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Volume 6 Issue 2: Editorial

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This is now the fourth issue of the Journal that has been produced since the Covid-19 pandemic began. At various points we have highlighted the effects of the pandemic on working-class people around the world and have hoped that the stark reminders of inequality brought by the pandemic would have some impact on policy makers and people in power. What we have seen is working-class people praised and even celebrated for the work they have done to keep societies functioning during lockdowns, but little in the way of tangible difference (at least in the long term) to working-class people's lives. All the talk of 'essential workers' has not necessarily translated to improvements in wages and conditions. But – there have been some victories. No thanks to the bosses, but due to the organisation and mobilisation of workers. Unions have been established, there has been industrial action, and there have been wins along the way. We see that it is collective action and worker solidarity that leads to positive change.

We aren't willing to make any predictions about 2022. The pandemic has shown that everything can change in a matter of days. But we do know that the *Journal of Working-Class Studies* goes from strength to strength, and that the field of working-class studies is vibrant and continually growing. In 2021, members of the Working-Class Studies Association ran the inaugural Irish working-class studies conference, mostly online, via Dublin. The success of that conference shows that there are many people globally who are interested and committed to working-class studies and to advocating for working-class people as well as doing the important work of demonstrating how class operates. This issue of the Journal also continues to showcase this commitment to working-class studies, with seven articles and nine book reviews.

The first article, 'The Transformations of Greek Working-Class Fiction from the Interwar Period to the Present' by Vasiliki Petsa, Sofia Zisimopoulou, Anastasia Natsina, andnIoannis Dimitrakakis, takes the reader on a survey of modern Greek fiction from the interwar years through to the present day, and suggests that there are some themes and styles of such literature that run across the decades. The authors offer a fascinating insight into Greek working-class literature that will no doubt encourage readers to seek out some of the works they analyse.

Wendy L. Wright follows with an analysis of bail reform in the US in 'Running head: Bail, Reform, and Foucault's Dangerous Individual', and argues that approaches to reform can be problematic, because they do not address the ways that individuals accused of crimes are labelled as dangerous and deviant due to legacies of such definitions flowing from the nineteenth century. Wright looks to Foucault's concept of the 'dangerous individual' to unpack these ideas and to call for new ways of reforming the criminal justice system.

The issue then moves to two articles about higher education, firstly in relation to working-class students, and secondly in regard to academics from working-class backgrounds. In 'Divergent Approaches to Access: How Selective College Admissions Offices Recruit Lower-Income, First-Generation, and Working-Class Students', Hannah Gunter and Janel Benson consider the methods used by selective colleges in the US to recruit students and examine their approaches to recruiting working-class students. They find that the colleges with greater numbers of first-

in-family, low-income, and working-class students, are those that consciously recruit these students by targeting low-income area schools and providing access to information about campuses and programs to prospective students.

Teresa Crew's article 'Navigating Academia as a Working-Class Academic' provides insights into the experiences of British academics from working-class backgrounds who have been faced with classism in their workplaces through micro-aggressions and a tendency for institutions to see a working-class background as a deficit rather than an asset. Crew's interviews with working-class academics provide valuable understandings of the kinds of prejudices faced and the impact this has on the working-class academics' work and lives.

Changing tack is Robert Francis' study of the labor participation of working-class men in rural Pennsylvania. In 'Missing Men? Precarity and Declining Labor Force Participation Among Working-Class Men', Francis analyses qualitative data collected from interviews with working-class men to ascertain why they might have periods of non-participation in the workforce. His findings suggest that raw figures on such non-participation do not give a full picture of why some men might have periods of apparent unemployment, and do also not take into account the role of the informal economy in the men's working lives.

Following is 'Social and Economic Costs of Inequality in the State of Virginia' which is a data-driven article by Lawrence M. Eppard, Erik Nelson, Michael McLaughlin and Theresa Ward, which details some of the social and economic costs of inequality in Virginia. The authors look at a variety of measures that indicate inequality such as household income and racial segregation and show that there are large difference across counties. They conclude that the impact of such inequalities, that starts in childhood and carries through to adulthood, ends up costing in huge cost to the state in terms of economic potential,

The last article in this issue is a creative non-fiction piece by Alice Wittenburg that looks at the tension between economies and the environment that has played out in the history of the Mahoning River in Ohio. In 'A Dozen Images Made in or Near Youngstown, Ohio, That Show Why People Need Both Jobs and Fish', the focus is on Youngstown, a former industrial city that once considered the levels of industrial pollution in the river as a sign that the town was prospering. Wittenburg uses a series of images to tell the story of the river and the city and to reveal how the people have regarded the river and ultimately how a balance can be found between the need for jobs, and the health of the ecosystem.

There is also a great selection of book reviews, edited by the book reviews editor, Christie Launius. Once again the reviews show the levels of interest in working-class studies shown by scholars and authors. Books being reviewed include the new Handbook of Working-Class Studies which will be a great place for anyone new to the field to start. Other topics in the books being reviewed are poverty in America, the impact of unemployment, working-class environmentalism, working-class cinema, as well as four reviews of creative works including an autobiography, a memoir, a diary of a pandemic nurse and a collection of poetry.

The editors thank all the contributors, and the reviewers who shared their expertise. We hope that readers enjoy this issue and we thank you too for your readership. Let us all keep working towards racial justice, economic equality and for climate justice. Together we are strong.

The Transformations of Greek Working-Class Fiction from the Interwar Period to the Present

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Abstract

Surveying a large corpus of Modern Greek fiction from the interwar years to the decade of the financial crisis (2010-2020) we set out to delineate the national inflection of 'working-class fiction' along the axes of theme and style as well as *answerability*, i.e. the engagement with working-class interests in distinct periods (interwar years, WWII and postwar, *Metapolitefsi* and beyond). Characterized by quantitative and aesthetic variability, the Greek version of the genre is shown to engage actively with topical contextual issues as well as with changing imperatives of authorial commitment and the shifting composition of the working class.

Keywords

Working-class fiction, answerability, social responsibility, proletarian literature

Focusing on Greek literary production from the interwar years to the first decades of the twenty-first century, in the present article we will draw upon, delimit, and outline the national inflection of 'working-class literature'.[1] This particular term differs from other similar appellations which have occasionally been employed in the Greek context to describe politically-committed or socially-sensitive literature, although various degrees of overlapping may be traced in different eras: for instance, 'socialist [κοινωνιστική] literature'[2] does not refer exclusively to the working-class; rather, it targets social inequality and economic discrepancies in general. Equally non-restrictive from a thematic point of view are other terms, such as 'Left

[1] Although definitely not exhaustive, the following list is indicative of the term's relevance in an international frame and within an extensive time span: Clarke, B. & Hubble, N. (Eds.). (2018). *Working-Class Writing. Theory and Practice*. Palgrave-Macmillan; Coles, N. & Lauter, P. (Eds.).(2017). *A History of American Working-Class Literature*. Cambridge University Press; Tocarczyk, M. (Ed.).(2012). *Critical Approaches to American Working-Class Literature.* Routledge; Goodridge, J. & Keegan, B (Eds.).(2017). *A History of British Working-Class Literature.* Cambridge University Press; Pierse, M. (Ed.).(2017). *A History of Irish Working-Class Writing*. Cambridge University Press; Lennon, J. & Nilsson, M. (Eds.).(2017). *Working-Class Literature(s): Historical and International Perspectives.* Stockholm University Press; T. Woodin, T. (2018). *Working-Class Writing and Publishing in the Late Twentieth Century*. Manchester University Press; Perera, S. (2014). *Working-Class Writing in the Age of Globalization*. Columbia University Press.

[2] We employ the term 'socialist' as the English-language equivalent of the term 'κοινωνιστικός', taking into account that during the 19th century the latter was used as a Greek translation of the French or Italian terms for 'socialism'. See Kalantzopoulou, M. (2016). Politiki filosofia kai sygchroni politiki istoria. Ta mythistorimata ton adelfon Soutson metaksi diafotismou kai romantismou. In *Zitimata neoellinikis filologias. Metrika, yfologika, kritika, metafrastika, Proceedings of the14th International Conference, 27-30 March 2014* (pp. 171-190). [https://www.lit.auth.gr/sites/default/files/mneme_ks._a._kokole_praktika.pdf].

literature', whereas the term 'proletarian literature', a historically specific, dominant form of working-class literature, has been invoked with regards to a certain period. Besides, and unlike working-class literature, all the above terms are usually invested with a clear-cut ideological content, occasionally even arising from a strict communist party-allegiance. By adopting the wider term 'working-class literature', we hope to bring to the fore and discuss a larger corpus of works that converge on *taking working-class life as their focus and promoting its interests, written by authors who either reproduce their lived experience or act as witnesses for others*.

It is equally important to note that, countering reductive definitions which delimit the semantic scope of the term 'working-class' to industrial workers, we posit that, according to a scientific, rigorous system of categorization in advanced capitalist societies, including Greece, it consists of employees in large and smaller-scale industries, as well as in the lower strata of civil servants (Economakis & Milios, 2019). As such, it comprises both blue-collar and the lowest ranks of white-collar labor, a fusion suggesting a commonality of experience, which transcends the manual-intellectual labor divide. Depending on different historical periods, working-class life may be a more or less permanent stage in one's career life, in upward or downward trajectories of social mobility. This is especially so since the late 1980s, when various processes took hold in Greece, such as the advent of the globalized organization of capital, the implementation of flexible forms of employment and the decline of union representation, leading to the apparition of precarious and mobile forms of wage labor.[3]

As far as the understanding and discussion of working-class interests is concerned, we resort to the notion of 'answerability',[4] which refers to the interlacing of life and art in terms of moral responsibility and may be used to encode a class-conscious artistic outlook pertaining to a wide range of ideological orientations. In this regard, in order to be included in the genre, literary texts need to preserve their materialist bases, that is to include social references and a critical stance towards class antagonisms, which are often obfuscated and channeled to other, horizontal and unifying identifications, such as national and religious identity. Therefore, working-class literature, regulated by a call for answerability, can be viewed as a 'literary/social/critical practice that is informed by a consciousness of the social and historical importance of class antagonisms' (Syson, 1993, p. 89).

More specifically, answerability from the part of the author consists in giving voice to and ensuring conditions of visibility for, working-class subjects in ways which deviate from hegemonic paradigms. In terms of linguistic composition, answerability in working-class texts consists in ensuring that the various, class-bound linguistic registers co-exist in egalitarian terms within the text. In literary texts written by working-class authors, answerability consists in a specific kind of social responsibility, which allows workers to converse by means of various types of discourse, about common experiences, while also allowing the authors to

[3] See, for instance, Dalakoglou, D. (2013). The Crisis before 'The Crisis': Violence and Urban Neoliberalization in Athens 1. *Social Justice* 39 (1), 24–42; Maniatis, Th. (2015). The Fiscal Crisis in Greece: Whose Fault?'. In Mavroudeas, St. (Ed.) *Greek Capitalism in Crisis. Marxist Analyses* (pp. 33-50). Routledge; Kallianiotis, I. N. (2013). Privitization in Greece and Its Negative Effects on the Nation's Social Welfare (Expropriation of the National Wealth). *Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, (Spring, 2013), 19(1), 1-23.

[4] The term was coined by Mikhail Bakhtin in his early works, and especially in his essay 'Art and Answerability' (1919), in order to describe artists' intention to observe critically, and respond to, the social reality of their time. See Holquist, M. & Liapunov, V. (Eds.).(1990). *Art and Answerability. Early Philosophical Essays by M.M. Bakhtin.* (pp. 1-3). University of Texas Press. As has already been remarked, answerability bears close affinity to Lévinas' concept of 'responsibility' and to Raymond Williams' concept of 'alignment'. See Zandy, J. (2004). *Hands: Physical Labour, Class, and Cultural Work*. (p. 86). Rutgers University Press, NJ. & Nealon, J. T. (1998). *Alterity Politics: Ethics and Performative Subjectivity* (pp. 31-52). Duke University Press Books.

express multiple working-class communities through their authorial voice. In terms of reader's response, whether working-class or not, answerability acts as an invitation to join a working-class community of readers who also identify with the working-class characters or, respectively, to realize their class distance, which deters such identification.[5]

Our synthetic approach to the genre of working-class fiction takes into consideration similar research approaches in other national literatures, as well as theoretical discussions in Greece.[6] It adopts a fluid, empiricist approach,[7] that acknowledges the lack of a widely accepted definition for working-class literature[8] as well as its crossing paths with other genres, touching on related subjects and employing a variety of styles. Although class is foregrounded as an analytic category and unifying prism of textual construction, it is considered in conjunction with other aspects of social identification, such as ethnicity and gender. Under the scope of this genre, we aim to detect similar yet evolving ways of organizing, representing, and interpreting reality over a long period of time, varying socio-historical conditions and different understandings of class-related identities.

Surveying the genre

The starting point of our research is the interwar years, since they mark a heightened sense of class consciousness for the working class in Greece,[9] along with an upsurge of publication of working-class literary texts. Textual precursors can be identified in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the form of single working-class works, which however are not accompanied by noteworthy theoretical discussions and are therefore not conducible to a generic clustering, or genres sensitive to social inequalities, such as the Greek version of the 'mysteries novel'.[10] Spanning the period 1919-2020, we surveyed the totality of published Greek prose fiction, while our archival research included Greek-language literary journals that were more likely to

[5] In formulating the above, we draw upon Hitchcock (2000) and Zandy (2004). See Hitchcock, P. (2000). They Must Be Represented? Problems in Theories of Working-Class Representation. *PMLA*, Special Topic: Rereading Class (Jan. 2000), 115(1), 20-32; Zandy, *ibid.*

[6] The issue of the authors' class origin arises among Greek critics exclusively within the context of 'proletarian literature' discussions during the interwar years. Despite the fact that most articles published in the Communist party-controlled journal *Neoi Protoporoi*, by critics such as S. Tetenes, S. Tsakiris, M. Glafyros & Th. Kornaros, give prominence to the proletarian standing of individual authors, in others greater emphasis is posed on the 'psychological configuration of the artist' – their mind frame and lived experience of working-class life – rather than on class positioning. It is further argued that to the extent that the 'proletarian-artist' of both bourgeois and proletarian origin transcend the intellectual force of the 'masses', their differentiation becomes de facto redundant. See. Alafouzou, A. (1932). Provlimata tis proletariakis logotechnias. *O Kyklos*, 25-33. Besides, social mobility, prevalent in 20th century Greece, renders the authors' class demarcation difficult and temporary.

[7] Also see Nilsson, M. & Lennon, J. (2016). Defining Working-Class Literature(s): A Comparative Approach Between U.S. Working-Class Studies and Swedish Literary History'. *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, (April 2016), 8(2), 39-61.

[8] See Christopher, R. & Whitson, C. (1999). Towards a theory of working-class literature. *NEA Higher Education Journal* (Spring 1999), 71-81; Lauter, P. (2005). Under construction: working-class poetry. In Linkon, S. & Russo, J. (Eds.). (2005). *New Working-Class Studies* (pp. 63-77). Cornell University Press; Zandy, *Hands.*

[9] Despite the fact that since the establishment of the Modern Greek state the advent of the Greek capitalist formation presents many particularities with respect to West European countries, to the point of being considered in terms of '(semi-)peripheral underdevelopment', the rapid embedment of capitalist productive structures in the last decades of the 19th century and especially during the interwar years, despite the initial relative reluctance from the part of the peasantry to join the ranks of the urban proletariat and the tenacity of the micro-regionalist mind-frame, led to the formation of a robust working-class with distinctive gradations. See Seferiadis, *ibid.*

[10] For a brief account of the apposite literary production from 1907 to 1920 see Y. Kordatos, G. (1972). 'Η επίδραση του εργατικού κινήματος στη νεοελληνική διανόηση'. In *Ιστορία του ελληνικού εργατικού κινήματος*, (7th ed., pp. 322-338). Boukoumanis.

have published relevant material.[11] It should also be noted that in discussing a national version of working-class fiction, we have excluded transnational (migrant or exilic) works.

Regarding the quantitative variation of the genre, we note that, as expected, the production of working-class literature is particularly prolific during the interwar years, which saw the consolidation of working-class consciousness in Greece. The WWII and postwar production is more limited, most probably reflecting the defeat of the Left in the Civil War (1946-1949) and the political and social processes triggered thereof. The wider period that ensued the fall of the military junta in 1974, namely *Metapolitefsi*, including the years of the economic crisis in Greece, which witnessed the lifting of censorship on ideological grounds and more or less abrupt reshufflings of class relations, sees an expected resurgence of the genre. The number of working-class texts written specifically by working-class writers, although high in the interwar years, has been rather meagre ever since and, from 1974 to the present, focused on autobiographical discourse in general (testimonies, interviews, chronicles).[12] It must be noted that there have been specific attempts to boost this kind of production: the journal *Protoporoi* aimed to promote writers with a working-class provenance through the reservation of a special column for working-class writing as well as feedback on the work submitted,[13] the journal *Neoi Anthropoi* dedicated a special section of its fifth volume to 'proletarian poetry', whereas literary contests were also organized in the postwar years (by *Organismos Ergatikis Estias*).[14] As far as specific genres are concerned, the prevalence of short stories, although expected in the context of a national literature lacking a long tradition of novel-writing, may also be traced back to authors who are bound by material needs not readily met by the activity of writing. It may also be argued that the relatively low production of novels compared to short stories collections attests to the difficulties encountered in articulating a grand narrative for the working class in Greece. Finally, we should note that, allowing for notable yet isolated cases,[15] the gender dimension of working-class heroes has been systematically downplayed, except for the cases of sexual exploitation, typically associated with women. Female working-class characters are either under-represented, compared to their male counterpart, or constructed in accordance with the dominant gendered division of labor. This may be attributed to the assumption that injustice and exploitation are a common working-class experience irrespective of gender, as well as to the domination of male writers in this genre.

Before we proceed, we should note that the periodization of the literary category proposed merely puts forth majoritarian or dominant aesthetic and ideological tendencies in each period,

[11] The following 23 journals were examined: *O Noumas* (1903-1931), *Neoi Vomoi* (1924), *Logotechniki Epitheorisi* (1927), *Nea Epitheorisi* (1928-1934), *Neoi Anthropoi* (1930), *Protoporoi* (1930-1932), *Neoi Protoporoi* (1931-1936), *Lytromos* (1933), *Epitheorisi Technis* (1954-1967), *Nea Poreia* (1955-2009), *Diagonios* (1958-1993), *Kritiki* (1959-1961), *Tram* (1971-1979), *I sinecheia* (1973), *Grammata kai Technes* (1982-1999), *Parafyada* (1985-1990), *To tram-ena ochima* (1987-1996), *Elefthera Grammata* (1945-1951), *I leksi* (1981-present), *Nea Estia* (1927-present), *Eksopolis* (1994-2011), *Diavazo* (1976-2006), *Planodion* (1986-2012).

[12] Let us note that, initially, works by working-class writers were not judged and classified on a fiction/non-fiction basis. For instance, in the call issued by the Greek Workers' Hearth Organization and addressed to working-class writers, literary works are simply termed 'texts'.

[13] This target was implemented through the reservation of a special column for working-class writing as well as feedback on the work submitted. This practice lasted probably until 1934 (Dounia, 1996, p. 151-153; 155-159).

[14] The award-winning short stories were published in a collective volume. According to the 'Foreword', the contest was first held in 1947. Two more rounds followed. See *Workers' short stories awarded in Greek Workers' Hearth Organization*'s literary *contests* (1953).

[15] Galateia Kazantzaki constitutes the most prominent case in point. See the novella *Gynaikes* (1933) and the novel *Andres* (1935). Gender relations are also explored in Petros Pikros's novel *Toubeki* (1996)[1927] and in Dimitris Sotiriou short story titled 'I korniza'. Dimitriou, S. (2018[1987]). I korniza. *Ntialith' im Christaki* (pp. 33-39). Patakis.

and that any strict temporal delimitation could not be sustained, as many individual authors reproduce older aesthetic approaches and thematic choices in successive periods. Although, understandably, a thorough analysis of the works included in the genre would exceed the scope of this article, we do ponder on specific working-class texts, which encapsulate more patently the specificities of the corpus in each period.

The interwar period: Social critique and proletarian guidance

During the interwar period, several crucial processes are taking place: the formation of the working class is completed (Seferiadis, 1995) and, consequently, the labor movement is consolidated, while the social dialogue on labor is intensified, as is the influence of the socialist worldview on the intellectual elite (Liakos, 1993). At the same time, there is a quantitative explosion of publications in magazines with an explicit socialist/communist orientation or related content.[16] Although there appears no coherent and unquestionable definition of the genre in the theoretical and critical texts of this period, it is generally thought that 'proletarian literature', that is the interwar version of the genre, is articulated in parallel with the labor movement, taps into emotions and, by means of its revolutionary content, aspires to play a guiding role for the masses. The invocation of an intellectual avant-garde and its substantial and active social responsibility may explain the fact that certain authors repeatedly contribute with their works to the genre during this period (eg P. Pikros, N. Katiforis, K. Paroritis, D. Voutyras, P. Afthoniatis, etc.).[17] As for the aesthetic standards of the genre, although symbolism is also present, it is mostly the principles of realism that prevail, as the faithful depiction of reality and the simple style give immediacy to social complaints and support the intended didactic function of the works.[18]

The dominant trend in the working-class literature of the time (1920s) is the focus on deviant or marginalized groups (petty criminals, pimps, convicts, homeless people, drug addicts, prostitutes, unemployed, terminally ill). By highlighting aspects of the urban underbelly, these literary works aim to stigmatize the social pathogenesis of the bourgeois society which condemns the lower classes to a hopeless living, without necessarily proposing the terms for a collective way out or expressing the certainty for a revolutionary change. For instance, in the novel *O Kokkinos tragos* [The Red Goat], a group of ideologically like-minded people meets at the homonym bar, to discuss social issues. One of the habitues argues: 'But it is not the people's fault. If one is by birth completely blind, they will go wherever directed to go. They will even throw stones at their benefactor. But this doesn't matter at all. What matters is that

[16] *O Noumas* (1903-1931), *Neoi Vomoi* (1924), *Logotechniki Epitheorisi* (1927), *Nea Epitheorisi* (1928-1934), *Protoporoi* (1930-1932), *Neoi Anthropoi* (1930), *Neoi Protoporoi* (1931-1936), *Lytromos* (1933).

[17] Pikros, P. (1927). *Toubeki*. Ekdotikos oikos N. Theofanidi & S. Lampadaridi; Katiforis, K. (1930). *I piatsa*. Mavridis; Paroritis, K. (1924). *O kokkinos tragos*. Vasileiou. D. Voutyras, D. (1921). *Zoi arrostemeni & alla diigimata*. Eleftheroudakis; P. Afthoniatis, (1929). *Prosfyges*. Agon.

