Times*, *Women's Press*,

Big Mama Rag, and *The Spokeswoman*, four of the largest alternative feminist magazines of the 1970s, mentioned abortion on the front cover and contained “Abortion Updates,” with detailed descriptions of current development in abortion legislation.^{xiii} They also encouraged readers to get actively involved in the fight for abortion rights. In an article from January 15, 1978, *The Spokeswoman* wrote: “1978 is an election year—a third of the Senate and every seat in the House are up for re-election. Those who oppose women's right to reproductive freedom are determined to make abortion an issue in every campaign they can reach. *We must be prepared to counter them.*”^{xiv} Similarly, a 1977 article from *New Women's Times* aptly titled “Heckle Dr. Jekyll and Ride Mr. Hyde,” implored readers to act, demanding, “we most protest this injustice! Write to your senators and representatives or send a public opinion message. Supports women's right to choose!” The author even provided a sample letter and the address of Henry Hyde, Republican congressman and sponsor of the Hyde Amendment.^{xv}

These feminist magazines also reported on the many pro-choice protests that erupted in wake of the Hyde Amendment. A 1977 *Big Mama Rag* article described over 150 pro-choice protesters who rallied at a Right to Life event where Henry Hyde was speaking. The article described women wearing coat hangers around their necks like nooses who “went into the ballroom lobby where Hyde was, linking arms chanting “Hyde kills women!”^{xvi} Yet while photos of protesters are commonplace in these magazines, black women were rarely present. In the *Big Mama Rag* article photo, not one black woman can be seen, even in the shots of the huge crowd. Moreover, none of the four magazines mentioned anything about race nor the impact of the Hyde amendment on women of color specifically in their “Abortion Update” articles. The magazines mentioned that the amendment “discriminates against poor women,” yet race was blatantly overlooked. The feminist press did not consider, or at least did not cover, the uniquely vulnerable position of black women in the abortion debate and did not reflect racial diversity.

One alternative feminist magazine, *Off Our Backs*, diverged from this trend and emphasized the intersection of race in the conversation about abortion. The November 1979 special edition issue focused on “Race and Racism” and contained multiple stories from black feminists. In one such article titled “Blaming the Victim: Feminist Racism and Feminist Classism,” Hope Landrine commented on the lack of black women’s involvement in the feminist movement, writing “[white] feminists might begin by asking, ‘What is the structure of the women's movement that excludes these women? What is it in the nature of our theory, strategy, personality, and ideology that tells these women they need not apply, that are we not talking about them, that we are not “relevant” to them, or interested in them?’”^{xvii} In a separate article, formatted as an open letter to her “white sisters,” Barbara Smith wrote that “white feminist not only need to fight racism, but to familiarize themselves with the substance of our lives and struggle.”^{xviii} A third article offered guidelines for talking about racism within groups in an effort to start dialogue between white and black feminists like Smith called for. The authors provided discussion questions such as “how did [racism] affect you in relation

to other people?” and “as you became a feminist, to what degree did you feel connected to women of *all* backgrounds and lifestyles?”^{xix} Race was clearly an important part of the discourse. Even beyond the 1979 issue, *Off Our Backs* criticized the lack of a more racially united pro-choice feminist movement and gave women of color a voice that eluded the vast majority of feminist publications at this time. Yet *Off Our Backs* is the blatant exception.

While the feminist press and mainstream media sources reported on abortion during this period, the black press remained suspiciously silent about the matter, even as the impact was unambiguously racialized.^{xx} Neither the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) nor *Ebony*, the largest and most popular black magazine at the time, made any statements relating to abortion following *Roe v. Wade* or the Hyde Amendment. The first mention of anything related came in April 1978 with an article about Dr. Mildred E. Jefferson, the first African American president of the Right to Life Committee and an avid pro-life advocate.^{xxi} An article in September of the same year about Faye Wattleton, the first African American president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, followed.^{xxii} These two articles, largely descriptive in nature, did not describe current events nor offer any direction for readers’ action, in clear contrast to those in the feminist press that encouraged active participation and engagement. Besides this article pair, *Ebony* never reported once on the Hyde Amendment and the term “reproductive rights” did not appear until an article in 1990. *Ebony’s* approach, or rather lack thereof, to abortion discourse, clearly contrasts with how the feminist press covered this content, suggesting that race guided dialogue in this context.