[18] The opinion of M. Spieros who insists on the function of symbols, as they are utilized in the context of surrealist and expressionist writing, is fringe. See Spieros, M. (1932). Provlimata proletariakis technis. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 9, (August 1932), 312-315 [=N. Calas, N. (1982). Provlimata proletariakis technis. In A. Argyriou, A. (Ed.). *Keimena poiitikis kai aisthitikis*, (99-109), Athens. Gavriilidis-Plethron]. Similarly, although she highlights a 'preference for realism', Alafouzou does not reject symbolism, although she perceives it as an inaccessible form for the proletarian culture of the time. See A. Alafouzou, A. (1933). Provlimata tis proletariakis logotechnias. *O Kyklos*, 1 (March 1933), 25-33. Besides, 'proletarian literature' is repeatedly contrasted with 'modern art', which is considered bourgeois. See the discussion between Thrassos Kastanakis and Kostas Paroritis in *Noumas* (1931). On the other side, objections were raised by the bourgeois literary critique on the aesthetics of these texts, as it was widely considered that they did not promote aesthetic renewal. See for example A. Thrylos, A. (1925, January 11). Σα θα γίνουμε άνθρωποι. *Dimokratia*.

everyone should do their duty' (p. 207).[19] These works narrate quotidian aspects of the lumpenproletariat, a tendency which has been described with the terms 'alitografia' [writing on vagrants] and 'bleak literature'[logotechnia tou zofou] by Panagiotis Moullas (1933, p. 50-51). Particularly characteristic of this trend are the interwar works of Petros Pikros, and specifically the trilogy *Chamena Kormia*, in which, Pikros casts a bold and unbiased eye on the lumpen proletariat, reflecting the social vicissitudes of the interwar years. It is crucial to note that, as, Alexandros Argyriou comments, 'their [the heroes' of this trilogy] psychology is not petty bourgeois' (2001, p. 49). In a similar way, Christina Dounia argues that the sexuality of Pikros' heroes, animalistic and innate, goes against the hypocrisy of bourgeois ethics (2009, p.12). This clarification is necessary if one takes into account the diachronically ambiguous stance of the Greek Left towards the standards and dynamics of the lumpenproletariat. In overall, in terms of normative morality, two directions are discernible: one the one hand, one should not underestimate the intention to transcend bourgeois ethics and counter the dominant patriarchal discourse, especially in the literary production of the 1920s. Such is the case, for instance, in Petros Pikros's *Toubeki*, in which the narrator ironically underscores the power relations underpinning the marital institution and the limitations imposed on female sexuality (1996, p. 73). On the other, the model of heroes who embrace the widely-held principles of morality and heteronormativity is also found in 'proletarian literature', although it is presented as a frustrated and/or impossible condition within the bourgeois order (see, for example, the novel *I piatsa*).

Gradually, from the early 1930s onwards, when socialist realism had been established worldwide, Greek working-class literature shifts its focus from the social margin and its inability to protest to more dynamic ways of class consciousness and rallying. As such, novels or short stories published during this time deal mainly with the vindication of the once docile worker, who then gets enraged with his oppressor (employer, supervisor, loan shark) and acts violently against him.[20] They also deal with the promotion of labor unions, trade unions and political action, which arise as the only way to improve working-class life.[21] Class consciousness, syndicalism and political action seem to contribute greatly to the advancement of the heroes, even when the latter are experiencing difficulties in their work or family life.[22]

As such, it becomes clear that alignment with working-class interests, which is also a demand explicitly expressed by the ideologically committed literary reviews and essays of the time, is carried out mostly in terms of clear, unambiguous sympathy, be that expressed with humanitarian intent (especially during the 1920s) or in Marxist terms (mainly from 1930 onwards). Characters are constructed according to Manichaean, dualistic models of absolute good and evil. More specifically, the workers are presented as positive heroes, imbued with honesty and militant spirit. Sometimes they appear as victims, as they end up being downtrodden, if not crushed, by the oppressive laws of historical and socio-economic causality

[19] The quote derives from the following edition: Paroritis, K. (2007)[1924]. *O kokkinos tragos*. Alexandreia Publ. In Greek: 'Μα δε φταίει ο λαός. Άμα κανείς είναι από γεννησιμιού του θεόστραβος, όπου τον σπρώξεις, θα πάει. Θα πετροβολήσει ώς και τον ευεργέτη του. Μα αυτό δεν έχει καμιά σημασία. Το σπουδαίο είναι ο καθένας να κάνει το χρέος του'.

[20] Karpos, A. (1934). O Garbis. *Neoi Protoporoi,* 2, 63-67; Kontos, N. (1934). Ena leipsano… *Neoi Protoporoi*, 8, 296-298; Kontos, N. (1935). O kaimenos o pappous mou. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 7-8, 178-179.

[21] Kontos, K. (1934). Nitriko. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 6, 216-217; Kornaros, Th. (1932). I proti mera sto ergostasio. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 11- 12, 411-412 & 441-442; Varypatis, V. (1934). Gia enan kambo choris agkathia. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 7, 249-251; Vergas, A. (1932). O afxendis. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 5, 162-166; P. Vlassi, P. (1932). Eleftheros. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 10, 346-348.

[22] M. Karkanidou, M. (1931-32). Ta Christougenna tis Lenios. *Protoporoi*, 11-12, 448-449; A. Krikanis, A. (1931). Dialysi oikogeneias. *Protoporoi*, 9, 378-379; Sfyris, S. (1933). Anergoi. *Neoi Protoporoi*, 5, 122-124.

and the everyday conditions of work. Accordingly, at the level of reception, the standards of answerability gradually shift from the will to provoking moral outrage through denunciation to the need for educating and mobilizing the masses. More complex manifestations of answerability relate to the understatement of individual distinctiveness for the sake of collective representation, as is the case in Vasilis Daskalakis's autobiographical work, *Oi Xerizomenoi* (1930). In this novel, the hero deliberately remains anonymous, in order to remain representative, incarnating a specific social type. At the same time, the working-class voice echoes strongly in these works. As Christina Dounia argues, the use of free indirect speech allows the heroes in Pikros' novel *Τουμπεκί* to undermine the narrator (1996, p. 12).[23]

WWII and Postwar: Commitment in political and aesthetic transition

As expected, during the 1940s, a decade which saw the German Occupation, the Liberation, and the Civil War, literary production is devoted primarily to the outcome of national adventures. Even so, however, the art praising resistance to Nazism, imbued with a significant social background, is inspired by, and expresses, the militancy and collective action of the lower strata (Papandreou, 2000, p. 11). In other cases, the class origin of the resistant fighters is accentuated, whereas class and national interests are barely distinguishable: for instance, in the short story 'Ta potamia' [The Rivers],[24] set in a small Greek village during the German Occupation, a military troop assists some farmers while they tend to the crops. A resistant fighter reveals to an old farmer that he used to work as a factory worker and muses: 'We were everywhere [both in the factories and the fields] slaves…' (p. 7).[25] He then tries to explicate in simplistic terms the socialist ideals, before being assassinated by the Germans. At the same time, the question of the authorial social commitment is raised with greater urgency, although not necessarily in class, but in more general, social or agonistic terms.[26] The gradual effacement of the term 'proletarian' and its replacement by the concept of the 'social' reflects the gradual identification of the 'working class' with the 'people' in left-wing discourse (Karpozilos, 2009). This shift widens the semantic range of the term 'working class', thus opening up new thematic fields of inquiry for the related literary production. Regarding style, in the context of the inflexible, Communist party-led political commitment, socialist realism remains the preferred aesthetic current.

Relevant literary developments from the 1950s onwards include the weakening of the debate about proletarian art, while the principles of socialist realism are gradually questioned by left-wing intellectuals.[27] This phenomenon is undoubtedly connected with the post-Civil War frustration of the Left and the undermining of the revolutionary certainties; it also pertains to purely artistic parameters, such as the demand for creative freedom and complexity of character

[23] This is particularly evident in the passage reconstructing the main character's, Arapis [Nigger], past, which follows his memories, although articulated as a third-person narration. His recurring moto, drawn from the criminal jargon, 'τουμπεκί και μην ανθί', could be loosely translated as 'zip up and keep it low'.
[24] Patatzis, S. (1945). Ta potamia. *Elefthera Grammata*, 45, 7 & 12.
[25] 'Παντού σκλάβοι είμασταν εμείς….'
[26] For example, there are references to 'social art', which 'highlights the struggle against the interests of a small group of exploiters, presenting images of the lives of workers and peasants' (Stefanidis, 1943, p. 5-7). The Communist party literary principles are evident in a series of interventions, in which special emphasis is placed on the 'popular' [laikos] dimension of the cultural products, i.e. on their linguistic and semantic accessibility (Moschos, 2019).
[27] It should be noted, however, that this was not a unanimously accepted trend among left-wing critics, as the leading representatives of the latter remained committed to the principles of Soviet artistic orthodoxy (Chatzivasileiou, 2011, p. 100-102).

construction.[28] Thus, this period sees a growing body of working class fiction which adopt principles and techniques of neorealism (Frangouli, 2018). Besides, social responsibility is no longer considered as a concern and duty exclusive to the politically committed art. Towards the end of the period, left-leaning writers and writers who were previously considered 'bourgeois' participate in a relevant key discussion;[29] its main topic is the objective representation of the modern Greek reality, regardless of aesthetic specifications. From this point of view, their convergence of views on experimentation with modernist styles is very interesting. In the interwar years, experimental writing was advised against for the politically committed, on the grounds that it would be inaccessible to workers; in this discussion, the same directive applies more widely to socially responsible writing, on the grounds of a need to record social reality in all its dire aspects and thus facilitate social progress. At the same time, there appear efforts to strengthen the production of working-class literature by its working-class writers, with the inauguration of a relevant competition by the Organismos Ergatikis Estias [Greek Worker's Hearth Organisation].[30]

The plot of the majority of the works published during this period is situated in the post-war present, while also reflecting, to varying degrees, on the recent national history. This focus on the past marks a renewed interest for more complex historical schemas, based on the succession of periods, spurred by innate contradictions and conflicts.[31] It also reveals the undermining of certainties about the future, as well as a weakening of the teleological view, although the pattern of causality is preserved, thus delimiting the power of human intervention and the intrusion of chance. When the plot is not situated in the post-war present, as is the case in the novel *Galaria no 7* (1961), working-class literature concerns the period of the German Occupation, when the political situation of the time interacts with the daily working routine of the heroes (German blockades, black market, National Liberation Army,[32] etc.), the post-occupation and pre-civil war years,[33] but also earlier times, such as the interwar period (in the novels *Kapnismenos Ouranos* and *Astoi kai ergates*).[34] As the human factor is inserted within a broader, undetermined historical pattern, the future prospect also comes into view. For instance, there appear works demonstrating the adverse effects for the working class caused by the renegotiation of the national-international equilibrium in terms of financial capital and investment (*Galaria no7*), as well as by the emerging de-industrialisation (*Anthropoi kai spitia*), developments that will be consolidated in later decades.

[28]Articles published mainly in *Epitheorisi Technis* and *Nea Poreia* magazines played a key role in the revision of the aesthetic standards of socially responsible literature. See Anagnostakis, M. (1957). Provlimata tou sosialistikou realismou. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 29, 440-444; Nissiotis, V. (1957). Thesseis kai antithesseis tou sosialistikou realismou. *Nea Poreia*, 195-198. For the outlook of the literary magazines of the period on aesthetics and ideology see Apostolidou, V. (2003). *Logotechnia kai Istoria sti metapolemiki aristera. I paremvasi toy Dimitri Chatzi 1947-1981*. Athens, Polis, 121-185.

[29] See Argyriou, A. et al. (1973). I neoelliniki pragmatikotita kai i pezografia mas. *I Synecheia*, 4, 172-179.

[30] Founded in 1931 and disestablished in 2012, the Greek Worker's Hearth Organisation was a public entity implementing social policy programs to support the working class, while also reinforcing the trade union movement.

[31] As Zissis Skaros (1999, p. 9) asserts in the second book of his trilogy entitled *Oi rizes tou potamou*: 'We cannot understand what the course will be tomorrow, if we do not first seek to find out where they[the forces] came from and what are the forces involved in this fierce battle'. Let us note his point, mentioned above, that the past events predetermine 'in a way' (and therefore not unambiguously or to an absolute degree) the future.

[32] Chatzis, D. (1960). Ena tragoudi stin Athina. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 62, 115-122; Chatzis, D. (1966). Ena thyma tis Katochis. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 139-140, 23-36.

[33] Fragkias, A. (1955). *Anthropoi kai spitia*. Kedros.

[34] See Kotzias, K. (2000)[1957]. *Kapnismenos Ouranos.* Sygchroni epochi and Skaros, *Astoi kai ergates.*

Unemployment and the psychological condition it imposes emerge as recurrent patterns in working class fiction during the postwar period, characterized by stunted democracy, uneven reconstruction, mass internal migration and political persecution. Unemployment is a common theme in working-class literature, although it does not concern solely the working-class. What differentiates the latter, however, is the ideological inculcation of the characters and the maintenance of a sense of solidarity and class fellowship. For example, in the novel *Kapnismenos ouranos* (Kotzias, 1957), one of the main characters is a bankrupt petty bourgeois shopkeeper, who resorts to immoral methods in order to survive, an attitude diametrically opposed to the unemployed worker, in the novel *Anthropoi kai spitia* (Frangias, 1955), who supports other members of his working-class community. A similar attitude is promoted through the shift of mentality of the eponymous tanner in the short story 'Sioulas o tambakos'.[35] All-pervasive distress, lack of optimism, a sense of entrapment and lack of guarantees for a prosperous future are evident even in cases in which heroism or other positive characteristics of the working class protagonists are indeed represented. Even immigration, as a way out and means of escape, a choice, in any case, negatively marked, proves doubtful as to its fruition, accentuating the thwarting of the prospect of social mobility.[36] Other works accentuate restriction, by showing a clearer geographical demarcation (Piraeus), figuring –already obsolete by then– naturalistic descriptions.[37] The dominant 'structure of feeling',[38] namely insecurity, alternates with doubt, fear and anger, while the heroes do not necessarily exhibit heroic characteristics.

In the postwar period, the answerability governing working-class fiction is located, first and foremost, in the fact that it identifies itself as such, i.e. as literature that recognizes and reveals social stratification, both synchronically and diachronically, with the intention of demonstrating the continuing plight of the working class. Working-class texts of the time, unlike popular melodramatic cultural texts (mostly films) that flourished during the same period, avoid eliminating, or canceling class antagonisms by invoking deus ex machina resolutions for social contrasts (an unexpected heritage or the disclosure of one's nobler descent) or reconciliation by romantic coupling. This is not a self-evident option at a time when the dominant ideology is trying to conflate working-class interests with the national threat from the Communist bloc (Tsoukalas, 2005, p. 34-37), whereas, on an international basis, the concept of the 'wealthy worker' who improves his standards of living and ends up adopting bourgeois ideals and ambitions, is dominant.[39]

Moreover, and although the aesthetic terms of socialist realism continue shaping the genre to no small degree, the demand for a broader conception of the 'political' is evident in the exploration of interpersonal relations and the human character, in a way that reflects the existential dimension. For example, Dimitris Raftopoulos (1957, p. 275-6) regards the novels *Anthropoi kai spitia* and *Kapnismenos ouranos* as 'progressive literature', since their heroes bear the characteristics of their class origin, while also maintaining their personality, their 'autonomous world'. Similarly, in his anthology of novelists who appeared in the period 1945-

[35] See Chatzis, D. (1963). Sioulas o tambakos. *To telos tis mikris mas polis*. Themelio.
[36] See Valtinos, Th. (1972[1964]). *Synaksari Andrea Kordopati*. Kedros.
[37] See Levantas, Ch. (1960). *Istories tou Porto Leone*. Difros; Politarchis, G. M. (1961). *Anthropoi kai limania.* To elliniko vivlio.
[38] In the interpretive process, the 'structure of feeling' is a 'cultural hypothesis' about how the experienced values of people in a given social context are constructed into a single, but sometimes contradictory social structure, a process revealed through analysis of contemporary literary discourse (Williams, 1977, p. 132).
[39] See, for example, Lipset, S. M. & Bendix, R. (1959). *Social Mobility in Industrial Society.* University of California Press; Zweig, F. (1961). *The Worker in an Affluent Society*. Heinemann.

1965, Apostolos Sachinis (1965, p. 14) talks about 'narrative prose dealing with man's agony and the historical turbulences, which expresses the ethical dilemmas and the ethical challenges of man […] and is seeking the ideals of freedom, peace and social justice· a prose […] which is trying to match the humanistic or the social element with the 'ethical' or the 'superficial''. Indeed, he includes Kostas Kotzias in the cluster of writers who produce this kind of literature, which brings a new sensitivity to Modern Greek literature, although he characterizes his works as 'socialist' or 'standardized'. Thus, while the basic themes remain identical, other partial motifs, related to the domain of feelings and experience, are explored, thus highlighting the complexity of working-class characters. For example, immigration remains a staple element of plot construction, although the focus is now posited on the interpersonal relations of the immigrant, whereas the maturation of the heroes, either smooth and gradual, or violent and abrupt,[40] is also greatly emphasized in coming-of-age narratives.

Metapolitefsi: (Corpo)reality and multi-nodal alterity

During the military junta (1967-1974) and the first years of the *Metapolitefsi*, political engagement remains an active demand and it usually takes the form of testimony of recent events or that of historical vindication of the past.[41] This kind of literary response to the socio-political developments of the time sets the framework for the literature of the working class: the working-class subject is usually shown in a positive light as s/he interacts, remaining part of a class-based collectivity, with the historical forces and economic conditions of different eras (*To diplo vivlio, Dekemvriani nychta*).[42] However, and as the literary focus gradually shifts from the public sphere to the private space (Kotzia, 2020, p. 124; Kotzia & Chatzivassileiou, 2003, p. 188-189), often enough, particularly in the work of younger authors first appearing in the 1970s (such as A. Sourounis, D. Nollas, D. Charitopoulos) and the 1980s (S. Dimitriou), the protagonists do not conform to the ideal of the moral worker set by socialist realism and rarely display class consciousness. They are in close contact with the social margin or belong thereof, in a semi-revival of interwar 'alitografia', although this time their social standing is rarely framed in either traumatic or accusatory terms. Nevertheless, they do retain, albeit sometimes unwittingly, a certain degree of collective consciousness in an era characterized by the rise of individualistic values and the corrosion of formerly powerful political and cultural identities. Such is the case in Charitopoulos's short story 'Ta takimia kai i ekdikisi', in which a 'rotters' club' is formed in a café by the port, comprising a motley of semi-thug types, who gradually grow fonder of each other. Although financial hardship eats away solidarity, they decide to avenge a buddy's arrest, by violating the corrupted policeman and the intermediary who snitched on him. In Sotiris Dimitriou's short story 'I korniza', a forty-year old woman,

[40] See Loulis, V. (1955). Koimisou, mi fovasai Leni… *Epitheorisi Technis*, 4 (Easter 1955), 272-282; Papagianni, K. (1964). To eikosachiliaro tou aderfou. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 11-112 (March-April 1964), 319-322; Matzouranis, G. (1963). Noumero 753. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 101 (May 1963), 425-429. See also Loulis, V. (1957). Ta parasima. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 25 (January 1957), 32-40; B. Ntintas, B. (1956). O Grigoris. *Nea Poreia*, 1 & 11-12 (January-February 1956), 444-446; Ntallis, M. (1958). Oi elpides pou pethainoyn ki anastainountai. *Epitheorisi Technis*, 45 (September 1958), 182-186; F. Prassinis, F. (1960). Ta prota grammata. *Nea Estia*, 783 (February 1960), 250-254.

[41] In a discussion conducted in 1973, Tsirkas expresses the view that a 'responsible' author must act as an 'accountant of souls', while also arguing about the 'social function' of literature. Concurrently, Ioannou states that his role remains social and that he relates his personal experiences in a manner that they 'connect to the common, elementary questions of humanity'. See Tsirkas, S. et al. (1973). An Interview with Three Contemporary Greek Writers: Stratis Tsirkas, Thanassis Valtinos, George Ioannou. *boundary 2*, 1(2), A Special Issue on Contemporary Greek Writing (1973), 266-314.

[42] Chatzis, D. (1977[1976]). *To diplo vivlio.* Kastaniotis; Kaliotsos, P. (1978). *Dekemvriani nychta*. Kedros.

abused by her father and then abused and abandoned by her cruel and unloving husband, finds employment in a factory and gradually gets involved in the trade union, in which she is sheltered from patriarchy and gradually achieves her self-emancipation.[43] In any case, social climbing, which turns working-class experiences into a more or less distant memory, is a persistent literary motif of the time[44], but it is not destined for everyone, nor is it entirely unproblematic.

The restriction of the working-class subjects in the social margin often goes hand in hand with an unbridled sexuality as a means of these subjects' self-determination; this often results in a severe undermining or a complete overturn of the value of rationality as a foundation of self-conscious subjects or even purposeful behaviour. In the late 1970s and especially after the 1980s, raw instinct is closely linked to work, either taking it over completely (as in the book *Τα kamakia*, 1978),[45] or through a stark antithesis, in the context of which pleasure and self-realization are promoted by sexual robustness and undermined by manual labor (as in Sourounis's works). One may detect a double emancipation here, both from the objectification linked to wage labor and from social conservatism, in the aftermath of May 1968. One may also discern, in this devaluation of the notion of work,[46] the repercussions of the transformation of the dominant mode of production towards a service-based economy, which, contrary to predictions and aspirations, does not seem to improve the living conditions of the working class.[47]

In its most accentuated form, this tendency pushes realism to its limits, as is the case with the first two works of Sotiris Dimitriou.[48] In these works, a disturbing naturalism is employed to depict nightmarish stories or raw instinct across the lower social strata (street cleaners, prostitutes, drug addicts etc.)[49] Within Dimitriou's amoral and bleak universe, the working-class characters seem to lie beyond good and evil, or at the very least to renegotiate the boundaries between the two, occupying an in-between position between wilful subject and object of instinctual and social coercion. As Alexis Ziras also notes (1997, p. 200), Dimitriou's characters 'are baptized in goodness precisely through their apprenticeship in 'evil''. As such, they represent the figure of the 'abject', which on the one hand signifies the precarity underpinning the seemingly unshakable dynamism of the *Metapolitefsi.* On the other, it ominously alludes to the transformation of the cry for personal and social freedom during the 1960s and 1970s into individualistic hedonism during the late 1980s.

In terms of representation, the answerability of these texts is to be found in the importance accorded to the body,[50] which secures the characters' individuality in flesh and bone, captures

[43] See Charitopoulos, D. (2013[1976]). Ta takimia kai i ekdikisi. *Daneikia gravata* (35-54) Topos; Dimitriou, I korniza.
[44] See Bacolas, N. (1989). Afto to aima einai…*Parafyada,* 5, 32-42 [Now in Bacolas, N. (2000). *To taksidi pou pligonei kai alla diigimata.* Kedros].
[45] This is the most characteristic expression of this tendency, as Vassilis Vassilikos' characters earn a living by offering sexual services to tourists.
[46] Aside from Sourounis's works and *To Diplo vivlio*, already mentioned, similar views are to be found in Charitopoulos, D. (2000[1989]). *Ti nychta pou efyge o Boukovi*. Exantas and particularly in the short stories 'Kata leksi' and 'Ti tha gino'.
[47] In the short story 'Daneikia gravata' from the book of the same title, the protagonist attempts, and fails, to earn a living as a door-to-door salesman.
[48] Dimitriou, *Ntialith' im Christaki* and *Ena paidi ap' ti Saloniki* (2019[1989]).
[49] The extreme social margin also concerns M. Fais, in his collection of short stories *Apo to idio potiri* (Kastaniotis 1999), especially the short stories 'Vzzt, vzzt', 'Ktl.' and 'Embodismeni zoi'.
[50] In the short story 'Velonia ti velonia' (Maro Douka, *Kare fix*, 1976) emphasis is also placed on the body of the working subject, although this is tarnished by fundamental disabilities (amputation).

their entire existence, and dissolves the idealistic fixation to the notion of the working class as a faceless vehicle of History. It also involves pushing the reader's defamiliarization to its limits, with a view to challenging bourgeois ethics as well as provoking the realization of class distance between the fictional characters and the reader.[51]

If migration from Greece is a dominant theme of the literature of the working class that reflects the rapidly shifting socio-historical context of the 1970s and 1980s, the association of the working class with (im)migration is further elaborated around the 1990s, when another figure gradually takes hold in Greek working-class literature, namely, that of the economic immigrant belonging to a different ethnic group, striving for their financial survival.[52] Such literary works are included in the genre when they target not primarily racial discrimination, but aspects of class inequality, which are normally aggravated by implicit or explicit xenophobia and racism, or, in other words, when they lay bare the material underpinning of racism.[53] Greek economic immigrants in the West provide the recurring characters for authors who have themselves lived through this experience, as is the case for Antonis Sourounis (*Oi sympaiktes*, 1977; *Meronychta Fragkfourtis*, 1982; *Gas o Gangster*, 2000; *Ta tybana tis koilias kai tou polemou*, 1983; *Oi protoi pethainoun teleftaioi*, 1985), Dimitris Nollas (*To tryfero derma*, 1982; *Oneirevomai tous filous mas*, 1990; *O palaios echthros*, 2004; *Ston topo*, 2012) and Dimitris Chatzis' late works (*To diplo vivlio*, 1976).[54] The protagonists of these works, living through a transitional period, represent the new, post-industrial proletariat which has no connection to the object of their occupation and has lost all faith in future prospects as well as the nostalgic connection with their home country. This 'non-class' is no longer bound by the transcendental, messianic vision of collective revolution, and, resorting to individual action, abandons the logic of incessant productive accumulation (Gorz, 1982). Notwithstanding their experiential basis, and although realism continues to constitute the preferential mode of expression, partial stylistic and formal experimentation is also present in these works. In contrast, fiction featuring immigrants to Greece (see footnote 52), providing a literary reworking of a real and pressing social issue (namely, the mode of integration of various ethnically and religiously diverse communities, mostly from a working-class positionality, in the Greek society), seem to resort to an almost testimonial form of realism.

[51] See also Petsa, V. (2021). I 'logotechnia tis ergatikis taksis' sta prota chronia tis Metapolitefsis: aisthitikes taseis kai ideologikoi prosanatolismoi. In Dimitrakakis, I & Natsina, A. (Eds.). *Metapolitefsi 1974-1981: Logotechnia kai politismiki istoria* (pp. 129-146). Ekdoseis tis filosofikis scholis tou Panepistimiou Kritis. Similarly, Dimosthenis Kourtovik (2021, p. 169) underlines Dimitriou's intention to exploit the 'shock' caused by his powerful themes.

[52] See Nollas, D. (2009). *Navagion Plasmata.* Kastaniotis and Nollas, D. (2010). *Foteini Magiki.* Kastaniotis; Valtinos, Th, (2015). *Epeigousa anagki eleou*. Estia, especially the short story 'Veneta Slaveva Stoilkova'; the edited volumes *Ksenos, o allos mou eaftos* (Patakis 1999) & *Eimaste oloi metanastes* (Patakis 2007); Makris, F. (1990). Meres Iouliou. *Parafyada*, 6, 106-107; Dassiou, O. (1987). Adioristos viologos. *Parafyada*, 3, 149-151; Kotsias, T. (1993). I trapoula. *Grammata kai technes*, 69, (October-December 1993), 26-27; Kotsias, K. (2001). To perasma tis Charavgis. *Eksopolis*, 15-16 (Spring-Summer 2001), 29-44; Nollas, D. (1997). Ena chameno deltio taftotitas. *Diavazo*, 376 (July-August 1997), 97-100; Dimitriou, S. (1993[1992]). Sto chioni. (a short story first published in the journal *Epochi* in 1992 and subsequently incorporated in the novel *N' akouo kala t' onoma sou*. Patakis; Chryssanthopoulou, Ch. (2011). Zoi me omicron. Papyros. Besides, the common circumstance of class degradation emerges as a recurrent element of works featuring migration to, and from, Greece. See Kotsias, T. (2004). *Treis genies Amerikanoi.* Kedros.

[53] For instance, in Dimitris Nollas' 'Ena chameno deltio taftotitas' the protagonist finds manual labor along with other immigrant workers. In the end of the story, the employer notifies him that work is cancelled for the next day, as the Immigration Office will effectuate controls. He and his female interlocutor deduce that the employer himself alerted the state services, in order to have the employees arrested and avoid paying them.

[54] A special mention should be made to *Pikres* by Vasso Lone Kalamara, Greek immigrant to Australia, published privately in Greek in 1976 and later republished as a bilingual edition in Australia (1983).

2010s: Veracity and deprived commonality

Echoing a similar, yet accentuated, sense of urgency, the turn towards a form of 'stripped-down' realism, devoid of lyricism or linguistic complexity, and thus bordering on documentary literature, constitutes a key trend in working-class literature during the last crisis-stricken decade, which witnesses the untethered consolidation of austerity policies and the orientation of the dominant mode of production in a neoliberal direction, processes already gradually underway from the late 1980s onwards. This trend is effectuated by means of various authorial strategies: first, by the transformation of writers into hubs, channeling working-class first-person accounts, resorting to varying degrees of invention.[55] Secondly, with the truthful and meticulous recounting of technicalities related to working-class professions, all the more so when such recounting is effectuated with the use of specialized jargon. Viewed under the prism of answerability, the latter promotes either a sense of unfamiliarity and incomprehension in terms of reader response, and hence of class distance, or a sense of belonging to a common linguistic-professional community.[56] Thirdly, through the linguistically unpretentious documentation and the veracious description of reality. This choice possibly arises as a direct (if only, at times, hasty and hence sloppy, in trying to be direct) response to the demand for registering the social repercussions of the financial crisis, thus manifesting a renewed sense of literary social responsibility.[57] Socially-sensitive observation constitutes a crisis-specific version of answerability as does the re-apparition of points of collectivity and the demand (the need, to be precise) for intimacy and camaraderie.[58] Despite not being formulated in succinct class terms in many cases, and although frequently articulated in specific geographic terms (i.e. the bounds of a neighborhood or suburb), this companionship is nevertheless devoid of nostalgia with regards to communitarian forms of living and to anachronistic structures of political coalition.[59] This tendency is mainly manifest in Christos Oikonomou's work (in his short stories collection *Kati tha ginei, tha deis* and in his short story titled 'Emeis tha zestainomaste me somba' included in *To apotipoma tis krisis*). For instance, the protagonist in the short story 'Ela Elli taise to gourounaki' [Come on Elli feed the small pig], gasps: 'I don't get it […] If the poor treat the poor in such a way, then imagine how the rich should treat us' (p. 20).[60] The protagonist in the short story 'Plakat me skoupoksylo' [Placard with a Broomstick] purports to protest for a colleague's death by a work-related accident, but since words fail him, he stands by the spot where the accident occurred, holding a blank placard,

[55] See, for instance, Perivolaris, P. (2020). *Istories Metanaston.* Polis; Grigoriadis, Th. (2013). O ksenos pou efyge. In Boura, E. & Chartoulari, M. (Eds.). *To apotypoma tis krisis* (59-74). Metaichmio and Spanou, E. (2019). *Aparatiritoi*. Polis. In Grigoriadis's short story, the author presents a short, fictitious or not, afterword, stating that the protagonist himself gave him the permission to 'rewrite' his story.

[56] See Peroulis, K. (2015). *Aftomata.* Antipodes.

[57] The editors of the collection *To apotipoma tis krisis* [=The Imprint of the Crisis] affirm that she short stories included in the volume 'function as a magnifying glass and as testimonies' (2013, p. 9). It should be noted, though, that the thematization of the financial crisis may derive from more self-interested, opportunistic motives (Kourtovik, 2021, p. 327).

[58] It has indeed been attested that literary works which appeared after the onset of the financial crisis, both in Greece and on an international level, mark a renewed interest in collective formations. See Chatzivassileiou, V. (2018). *Atomo kai koinonia sti neoteriki elliniki pezografia: 1974-2017*. Polis, pp. 807-853; Kotzia, E. (2020). *Elliniki pezografia, 1974-2010. To metro kai ta stathma.* Polis, pp. 361, 11, 165, 333, 361; Chatzivassileiou, V., Sainis, A. & E. Papargyriou, E. (2020, February 9th). Pezografia tis krisis i krisimi pezografia? (2010-2020)', *I Efimerida ton Syndachton*.

[59] This tendency is mainly manifest in Christos Oikonomou's work (in his short stories collection *Kati tha ginei, tha deis*, and in his short story titled 'Emeis tha zestainomaste me somba' included in *To apotipoma tis krisis*), in Christos Chartomatsidis's, novel *Einai kapou allou I giorti* (2011), but also in Dimitris Nollas's recently published short stories ('Tzamaroun ta spourgitia', 'Ena koulouri sta dyo', 'Ta logia tou aera', 'Moro stin aiora').

[60] 'Δεν το καταλαβαίνω […] Άμα κάνουμε οι φτωχοί στους φτωχούς τέτοια πράματα τότε οι πλούσιοι τι πρέπει να μας κάνουν'.

waiting in vain for someone to approach him. Such non-partisan solidarity is also evident in Christos Chartomatsidis's, novel *Einai kapou allou I giorti* (2011) and in Dimitris Nollas's recently published short stories ('Tzamaroun ta spourgitia', 'Ena koulouri sta dyo', 'Ta logia tou aera', 'Moro stin aiora'). In the latter, an immigrant street artist turned builder, who dreams of retrieving his music career, and a Greek internal migrant, who intended to open a café but now hardly makes ends meet, decide to nurse an abandoned baby.

In relation to the thematic focus of working class works during the last decade,[61] the renewed interest in registering the affective repercussions and the practical inconveniences caused by unemployment should be noted.[62] Inner-life and social hardships as a prominent literary motif related to unemployment echo similar postwar literary preoccupations of the genre, although in this case, as unemployment is combined with downward social mobility, it defines a shared condition of precarity and vulnerability for social strata and ethnic communities which used to be segregated in terms of class positioning, thus reflecting the convergence and interweaving of their interests. In this respect, the erosion of middle-class economic robustness constitutes an inversion of the motif of upward social mobility which emerged during the period of *Metapolitefsi*. As such, fear, a sense of restricted horizons, shame, disillusionment, reduced self-respect and the inability to forge or preserve interpersonal relations constitute partial aspects of the dominant structure of feeling related to the lack, or flexibilization,[63] of employment and subsequent proletarianization. If, towards the end of the previous period, immigration to Greece constituted a thematic area for working-class literature to draw upon and designate in bleak terms, during the years of crisis we note a convergence of emotional states, encapsulated in helplessness towards financial precarity. For instance, in Eleni Giannakaki's short story 'Agiou Nikolaou kai Karaiskaki Gonia' [St. Nicholas & Karaiskaki Str.],[64] the narrator imparts the thoughts of the main character, a pensioner who used to be an employee at a fabric store, and now, after the pension cuts, struggles to make ends meet: '[…] They [the protagonist and his spouse] will have to be tossed here and there like gypsies. Or, rather, just like those Kurds and Afghans, who gathered here to hit the big time. Even they, born and bred here, will end up just like them, if things go on like this' (p. 37).[65]

To sum up, we note that this proposed history of Greek working-class literature defines a fluid and malleable genre, articulated along the axis of class, while also traversing ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Encompassing canonical literary works, but also more fringe publications, and presenting varying degrees and types of commitment to working-class interests, this textual category keeps pace with the mutations of the socio-economic field and the transformation of class composition, incorporating synchronic aspects of diachronic phenomena or special

[61] Even a cursory survey of the theoretical discourses articulated thus far leads to the conclusion that 'literature of the crisis' as a literary category does not enjoy unanimous acceptance as such. From our part, we refer to literature published during the period of crisis, since the dominant thematic and stylistic trends do not seem to vary to a considerably degree with respect to earlier years. Besides, in what concerns specifically working-class literature, we hold that continuities outweigh ruptures.

[62] See, for instance, Oikonomou, *Kati tha ginei, tha deis* (2010); Vlachos, P. (2016). *To blues tis anergias*. Kedros; Magriplis, D., (2016). *Ta kanapedakia tis anergias*. Kritiki; Kitsopoulou, L., 'Eche geia kaimene Kosts', in *To apotipoma tis krisis,* pp. 113-119.

[63] Other national literatures, such as the French and Italian ones, have already began processing the condition of precarity, which leads to the apparition of new social categories (such as the intellectual precariat), problematizing the long-standing pairing of manual work with working class and of intellectual work with middle class.

[64] Eleni Giannakaki, 'Agiou Nikolaou kai Karaiskaki Gonia', in *To apotipoma tis krisis,* pp. 33-43.

[65] '[…] θα πρέπει να τους πετάνε από δω κι από κει σαν τους γύφτους. Ή μάλλον σαν αυτούς τους Κούρδους και τους Αφγανούς που μαζευτήκαν εδώ να βρούνε την τύχη τους. Κάπως έτσι θα καταλήξουνε κι αυτοί, γέννημα θρέμμα, όπως πάει'.

circumstances (i.e. migration and immigration, dominant mode of production, financial crisis) from a class perspective.

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Running head: Bail, Reform, and Foucault's Dangerous Individual

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Abstract

Over 2.5 million people in the US are incarcerated annually for the sole reason that they cannot afford cash bail. This nearly exclusively affects the working-class, and disproportionately affects Black and brown individuals and communities. Whether someone is incarcerated pending trial affects employment, family stability, and even likelihood of conviction. Across the US, reform efforts are being considered and adopted, but in this paper, I use a political theory approach to argue that racial capitalist ideologies that construct the accused as specifically 'dangerous' impede just policy transformation. I start by centralizing Michel Foucault's genealogy of the 'dangerous individual' as a frame for analyzing the logics and movement of the dangerous figure, and then re-situate the concept of the dangerous person in the contemporary US bail context. Ultimately, I argue that the dominance of oppressive ideologies in the bail discourse demonstrates the pervasive race and class biases that persist in the criminal justice apparatus, even in policy reform approaches that promise unbiased outcomes like algorithmic assessments.

Keywords

Bail reform, dangerousness, Foucault, racial capitalism, neoliberal ideology

Bail, Reform, and Foucault's Dangerous Individual

Bail is almost exclusively a crisis for poor and working-class people, and is especially burdensome for urban Black and brown working-class communities. Today, about half of million people in the US are incarcerated pre-trial, while *legally innocent,* exclusively because they cannot afford to pay money bail. While bail reform initiatives are being considered and implemented across the United States, efforts to reform are often palled by an omnipresent image of the threatening figure. Even as empirical analyses have shown that bail reforms do not increase risks to public safety (Herring, 2020), the specter of the individual who may commit a crime, during the timeframe that they might otherwise have been incarcerated, haunts this policy discourse. This paper uses a political theory approach to explore this phenomenon through a deep engagement with Foucault's genealogy of 'the dangerous individual.' In lectures between 1974-1977, Foucault analyzed the construction of the dangerous individual as a pathologized figure forwarded by forensic psychiatry as a force in the modernizing criminal justice apparatus of the nineteenth century. In this paper, I engage Foucault's 'dangerous individual' as a means of teasing out, exploring, and theorizing today's bail reform discourse.

Bail is a mechanism of sureties in lieu of incarceration, wherein the court requires that a thing of value, typically cash, be temporarily given to the court in order to assure that the accused will return to future court dates (the surety is forfeit if the person does not return). The average bail amount for a felony is $10,000 in 'cash or bond.' [1] Most felonies will require the non-refundable payment of a minimum of one thousand dollars to a for-profit bail bondsman, who will post bond on behalf of the accused, and take the surety as profit at the conclusion of the case.[2]—Recent surveys have reported that more than two-thirds of households would be unable to readily produce that thousand dollar surety (Tolan, 2017). Bail for misdemeanors is typically much lower, though for many thousands at any given time, even smaller out-of-pocket costs are unreachable (Rockett, 2019). Many will recall the 2015 case of Sandra Bland, who was arrested in what was widely named racial harassment and was found hanged in her jail cell three days later: Bland was eligible for release the day following her arrest, but her family struggled to raise the $500 that would have enabled them to post bond (Mansoor, 2020). The Bail Project estimates that 2.5 million people each year are incarcerated for some period of time due to unaffordable money bail (Bail Project, 2021). Not being able to post bail also has cross-cutting effects, from job loss, to family disruption, to a significant increase in the likelihood of conviction as a case outcome (Digard & Swavola, 2019; Hunter, 2020). In addition to affecting those with lower income and wealth, working in positions without access to time-off elevates the harms of bail detention.

Across the nation, bail reform movements have been initiated, but some have foundered or even, in the case of New York, been rolled back after public outcry. Beyond the over-criminalization of working-class and poor Black and brown people as a cause of over-incarceration in the first place, the issue of bail, who can afford it, and why the bail system persists is both profoundly unequal and a vital question for those interested in race- and class-differentiated experiences of justice and freedom (Arnold et al, 2018; Peterson & Omori, 2019; Sawyer, 2019).

In this paper, I review the current state of bail reform, and argue that persistent challenges to reform might be understood through the lens of Michel Foucault's framework of the 'dangerous individual,' a concept that emerges within the context of larger issues of biopolitics. After arguing for the relevance of the dangerous individual framework, I discuss the deep-seated ideological dominance of the dangerous individual, and argue that has profound effects on the possibilities for justice in the pre-trial criminal justice system, with particularly devastating effects on poor and working-class communities of color, who may be prefigured as particularly dangerous in ways that intensify the effects of bail inequalities.

The State of Bail

The money bail system that has dominated most US state criminal justice systems in the modern era is widely seen as problematic, self-evidently producing class-differentiated

[1] A felony is the most common, though not universal, category in the United States of relatively serious offenses, typically distinguished from 'misdemeanors.' While there is variation across state jurisdictions, a felony is generally any criminal offense for which the maximum sentence is one year or more in prison. An example of this distinction is that under Illinois law, theft of property worth less than $500 is a misdemeanor, but theft of property worth more than $500 is a felony.

[2] While a number of countries use cash bail in some ways, the United States and the Phillipines are considered outliers wherein a significant industry has developed around providing sureties. See Shima Baradaran Baughmna's book *The Bail Book* (2017) for further detail.

inequality. In response, bail reform is one of the most widespread, transformative movements happening in the US criminal justice field, even as it is one of the quietest (Starger & Bullock, 2018). While bail reform sometimes received less attention than other decarceration movements, bail reform has the possibility to utterly transform the average arrestee's experience of the US criminal justice system (Cohen & Reaves, 2007; Gupta et al., 2016; Rengifo et al, 2021). Nation-wide, there are organizations working to reform the system that keeps hundreds of thousands of poor people behind bars, exclusively for want of a few hundred or thousand dollars. Some states, like New Jersey, have recently implemented radical bail reform through the legislative process (Rengifo et al, 2021). Other states, like California, have rejected wholesale reform, but are seeing challenges through legal advocacy and activism (Coffman, 2018). According to the Pretrial Justice Initiative, in only 11 states has there been no recent major activity toward 'improving' pretrial processes (Pretrial Justice Institute, 2021). Much of the dominant discourse has identified money bail as the problem, and a shift to a non-money, risk-based assessment as the obvious, progressive solution. However, in this paper, I explore deeper ideological factors that elude the simple, seemingly value-free solution of quantitative risk assessment. This article contributes to the emerging literature that is more deeply suspicious of algorithmic justice, which seeks to use complex scoring tools to identify riskiness in the accused (Eckhouse et al, 2019; Green, 2020; McKay, 2020; van Eijk, 2020.), but also contributes to a less developed literature that forwards a theoretical analysis of the role of ideology, identity, and power in bail.

Bail reform, as debated or adopted, has garnered a complicated response. In NJ, jail populations fell by about 20% across the board in the year following reform implementation. This has clearly been a boon for the several thousand individuals who would otherwise be incarcerated, but it has transformed the for-profit bail bond industry, shuttering many small businesses (Conte, 2020). Further, while on the whole, bail reform does not appear to harm public safety, there have been several reports of violent crimes being committed by individuals free from jail, who under the previous system would likely have still been incarcerated (Schuppe, 2020). Less discussed, but more troubling for proponents of progressive reform, is that there are strong indications that bail reform may be exacerbating racial disparities, largely through the use of ostensibly race-neutral, but in actuality deeply racialized risk-assessment tools (Eckhouse et al, 2019; Green 2020). Thus, it is white defendants who have thus far benefited most from bail reform.

Risk-assessment tools have a long and inarguably biased history. The first generation of instruments was developed largely based on a 'common-sense' approach that relied on items like length of time at address, which quickly were seen to be more measures of economic and/or racial status than of public safety or likely failure-to-return risk (Koepke & Robinson, 2018; Werth, 2019). That new bail assessment instruments may be imbued with pre-existing biases, especially racial and class biases, is not a novel claim. Opponents of an uncritical big-data approach to criminal justice assessments have hailed from political, legal, and scholarly fields. In 2014, then-Attorney General Eric Holder warned that risk assessments (be they used in bail, sentencing, or other venues) 'may exacerbate unwarranted and unjust disparities that are already far too common in our criminal justice system and in our society' (Holder, 2014). Risk, the use of algorithms to claim bias-free analysis, and the incorporated oppressive ideology in penal settings including sentencing and parole has been explored by scholars including Kelly Hannah-Moffat, Kelly Montford, and Robert Werth (Hannah-Moffat and Struthers Montford, 2019; Werth, 2018, 2019). However, bail practices—where by definition, no one's guilt has been determined—remain sites of actuarial dominance.

Pretrial reform advocates have argued that well-designed bail assessments can be race-neutral, even as they do not solve pre-existing inequalities (Pretrial Justice Institute, 2017). Further, it is argued, by releasing a significant percentage of those who would otherwise be detained, people of color (who are arrested at higher rates) will benefit. However, reform advocates base their assessments on the likelihood of detention based on specific scoring on specific assessments. Their findings emphasize that individuals with similar scores will be released or detained at similar rates. But the problem of a snowballing effect of racial inequality in policing, legal representation, and sentencing is left unaddressed.[3]

Across states who have begun to implement reforms, there are formal reports and news stories focusing on defendants who committed new, often violent, crimes while pending trial, whereas under previous pretrial models they might have been incarcerated at the time of the instant offense. These crimes, even as they do not statistically increase crime rates, and constitute a small percentage of the overall released population, test the political will of both reformers and the public at-large (Herring, 2020).