Ebony’s letters to the editor section offered a richer narrative of the black community’s relationship with abortion and revealed that many black women did indeed feel passionately about abortion and reproductive rights, despite that sentiment not being reflected in the magazine’s general content. Readers submitted letters in response to the article about Dr. Jefferson and the majority of them took a pro-choice stance. For example, Shirley Thomas wrote that she was angered by Dr. Jefferson’s “holier-than-thou stand against abortion” and believed that “she and her pro-life cronies should be reminded that the purpose of Medicaid is to provide medical care of the quality that the rich can afford...It allows the poor women the same options.”^{xxiii} Many of the women who wrote expressed a desire to make decisions over their own body and noted black women’s uniquely vulnerable position.

The silence on behalf of the black press around abortion and the lack of diversity, in both content and authorship, in the alternative feminist press reveals what Bylye Avery, notable black feminist and health care activist, has called a “conspiracy of silence.”^{xxiv} Abortion was certainly relevant to women of color and polls reflect that black women supported abortion, so their silence hints at the existence of other restrictive factors.^{xxv} Loretta Ross, a prominent black feminist historian and founder of the Sistersong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, wrote, “it is not easy for Black women

to talk about abortions. It is not easy for Black women to have abortions...Our abortion experiences have been invisible.”^{xxvi} This invisibility was rooted in a combination of ideological and historical barriers that limited black women’s involvement. Ideological barriers were both internal, within black women’s mentality, and external from the larger black community and the feminist community.

Internally, black women faced a stigma and culture of secrecy surrounding talking about women’s health and abortion, suggesting the avoidance on behalf of the black press reflects similar patterns at the interpersonal level. Loretta Ross said that “it wasn’t that [black women] were opposed to abortion but they weren’t necessarily ready to talk about it front and center.”^{xxvii} Byllye Avery mirrored this sentiment, describing the intergenerational pattern of avoiding open discussion of sexuality and women’s health in black culture.^{xxviii} This normative barrier manifested itself in the black press’ aversion to open conversation about abortion.

Another possible historical explanation for why black women were especially hesitant to join the pro-choice movement relates to its strong ties with the Sexual Revolution, a movement occurring simultaneously in the 1960s-1980s that challenged traditional codes of sexual behavior and orthodox ideas surrounding sexuality. Scholars have connected a lack of willingness among black women to openly discuss sexuality with the historical hypersexualization of black women’s bodies. Black women have had to overcome many derogatory sexualized caricatures and an exploitative sexual history and thus would have had more reasons than white women to avoid open discussion of sexual freedom.^{xxix} Aware of the many pervasive stereotypes attributed to them, black women modified their behavior, reflecting the experience of existence in what African-American scholar, W.E.B. Du Bois, called “double consciousness.” Always with the looming “sense of looking at one’s self through the eyes of others,” black women’s lives were shaped by the stereotypes perpetuated by mainstream culture.^{xxx} Their silence was, in part, an overcompensation in the effort to avoid meeting those stereotypes. Black women’s interaction with sexual liberation was different than white women’s for this reason.

An external barrier to black women’s involvement came from the tension they felt as players positioned in between the feminist movement and the black liberation movement. As women of color, they faced unique marginalization and oppression from both the systems of racism and sexism. Neither movement fully captured their needs nor encouraged their full participation. The feminist movement was riddled with racism and elitism and some radical separatist feminists pressured women to work against men. Meanwhile, the black liberation movement was in many ways sexist, both operationally through leadership and gendered roles, and ideologically, through an emphasis on patriarchal norms.^{xxxi} This placed black women in a constantly tense situation, navigating between their dual identities. Gloria Joseph and Jill Lewis used the analogy of a Siamese twin to describe this dilemma, suggesting that black women were being pulled in opposite directions by distinct and incompatible interests which in turn prevents their full commitment to either movement.^{xxxii} While this tension is clear, it is

important to note that black women's dual identity is not determinative of permanent marginalization, as black feminists begin to embrace their agency and intersectional identity, using this unique positionality as a source of power.