Even as the first waves of pre-/post-bail reform (often referred to as 'system improvement' within the pretrial community) have shown no blanket increase in new arrest rates, the concern with the dangerousness of the released defendant, who otherwise would be confined, persists, beyond data or even ethical analysis (Koepke & Robinson, 2018; Mayson, 2017). Once arrested, the arrestee, no matter the legal status of innocent until proven guilty, has been marked out as potentially dangerous, but also potentially controlled.

There is a constant refrain in the discourse surrounding bail reform focusing on the potential danger of he-who-is-released.[4] Law and order politicians hold up this example, real or imagined, as a requirement for an authoritative approach. Bail bondsmen proffer this 'dark' figure ahead of the profit motive.[5] No matter that empirically, there is no evidence to show that these individuals represent any particular striking threat—or a threat that would not have been able to post release bond in traditional systems—the danger the now-released person poses is a central figure in bail reform discourse. The ideological construction of the maybe-released person rests on deep ideological constructions of Blackness and unspecified lower-class-ness. Emily Brissette has argued that arraignments (the hearings at which initial bail determinations are made) are 'ritualized practices' which together represent and interpellate the accused as a 'bad subject' (Brissette, 2020). The arrestee's life as a parent, a worker or community member is rendered invisible and irrelevant by the dominance of the imagined threat.

The Construction and Persistence of Foucault's Dangerous Individual

A deep read into Foucault's exploration of the figure of the dangerous individual offers much to help in interpreting the persistence of the specter of the potentially-released defendant. By mapping the disciplinary emergence of psychiatry as a socially, politically, and *legally* powerful body, Foucault frames this within broader anxieties about rationality in the emergence

[3] While many still hold this view, the Pretrial Justice Initiative, a leading think tank reversed their position on algorithmic risk assessment tools in 2020 following a great deal of pushback on their position that 'race-neutral' assessments were sufficiently beneficial.

[4] This figure is proffered as a shadow figure, but is consistently race, classed, and gendered, and is meant to provoke fear in the middle- and upper-class imagination as an Other who can only be understood as a thread. Here I use 'he' as an indication of the gendered, even as unidentified, figure associated with crime.

[5] Many bail bonds professionals forward images of potentially unsecured offenders with highly racialized subtext. In commenting on New York's bail reform, one bail bond professional held up the 'drug dealers' and 'gangs' (coded Black and brown) with 'soccer moms, … the tourists' (coded white) (Rayman, 2019).

of the modern society. In this section, I trace Foucault's argument identifying the dangerous person and its centrality in the modern state framework.

Foucault, in a 1977 lecture (turned article), 'About the Concept of the 'Dangerous Individual' in 19th Century Legal Psychiatry' and later an interview, 'Danger, Crime and Rights: A Conversation between Michel Foucault and Jonathan Simon,' explored the origins of the specified dangerous figure in the criminal justice apparatus, as well as how and in what ways this figure has persisted and changed into the contemporary moment. These brief texts should be understood within the larger contexts of the work collected in *Abnormal: Lectures at the College de France 1974-1975, Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the College de France 1975-76* and *Security, Territory, Population, Lectures at the College de France, 1977-78*, and of course *Discipline and Punish.*

Discipline and Punish: Birth of a Prison plays a large, mostly implicit role in this argument, as the penal framework here is a sizeable shorthand for the larger argument about punishment seeking to transform the individual soul within the mass institution of the prison. This is all part of the larger argument Foucault is making in the mid-1970s about the functioning of power in the modern technical state, but in focusing in on the particular processes of the construction of the dangerous individual and its relationship to the contemporary bail context, there is an opportunity for a particularly clear view of both Foucault's thinking and the operation of ideology in political institutions.

Out of the larger context of Foucault's work, I think most importantly, is the explication of the concept of biopower as a setting for the more specific exploration of dangerousness. Biopower, or 'power's hold over life,' refers to the exertion of state control over the biological. This is articulated as a different, new form of sovereignty that emerges in the nineteenth century. Previously, the right of the sovereign should be properly understood as a right to 'take life or let live' (Foucault, 2003, p. 241). Biopower as a new exercise of sovereignty, is constituted by 'the right to make live and to let die.' Foucault was primarily an analyst of power, and thought that the study of power ought to begin at the point 'where it is exercised over individuals rather than legitimated at the centre' (Jessop, 2017, p. 5), and so a microanalysis that focuses on the individualized body as the point where power meets flesh, as in bail, is particularly relevant.

Through biopower, which begins to emerge in the second-half of the eighteenth century and is fully developed in the nineteenth, shifts from the discipline of 'man' as individual, to the rule of man as the collected 'global mass' of those whose lives are affected by the (inevitable) elements of the biological (Foucault, 2003, p. 271).[6] As Nikolas Rose describes the biopolitical turn, 'Political authorities, in alliance with many others, have taken on the task of the management of life in the name of the well-being of the population as a vital order and of each of its living subjects' (Rose, 2001, p. 1). Biopolitics seeks to control in the first order, the processes of biological life, such as 'birth rate, mortality rate, longevity,' but also beyond the basics of biological life, 'a whole series of related economic and political problems' (Foucault,

[6] I think something implicit in Foucault's argument here is the fundamental economism of human life. The fact of our existence as necessitous beings—creatures that need food-water-shelter-society—is the central element of Marx's analysis of the functions of capitalism in the nineteenth century, and this is one area of Foucault's 'uninterrupted dialogue' with Marx (Fontana & Bertani, 2003 p. 277). Foucault's articulation of biopower acknowledges the complexity of organized life outside of a subsistence model. As economic society complicates, especially under the industrial model, control over necessity might be understood to be wrested from nature, but is vested in capital as an accumulation of labor-time. Moving from this macro understanding, Foucault drills down to the mechanisms that proceed from this organization of need.

2003, p. 243). An element of this is the emergence of the field of public hygiene, which develops both institutions and knowledges of various functions of the monitored body. This paper argues that contemporary bail discourse operates through a frame that is analogically and genealogically continuous with this public hygiene frame.

This point of public hygiene is the arena through which Foucault details the medicalization of the criminal justice sphere, via legal psychiatry. In the lecture 'About the Concept of the 'Dangerous Individual in 19th Century Legal Psychiatry,' Foucault explores the 'mechanisms, techniques, and technologies of power' (2003, p. 241) that characterize the emergence of public hygiene and its role in the criminal justice system. This lecture was a distillation of many of the themes that had been previously developed in Foucault's 1974-75 lectures at the College de France, and which were published in English as *Abnormal.*

Foucault argues that the 'psychiatrization of criminal danger' occurs in two stages in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first stage, which he points to via a series of cases between 1800 and 1835, focuses on the unreasonable crime. These are offenses committed by people who would otherwise appear to be rational and healthy individuals. Prior to this, mental status was recognized only in cases of 'dementia' or 'furor,' where in both, 'the insanity manifested itself through numerous signs which were easy enough to recognize' (Foucault, 1978, p.4). In these new cases, there was no prior indication of madness, nor other than the instance of the crime itself, was there any further sign of infirmity. Also different was that the offenses identified were particularly horrific—almost exclusively murders with no cause either before or after the offense; prior crimes of mental status had tended to be petty violence or public disorder. Foucault identifies this as a series of cases which might be understood as crimes against nature, rather than offenses merely against society.

Finally and most importantly, these are crimes with no reason. In the 18th century, a discourse around crime as violations of reason became the narrative of law and law-breaking, but with this turn, came the events that undermine this narrative. The law, grounded in reason, could not immediately respond within its own boundaries. As the law, as embodied in the judiciary, but also in the larger juridical framework of lawyers, jails, and the emerging prisons, the centrality of the figure of the rational actor choosing to law-break required a reasonable narrative of a crime in order to make it 'intelligible.' Foucault outlines this via example. First, he notes that under the French system he is examining, if the accused is found to be irrational, then the crime itself is negated (this is different from the US system wherein the crime remains, but the criminal is judged to be not-responsible; this is a legal difference). It is only through an articulable motivation that the crime is circumscribed in the legal order. He gives the example of a story in which a poor woman kills a child and eats her. This woman is condemned, but Foucault counters that had the woman been rich, this crime would have been seen as an act of madness, rather than sheer criminality. Their actions cannot be explained through reason and the juridical order cannot account for such.

At the same time as the courts were finding their current schema inadequate to respond to this certain class of crimes, the newly emergent profession of psychiatry was establishing itself as a legitimate branch of medicine—and found this crime-out-of-context explainable by naming it madness. Foucault identifies this as an active process by psychiatrists trying 'very stubbornly to take their place in the legal machinery' (Foucault, 1978, p. 6). This stubbornness is described as taking place because the legal order functioned as a modality of power to be secured and justified. And this is possible *because* here psychiatry is acting to disseminate a framework of public hygiene, which—as discussed above—develops both institutions and knowledges of

various functions of the monitored body. Here the monitored body is the body of the unusual, horrific criminal.

Foucault argues that it was via its operation in the legal sphere that psychiatry was able to establish itself so well. These crimes could not be accounted for in the traditional juridical order, but the intervention of the psychiatrist saves the legal framework as a comprehensive body by finding a rational explanation for how these individuals must be situated and managed. Only technicians of public hygiene are *able* to make effective judgments about the irrational actors who are acting in criminal ways. This particular kind of insanity *especially* required an experienced and trained eye, because homicidal monomania 'remained invisible until it explode[d].' Foucault notes that it is both audacious and necessary that this intervention must come through such an 'extravagant' a crime as homicidal mania, a crime that had 'a maximum of consequences, a minimum of warning' (1978, p. 7) in part because such violations required response, but did not fit a rational narrative—so they must be mad—and are thus ineligible for management through the extant criminal justice system.

Foucault explores how psychiatry as part of its establishing authority as a discipline, became authoritative, even as judges and prosecutors objected. Foucault argues that as legal psychiatry expanded its institutional power, the importance of maintaining public hygiene created the demand *for* the psychiatrist as solution. Convicted criminals were punished in order to correct the failing that resulted in crimes being committed, but without a possibility of correction, a prime contemporary function of punishment is left rudderless. Punishment had adopted the power to transform the soul, but when a crime is so out of *character* there may be nothing to transform—thus the criminal must be consigned not to the prison, but to the care of the psychiatrist via the institution. Even when jurists resisted the encroachment of psychiatry, they were ultimately required to accept the incursions even if only at the most extreme bounds of criminality. This is a circular logic, that when unraveled can be seem to be built on fog. In the earlier lectures, Foucault characterized the psychiatric position as speaking 'the language of children and the language of fear' (Foucault, 2003a, p. 36): the person is dangerous because the psychiatric authority says so—so there. Contemporary discourse around bail functions along a similar mirage: non-dangerous people should *of course* be released, but they are all *actually* dangerous.

Foucault argues this early nineteenth century moment set the grounds for legal psychiatry to be engaged in the identification and management of a certain type of dangerous individual—that individual whose danger cannot be predicted or managed. Thus begins the process of understanding the offender as one who must be held suspect, whose potential viciousness requires the application of expert techniques. And through the century, we begin to see the discourse of a relationship between criminality, dangerousness, and insanity slipping into, seeping across, and soaking through the juridical order. A central mechanism for this is the massification of an understanding of social ills as a function of 'degeneration.' Degeneration is a concept that emerges in several of Foucault's texts,[7] the most important implication of which, for this paper, is the idea that even the smallest infraction might be an indication of future danger to come (remember, legal psychiatry enters the field to engage with crimes of which there was no warning—the shift to a model of degeneration suggests that small violations, petty crime, a. are the harbingers, but more importantly, b. are a sign of degeneration within the social body—the flaking skin to be confronted in order to maintain public hygiene).

[7] For more context on degeneration, see Foucault's larger argument on the nature of police regulation and governmentality, especially in Foucault, M. (2007). *Security, territory, population: lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*. Springer.

The notion of degeneration made it possible to link the most insignificant of criminals to a peril of pathological dimensions for society, and, eventually, for the whole human species. The whole field of infractions could be held together in terms of danger and thus of protection to be provided. Further, in the face of degeneration, the existing juridical framework was unable to account for this social concept within its own norms—and in Foucault's telling, the whole of the legal order largely adopts this conception, leaving the impulse to manage degeneration through a psychiatric model to exist as an overlay to the entirety of the criminal system. Foucault argues that this is so, even when the norms and propositions by those pushing the degeneration model are ostensibly rebuffed in dominant discourse. This essentially confronts the rule of law, creating a mirror system where danger becomes the metric of judgment rather than justice. We see similar patterns occurring in the turn toward algorithmic assessments in bail adjudication, even as assessments have been found to consistently, as the Pretrial Justice Institute argues, 'derived from data reflecting structural racism and institutional inequity that impact our court and law enforcement policies and practices' (PJI Team, 2020). That is, the degenerative model comes to paint individuals from criminalized communities as dangerous criminals, no matter the specific realities of their arrest.

Identifying another key period in the development of the relationship between psychiatry and criminal law, Foucault points to the second half of the nineteenth century as crucial as psychiatry contorts and expands to respond to new social demands, especially the management of the social problem of crime, which, Foucault notes that 'for all sorts of reasons, […] there was a very strong social and political demand for a reaction to, and for repression of crime' (Foucault, 1978, p. 13). One of the paths of response to this is the emergence, by the start of the twentieth century, of 'risk' via a liability model, as the dominant ideological framework in play for criminal judgment. This effective result of this is a shift that focuses on the displacement of the danger from the crime to the criminal. Under this new regime, 'the crime tends to be no more than the event which signals the existence of a dangerous element' (Foucault, 1978, p. 2). Under this schema, the dangerous person is signified by the accusation. Bail reform is then refigured as always already a discussion about minimizing absolute risk, where absolute risk is undefinable.

Framing Bail Reform

And this is where we return to the question of bail, bail reform, and how one might interpret emerging movements toward bail reform and the mechanisms by which bail is being reformed. While there are a diversity of policy positions, even on the 'progressive' side of the policy argument, the specter of the dangerous individual looms. For those opposing bail reform (at least as 'reform' is currently understood to mean detaining fewer pretrial arrestees), arguments tend to fall into one of two thematic groups: one group driven by a law & order ideology and the bail bond industry.

The law & order discourse hews most closely to the 'dangerous person' discourse, emphasizing the *risk* of release. Foucault's description of the visage of degeneracy, combined with long practice in the stigmatization of the petty criminal, results in a policy position that resists any attempt to liberalize release standards. This of course, runs afoul of the presumption of innocence, but holds strong sway. The only way to prevent the possibility of further risk to the non-incarcerated community is to defensively detain. Those arrested of violent crime are seen as obviously risky, and current bail reforms typically strengthen the court's ability to detain those accused of violent crimes. However, the vast majority of those arrested—the non-violent, low-level arrestee, also take on the mantle of the unruly risk. Past accused unruliness—violent

or not, it all falls under this framework of the unreliable, potentially irrational, dangerous person—creates an absolute category of risky: the individual who is constructed as always already potentially harmful. The potential risk in release becomes the controlling metric when assessing 'the dangerous person.'

This imagining becomes possible because there is no *real* metric of sufficiently not-dangerous. This modern strategy of forwarding risk 'denotes a family of ways of thinking and acting, involving calculations about probable futures in the present followed by interventions into the present in order to control that potential future' (Rose, 2001, p 7)—it's always the same 'childish,' 'fearful' frame that asserts its validity on a foundation of imagined terror. The nature of human existence is risky, and while empirically, it is possible and reasonable to balance and compare risks, in the discourse of the dangerous person, the dangerousness outweighs all other actuarial accounts. Under this model, it does not matter even if research finds that bail reform might prevent the release of other, more likely-to-be-dangerous arrestees,[8] the release of any particular unruly body presents a violation of the sanctity of the commons to be free from such unruliness whenever and wherever possible. The risk of the dangerous person as fetishized in the body of he-who-would-be-released becomes an absolute metric.

The second powerful vector in the anti-reform camp is the basic market interest of the bail bond industry. The bail industry, which is primarily composed of small, often family, businesses, profits by taking a fee and contracting collateral from the defendant and posting the remainder surety on behalf of the defendant. For example, if a person is required to post a $5,000 bail, a person's family might pay a bail bond agency $500, and the bail company would post the remainder (or a promissory bond). If the arrestee does not return to court, the bail is forfeit. Thus the bail industry serves a role in ensuring those released return to court. When a person does not appear as required, bail bond agencies will often perform their own arrests, forcibly returning the arrestee to court.

The bail industry has been a powerful lobbying voice against bail reform at the ballot box and in legislative debates. Two main arguments are offered. The first argument is that bail bondsmen perform a valuable service in ensuring arrestees' return to court. However, there is little evidence to support this claim. In the recent pre- and post-reform implementation analyses, there is no significant difference between the court appearance rates of bailed v. released arrestees (Brooker, 2017). Second, that bail reform will be devastating to this small business sector. This argument, when considered in relationship to the construction of the arrestee as a categorical dangerous person reveals a certain orientation toward the value and integrity of the accused. The implicit principle is that the economic well-being ought to trump any and all benefits that might accrue to a person who is released rather than incarcerated. Here, the degenerated value of the dangerous person—one whose multifarious wellbeing, but also crucially his literal freedom, is subjugated to the bail bondsmen. The power of a dominating narrative assigning the arrested to such a status becomes evident in this comparison.

On the opposite, pro-reform side, while the dangerous individual narrative does not dominate, it remains a subtext—but one that is argued to be managed through alternative state

[8] Under a true money bail system, higher risk detainees retain the option to secure release through a money bond. That bond will be much higher than the bond required for low level offenders, but is still an option. For serious criminals, the proceeds of criminal activity sometimes actually make higher-level money bond more accessible than a lower bond might be to a petty offender. Under most reform models, 'high-risk' arrestees are precluded from release at all. In NJ, part of the political horse-trading to reach a deal on bail reform including precluding many classes of offenses characterized as dangerous from bail eligibility at all.

technologies. Bail reform advocates argue that they are advocating for a less punitive, more just approach, one that is more respectful of the presumption of innocence, *very few argue for a switch to a system premised on release on recognizance*. This is the presence of the dangerous individual, that childish and fearful language dominating, even as the courts articulate themselves through the scientization of the algorithm. Instead, under most bail reform models across the US, while most arrestees would be bailed, the vast majority would be released under various sets of surveillance conditions, such as house arrest, GPS monitoring, or required reporting. NJ, the bastion of progressive bail reform has thirteen such requirements. Failure to comply with these requirements can result in bail revocation. While these measures are posited as softer, kinder, gentler, more just interventions, the long history of use of these mechanisms for parole and probation suggests otherwise. Criminologist James Kilgore argues that 'the majority of EM [electronic monitoring] regimes are fully in line with the paradigm of punishment that has dominated the criminal justice system for more than three decades' (Kilgore, 2013). Individuals who have been monitored have reported that in-community monitoring is aggressively disruptive, and interferes with employment, family responsibilities, and psychological well-being—theoretically the exact harms bail reform advocates say they wish to mitigate. Parolee David Dupree described GPS monitoring as making him feel like a 'dog that's on an invisible fence' (Rickert, 2018). Here, the accused is still posited as the dangerous individual, but one whose posed risk can be managed effectively through emergent state technologies.[9]

Bail, the Dangerous Individual, and Racial Capitalist Ideology

Deploying Foucault's dangerous individual is not a historic argument, but rather is an attempt to bring a relevant category into view as a methodological fragment. However, it is also important to re-historicize and re-locate bail discourses within the US's specific bail history. As Dabney et al (2017) argue, bail practices in the US enclose the logics of earlier eras of penal ideology while also being 'tinted' with emergent neoliberal and neoconservative impulses over the past fifty years. Daubner et al also emphasize that the increased emphasis on dangerousness is a characteristic of neoconservative influence that emerges as part of broader sociopolitical turns toward law and order politics. Also central to the emergence of neoconservative law and order-ism of the 1970s and 1980s is the reconfiguring of the criminal justice system as the new central mechanism is maintaining the US racial order (Alexander, 2012).

Dangerousness in this context is inseparable from broader white supremacist politics in the post-Civil Rights Movement era. As Khalil Muhammed has argued, blackness in the United States has always been stigmatized with connotations of criminality, that white supremacy has mobilized criminalization as a tool in the production of racist ideology (Muhammed, 2011). Previously, I've argued that race and class intersect in the neoliberal city to mark non-wealthy people of color as always already identified as unruly, dangerous, and in need of state

[9] It is also important to note that the shift toward expanding state surveillance is not benign. There is further danger in expanding the use of state surveillance, as individuals who would previously have been eligible for release under the most minimal of conditions, provided they had the cash, are now released under an aggressively expanded state surveillance apparatus. This seems poised to normalize mundane monitoring of the 'dangerous classes,' further opening what might have been otherwise protected as a matter of due process rights. This ongoing, encroaching march of state power, even as steel bars give way to signal bars, expands the reach of the security state in ever more subtle, inextricable ways. One might think of the data collected through GPS monitoring—to whom does it belong? How can it be used? Will that data be recollected in a recursive process of further refinement of algorithm-driven governing? What happens next? That these are decisions made by power elites that will determine the futures of those who are almost entirely separated from those mechanisms of power suggests the ability to resist the ideological formation of the dangerous individual may be limited.

management (Wright 2016). The process through legal psychiatry that Foucault describes was not the origin of the construction of the subjugated classes as dangerous—that required hundreds of years of aggressive, violent white supremacy explicitly enforced through social, economic, legal, and political forms—but it does demonstrate the sanitization and legitimation of this discourse into modern juridical forms. This is an example of what Murakawa and Beckett call 'racial innocence' (Murakawa & Beckett, 2010), the process through which white supremacist action retains legitimacy by appearing race-neutral, but functions through embedded, silent forms of racial disparity.

Alongside, intertwined with racial formation is the neoliberal ideology that constructs working-class bodies as valuable to the extent that they service capital, and defines them as criminal and dangerous to the extent when seen as disrupting the expansion of capital interests (Wright, 2016). White working-class individuals and communities are often assimilated into the management and maintenance of the criminal justice apparatus (Gilmore, 2007), through accessing social and economic mobility through employment in policing and corrections agencies—while BIPOC individuals have joined these institutions in recent years, criminal justice remains dominated by white bodies and ideologies (Whitehead, 2015). Black and brown working-class people are the fodder for these systems; lack of access to pretrial release is a process of extraction of value as they are reduced to bodies whose economic role is to be disciplined and controlled—all enabled and legitimated by the persistent forwarding of the dangerousness trope. Until this inherent ideology is confronted, reforms will continue to reproduce extant forms of injustice, no matter how sophisticated the algorithm or assessment.

Conclusion

Bail policies are, like so many other areas of public policy, designed, but rarely experienced by the elite. Perhaps most like abortion access, bail will never be a problem for the economically privileged classes, but has pressing, life-altering effects for those with economic restrictions. In addition, beyond the impact on individuals, bail practices change the social, familial, and economic realities for many urban, Black and brown, working-class communities—to the extent that understanding the dynamics of bail is crucial to understanding the ways that many racialized working-class individuals and communities experience the world.

Viewing jail and bail through the lens of the dangerous individual makes apparent the chasm between legitimate democratic ends for a criminal justice apparatus and current bail policies. Decisions about incarcerating individuals, driven prior to arrest by racist, classist practices in policing, exacerbated by racist, classist practices around detention and the judicial process, continued through further racism and classism in penal practices, are made through ideological lenses that are incapable of recognizing the humanity of the working-class. Under this ideological regime, jails must be interpreted as tools of oppression, not safety, and resisted as such.

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Divergent Approaches to Access: How Selective College Admissions Offices Recruit Lower-Income, First-Generation, and Working-Class Students

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Abstract

In recent years, selective colleges and universities have made diversifying their student bodies a top priority, yet the class diversity on these campuses has barely shifted. While most research on class disparities in college admissions focuses on student explanations, this study seeks to understand how campus admissions approaches to recruitment may also contribute to why so few lower-income, first-generation, and/or working-class students (LIFGWC students) attend selective colleges. To address this question, we conducted interviews with seven admissions officers from selective campuses with both relatively strong and weak records of LIFGWC students recruitment. Institutions with stronger records of recruiting LIFGWC students actively sought out new initiatives to make their college more accessible for LIFGWC students, and these actions were motivated by a shared focus on improving larger societal inequality. Although campuses with weaker records also expanded their recruitment strategies, their efforts were often piecemeal and motivated by competition for students and institutional rankings rather than a larger mission to improve diversity and equity. These findings suggest that institutional missions and philosophies are central to increasing access.

Keywords

First-generation student, low-income students, undergraduate admission, undermatching, diversity

Introduction

First-generation, low-income, and/or working-class students (hereafter LIFGWC students) reap a range of benefits from attending selective colleges, including strong academic and financial support, high graduation rates, and connections into professional careers (Lee, 2013; Benson & Lee, 2020). Selective colleges can also have a substantial impact on social mobility; LIFGWC students who attend selective colleges end up earning about as much as students from wealthier backgrounds (Aisch et al., 2017). Despite these benefits, scholars question whether selective colleges genuinely aim to advance social mobility (Hurst, 2019). For example, the representation of LIFGWC students at selective colleges generally has not changed much in the last four decades, even as access for other underrepresented groups has increased (Rouse & Barrow, 2006; Lee, 2013; Hurst 2019).

Despite having similar college aspirations, LIFGWC students are less likely to attend selective colleges and universities compared to students whose parents are college-educated (Redford & Hoyer, 2017). High-achieving LIFGWC students consistently undermatch in the college selection process, attending campuses of lower selectivity than they are qualified to attend (Bowen et al., 2009; Roderick et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2013). This is largely because so few high-achieving, LIFGWC students apply to selective colleges (Hoxby & Avery, 2013). In addition to missing out on the financial and academic benefits of attending selective campuses, LIFGWC students who undermatch take longer, on average, to graduate, have lower graduation rates, and less positive employment outcomes compared to students who attend institutions that align with their abilities, further increasing social class inequality (Bowen et al., 2009; Ovink et al., 2017; Shamsuddin, 2016).

To understand why so few high-achieving LIFGWC students choose to apply to selective colleges and universities, scholars and policymakers tend to focus on deficits in students' backgrounds. For example, LIFGWC students tend to have less access to college knowledge, application support, and related preparation resources compared to their more advantaged peers, leading to more constrained college search patterns (Holland, 2014; Holland, 2020; Grodsky & Riegle-Crumb, 2010; Alon, 2009; Engberg et al., 2012). What is less understood, however, is how selective colleges and universities contribute to this undermatching process through their recruitment approaches. Recent studies show that LIFGWC students are especially responsive to marketing and recruitment tactics (Holland, 2019; Dynarski et al., 2018), suggesting that the ways colleges and universities recruit applicants is a key part of the undermatching puzzle.

In this study, we build on literature on LIFGWC students undermatching and college selection to examine the practices selective colleges use to approach the recruitment of LIFGWC students and whether these practices are linked with the successful recruitment of LIFGWC students. To answer these questions, we interviewed seven college admissions officers (AOs), the gatekeepers of college access, from selective campuses with both relatively strong and weak records of LIFGWC students recruitment, as indicated by the percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students on campus. In doing so, we aim to understand if differences in recruitment approaches explain, at least in part, why some campuses are better than others at recruiting students from this underrepresented demographic.

Literature: LIFGWC students College Access and Admissions

In order to understand admissions recruitment processes, it is important to examine both the decisions institutions make as well as their rationale or justification for these approaches. To do so, we draw upon a cultural toolkit approach (Swidler, 1986) to examine both the recruitment strategies and motivating philosophies used by selective college admissions offices. Recruitment strategies are the concrete practices admissions personnel use, such as offering fee waivers, to remove barriers and attract LIFGWC students. On the other hand, recruitment philosophies or logics are the more abstract component of the decision-making process (Harding, 2007; Small, 2004). This is the lens through which admissions personnel view potential applicants and admissions priorities. These frameworks are critical because they often guide institutional priorities, investments, and decisions.

Previous research on recruitment philosophies tends to focus largely on racial diversity and treat all selective colleges as a singular entity (Stulberg & Chen, 2013; Glasener et al., 2019; Ahmed, 2012). Very few studies examine campus motivations to increase class diversity. One

exception is Rubin's (2011) historical analysis of admissions practices at Amherst College, a selective college with relative success in enrolling high numbers of low-income students, which connects colleges' motivations surrounding diversity to their recruitment of low-income students. Rubin (2011) finds it is not one specific policy or combination of policies that worked to improve class diversity for Amherst, but a historical commitment from administrators to socioeconomic and racial diversity that made the difference. This work suggests that institutional motivating philosophies are critical to understanding how campuses approach improving access for underrepresented students.

Motivations do not always come from deep institutional commitments to diversity but rather from interests to improve rankings and prestige. Selective colleges often recruit underrepresented students because diversity is expected at a selective institution and makes the college more prestigious (Golden, 2006; Cashin, 2014; Okechukwu, 2019). Ultimately, however, rankings are not determined by how truly diverse or accessible a college is, but rather, schools chase rankings measured by 'pre-existing privilege' (i.e. acceptance rates and average SAT scores) (Hurst, 2019, p. 79). Thus, scholars argue that higher education institutions engage in performative commitments to diversity, rather than genuine commitments (Ahmed, 2012; Okechukwu, 2019). Ahmed (2012) notes, 'diversity work becomes about generating the 'right image' and correcting the wrong one' (34). Cashin (2014) refers to this concept as 'optical diversity,' arguing colleges accept affluent students of color because it makes them appear diverse, but do not work to foster real inclusion (41). In this way, scholars argue that diversity approaches are more of a marketing tactic than efforts to alleviate forms of inequality by expanding access (Stevens, 2007; Stulberg & Chen, 2013; Ahmed, 2012; Okechukwu, 2019).

Other work suggests that campuses interested in expanding class diversity also face conflicting goals. Colleges may want to increase socioeconomic diversity and expand financial aid to do so, but also need to recruit full pay students to meet their bottom-line (Cashin, 2014; Lee, 2016). In addition, it is challenging to shift long-held institutional preferences, values, and culture, often referred to as institutional habitus (Reay et al., 2001). Since the beginning of higher education in the United States, colleges have predominantly served affluent, white students, resulting in admissions practices and commitments that largely benefit this group (Stevens, 2007; Golden, 2006; Killgore, 2009; Lee, 2016). Although campuses may aim to expand class diversity, their approaches may be limited by financial resources, long-standing stakeholders, and deeply entrenched practices.

Unlike motivating philosophies, there is robust literature on the types of policies and practices campuses have successfully implemented to increase their LIFGWC students population. First, selective colleges have begun to identify new ways to attract LIFGWC students who often have less familiarity with these types of campuses and/or are intimidated by costs (McDonough, 1997; Holland, 2014; Lee, 2013). One strategy is to visit students within their high schools and communities. Although many selective colleges tend to target predominantly private and affluent public high schools with their visits (Salazar et al., 2021), some campuses have expanded their efforts to intentionally include schools in predominantly lower-income and/or racial minority communities (Okechukwu, 2019) and have begun building new partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) within these communities (Simmons & Hewitt, 2018; Hooker & Brand, 2009; Coles, 2012; Holland, 2019). In addition, many selective campuses now host fly-in programs, which provide interested LIFGWC students a fully-funded opportunity to visit campus and meet with current faculty and students. Research shows that the campus visit is critical to recruitment (Dearden et al., 2017), yet many LIFGWC students do not have the resources to visit campuses, especially those far from home (Holland, 2014).

Fly-in programs are especially valuable for improving college access for LIFGWC students because they provide an opportunity to learn about a specific campus and college life in general.

Second, some selective campuses have implemented a more holistic application review process that acknowledges some of the barriers faced by LIFGWC students. In recent years, many selective campuses have made standardized tests optional based on evidence showing that bias within college admissions tests artificially deflated LIFGWC students' scores (Simmons & Hewitt, 2018; Alon, 2009; Holzman et al., 2020; Dache-Gerbino, 2018; Guinier, 2015). In addition, there has been some recognition of the class bias built into the traditional application markers of character and well-roundedness (Stevens, 2007; Cheadle, 2008; Hamilton et al., 2018). For example, some AOs take a broader view on high school engagement by considering responsibilities often unique to LIFGWC students, such as employment, on par with traditional leadership and extracurricular involvement. Finally, many selective campuses offer application and test-score fee waivers to reduce the financial barriers to the application process, and offer significant financial aid packages that reduce the overall cost of attendance.

Although many selective campuses are investing in efforts to increase the recruitment of LIFGWC students, we argue that the impact of these efforts depends on the motivating philosophies behind them. We find that motivating philosophies for increasing class diversity are linked to ways strategies are implemented and ultimately, their success. By comparing the recruitment approaches used by selective colleges with strong and weak records of enrolling LIFGWC students, this study builds upon Rubin's (2011) work by showing how commitments to equity are the key component to improving access for LIFGWC students.

Data and Methods

To examine how selective colleges recruit LIFGWC students and whether these strategies are linked with successful records of LIFGWC students attendance, we interviewed selective college[1] admissions officers (AOs) from campuses with both relatively strong and weak records of LIFGWC students enrollment. Specifically, we used data on the percentage of Pell Grant recipients from 'Mobility Report Cards[2]' to select eight admissions officers from low socioeconomic diversity colleges (LDC) and eight from high socioeconomic diversity colleges (HDC) to be interviewed for this study. We define campus socioeconomic diversity based on the percentage of enrolled students receiving Pell Grants. Pell Grant eligibility, a metric also used by *U.S News and World Report* to measure campus economic diversity, includes students whose total family income is $50,000 a year or less, which is roughly equivalent to 200% of the 2021 Federal Poverty Line for a family of four. HDCs are those with greater than 20% of enrolled students receiving Pell Grants, while LDCs have less than 14% of enrolled students receiving Pell Grants.

Table 1 includes the information about the socioeconomic diversity of each campus in the sample. All institution names are pseudonyms. Four AOs from LDC campuses and three from HDC campuses agreed to participate. To maintain consistency across the interview sample, all

[1] This study defines selective colleges as schools that admit less than 30 percent of applicants, and all colleges sampled rank as level 1 or 'most competitive' on Barron's Profiles of American Colleges list.

[2] To determine which colleges to select, we used the dataset from the study 'Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility by Opportunity Insights' (Chetty et al. 2017). This dataset was used to provide background information on the socioeconomic demographics of the school, as many schools do not have this information readily available on their websites.

AOs in the sample are responsible for the same geographic region.[3] The AOs in this study come from predominantly small to medium-sized campuses, with the exception of Robertson University, which is a larger university. All sample campuses are private, and five of the seven are liberal arts colleges. It is important to note that all three of the HDCs are need-blind (meaning they do not consider an applicant's ability to pay tuition in their admissions decision) and meet 100% of demonstrated financial need. The four LDC campuses are not need-blind (although one recently announced they will eventually be implementing need-blind into their admissions practice), but they do meet 100% of students' demonstrated financial need.

Table 1

Sample of Selective Colleges and Universities

College	Pell Grant Recipients	Students from Bottom 60%	Students from the Top 1%	Total Undergraduate Enrollment	Domestic Students of Color
	%	%	%	*n*	%
High SES Diversity (HD)					
Patterson College	24	26	9	2,800	41
Robertson University	22	22	14	19,000	37
Sage College	24	24	21	1,800	45
Low SES Diversity (LD)					
Brooks College	12	14	23	2,800	22
Chase College	10	12	20	1,700	18
Tucker University	10	6	22	7,500	39
Jamestown College	9	8	19	1,800	15

Source: Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility, by R. Chetty, J. Friedman., E. Saez, N. Turner, & D. Yagan, December 2017, Opportunity Insights (https://opportunityinsights.org/paper/mobilityreportcards/).

Study participants were recruited through an email that explained we were conducting a study on admissions practices, but did not specify the focus was on LIFGWC students. The intention was to see if LIFGWC students would come up in conversation without the interviewer asking about them, as this might give insight into the college's institutional logic and how LIFGWC students fit into the admissions office's work. The interviews were conducted over the phone or in person, and they lasted approximately 60 minutes. AOs were asked a range of questions about the admissions process. The interview started with broad questions about campus culture, the ideal applicant, and their recruiting strategies, and then moved to more specific questions about the recruitment of LIFGWC students. The interviews were transcribed and then coded using MaxQDA. We started by coding deductively for recruitment and enrollment strategies, and then used an inductive approach as we began to notice the HDCs and LDCs described different philosophies guiding their practices.

Results

Motivating Philosophies

The LDCs and HDCs in this study differed in their motivating philosophies, which in turn influenced the way campuses recruited and enrolled LIFGWC students. LDC admission officers (AOs) aimed to expand student diversity as a way to improve their specific campus. This was clear in AOs' explanations of the role of diversity in the recruitment process. Further, when LDC AOs spoke about campus diversity, they often used the term diversity more broadly,

[3] Admissions' websites include information about which counselors cover each geographic region, such as New England, Metro New York, Southeast, etc.

refraining from speaking about class diversity unless specifically asked. For example, when the Brooks University (LDC) AO describes campus diversity to prospective students, they told us:

> I talk about how [diversity] sort of plays out in the classroom space, and the community...You're going to be in the classroom and the person sitting next to you is just going to blow you away because of where they're coming from, and who they are, and their perspective...So in terms of demographics and admission, we certainly talk about the profiles and the statistics in the fact sheet, but then we talk about how I think that plays out in terms of students' experiences here.

LDC AOs also linked diversity efforts to national rankings and recognition. For example, the Tucker University (LDC) AO explains,

> We often start with questions about diversity really in the application process... Of course, we are looking at making sure that populations and demographics are represented on campus. Especially underrepresented demographics in the college arena. But also in making that transition to a more nationally recognized university.

The AO notes that as the school developed from a regional to a nationally ranked university over the last thirty years, increasing diversity has been a key piece of this strategy. Other LDC AOs in the sample echoed these sentiments, framing the recruitment of LIFGWC students as a way to become more competitive in the higher education marketplace.

In contrast, AOs at HDCs framed increasing campus class diversity as part of a larger goal of improving equity within broader society. For example, when asked about their recruitment approach, the AO at Robertson University (HDC) explained, 'I think we've always understood that college admission and higher education, in general is, on the whole, an effort to improve socioeconomic mobility, and that means bringing families up the socioeconomic ladder.' Additionally, rather than simply enrolling the most accessible LIFGWC students who will boost diversity statistics, the HDCs strive to expand their reach. When asked about the number of LIFGWC students applying to Sage College (HDC), the AO noted that not only do they have a lot of low-income students at their school, they are 'on the forefront' and 'pioneering' in regards to making college more accessible for LIFGWC students. They added that all of the initiatives for LIFGWC students, including meeting 100% of demonstrated financial need, applies to international, DACA, and undocumented students, noting they consider this 'one of the reasons [Sage] is one of the most accessible places of higher education.'

The HDCs were intentional about using admissions practices that benefitted LIFGWC students, even when they did not serve the campus bottom-line. The HDC AOs were conscious of admissions practices that may benefit the college, but disadvantage LIFGWC students. For example, the Robertson University (HDC) AO describes how some colleges 'certainly aren't acting in the best interest of students, [due to] the proliferation of early decision programs, this race to reduce the number of admission offers, and net revenue becomes the focus, and that is obviously not a low-income students oriented kind of paradigm.' Further, the HDC AOs often spoke about advocating for LIFGWC students. The Robertson University (HDC) admission officer states,

> We have to continue to make that case to the public at large that considering race, for example, and low-income status, for example, can be valid, educationally beneficial

> reasons to decide to admit students over others...I am afraid that we will go backward in this battle for equality.

The AO's emphasis on how they can more broadly serve LIFGWC students demonstrates a diversity philosophy that prioritizes benefiting the greater good over the college itself.

Ultimately, the difference in philosophies between the two groups of colleges seemed to play out in their strategies for recruiting and enrolling LIFGWC students. The HDCs are passionate about increasing socioeconomic mobility; thus, they seek out ways to improve the college process for LIFGWC students. On the other hand, the LDCs work to recruit and admit LIFGWC students, but are less aware of the ways these students are disadvantaged in the process. The lack of emphasis on class diversity by LDCs raises the question of whether LDCs engage in more performative strategies for increasing diversity, such as enrolling more affluent students of color. We divided the recruitment and enrollment strategies into two categories: broadening recruitment and reducing application barriers. We describe the differences in the approach to each strategy between the HDCs and LDCs.

LIFGWC Recruitment Strategies

While all campuses described using three best practice recruitment strategies to enroll LIFGWC students–high school recruitment visits, fly-in programs, and partnering with community-based organizations (CBOs)–HDCs and LDCs differed in their implementation of these practices, reflecting their distinct motivating philosophies. Moreover, HDCs were strategic in their efforts to diversify admissions staff as another way to build connections with under-served student populations, like LIFGWC students.

When selecting high schools for recruitment events, HDCs were intentional about selecting visit locations that maximize socioeconomic diversity, while LDC campuses tended to favor high schools where they had already established strong relationships. Robertson University (HDC) actively chose high schools with high percentages of low-income students to draw a diverse applicant pool. Both Sage (HDC) and Patterson (HDC) aimed to balance visits to private schools and low-income public schools to ensure they reach LIFGWC students. In contrast, the LDCs gave little consideration to diversity when selecting schools to visit. Tucker University (LDC) generally visited high schools where they previously have drawn the most applicants from: 'We actually go to schools, oftentimes our bread and butter schools, the ones that know us well, the ones that have lots of students who have applied in the past, and where we have relationships with the counselors.' By labeling these '*bread and butter*' schools, the AO suggests the typical Tucker (LDC) student comes from a school where many students are applying to selective colleges, presumably affluent public or private schools. Likewise, when asked about how LIFGWC students find out about Chase College (LDC), the admission officer initially did not think that there was a difference in the way LIFGWC students found out about the college:

> I'm not certain that [LIFGWC students] find out in ways that are different from... Well okay, I guess I see what you mean there, because the boarding schools that I visited, Chase's name comes up a lot more than at a high school…okay yeah...now that I talked about it out loud I'm like okay yeah, that makes sense. I'm not positive how they find out about it...

While all AOs had trouble providing a single pathway for LIFGWC students, the fact that this AO had not considered LIFGWC students suggests that LDCs are less committed to expanding access and tend to stick with strategies that attract a typical white, affluent applicant.

Similarly, HDCs were more intentional than LDCs in expanding LIFGWC students recruitment through developing partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs). For HDCs, this process was integrated into the recruitment process, including designating specific staff members to build and maintain CBO partnerships. In addition, HDCs are trained to identify new partnerships when they are traveling for recruitment trips:

> For example, when I was in Miami traveling, I met with a potential organization...and they explain to me what they're doing, I get a sense that this is something that feels legit, and when I get back, I'll report to my boss, 'hey look I met with [CBO], they seem like the real deal, they really do a lot of great work. I think it's good that we have a partnership with them.' At that point, my boss will simply...send them a form. And that's kind of how easy the process is. So I'd say there's dozens, at least dozens of organizations that do stuff like that that we work with (Sage College, HDC AO).

At the HDCs, CBO partnerships are a highly valued recruitment tool. On the other hand, LDCs did not have as structured of a system for building CBO partnerships, and they seemed to handle this on an ad hoc basis. For example, when asked about CBOs, one LDC described offering high school students affiliated with a local CBO local partnership something that 'might not look like a traditional Brooks visit, but maybe [we give them] a presentation on the college process' (Brooks, LDC AO). This suggests a group of LIFGWC students visiting Brooks with their CBO is abnormal, and that a more typical or *traditional* prospective student at Brooks is a student who has the financial resources to visit campus on their own.

Fly-in programs, designed to provide fully paid campus visit opportunities, were used by HDCs to promote college access for LIFGWC students, while LDC campuses used them as a tool to sell their specific campus. The HDCs described fly-in programs as a way for low-income students who may not normally be able to visit a selective college to experience one. For example, the Sage College (HDC) AO explained:

> They don't have to state that they intend to apply to Sage, or come to Sage. So really someone with no interest in Sage College can apply [to the fly-in program]...we pay for all of their expenses so that students who normally would not have the opportunity, per se, to really travel and visit a college, will now have someone else who pays for...it without it being a financial burden.

In contrast, LDC AOs describe their fly-in program solely as a competitive recruitment tool to convince underrepresented students to choose their specific campus:

> Getting students to campus is a huge priority for us...A lot of small liberal arts colleges look very much the same...I can use all the fancy words that I can during the high school visit, but if they don't actually experience [the college] in-person, then it's not really going to bring them here necessarily (Chase, LDC AO).

Although offering fly-in campus visit opportunities undoubtedly improves LIFGWC students' college access by providing opportunities to experience campus life and interact with students

and faculty, these data reveal that they are all not the same. For HDCs, these programs are more than a recruitment tool, but rather part of a larger set of practices that promote equity.

Reducing Application Barriers

In addition to using best practice recruitment strategies, selective college AOs aim to improve campus class diversity by addressing three common application barriers: application costs, standardized test requirements, and financial aid. The HDCs used a more holistic approach to reviewing applications that de-emphasizes standardized test scores, including reviewing applications without them:

> Coming to mind are lots of examples of individual people who have told us their story, and the numbers suggest it might hurt us to have admitted them, and some people even wonder... 'hey why did you take this kid with this SAT or this ACT?' But we can show them the story, and the case need not be discussed further, because we do a good job of listening to student stories (Robertson HDC).

By placing less emphasis on standardized test scores despite how it might impact their selectivity, the HDCs demonstrate a philosophy that prioritizes LIFGWC students over their own benefit.

LDCs, however, voiced concern about how doing so might hurt their selectivity ranking, and therefore continued to prioritize test scores in evaluating applications. The LDCs either did not make it clear they were aware of how standardized tests disadvantage LIFGWC students, or seemed to largely disregard this. The Tucker (LDC) AO described the challenges they face in admitting LIFGWC students with lower test scores:

> We are charged with meeting certain numbers in terms of our average testing, and so at some point, we sometimes will have to be considering more people who have higher testing, and that is predominantly students with more means.

The LDC AOs often felt it was unfortunate that standardized tests disadvantage LIFGWC students, but their sentiment was that this is out of their control and a fault within the larger system. Rankings were a top priority for these campuses, and they viewed admitting students with higher test scores as one way to do this.