The demographics of the second wave feminist movement at large reflected the trends in the feminist press. Both clearly lacked racial diversity and were dominated by white, middle class women. In discussing the feminist activist scene in Washington D.C. in the 1970s, Loretta Ross mentioned that, "although the city was 80% black at the time, ... we [black women] were never more than one, two, or three voices at a meeting out of twenty people."^{xxxiii} Audre Lorde echoed this sentiment in her poem titled "Who Said It Was Simple." Lorde characterizes the complications of "interracial sisterhood" by describing a lunch meeting she had with white women where they were largely ignorant of the subtle ways in which racism pervaded society: "But I...see causes in color/ as well as sex/ and sit here wondering/ which me will survive/ all these liberations."^{xxxiv} Finding a voice, let alone a spot, in the white-dominated feminist movement proved difficult for black women on multiple levels.

It was not only a lack of racial diversity in the feminist movement that posed problems, but also a lack of effort on behalf of white feminists to consider the unique circumstances and history of black women. Author, academic, and activist Angela Davis discussed how white abortion-rights activists of the early 1970s largely failed to consider their privilege and history, noting "had they done so, they might have understood why so many of their Black sisters adopted a posture of suspicion toward their cause."^{xxxv} According to Davis, had white feminists done the proper research in an attempt to bring black women into the conversation, they would have understood some of the hesitations that they felt. Most white feminists in the 1970s failed to recognize, or simply ignored, that American feminism and the birth control movement had roots in overt racism. In fact, the early American birth control movement had intimate connections with the eugenics movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which targeted women of color, deemed "unfit" by racist, pseudo-scientific standards. The history of birth control read much more like population control for non-white women, as reflected in the dark history of racist sterilization abuse.^{xxxvi}

This systematic racism continued even after the Hyde Amendment, as sterilizations remained subsidized by federal funds even when abortions were not.^{xxxvii} While we cannot assume that all black women knew these details, we can speculate that they were more aware of the racist history that directly affected their families than the middle class white feminists. Moreover, some Black nationalists, well aware of this history, painted birth control and abortions as a white supremacist plot of racial genocide, causing increased suspicion among black women who were involved with the black power movement.^{xxxviii} In this way, the racist past of the American birth control movement provides another explanation to why women of color were hesitant to join the pro-abortion movement of the 1970s. Surely black women wanted to escape dangerous back-alley abortions just as much as white women did, expressing pro-abortion sentiments

was just a much more complicated action given the historical foundations of the movement.

Yet another external limiting force to black women's involvement in the pro-choice feminist movement came from the unique nature of their relationship with black men, which contradicted a "monist" approach by women's liberation groups. Albert et al. describes monism in *Liberation Theory* as a political claim that "one particular domination precipitates all really important oppressions. Whether Marxist, anarchist, nationalist, or feminist, these 'ideal types' argue that important social relations can all be reduced to the economy, state, culture, or gender."^{xxxix} The black liberation movement had recently united black Americans—men and women—in the struggle for racial justice. Thus, a profound sense of racial solidarity made joining a movement where some feminists urged separatist sentiments and openly condemned men according to monist logic difficult. Many black women found it impossible to work against the men with whom they were deeply bonded by a history of racial oppression and whom they had just recently marched alongside. The Combahee River Collective, a black feminist group, reiterated this sentiment in their statement of purpose, writing, "although we are feminists...we feel solidarity with progressive Black men and do not advocate for the fractionalization that white women who are separatists demand...We struggle together with Black men against racism, while we also struggle with Black men about sexism."^{xl} Black women were intimately tied to their male counterparts based on their experiences of solidarity in the struggle for black liberation in a way white women could not relate to nor understand.