HDCs and LDCs also approach fee waivers and financial aid differently. While both types of campuses offer LIFGWC students an application fee waiver, the HDCs make the process easier by having a 'no questions asked' approach. This relieves students of the complicated process of demonstrating waiver qualification. Both HDCs and LDCs meet 100% of students' financial need, but HDCs are need-blind, meaning they do not consider an applicant's ability to pay tuition when reading their application, while the LDCs are need-aware, meaning they do consider an applicant's ability to pay. The HDCs AOs explained that their generous financial aid policies are central to their access approach, allowing them to be 'hospitable to low-income students,' (Robertson AO) and 'one of the most accessible colleges in the country for students from very low-income backgrounds' (Sage AO). Moreover, they are able to offer no-loan packages to students who are Pell Grant[4] eligible.

[4] Students whose total family income is $50,000 a year or less qualify for the Pell Grant

The LDCs, in contrast, are more constrained by cost, and many times LIFGWC students are pushed out of the selection process due to their high levels of need. For example, the Tucker University (LDC) AO states,

> Unfortunately, a lot of selective colleges become very need-aware when they go to things like their waitlist. We have a budget, and we exhaust it to a certain point. Sometimes we get to a point in our admissions process where we've made as many blind decisions as we can, but then we hear from financial services that if you're looking at all these admits, we're over our budget...So you might need to take some students out, or just start considering only the students who can pay full pay.

The AO at Brooks University (LDC) also discusses how LIFGWC students are disadvantaged when their admission decision is a close call, or when it goes to the 'committee room,'
I think the students who are excelling academically and really contributing to their community, if they're really strong they're going to get in. I think sometimes when it's a committee conversation, we just have to be careful, we have to watch our resources and sort of look at those numbers in terms of budget.

LIFGWC students whose applications are on the borderline for admission are severely disadvantaged in the admission process. Again, we find that the differences in these strategies connect to the colleges' diversity philosophies and hold implications for their ability to enroll LIFGWC students.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to expand our understanding of why so few high-achieving, LIFGWC students attend selective colleges. While we know that attending selective colleges increases degree completion, future wages, and college affordability for this underrepresented student population (Cohodes & Goodman, 2014; Andrews et al., 2016), there has been very little increase in the number of students who attend these institutions (Aisch et al., 2017; Hurst, 2019). In fact, a majority of low-income, high-achieving students apply to zero selective schools (Hoxby & Avery, 2013; Smith et al., 2013). We addressed this larger puzzle by taking a closer look at how selective college admissions offices approached the recruitment of LIFGWC students. Specifically, we compared the approaches used by campuses with relatively high class diversity (HDCs) with those that were less successful (LDCs).

We find that recruitment strategies fall short if they are not backed by a strong institutional mission and commitment to equity and diversity. While both HDCs and LDCs described using similar approaches, they differed in both their guiding philosophy and implementation. Overall, AOs from HDCs were more intentional in actively implementing strategies to make the admissions process more equitable and inviting for lower-income students compared to those from LDCs, and their strategies were linked with a larger mission to improve equity. LDCs lacked both intentionality and mission. Their focus was primarily on improving institutional standing and competing for students, and overall, they were less successful in attracting students from underrepresented class backgrounds to campus.

The differences in philosophy and motivation were evident in how LDCs and HDCs implement their recruiting strategies. LDCs conducted high school recruitment visits at schools where they historically received many applicants from, while HDCs carefully selected high schools with

large populations of low-income students for visits. LDCs described fly-in programs–where colleges pay for prospective students' trips to visit their campus–as a way to sell students on their school, whereas HDCs presented it as a way for students to experience a college campus who might not otherwise be able to. LDCs also placed less emphasis on their relationships with CBOs and diversifying their admissions staff than HDCs.

The two campus types also had differing approaches to standardized test scores and financial aid in the application process. HDCs prioritized a more holistic approach to applications and gave less weight to standardized test scores than LDCs. They also aimed to reduce the complexity of the application process, including a no-questions-asked approach to fee waivers. Finally, financial need played much less of a role in the admissions process at HDCs than LDCs, and they leveraged need-blind and no-loan strategies to attract the most talented students, regardless of class position.

Consistent with Rubin's (2011) research on Amherst college, this research highlights the importance of institutional commitment to diversity. We expand upon this work by using a comparative approach to show how equity and diversity philosophies are linked to recruitment policies and success. Campuses guided by deep commitments to equity have more comprehensive and successful approaches to improving college access for LIFGWC students than those who are motivated by improving campus rankings. In line with Golden (2006), Cashin (2014), and Okechukwu (2019), we find that LDCs recruitment practices were in some ways performative or what Cashin calls 'optical' equity efforts. Although they claimed to use many of the same recruitment strategies as HDCs, they implemented them in ways that often prioritized their bottom-line over LIFGWC students. These more surface-level commitments to expanding recruitment were limited in their success. Moreover, LDCs seemed to have fewer resources to devote to financial aid and recruitment, highlighting another potential barrier.

Our findings show that motivating philosophies are critical because they guide institutional priorities, investments, and strategies. It is important to highlight that this study is limited by the small size of the sample and its focus solely on selective campuses. Future research should consider how these processes play out on other types of campuses and in diversity and equity practices beyond admissions. This work also has substantial implications for how campuses recruit diverse talent, and future work should investigate the guiding philosophies and strategies campuses use to recruit other under-represented groups and how these work to promote equity or reproduce privilege.

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Navigating Academia as a Working-Class Academic

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Abstract

Despite an increasing focus on the impact of class in higher education, less has been said about the experiences of those working-class people who navigate from student to scholar. In the largest interview study to date, conducted in the United Kingdom, this paper draws upon extensive qualitative interview data with ninety working-class academics. This article highlights the hostile encounters faced by these academics but also illuminates the forms of capital and the assets they bring to academia. The article suggests how we can move forward before providing a reminder that the working class should not be viewed by their supposed deficits (real or imaginary).

Keywords

Working-class, academic, microaggressions, hostile

Introduction

Class lurks in every nook and cranny of society. Taking higher education as one example, a report from the National Education Opportunity Network (Neon)[1] found that those who were in receipt of free school meals are the least likely of all groups, after people of Gypsy Traveller heritage, to study at university. If they do attend university, they are less likely to enrol at prestigious institutions (Atherton & Mazhari, 2019). While those that traverse from non-traditional student to scholar provide a compelling example of widening access, we are less likely to hear about their experiences. Perhaps as Attfield (2007) critically comments, there is a presumption that entry into academia is a 'ticket out of the working classes' (p. 33). But the material conditions of one's social heritage has a lasting impact on one's identity, especially in a hierarchical institution like academia (Crew, 2020). The classic texts on these 'Strangers in Paradise' (Ryan & Sackrey, 1984), suggest that the academy is not a welcoming environment, as the different worlds working-class academics (WCA) inhabit are often in conflict with each other. For instance, Dews and Law (1995) highlight there is a sense of being 'neither here nor there', so much so that 'the working-class academic can never fully move in' (p. 130). Patricia Hill Collins (1986), described herself as 'outsider within' due to her standpoint as a Black female professor. While Case (2017) acknowledged her ethnic and heteronormative privileges, she referred to her middle-class colleagues social and financial capital, as being obvious 'mark[s] of difference' (LeCourt & Napaleone, 2011: 83).

[1] NEON is a professional organisation in the United Kingdom that supports those involved in widening access to higher education.

Contemporary literature addresses key themes such as academic casualisation, intersections of identity (Michell et al., 2015) and how an institution influences one's experience (Binns, 2019). Lubrano (2005) felt that his working-class family 'don't like who I've become' (p.232), but then on the other hand he found he did not like socialising with colleagues. Warnock (2016) offers a detailed analysis of the lived experiences of WCA based on material published over the span of thirty-two years (p.28), noting that WCA often have survivor guilt, whereby they feel guilty for the financial and social benefits they have accrued. In addition, Warnock (2016) revealed microaggressions to be typical for working-class students and scholars. A survey by Haney (2016) of the Canadian professoriate found that 40 per cent of participants reported experiencing classist language (p.150). The literature on WCA serves as a reminder that 'class distinctions do not die; they merely learn new ways of expressing themselves.' (Hoggart, 1989).

Researching working-class academics

The genesis of this study was grounded in my many interactions with students, who often remarked that I am 'not like other lecturers'. I instinctively knew what these students meant by this as I reside in the same social housing estate I lived in prior to attending university, and as I travel in by bus, I often talk to students outside of university. Speaking to colleagues, both male and female, who were the 'first in their family' to become an academic, they too had received similar comments from their students. This intrigued me and led to this research study, its main aim being to understand more about the lived experiences of WCA, such as the difficulties they may face and the skills that they might bring into the academy. Respondents were recruited in three ways: via the social media platform Twitter; at various academic conferences within the Social Sciences, and referrals from previous respondents. The selection criteria required that respondents should self-define as a 'working-class academic' and currently/have worked in the last six months at a UK university.

This article draws upon data gathered from ninety working-class academics[2], the largest interview study conducted with WCA in the UK, to date. Respondents were recruited from twenty different subject areas, although most (two thirds, n.60) were from an Arts and Humanities background. The convenient sampling methods used meant that it would be less likely that I would recruit WCA from Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)[3]. Empirical research talks of the effectiveness of social media recruitment (see Gelinas et al,. 2017) however, users of social media are not representative of the general population (Ruths & Jurgen, 2014), and this mode of recruitment tends to generate responses from people with similar characteristics, with similar things to say on the given topic[4]. Comparable numbers of interviewees from 'redbrick', 'Post 1992' and 'Traditional' institutions took part, but less so from Oxbridge universities[5]. Most interviewees were either 'early career' or 'mid-career', with

[2] I originally intended the research to be a small scale study, comparable to Ryan and Sackrey (1984) who collected data from twenty-four college professors, with roots in the working class, or Mahony and Zmroczek (1998) who included the autoethnographies of fifteen female working-class academics. However, there was such interest in this study that I interviewed 90 respondents. I stopped data collection after an eighteen month period after a natural break in recruitment as I would never have been able to analyse and write up the findings. I am now in the process of interviewing WCA from STEM subjects.

[3] As such I am currently conducting additional research on WCA from STEM subjects.

[4] Thank you to the reviewers of this article for their useful and supportive comments in relation to this issue.

[5] Redbrick Universities in the UK are a group of institutions founded in 6 major British industrial cities during the 19th century. There were originally engineering or science colleges. These universities got their 'redbrick' label from the style of brickwork common at the time. See: https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/choosing-a-course/what-is-a-red-brick-university-list-of-red-brick-universities

fewer self-defining as being 'late career'. Just over half were on permanent contracts, with the rest experiencing some level of precarity. Two thirds were female, which is typical for many research studies, except for clinical trials where women are underrepresented (National Institute for Health Research, 2020). Fourteen per cent identified as being Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) and six per cent reported that they had a disability. Seven out of ten respondents resided in English institutions, with approximately half having worked at more than one institution across the UK. Interviews were carried out via online video conferencing, with a small number being conducted in person at either the respondent's workplace or a café. Interviewees were given a copy of the information sheet, consent form and the interview schedule so they had full details of the study.

Theoretical framework.

Bourdieu's trilogy of 'thinking tools' – habitus, field and capital have informed this study. The field is defined as a set of relationships which can be intellectual, cultural, educational, etc. (Navarro 2006). The field (in this case, academia) is the arena in which an individual and their social biography (habitus) interacts. One's habitus influences an individual's ability to generate and accumulate capital (or power) (Bourdieu 1986). A field is a competitive space with its own rules and patterns of behavior (Bourdieu 1984), those whose habitus and capital are desired will be privileged. In academia, it is a middle-class habitus (and forms of capital) that dominate and monopolise this field.

Tara Yosso (2005) contests Bourdieu's view on the value of 'elite' 'knowledge' since this perpetuates deficit models of thinking. Yosso introduced the concept of community cultural wealth which includes six forms of capital held by members of marginalised communities: *Linguistic*: social skills attained through communication in more than one language/style. *Social*: community resources. *Familial*: cultural knowledge that carry a sense of community history. *Aspirational*: maintaining hope despite barriers. *Navigational*: skills from manoeuvring social institutions. *Resistance*: knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behaviour that challenges inequality (pp. 77–80).

Lived experience

Lisa McKenzie's 2015 article in *Times Higher Education*[6] about being a working-class female academic, was an early inspiration for this study as it offered a way of conceptualising my identity in comparison to other academics. My family biography is a mixture of working in manual employment, long-term illness, claiming benefits alongside an 'aspirational' working class habitus[7] (Lawler, 2005, p. 434). I enjoyed school as I was a voracious reader, but my

The UK's two oldest universities, Oxford (est. 1096) and Cambridge (est. 1209) are the most revered, elite institutions of higher education in the UK. The term 'Oxbridge' was used in a Thackeray's Pendennis in 1849 and is often used to denote these two elite institutions within the UK.

In 1992 the UK government formally abolished the binary divide between universities and polytechnics to establish a unitary system of higher education for UK. The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act granted thirty five polytechnics full university status. See: https://wonkhe.com/blogs/analysis-25-years-on-the-higher-and-further-education-act-1992/. Traditional (pre 1992) Universities typically are more research-intensive, while post-1992 universities, the former polytechnics, *may* be less research-intensive, and tend to focus on vocational courses.

See an article by Boliver (2015) for a more detailed discussion https://dro.dur.ac.uk/14978/1/14978.pdf

[6] https://www.timeshighereducation.com/lisa-mckenzie-who-would-be-working-class-woman-academia

[7] I'm not overly fond of the term aspirational as it is typically used to divide the disadvantaged into 'skivers' and 'strivers' (Williams, 2013, para one), terms which are popular in UK political discourse to describe

parents' divorce meant I was displaced, often moving between houses and cities. My education suffered and I began to truant regularly, before leaving school with no qualifications. My parents encouraged me but lacked the knowledge to talk to me about further education, or support unfamiliar career choices, thus waitressing and retail were my only career options. I enjoyed working with the general public but was intellectually unfulfilled. Inspired by a simple desire to be able to read the 'posh' broadsheet newspapers, I enrolled on a Criminology degree with my local, traditional university. Imposter syndrome was rife but I fell back in love with learning. I approached my degree like a job and graduated with a first. I worked in local government alongside doing postgraduate study. I also worked as a teaching assistant, then a lecturer in my institution, on a precarious contract for four years before becoming a senior lecturer. This sounds like a simple transition, but it wasn't as easy as that. Academic casualisation is rife in academia so these were difficult years filled with self-doubt and worry. Academics on fixed term contracts are 'cheap, flexible and disposable, hence their appeal to universities' (Zheng, 2018 cited in Leathwood & Read, 2020, p.3). Permanent contracts are like gold dust in academia so I still pinch myself now that I am fortunate enough to teach and research subjects that fascinate me, although feeling 'lucky' is typical of an academic 'like me' (Mahony & Zmroczek, 1997). I have been fortunate in my institution as my colleagues are kind and supportive, but apart from engaging with other WCA, outside of my institution can be a toxic environment. Returning to McKenzie (2015), her words 'It's hard work defending ourselves...against those who judge us, look down on us, sneer and laugh at us' (para. 7) send a chill down my spine because I know exactly what she means. This study, inspired by a desire to understand more about the atypical academic, uncovered a variety of experiences.

Not Fitting In

For around eight in ten respondents, navigating academia as a WCA could be difficult. Skeggs (1997), when discussing her own experiences as a working-class woman in academia, talked of 'not getting it right' (p. 130–131). This sense of alienation (Warnock, 2016), and not belonging in the world of academia with its 'distant accents and cultural conventions' (Shukie, 2020, para 2) is typical for WCAs. Throughout my interviews the same theme reoccurred: *I feel I don't 'fit in'*. [Anna, a lecturer in Health Sciences at a redbrick institution]. As one's social history is displayed by aspects of their hexis (the physical embodiment of habitus) (Jenkins 2000), I noted respondents mentioned their accent, clothes, and even sense of humour as areas where they did not fit in.

The 'Wrong' Accent

The way we speak reveals our class positioning by its very utterance. Where bourgeois language is 'formal', working-class language, influenced by material deprivation, is perceived to be 'common' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 60). The Social Mobility Commission[8] (2015) found that working-class candidates were often unable to secure employment in elite professions such as law or banking as informal poshness tests can exclude working-class candidates from such professional occupations (Ashley et al., 2015). Research by the Chartered

those who are hardworking, and those who are feckless. Such labels mean there is little sympathy for those who are disadvantaged, as they are perceived as not trying hard enough, it ignores that many people are born playing catch up in the game of life.

[8] The Social Mobility Commission is UK, independent statutory body (an organisation created by an Act of Parliament). They are responsible for carrying out and publishing research in relation to social mobility and providing advice to ministers (at their request) on how to improve social mobility in England. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/social-mobility-commission

Institute of Personnel and Development (2006)[9] found that three quarters (76 per cent) of employers discriminated against applicants because of their accents. My respondents felt stigmatised for their vernacular, particularly 'Welsh' or 'northern accents [10]':

> 'I presented at the top scientific conference. An audience member puts up her hand and says: 'I'm finding it very hard to follow you as you are talking in a regional manner'. Upset I mentioned it to my supervisor. Rather than be sympathetic he asked if I could tone it down.' [Polly, a lecturer in Medical Sciences at a redbrick institution]

> 'I moved for a Lectureship, and on the first day two colleagues advised me that I may want to 'work on' my 'strong' Welsh accent if I intended to teach.' [Catrin, a lecturer in Community Health, at a redbrick institution]

Coogan (2019, para.8) in an article for the *Times Higher Education* suggests 'ingrained linguistic habits' can mark 'us' as being inferior. Yet my respondents noted that a regional accent can actually be an advantage, with students reportedly feeling more comfortable with lecturers who *sounded like them* [Polly, a lecturer in Medical Sciences at a redbrick institution]. Tbis is mentioned by in Hastie (2021) who talks of being approachable, speaking in 'his normal accent and dressing more casually' (p39-40). In relation to my own respondents, Belinda, a lecturer in Social Policy at a redbrick institution, talked of how perceived class diversity, demonstrated by having lecturers with regional accents, can have recruitment advantages and as such may be examples of what Yosso (2005) describes as cultural language resources, or linguistic capital.

The 'Wrong Sense of Humour'

Humour is an essential factor in social relationships, and for over half of my respondents, a cultural marker of class distinction:

> 'If I joke about, they tell me not to put myself down, but it's my humour.' [Emma, a teaching assistant in Health Studies at a post 1992 institution]

This type of humour, often used to relax others at one's own expense, was often misunderstood, with passing comments being taken literally. Humour can also be a characteristic of the 'most effective teachers' (James 2004, p. 94). Ted, a lecturer in Media Studies from a post 1992 institution expands on this talking of how he *used my sense of humour with students, it…lets them feel included*. Ant, a teaching associate in Social Sciences at a Russell Group institution used humour so that his students would know that *I'm not a stuffy lecturer*. He found that his students instantly relaxed with him. Tina, a lecturer in Secondary and Post Compulsory Education at a post 1992 institution found that using humour meant that students were more likely to join in with class activities. However, like Azizinezhad and Hashemi (2011), a small number of respondents reported that their colleagues saw their humour in the classroom as being *an example of poor class conduct* [Jamie, a lecturer in History at a traditional institution]. Respondents reported muting their humour to more easily navigate academia.

[9] A registered Charity established to promote the art and science of the management and development of people for public benefit. https://www.cipd.co.uk/

[10] 'Northern refers to having an accent derived from living in the north of England.

The Wrong 'Clothing'

Clothing conveys meanings beyond the clothes e.g. a police uniform conveys to us immediately what the wearer's occupation is. Respondents would refer to the traditional image of an academic as being a tweed jacket with patches on the elbows (an image that excludes women). A visible sign of working-class respectability is a smart suit or dress.

> 'If I am teaching, or in work in general, I would dress in a skirt suit. Nothing too formal, but something smart and tidy. I always look over dressed by comparison when I look at my middle class colleagues, The women tend to wear a cardigan with a dress. Something much more casual.' [Emma, a teaching assistant in Health Studies at a post 1992 institution]

Emma, a teaching assistant in Health Studies at a post 1992 institution found that whenever she wore 'smart' clothes for work, she would be 'stared at'. *It's like I'm wearing the wrong clothes, the wrong jewellery.* Unpicking these extracts, they depict examples of female WCA not knowing 'the rules of the game', i.e *when to wear casual clothes, and when a smarter attire would be* required [Jamie, a lecturer in history at a traditional Institution]. For female academics, dressing 'too smart' may be linked with the more glamourous, 'hyper-heterosexual' forms of femininity associated with working-class women, whereas instead they should be seeking a more understated, 'acceptable', type of femininity of middle-class women referred to in Skeggs (1997). The latter femininity being a form of symbolic capital. Whereas for male academics, the right way to dress appeared to be linked with their age. For 'more mature' lecturers such as Nick, a senior lecturer in Film Studies at a redbrick institution, he reported being taken to task by 'management' when he did not wear suits or a shirt and tie. While for younger men such as Neil, a lecturer in Sociology at a traditional institution, flowery shirts and smart jeans were the preferred wardrobe, informal, but not a lazy informal, a 'studied informality' alluded to by Friedman & Laurison, 2016, p. 149).

Hostile encounters

But the 'problem' was more than just aspects of their presentation. Experiences of behaviour otherwise known as microaggressions was rife throughout my interview data. A term coined by Pierce (1970) to describe subtle (whether intentional or unintentional), derogatory, or negative slights (Sue et al. 2007) is something often seen to be directed toward stigmatized communities (Lilienfeld, 2017). 'Subtle' is an inappropriate descriptor as the examples given here are rather crude. Microaggressions for Bourdieu (2001) are examples of symbolic violence, a imperceptible violence, even to its victims. Microaggressions include discriminatory actions such as racism, sexism or classism. Lilienfeld (2017) suggests these interactions may be callous rather than malicious, although Deb, a teaching fellow in Health Sciences at a post 1992 institution, said *it's like a dripping tap.* These hostile encounters were a common ingredient of professional life for my respondents.

The most visible form of microaggressions are microassaults (Sue, 2010), deliberate, and conscious, verbal and nonverbal acts, done with the intention to hurt or to discriminate. Due to the Equality Act 2010, a UK Act of Parliament that makes such overt acts discriminatory, they were the least common form of microaggression (Dovidio 2001), although as 'class' status is not a protected characteristic it is 'easier' to be overtly classist. Interview data revealed that microassaults tended to be experienced by men. Frank, a Lecturer in Geography, at a Russell Group institution recounted a microaggression he experienced at a formal dinner:

> ‘I was at a conference dinner, really nice…old building, a fancy affair and some posh cow said ‘Oh um, have you ever been in a place like this before?’…I thought…you can either be rude…or I could just make a joke out of it, so I said only to sweep chimneys because they don’t let my lot in here.’

Stefan, a researcher in broad subjects at various institutions, recounted a number of negative interactions. Stefan’s extract is a difficult read, but important as we often hear little about the microaggressions faced by men. Stefan describes introducing himself at a conference and having his offer of a handshake and polite conversation ignored. During his presentation, Dr X, a female academic called into question the validity of his research. When later attending Dr X’s talk, Stefan picks up the story:

> ‘I have made it my practice that when I am the sole male attendee I sit…furthest away from the speaker…I was horrified, shaken, and shocked, when in her talk Dr X referred to the ‘paedophile in the corner’, stared at me and made a hand gesture towards me. I glanced around and the chair of the session was looking directly at me in shock – her jaw had literally dropped. I am still affected by Dr X’s actions – someone I was completely unaware of and had never met before.’

Stefan’s interaction appears to be influenced by his presumed privileged identity as a white man. Yet while men as a category may appear to dominate aspects of society, this is not the case for working-class men in elite spaces. A blanket understanding of privilege, ignores that there are ‘multiple marginalisation and inequalities for some, and multiple privileges and equalities for others’ (Hearn, 2015, p. 56).

Respondents also reported microinsults i.e demeaning behaviours which convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient. Interviews with respondents of colour revealed that their promotions would trigger envy amongst their colleagues:

> ‘A colleague was very interested in my promotion… she probed my credentials and expressed views on meritocratic hiring practices—the implication being that promotions were only handed out to Black guys.*’* [Theo, a Politics research fellow at a Russell Group institution].

The literature would likely describe these incidents as being unintentional slights, but my respondents felt these were examples of outright bigotry and racism. Microinsults are particularly problematic as they reduce the individual to a stereotype. Over half (n.46) of respondents discussed hearing the word ‘chav’ in relation to students ‘*from the exact background I am from*’ [Sophie, a teaching assistant in Biological Sciences at a redbrick institution]. ‘Chavs’ are the ‘21st-century grotesque’ (Morad, 2012, p.672), an offensive caricature of the working class, that describes them as racist hooligans, or alcoholics, and in terms of women, as being sexually available (Jones, 2011). Amy, a teaching fellow in English at a Russell Group institution noted:

> ‘A colleague consistently described his research respondents as chavs. I looked shocked, but it seemed to trigger a ‘memory’ in him, and he said, oh I’m sorry, you come from that area too? I was shocked how easily he related me to the word chav.’.

Microinsults demean a person's heritage, identity or race, but perpetrators of microinsults appear unaware of the insulting implications of their behaviour i.e Amy suggested her colleague wasn't aware that 'chav' was a term of abuse for the white working class. But when she tried talking to him, he was unwilling to discuss the implications of his language.

Gabriel and Tate (2017) noted that racial microaggressions are an invisible feature of the Black scholar's experience in academia. Rollock (2019) interviewed 20 of the 25 Black female Professors in the UK and found they had experienced a culture of explicit and passive bullying, along with racial stereotyping and microaggressions. Racial microaggressions were particularly common to all but a small number of interviewees of colour. From being asked to show staff identity cards when entering university buildings with a white member of staff (who was not asked to show their identification), to receiving sexualized comments in academic feedback from students: *my teaching doesn't get commented on ... but my physicality does.* [Nicole, a Business Studies lecturer in a post 1992 institution]. Respondents of colour such as Theo and Nicole were often told they were articulate, but Theo countered w*hat they meant was I am very articulate for a Black guy*. A survey of 240 BME staff and students by the *Guardian* newspaper found racism in universities is widespread and tolerated. As one respondent in the *Guardian* survey said: 'the message is clear: assimilate and shut up' (cited in Weale et al. 2019).

Navigating university[11]

When asked about what they offered academia, three quarters of interviewees (n.67) referred to the pastoral care they provided, that they perceived went above and beyond that of the typical personal tutor. This is not to say that traditional academics do not provide good quality pastoral care, but the WCA experience of inhabiting 'two distinct cultures' (Bridges 2017, p. 70) as well as navigating unsupportive environments, meant that respondents were particularly adept in helping non-traditional students. Yosso (2005) refers to this as 'navigational capital'. For instance, Lynn, a graduate teaching assistant in Mathematics at a post 1992 institution held free, monthly information, advice and guidance (IAG) sessions at a local community centre. She helped students write personal statements or with their choice of degree. Tim, a Lecturer in Social Sciences at a Russell Group Institution, of Afro-Caribbean heritage mentioned an experience he had at an open day:

> 'I asked him was he ok…He, the potential student, said— I'm alright, I'm working out if this is 'me'. I told him I felt the same at first. That seemed to put him at ease so…[w]e talked about why he felt like this. He said—They are posh and white mate. I laughed and said that—yeah I got [it], but…it needed people like him so that it isn't always posh and white.' (Crew, 2020: 102).

Axes of inequality are so intrinsically entwined that they reinforce one another and as such cannot be disentangled (Crenshaw, 1989). Tim, who is a visible presence of class and ethnicity, demonstrates the importance of 'seeing' class in tandem with, rather than distinct from, other aspects of our identity (e.g., ethnicity, gender, etc).

[11] A striking feature of the interviews was how difficult it was for respondents to give examples of what WCA offer to academia. While it is likely to be an example of how the sample was skewed towards people who had experienced difficulties in their academic trajectory, I also observed that interviewees would often compare themselves negatively in relation to the traditional academic - the influence of the deficit discourse perhaps? This is something I am currently researching.

Joy, a Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences at a Russell Group institution, provided an overt way of supporting working-class students. She designed a module where all students had the opportunity to be a role model in a poor-performing school or community centre in a deprived area. The module took the notion of employability further as it helped the students in her class, mainly from disadvantaged backgrounds, to develop skills not often found in other modules, but had the added benefit of potentially helping the young people that the students interacted with, because as Burgess et al. (2017) found, an inspirational talk from a current student increases the chance of an application to university. Joy, saw herself as an agent of change:

> '[T]he same people are the teachers, in the judiciary, civil servants etc. We need to be the example of change. Our students need the help we never got.' (Crew, 2020: 103).

Jane, a researcher in Biological Science at a Russell Group institution, would invite speakers from working-class backgrounds such as local people in professional employment so that students could see *people like 'us' in top jobs* (Crew, 2020, p.105). These examples of using knowledge to challenge inequality is what Yosso (2005) refers to as being resistant capital.

Innovative Teaching Approaches

Eighty per cent (n.72) of respondents outlined examples of how their social biography gave them pedagogical advantages. An edited collection by Shepard et al. (1998) reminds us that one's working-class heritage can positively impact one's pedagogy. Daniels (1998) refers to making poetry accessible to working-class students by including poems on themes that his students can relate to i.e about school, getting in trouble and relationships (p.3). My own respondents often drew upon the work of Paulo Freire (1970) as Freire supported 'co-creation', an approach where teachers and students are learners in joint inquiry (Freire 1993). Research by Willis and Gregory (2016) found that co-creation was perceived by students as being an innovative pedagogical approach, commenting that 'it didn't feel like the usual chalk and talk'. Methods of co-creation among my own respondents included course redesign. For instance, Amy, a teaching fellow in English at a Russell Group institution, used student 'consultants' to provide advice on how to embed employability throughout her programme. While Emma, a teaching assistant in Health Studies at a post 1992 institution module, included students in her assessment design. Emma and her students critiqued the UK governments advice to eat five fruit and vegetables a day and from this discussion, the idea for an assignment developed, one that asked students to spend only £1 per day, for a week, while on the university grounds, and then report back on their experience of trying to eat healthily. She used this assignment to highlight how many people were already managing on a low income.

My respondents tended to avoid using essays and exams as a mode of assessment and, instead, created atypical assignments. Jack, a teaching associate in Mathematics at an Oxbridge institution, had students working in groups to design a website with guides to GCSE[12] maths problems. While Theo[13] and Jeremy[14] co-designed, with students, social media campaigns to raise awareness of specific issues. Zandy (1995) remarks that many WCA have 'pedagogical gifts forged from lived experience' (p. 592). In an assessment set by Theo, a Politics research fellow at a Russell Group institution, he drew upon stories from his relatives who were part of

[12] The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is an academic qualification in a particular subject, taken in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
[13] Theo, a Politics research fellow at a Russel Group Institution
[14] Jeremy, a postdoctoral researcher in Geography at a traditional institution

the 'Windrush generation'[15] and gave students the assignment of keeping a diary of a fictional character travelling to England on Empire Windrush. In his attempt to make the *historically invisible, visible*, Brandon, a lecturer in Political Studies with a disability, referred to his own experiences as a way of helping students to understand how the concept of disability has changed during specific historical periods. While Pat, a professor in Biological Sciences at an Oxbridge institution who once struggled to summarise research, set her students the weekly task of producing one-minute papers. Alongside this, most of these academics had a keen desire to teach in a clear manner, *explaining concepts in accessible ways* [Samantha, a PhD student in Geography at a Post 1992 institution].

Unpacking the interview data also revealed that interviewees engaged with their students from a strengths-based perspective. Talking about his own institution, but echoed by many respondents, Jeremy, a postdoctoral researcher in Geography at a traditional institution noted that, rather than being in deficit, *many of my best students are from disadvantaged communities*. Over half of my cohort (n.51) gave examples of 'teaching from a strengths-based perspective'. This approach links well with 'funds of knowledge' (FoK), an anthropological term which refers to the resources and knowledge essential for individuals to function appropriately in his/her community (Hogg 2011, p. 667). FoK include painting, construction, cooking, 'making things', household management, knowledge about computer games and accumulated life experiences (Hogg, 2011). Among my own interviewees, Mark, a lecturer in Engineering found that some of the working-class students he encountered had an innate understanding of how objects worked e.g. being able to repair old appliances, reflecting that this was *a skillset useful for an engineering degree*. While Brandon a lecturer in Political Studies noted that he was able to discuss welfare benefits with his students more effectively due to the FoK the mature students in his class possessed. 'Dark funds of knowledge' e.g. domestic violence, mental illness etc, can often be rich assets for learning (Zipin, 2009, p. 325). Victoria, a lecturer in English Literature from a post 1992 institution, inspired by Cash Carraway's 2019 book, *Skint Estate*, created an assignment where students kept a diary for two months, recording any personal difficulties they faced before reflecting on related literature and support systems. Overall, respondents felt that students enjoyed this type of assessment as it was academic writing that recognises their lived experience.

Conclusion

This UK wide study provides the most comprehensive picture we have of UK academics from working class backgrounds to date. The research supports existing literature as many respondents noted their differences in comparison to their middle-class counterparts, in relation to their accent, style of dress or even sense of humour. Furthermore, like Warnock (2016), examples of microaggressions were found, with female, and respondents of colour experiencing them most frequently although my study noted that men faced more overt microaggressions. This study also contributes to the literature by highlighting that WCA have assets that they bring to the academy, such as their approach to student support and teaching. In relation to teaching, this study demonstrated the innovative and creative pedagogy that WCA brought to university settings. Furthermore, they demonstrated forms of capital such as linguistic capital (explaining concepts without reverting to academic language); resistance capital (were agents of change) and navigational capital (provided IAG in informal community

[15] The 'Windrush' generation are those who arrived in the UK from Caribbean countries between 1948 and 1973 to work in sectors affected by Britain's post-war labour shortage. The name 'Windrush' derives from the 'HMT Empire Windrush' ship which brought one of the first large groups of Caribbean people to the UK in 1948. See https://www.jcwi.org.uk/windrush-scandal-explained

settings). This study on WCA demonstrates that it is important that the assets WCA bring to academia are recognised[16]. Thus, if you are a WCA, consider your teaching and research practice and reflect on what is your cultural wealth. What do you bring to academia? What are your funds of knowledge?

Recommendations for further research

There is scope to conduct a study that does not rely on the researchers social networks. Alongside this, quantitative research that considers the numbers of WCA, would be useful, as well as a study that considers how/if these numbers have been affected due to the introduction of fees in the UK in recent years. Further consideration is also needed in relation as to how class intersects with gender, ethnicity, disability etc in this field.

Concluding Remarks

I close with a reminder from Shukie (2020) and others about working-class people in academia:

> 'Working class is not an accent to be lost ... a savagery to be civilised ... a roughness to be polished ... [nor] a background to be assimilated' (para. 24). 'We', working class academics, sparkle with pedagogical gifts (Crew, 2020) and represent a bridge between ''educated' middle-class life to the 'real' world' (Greenwald and Grant 1999: 28). 'Working class is achievement.. a space of philosophy, art, science. Working class are active creators of knowledge not the passive subject of other peoples'.' Working Class as Academics (Shukie (2020, para. 24).

Author Bio

Teresa Crew is a Senior Lecturer in Social Policy at Bangor University. She is the author of *Higher Education and Working-Class Academics. Precarity and Diversity in Academia*, published in 2020 with Palgrave Macmillan. In 2019 she became a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA). In 2018 Dr Crew was the winner of the Policy Press Outstanding Teaching Award by the Social Policy Association. Alongside this, she was awarded a Bangor University Teaching Fellowship. Her PhD, which was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, was completed in 2014. The thesis focused on graduate inequalities in relation to class, gender and place. Her research interests are related to class and its intersections.

[16] There are societies and associations relating to working class academics in the UK. I highly recommend Working-Class Academics (WCA) who advocate for students and faculty of poverty and working-class origins (For more details: https://wcstudiesassociation.wordpress.com/working-class-academics-section). I was fortunate to attend and speak at their inaugural conference and the collective joy of being able to speak without fear of critique of one's regional accent, or supposed lack of cultural capital, was palpable.
The Association of Working Class Academics is an international collection of academics who have formed the association in order to support the working class in academia. For more details https://workingclassacademics.com

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Missing Men? Precarity and Declining Labor Force Participation Among Working-Class Men

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Abstract

Recent research has noted declining labor force participation among working class men in the United States, but with little attention to the mechanisms underlying such withdrawal. In this article—drawing on in-depth interviews with 61 working-class men from rural Pennsylvania—I address this gap in the literature by prodding respondents on the sequential character of their employment experiences, their perceived vulnerabilities, and the calculations they make in the contexts in which they live. Findings reveal fluctuations in their engagement with work, something I refer to as *participation churn*. However, respondents' labor force narratives also show how they adapt to local employment conditions and personal circumstances, a phenomenon referred to as *adaptive nonparticipation*. The results highlight key mechanisms underlying labor force dropout and have implications for how declining labor force participation should be understood. These findings advance the sociological understanding of how workers—even in precarious positions—assert agency.

Keywords

Working class, employment, nonwork, precarity

The American labor force participation rate[1]—the percentage of the working-age population working or actively seeking work—has been marked by two dominant trends since the 1950s: a dramatic increase in labor force participation among women, especially since the 1970s, and a steady decline in labor force participation among men (Council of Economic Advisers, 2014). Within these trends, a phenomenon that has attracted a particular attention is the decline in labor force participation among prime-age men (ages 25-54), especially prime-age men with less formal education (Eberstadt, 2016; Tüzemen, 2018; Ziliak, 2018). In 2016, 7.1 million prime-age men did not participate in the labor force, up from 4.6 million men twenty years earlier (Tüzemen, 2018). Additionally, most of these cases of nonparticipation last one year or longer. For example, almost one-quarter of men between the ages of 21 and 30 without a four-year college degree reported not working at all during 2015, up from just nine percent in 2000 (Aguiar et al., 2017). Why are so many prime-age men 'vanishing' from the labor force (Tüzemen, 2018, p.5)?

[1] The civilian non-institutional labor force participation rate (LFPR), which is captured in the Current Population Survey (CPS) and reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), is the percentage of the population age 16 and older who are not in prison, the active-duty military or other institutions (e.g. mental health facilities) and who are either currently employed or unemployed but actively seeking work.

Explorations of this phenomenon, mostly by labor economists, tend to favor either supply-side or demand-side explanations.[2] Supply-side explanations for nonwork argue that men have largely chosen to leave the labor force voluntarily, enticed by a combination of government benefits, financial and housing support from family and household members, and the allure of video games and other leisure activities. Demand-side explanations emphasize the roles of structural changes to the economy, such as reduced demand for less-skilled labor, stagnant wages, globalization, and mismatches between the employment expectations of low-skilled men and the types of jobs that are available at their skill and educational levels. While economics has identified certain aggregate patterns, a sociological view is also interested in the mechanisms underlying these trends (Gross, 2009; Reskin, 2003).

Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 61 working-class men from rural Pennsylvania, this article brings a sociological lens to the 'economic mystery' (Noguchi, 2016, p. 1) of declining labor force participation among less-educated, prime-age men. The picture of labor force participation that emerges from the men in this study is more fluid—and men's labor force decisions more adaptive—than previous work suggests. This article offers two main findings. First, there is evidence that *most* workers over the long run experience periods of labor force nonparticipation, including periods lasting one year or more, a phenomenon I label as *participation churn*. Empirically, this suggests that a full accounting of declining labor force participation must consider the movement of men in and out of the labor force over time, including men who leave for extended periods but later return. Sociologically, this finding challenges the idea that the labor force is composed of two empirically and qualitatively distinct types of men: those who work and those who don't. The fact that most workers experience labor force dropout at some point suggests that labor force nonparticipation is a feature—not a bug—of the twenty-first century labor market, a finding likely to be accentuated in the post-COVID-19 employment landscape.

Second, by using in-depth interviews to set men's labor force decisions in the contexts of their lives, families, and communities, the main reasons men leave the labor force are *adaptive*. I suggest the phrase *adaptive nonparticipation* to capture the ways in which men leave the labor force for reasons that make sense in context and rarely represent disinterest in or detachment from work. Adaptive nonparticipation offers a theoretical advancement in the sociology of work subfield of *employment management work* (EMW), the term for the process by which workers 'manage their employment experiences' (Halpin and Smith, 2017, p. 340). Adaptive nonparticipation expands the scope of EMW to include the ways in which even the choice of nonwork itself is a way in which disadvantaged workers assert agency in the management of their employment.

Declining Labor Force Participation Among Prime-Age Men

Explanations for the decline in labor force participation among less-educated, prime-age men tend to emphasize either supply or demand. Supply-side arguments suggest that men have been enticed to withdraw their labor supply by a combination of government benefits, support from others, and the allure of video games and other leisure activities. For example, there is evidence that Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits, income from household members, and unearned income are important in supporting nonworking, prime-age men (Council of Economic Advisors, 2016; Eberstadt, 2016; Stewart, 2006). Supply-side proponents also point

[2] For reviews of the evidence around declining labor force participation rate among prime-age men, see Abraham and Kearney (2020); Black et al. (2016); Council of Economic Advisors (2016); Eberstadt (2016); and Tüzemen (2018).

to the fact that there has been a decrease in nonparticipating men who report wanting a job over time (Council of Economic Advisors, 2016). Further, the biggest divergence of time use between nonparticipating men and their participating peers is in leisure, particularly video games, leading some to argue that nonparticipating men have been enticed from the labor market by gaming and recreational computer use (Aguiar et al., 2017; Hurst, 2016).

Demand-side explanations emphasize reductions in the demand for low-skilled labor and the low return for work for those at the bottom of the wage distribution. Research shows that skill-biased technological change (Autor et al., 2008; Goldin & Katz, 1998) depresses wages for occupations that require manual or routine labor, which hits less-educated, prime-age men particularly hard. Previous studies have linked declining labor market opportunities for low-skilled workers and stagnant real wage growth as the most likely driver in the 1970s and 1980s (Juhn et al., 1991; Juhn & Potter, 2006), and then decreased demand for middle-skill jobs in the 1990s (Aaronson et al., 2014). Numerous studies – both quantitative and qualitative – have described dismal job prospects for low- and middle-skill workers in today's economy, including low wages, few opportunities for wage growth or advancement, few benefits, and low job security (Autor & Dorn, 2009; Chen, 2015; Kalleberg, 2009, 2011; Newman, 2009; Silva, 2013).

Fitting Nonwork within Employment Management Work (EMW)

In 2017, sociologists Halpin and Smith (2017) introduced *employment management work* (EMW) as a theoretical framework to capture the real-world calculations and trade-offs made by workers—from white-collar managers to migrant workers—as they navigate the labor market and engage with the economy. EMW as theorized by Halpin and Smith (2017) has four components that cut across occupations and social classes: 1) people calculate their use of time in relation to their income streams; 2) work is relational and mediated by others (e.g., networks, organizations); 3) workers know the importance of acquiring human capital; and 4) workers plan for future prospects. EMW operates for all employment types, although the focus of this article is on relatively disadvantaged workers, namely working-class men. As Halpin and Smith argue, there is robust evidence about the ways in which low-wage workers, despite their labor market disadvantages, are agents of their own employment, including through the use of 'folk knowledge' (Newman, 2006); the continual calculation and maximization of paid obligations (Edin & Kefalas, 2007); and making lateral moves among low-wage jobs to maximize dignity (Newman, 2006; Smith, 2002; Williams, 2006). In Halpin and Smith's own research among immigrants in low-wage work, they find the use of several employment management strategies that enable these workers to 'control and improve' (2017, p.349) the terms of their employment.

The phenomenon of declining labor force participation introduces a potentially confounding behavior into EMW, namely the decision to withdraw from the labor force. There is an extensive literature about the fact that women are more likely than men to withdraw from the labor force when faced with parenting and caregiving duties (Damaske, 2011; Dill & Frech, 2019; Kaufman & Uhlenberg, 2000), a phenomenon exponentially accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, less sociological attention has been paid to the reasons why prime-age men withdraw from work, a behavior that cuts against the gendered expectations that men's labor market position in a household is primary. Nonwork is potentially confounding to the EMW framework because of EMW's focus on the ways that workers, especially low-wage workers, seek to work as many hours as possible, often juggling multiple jobs and income streams. Within the EMW framework—and within the sociology of work more broadly—what are we to make of workers who withdraw their labor?

Data and Methods

Data for this article come from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 61 working-class men in rural Pennsylvania conducted between July 2016 and May 2018. The three screening criteria for inclusion in the sample were 1) men; 2) relatively young, generally under 40 years old; and 3) working class, loosely defined as having less than a four-year college degree, working in a blue-collar occupation, or both. Men were recruited through a mixture of snowball sampling and venue-based recruitment. When recruiting, I most often said I was looking for younger men who were not working or had trouble finding work, but I did not exclude men who were working at the time of the interview to guard against sampling on the dependent variable, namely nonwork. As part of recruitment, I talked with local business owners, nonprofit executives, chambers of commerce, pastors, and educators. I also spent time in bars, restaurants, coffee shops, and businesses, all with an eye for possible study participants.

Once respondents were identified and successfully recruited for the study, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews with each respondent using narrative interviewing (DeLuca, Clampet-Lundquist, and Edin 2016). I began each interview with the invitation for the man to tell me the story of his life. From there, participants were asked about their life histories, including origins, education, employment, relationships and current situation. Special attention was given to participants' employment histories, including job duties, duration, hours, wages and benefits, coworkers and supervisors, reasons for leaving, views toward work and the labor market, and current work status and means of support. Interviews took place in a variety of places: homes, apartments, front yards, back yards, offices, coffee shops, restaurants, and even a police station. Men came from a total of 17 different small towns across a five-county area of northwestern Pennsylvania, a relatively rural region of a state with a history of lumber, oil, and natural gas extraction; steel production and manufacturing; and limited agriculture. Interviews were digitally recorded, and I took field notes about the setting and substance of each interview as soon as possible after the interview was completed. Respondents were offered a $25 stipend for their time, although in some cases, men declined the payment.