Feeling alienated in the mainstream feminist movement, black women increasingly looked to create alternative spaces and organizations that prioritized their unique needs and experiences. Their "double victimization" as both female and black required special attention and separate spaces in order to overcome the conspiracy of silence and counter hegemonic discourse. Loretta Ross explained the importance of these spaces for black women, saying, "white women have begun to break their silences about their abortions. But they do not speak for us. We need to start telling our own stories about how illegal abortion killed our mothers and how legal abortion saved our lives."^{xli} These new spaces emerged as contemporary black feminist groups formed, beginning with the National Black Feminist Organization in 1973 and continuing with the establishment of the Combahee River Collective in 1974 and the National Black Women's Health Project in 1984, among others.^{xlii} These groups were significant in establishing official organizational capacity and visibility as well as a supporting theoretical conceptualization of what anti-racist, anti-sexist work could look like. They challenged the conspiracy of silence as dialogue about abortion opened to more diverse voices. Change, however, does not happen overnight. The birth of a more inclusive mainstream reproductive justice and feminist movement evaded the 1970s and 1980s, taking until the mid 1990s for activists to gain a larger audience and acceptance. Although many women had been involved in the work since the early 1970s, the wider public acceptance

and large-scale diversification of the feminist movement lagged.^{xliii} The lack of black women's voices in the time surrounding the Hyde Amendment is but one illustration of this delay.

To be clear, these groups did not give rise spontaneously to a black feminist consciousness; black feminists, despite perhaps lacking the title, existed in practice long before these organizations formed. As the Combahee River Collective Statement of Purpose explains, "contemporary Black feminism is the outgrowth of countless generations of personal sacrifice, militancy, and work by our mothers and sisters." Prior to the creation of formal organizations, black women engaged in practices of resistance to white supremacy and patriarchy through quotidian efforts to assert agency and reclaim their bodies, a practice dating back to slavery. While this research paper focuses on openly declared expressions of pro-choice sentiment by narrowly considering press publications and protest participation, I hope to encourage further consideration of more hidden means of political resistance that black women engaged in during this time period dominated by their apparent silence. Political anthropologist James C. Scott characterizes "infrapolitics" as the small acts of barely visible resistance waged daily by subordinate groups which are "like infrared rays, beyond the visible."^{xliv} In contrast to the "public transcript," Scott argues that a "hidden transcript" reveals that actions that may appear acquiescent or passive are in reality a strategy of active resistance. This paper fails to consider how black women engaged in infrapolitics in this time period, but urges those reading to recognize that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence and hidden narratives exist beneath the surface I've painted. Further research is necessary in this regard.

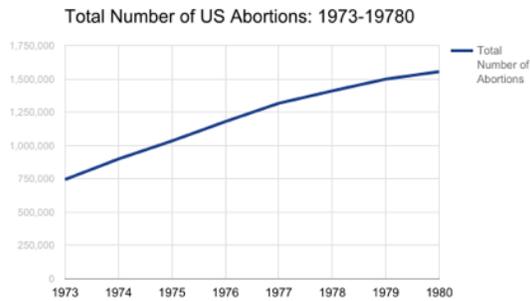
Jan Allen described women's reproductive rights in the late 1970s as "hang[ing] by a very slender thread."^{xlv} Yet for many women, disproportionately black, the Hyde Amendment had already severed that thread. Given the cross-cutting effects of abortion, applying to all women regardless of race, restrictive abortion legislation such as the Hyde Amendment seem to provide the perfect context for women to unite in a common cause. In reality, however, the pro-abortion movement and discourse in the late 1970s did not reflect racial diversity. While some feminists in the 1970s and 80s focused on the needs of black women, the large-scale bipolar responses to the Hyde Amendment, as seen in the alternative feminist press and the black press, reflected a deep racial divide. Black women were largely absent, despite having benefited most from *Roe v. Wade* and harmed disproportionately by the Hyde Amendment's restrictions on publicly funded abortions. Although access to abortion and reproductive autonomy at large was important for black women, a conspiracy of silence limited their involvement. A complex combination of ideological and historical barriers in conjunction with racism within the feminist movement contributed to black women's silences. It should not be mistaken, however, that black women were unable to advocate for themselves during this time period. Black women did not lack agency, as seen in the activism of many

individuals in the 1970s and the later growth of black feminist groups. Their dual identities as women *and* black simply made public action more difficult.

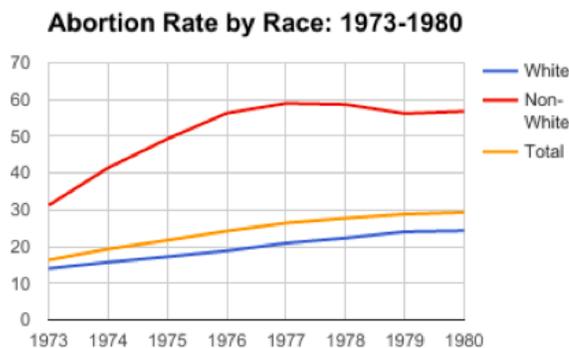
Race played a key role in the evolution of reproductive justice in America, guiding dialogue, tinting opinions, and ultimately proving that social movements are more complicated than a unifying cause. With this in mind, we move forward, with the understanding that the past is intimately tied to the present. Over 40 years later, black women are still too often marginalized. While the names Eric Garner and Michael Brown ring familiar to many Americans who know them as black men killed by police, the names Tanisha Anderson, Natasha McKenna, Yvette Smith, and countless more remain unheard and unrecognized, reflecting how black women continue to be overshadowed in mainstream mobilizations around racial justice, including the Black Lives Matter movement, founded by three black women. Meanwhile, reproductive health care continues to reflect a dramatic racial dimension. A shocking chasm exists between white maternal mortality rates and black, with black women facing a rate four to five times that of their white counterparts.^{xlvi} Furthermore, threats to all women's reproductive rights remain as the Hyde Amendment is still in place at the federal level and in 33 states, leaving more than half of reproductive-aged women with Medicaid lacking abortion coverage. In response to these conditions, many continue to navigate the complex legal and social barriers to women's full autonomy over their own bodies. That the struggle continues reflects the urgency in understanding our movement history. I urge both scholars and citizens to acknowledge and study the silences in our history, for this act is crucial not only in our understanding of the past, but also in formulating our path into the future.

APPENDIX 1

A.



B.



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NOTES

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Guttmacher Institute, *Abortion Factbook*; Trussell et al., “The Impact of Restricting Medicaid Financing for Abortion,” *Family Planning Perspectives* 12, no. 3 (1980): 124.

It also cost the federal government more money through welfare payments to Medicaid-eligible women who now had more children to care for. See *Committee to Defend Reproductive Rights v. Myers* (1981), in which the California state court declared that “whatever money saved [by not obtaining an abortion] will be spent many times over.”

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Sterilization was often a condition of receiving welfare payments or abortions for poor women. This impacted women of color disproportionately. Of the 7,686 state sponsored sterilizations in North Carolina from 1933 to the early 1970s, over 5,000 of those were of African Americans. Angela Davis, "The Historical Context," 217; Moreover, these statistics were not a mistake but the result of state-sponsored racism with the goal, in the words of "the mother of American birth control," Margaret Sanger, "more children from the fit, less from the unfit." Margaret Sanger, "Why Not Birth Control Clinics in America?" *Birth Control Review* 3 (1919): 10-11; Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body*, 280-284. For more

background on sterilization abuse and the racist history of the American birth control movement see Dorothy Roberts, *Killing The Black Body*, 209-219 and Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right*, 282-313; *Relf v. Weinberger*, 372 F. Supp. 1196 (D.D.C. 1974)

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