The recorded interviews were transcribed, assigned a case number and pseudonym, and uploaded into NVivo 12 Plus, a software program for analysis of qualitative data. Following the 'flexible coding' protocol detailed by Deterding and Waters (2018), I began analysis by creating a set of index codes, which are broad categories based upon the topics covered in the interview protocol. Concurrent with index coding, I populated a spreadsheet with what Deterding and Waters (2018) call attributive codes, which are categorical or numeric data connected to each case, such as number of biological children, highest educational attainment and current hourly wage. Also concurrent with the index coding, I took notes on each case, which formed the basis for a respondent memo associated with each case. These four documents—interview transcript, respondent memo, interview field notes, and spreadsheet of attributive codes—make up the core data for each case.

Analysis and Findings

The demographics of the cases are displayed in Table 1. The average age of the participants is 35. All participants are men and virtually all are White, which reflects the racial demographics of the study site, which is 95 percent White. The modal highest educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED, although a plurality of the men attempted or completed some type of post-secondary education or training. About three-quarters of the men had a job at the time of the interview, with another 10 percent unemployed but looking for work. Ten men were not in

the labor force. The men work in a wide range of sectors, including construction, manufacturing, retail, health care, resource extraction and law enforcement.

Table 1. Demographics of Cases

Respondent Characteristics	Total (N = 61)	Percent of Cases[a]
Mean Respondent Age	35	N/A
Gender		
Male	61	100
Female	0	0
Race		
White	58	95
American Indian	2	3
Asian American	1	2
Highest Educational Attainment		
Less than high school	1	2
High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)	20	33
Completed post-secondary credential (e.g. CDL)	11	18
Some college, no degree	15	25
Associate degree	7	11
Bachelor's degree	7	11
Work Status (at time of interview)		
Full-time	35	57
Part-time	11	18
Unemployed	5	8
Not in labor force (NILF)	10	16

[a] May not total to 100 due to rounding

Participation Churn

Because this study is concerned with labor force nonparticipation as defined by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the first task was to use the BLS framework for identifying periods of work and nonwork in the labor force histories of each respondent. The BLS has a detailed protocol for determining the labor force status of each participating household.[3] For that reason, a key feature of the interview protocol in this study was a thorough questioning of the respondent's full work history with probes for periods of unemployment or nonwork. Based upon the respondent's lifetime labor force history as captured in the interview, I determined for each case if there would have been any time when the respondent was outside the labor

[3] For more on how the BLS measures unemployment and labor force participation, see https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm.

force had they been surveyed by the BLS in a given month.[4] Using this process, I sorted the 61 cases into two categories: 1) men continuously in the labor force since high school (or whenever they left high school if they dropped out), and 2) men for whom there was at least one period of a month or more since high school where they would have been outside the labor force. Based on this analysis, 13 of the 61 (21 percent) men have been continuously in the labor force since high school. Conversely, four-fifths of the of men (48 of 61, or 79 percent) have spent at least one month outside the labor force since high school. Next, I categorized each period outside the labor force by its length: short-term spells of nonparticipation are less than one year in duration, and long-term spells are one year or longer. Using these definitions, 34 of the 61 men (56 percent) have had at least one spell of short-term labor force nonparticipation, and 28 of the 61 men (45 percent) in the study had at least one spell of long-term labor force nonparticipation. Fourteen of the 61 (23 percent) had both short- and long-term spells of nonparticipation.

The first finding in this article is what I label *participation churn*, a term for the degree to which men move in and out of the labor force over time. As seen in Table 1, a cross-sectional employment snapshot of the men in this study at the time of the interview shows a high degree of labor force attachment. Nearly 80 percent of the men were employed at the time of the initial interview, and five percent did not have a job but were actively looking for work, meaning they would be considered in the labor force by the BLS. However, with the benefit of these men's lifetime labor force histories, I find that 80 percent of the men in the study have had at least one period outside the labor force since high school, and nearly half of the men have had at least one period outside the labor force of a year or longer. In short, while a cross-section of this sample shows strong labor force attachment, a longitudinal examination of the lifetime labor force histories of the same men finds a high prevalence of nonparticipation.

Consider the cases of two men from this study who look like very different men—from a labor force perspective—at different times of their lives. After high school, Sam drank himself out of two universities without a degree and landed back in his hometown, where he enrolled in a local university and got a job at a small manufacturer. His drinking was taking its toll on his performance at work, and he wondered why some of his coworkers seemed to recover so quickly from nights of hard partying. When he learned that it was because of crystal meth, his descent into addiction began. For two-and-a-half years in his early twenties, Sam dropped out of the formal labor force to make, sell, and take crystal meth. A brush with law enforcement in his mid-twenties caused him to stay clean for a few years, during which time he reattached to the labor force and even finished his bachelor's degree. However, in his late twenties he started using again, this time including other drugs like cocaine. For another two years, Sam was out

[4] In most cases, determining the respondent's labor force status at a given time is unambiguous: if they were working full- or part-time, they were employed. If they did not have a job but were actively looking, they were unemployed but still part of the labor force. Some episodes of nonwork were also easy to identify. However, there were cases in which determining labor force status for a particular man during a particular period was challenging. To the degree possible, I used probing questions during the interview itself to clarify these ambiguities in the moment, knowing during the interviews that a primary goal of the study was labor force nonparticipation. In these probes, I often asked the respondent how he would have characterized his situation during those periods in which his labor force status was unclear. However, even after seeking clarification, ambiguity sometimes remained. For the purposes of assigning those ambiguous periods to a labor force status, I used my knowledge of the BLS questions and the context of the man's case to make an educated judgment. The analysis in this article does not hinge of whether my determination for the few ambiguous situations matches what the BLS might have found if the man had been interviewed in a given month. In fact, as will become clear in this article, these instances where labor force status is unclear provide the opportunity to expose how realities 'on the ground' are often more complex than surveys allow.

of the labor force due to his addiction. This period ended abruptly when he was arrested on more serious charges, for which he eventually served several years in prison. Released from prison in his early thirties, Sam by that point had spent half of his twenties out of the labor force and another several years in prison (a population not counted in labor force statistics). However, since being released over six years ago, he has managed to stay clean and attached to the labor force. He now has a family and works in middle management for a local manufacturer. Sam's case illustrates how the same person can look very differently to the BLS over time, depending on when he would have been surveyed.

Jeremy, now in his late thirties, has worked most of this life but had two stints of nonwork in his twenties that lasted about two years each. In both cases, he had been laid off from a job and initially qualified for unemployment insurance. Single and living at home, he chose to delay his job search in favor of initially living on his unemployment benefits and occasional under-the-table work. He made about as much in this arrangement as he did in the low-wage jobs available at his skill and educational level, and he said he was able to find work when he wanted it. However, Jeremy never got fully comfortable outside the labor force, and he returned to formal work after each of his extended periods of official nonwork. After more years in low-wage jobs, he eventually secured a full-time position with the state of Pennsylvania, a job with good benefits, job security, and a pension that he has held for the last four years. Jeremy has had a relatively high degree of labor force attachment overall, including for the last ten years, but that masks the four years in his twenties when he was unattached to the formal labor force and would have appeared as 'not in the labor force' to the BLS.

This finding of participation churn has at least two implications for the measurement and understanding of nonwork. First, because the categories of worker and nonworker are not static, and a full accounting of declining labor force participation must consider this movement of individual workers in and out of the labor force over time. Stories like Sam and Jeremy's, which make up almost half the cases in this study, suggest that the men who the BLS finds out of the labor force are not the same men from month-to-month or even year-to-year. From a measurement perspective, the level of churn among the men in this study suggests that some portion of the declining labor force participation rate reflects an increased amount of participation churn, not an increase in permanent labor force dropout. In fact, this finding is corroborated by a recent econometric analysis by Coglianese (2017), who finds a group of men—the 'in-and-outs'—who take short breaks from work but are otherwise attached to the labor force. Coglianese's analysis suggests that 40 percent of the decline in men's labor force participation between 1984 and 2011 is attributable to men moving in and out of work.

Second, participation churn has a sociological implication for understanding nonwork, namely that observers should resist any impulse to reify the survey categories of worker and nonworker. While categories in survey research must be mutually exclusive, this carries the risk of assuming these categorical differences also involve qualitative distinctions. Some observers of declining labor force participation among prime-age men have suggested that the cultural norms around work have weakened or that those who are nonworking in a given moment are uninterested in work or quick to exchange work for leisure pursuits (Eberstadt, 2016; Hurst, 2016; Murray, 2012; Winship, 2017). However, what emerges in the labor force narratives of the men in this study is the fact that virtually all of the men are workers and nonworkers at different moments across their labor force histories. *Most men see themselves as workers and are, in fact, working most of the time.* However, this does not mean that some men—perhaps most men—do not take breaks from formal work when those decisions make sense in the context of their lives, as I explore in more detail below.

Before exploring the reasons for these labor force exits, it is worth noting that most men in this study who have an extended exit from formal work eventually return. Table 2 lists the 28 men in the study with at least one period of long-term labor force dropout, grouped by labor force status at the time of the interview and arranged by tenure at their current job in ascending order. There are two items to note. First, all but six of the 28 men were in the labor force at the time of the interview, suggesting that even longer-term spells of labor force nonparticipation are not permanent. Second, many of the men who returned to formal work have shown longstanding labor force attachment: 16 of the 19 men with a job have been at their position for at least one year, and 10 of the 17 have been at their job for at least five years. These findings provide additional evidence that while men move in and out of the labor force over time, even those men with extended labor force exits eventually return to the formal labor force and persist in employment. This underscores the fact that the worker-nonworker binary is misleading, and even extended labor force exits are not to be equated with a lack of desire or ability to work.

Table 2. Current Labor Force Status of Respondents with Long-term Spells of Nonparticipation (N = 28)

Name	Age at Time of Interview	Labour Force Status at Time of Interview	Tenure at Current Job or in Current Status
Jeff	26	Not in labour force	10 months
Cody	37	Not in labour force	1.5 years
Richard[a]	35	Not in labour force	1.5 years
Trevor[a]	41	Not in labour force	3 years
Frank	22	Not in labour force	4 years
Jared[a]	43	Not in labour force	6 years
Brandon[a]	35	Unemployed	1 month
Christian	41	Unemployed	5 months
Victor	40	Unemployed	10 months
Gabe	27	Employed part-time	3 months
Kyle	29	Employed part-time	8 months
Evan	28	Employed part-time	1 year
Ryan	26	Employed part-time	1 year
Carl	31	Employed part-time	1 year
Brad[a]	37	Employed part-time	1.5 years
William[a]	39	Employed part-time	2.5 years
Patrick[b]	39	Employed part-time	5 years
Charles	39	Employed full-time	6 weeks
Jeremy	39	Employed full-time	4 years
Sam	37	Employed full-time	5 years
Jeremiah	38	Employed full-time	5 years
George	40	Employed full-time	6 years
Seth	40	Employed full-time	6 years
Alex	43	Employed full-time	6 years
Curtis[b]	33	Employed full-time	7 years
Dennis	33	Employed full-time	9 years
Zach	43	Employed full-time	11 years
Dustin	46	Employed full-time	15 years

[a] Indicates current receipt of disability benefits
[b] Indicates former receipt of disability benefits

Adaptive Nonparticipation

Having established that most men experience spells outside the labor force, this section examines the reasons why men leave work. Much has been made of this question in academic and policymaking circles, which often boils down to a debate between whether men are leaving work or work is leaving men. In what follows, I suggest that a better question is, how have working-class men adapted to a changed and changing labor market that generally does not favor them. I argue that when men in this study leave the labor force, most of them are engaged in what I call *adaptive nonparticipation*, meaning their reasons for leaving formal work are generally constructive adaptations to their circumstances that make sense when understood contextually. Men are not eschewing the importance of work altogether, as supply-side explanations for declining labor force participation suggest, nor are they reacting to a situation in which there are literally no jobs, as demand-side explanations propose. In this way, leaving the labor force is an understudied type of EMW, a theme I develop at the end of this section.

Among the twenty men in this study with only short-term spells of labor force nonparticipation, by far the most common reasons for leaving work were to pursue post-secondary education or military service. The shorter-term spells of nonwork for education take different forms. In some cases, men went to college after high school, only to learn that college was not for them and pivot quickly to the labor force. For example, Derek did one semester at a technical college before leaving school: 'I just didn't like it. I didn't like the schoolin'.' When Derek got a job offer at a local tool and die shop, he left school for work and has been continuously in the labor force ever since, despite being laid off twice. Don's time in college was also short-lived. He went to college after high school to pursue a degree in wildlife technology, but he also realized it was not for him: 'But I literally partied my way out of school. But I was done with school. At 12 years, you know, I hated it. I went to college because I was supposed to and I didn't last very long there.' As with Derek, things worked out for Don: he worked on a farm for a couple years, and then got an offer to work in the oil and gas industry, a job he has had for the last 22 years. In other cases, men were laid off from work and took the opportunity to pursue more education or training, which took them out of the labor force for a relatively short time. Dan had worked for seven years at a warehouse, and when the company did some restructuring, they offered voluntary layoffs. He took the layoff, drew unemployment insurance, and used the opportunity to take a six-week course to earn his Commercial Driver's License (CDL), after which he started as a long-haul truck driver.

Several men also took short breaks from work before enlisting in the military or after returning from duty. Larry and Blake, who served in the Army and Coast Guard respectively, both took a little time off before and after their military service. Both men had a gap between when they enlisted and when they started boot camp, and each took that time to relax. Larry joined right out of high school, so he took the month off between graduating and starting in the Army. Blake had a longer wait, and he primarily used the time to get into better physical shape. Similarly, after getting out, both men had saved up some money and took the opportunity for a break. As Larry said, 'So, then I come back here, and I'm like, I have some money saved up, so I might as well take a month off and just not doing anything.' Overall, a consistent picture emerges of the men who had only short-term spells of nonparticipation: they are continuously attached to the labor force except for brief periods away from work, much like the 'in-and-outs' (Coglianese, 2017).

While short-term episodes of nonparticipation are important to understand, it is the longer-term spells of nonparticipation that are of greatest interest to observers of the declining labor force

participation rate among prime-age men. It is understandable that men who are otherwise attached to the labor force might occasionally take short breaks from work; however, it is less explicable why men in their prime-earning years would go for one or more years without working or seeking work. Despite the high degree of labor force attachment of the men in this study at the time of interview (85 percent), an examination of the full labor force narratives of these 61 men finds that 28 of the 61—or 46 percent—have had at least one spell of nonparticipation of a year or longer since leaving high school. Why did these men leave the labor force?

Men in this study had many reasons for why they left the formal labor force for extended periods of time. The least surprising and most socially acceptable reason was for the pursuit of education or training[5]. For other respondents, spells of longer-term nonparticipation began with being laid off from low-wage jobs and initially qualifying for unemployment insurance, much like the story of Jeremy from above. Seth, when he was laid off from the sales job, drew unemployment insurance and stayed out of the formal labor force for a year and a half: 'Year and a half I floated. Totally floated.' Seth did what he needed to do to bring in enough income to supplement his UI. Single with low expenses, men like Jeremy and Seth opted for under-the-table work to make ends meet rather than immediately reattaching to the formal labor force, a situation for some that went on for years. For others, the decision to leave formal work was to stay home with young children while partners with better employment prospects worked. George, who said he 'always had a close relationship with my kids,' stayed home for about a year while his wife worked. A couple men dropped out of formal work for an extended time when a close family member died. In all these cases, men's labor force exit had a precipitating event that helps contextualize their decision. These men's cases also illustrate the sometimes-blurry line between unemployment and nonwork: many of these men occasionally generated at least minimal, often off-the-books income. However, even though some of these men could make almost as much doing odd jobs for cash as they could in formal work, there was still a pull back to work in the formal labor market. In most cases, men with extended exits eventually returned to the formal labor force and persisted in work.

One additional reason why some men in this study were outside the formal labor force deserves particular attention: the receipt of disability benefits. Several men in this study received these benefits: some were originally diagnosed for childhood disabilities that have persisted into adulthood; some receive disability for trauma related to their military service; and some qualified due to health problems or workplace-related injuries. I classify these cases as examples of adaptive nonparticipation for two reasons. First, it is beyond the scope of this article to assess whether the receipt of disability benefits is justified. If these men have been awarded benefits through proper channels, their claims are legitimate according to the current program standards. There was no evidence of fraud among the men I interviewed. Given that, it is adaptive for men to apply for benefits to which they are entitled, especially if a disability curtails their ability to generate enough income in the market to survive. The second reason why the behavior of those on disability in this study is adaptive is that the receipt of benefits itself is not a permanent off ramp from the labor force for most men who receive them. Disability provides an income floor for men with various diagnoses, but as seen in Table 2, more than half of the men in this study who receive disability benefits currently work—some above and some under-the-table—or have tried to work in the past. In some cases, the work is for the money, but in others, it is as much for a sense of community and structure. For the men

[5] Among the men in this study, about half who had a spell of long-term nonparticipation for education ultimately earned their credential or degree.

on disability in this study, I interpret their actions—and hear in their explanations for applying for benefits—a desire to remain engaged and connected to work and the community it offers. The receipt of disability benefits is not synonymous with complete labor force dropout or lack of interest in work.

The one reason for leaving the labor force that was present among men in the study that I consider maladaptive was substance use disorder. For some men in the study, addiction to drugs or alcohol made it challenging to maintain labor force attachment. A few men in the study had periods of several years where they were fulltime drug dealers. Other men were unattached to the labor force due to struggles with alcoholism. A couple men in the study were recovering from opioid addictions, but they were out of the labor force for other reasons before their addictions occurred. The discovery of substance abuse among these men is consistent with research that highlights the role of drug abuse with declining labor force nonparticipation (Krueger, 2017) and attention to the so-called 'deaths of despair' (Case & Deaton, 2020). It is noteworthy that several of these men were able to manage their addictions such that they have returned and persisted in formal employment[6]. Additionally, some men managed to maintain employment despite their substance use disorders.

Returning to the EMW framework, adaptive nonparticipation is a way that working-class people assert agency in their employment. As mentioned above, most of the periods of nonwork among the men in this study are not efforts to retreat from work permanently but are strategic choices that make sense contextually. Halpin and Smith (2017) argue that one key feature of EMW is the time/money matrix, which describes how workers constantly make tradeoffs between time and money to minimize downtime and maximize earnings. For example, in their interviews with immigrants in low-wage jobs, Halpin and Smith document the great effort of respondents to protect against unemployment, including by working multiple jobs, rarely turning down offers to work, and strategically creating demand for their labor, such as by signaling dedication to employers by working extra hours or not demanding overtime pay. While men in this study engaged in these behaviors at times, adaptive nonparticipation stands in apparent contrast to this drive to maximize earnings and employment.

There are two ways to address this apparent contradiction. First, when adaptive nonparticipation is viewed contextually in these men's lifetime labor force histories, an argument can be made that they are still operating within the time/money matrix. Men's reasons for leaving work—such as to enhance skills, in deference to a partner with greater earning power, or when they can work under-the-table for similar amounts of money but in less time—are consistent with EMW's emphasis on constant 'calculation, planning, and negotiating' (Halpin and Smith 2017, p. 350). There is evidence throughout the workforce histories of these men that their labor market behaviors are sensitive to concerns of both time and money. It is also worth noting again that most of these men are attached to the formal labor force most of the time, so episodes of nonwork—even extended ones—are exceptions, not the rule. A second possibility is that there might be something unique about some aspect of this sample—whether

[6] Although not examined in this article, there is a small group of the men in this study—about 10% of the sample—who have been marginally attached to the labor force over time. These men look different from the other men in the study in the sense that they often have long gaps of unemployment or nonwork, yet it is less clear when compared with the adaptive nonparticipators that these men are interested in work or would take a job if one were available. While these men have held jobs, usually their periods of employment are short-lived. However, even these men show aspects of adaptive behavior. There is a pattern of trauma in the lives of some of these men that helps explain their challenge of maintaining employment. Further, for a couple of these men, their rejection of formal labor force participation is an active and rationalized choice that flows from rejections of certain cultural norms around work and an embrace of alternative visions of work and sustenance.

Whiteness, maleness, rurality, or some combination of these—that makes these men's cognitive frameworks different than other cases of working-class or low-wage workers. In either case, adaptive nonparticipation expands the parameters of EMW by suggesting that the decision to withdraw from the labor force completely—nonwork—can itself be a way that low-wage and disadvantaged workers manage their employment.

Discussion and Conclusion

The declining labor force participation rate among prime-age men has been an empirical and policy puzzle for many years. Using the lifetime labor force narratives of 61 working-class men in rural Pennsylvania, I explore the ways in which these men move in and out of the labor force and the reasons why. First, I identify the phenomenon of *participation churn*, in which men leave the labor force—often for one year or more—yet usually reenter and persist in formal work. This finding complements the previous discovery of the 'in-and-outs' (Coglianese, 2017), and together, these findings suggest that a full account of declining labor force participation must consider the movement of men in and out of the labor force over time. Further, the fact that labor force dropout is not confined to a small number of men suggests that the survey research categories of worker and nonworker are not static and should not be reified. Second, I argue that most labor force exits are best understood as examples of *adaptive nonparticipation* in which men use both brief and extended periods outside of formal work as tools of employment management. Adaptive nonparticipation makes a theoretical contribution to the subfield of EMW by extending EMW to include nonwork.

These findings have several additional implications. First, the twin findings of participation churn and adaptive nonparticipation provide a possible explanation for why so few men who are out of the labor force report not wanting work (Eberstadt, 2016), a finding that has been interpreted by some observers as a lack of interest in work (Hurst, 2016; Murray, 2012; Winship, 2017) and support for the supply-side explanation of declining labor force participation. If most men see labor force nonparticipation as strategic and time-limited, then it is perfectly reasonable that men might report not wanting a job in the moment without it meaning that they are uninterested in work or unwilling to return to formal labor force participation when circumstances are right. This finding is especially relevant in the wake of COVID-19 when many workers withdrew (or were forced to withdraw) from the formal labor market. The fact that some have been reluctant to return to just any job underscores this type of calculus. Second, the role of drug and alcohol addiction in removing men from the formal labor force in this study suggests that any policy response to declining labor force participation must address substance use disorder. The hopeful finding in this study is that many men who left the labor force for reasons of substance use disorder returned to work once they received treatment. Finally, I must address the COVID-19 pandemic, which has precipitated a dramatic rise in unemployment and a steep drop in labor force participation. The research in this article occurred during a time of historically low unemployment and a tight labor market. In fact, the American labor force participation rate for prime-age men, while still low by historic standards, inched upward from its all-time low in 2014 until the start of the pandemic in 2020. Time will tell how quickly labor market demand returns and the ways in which labor is reallocated as employment revives. It bears watching—and studying—to see what EMW strategies they use to manage their work—and nonwork—in the months and years ahead.

This work is limited in several ways. First, conducting the project in a field site that is virtually all White precludes these data from speaking to the situation of working-class African Americans and other racial and ethnic groups who have faced well-documented barriers to

employment that even disadvantaged Whites have not faced (Alexander et al., 2014). This may limit the applicability of these conclusions, but it opens the door for other studies that examine the labor force experiences of working-class men of other racial and ethnic backgrounds in rural places and beyond. The decision to focus on rural America was born of the interests of the researcher, who was raised in rural Pennsylvania in a working-class household. Part of the impetus for this work is seeing the ways my working-class father moved in and out of work, as well as a curiosity about what the younger generation of working-class men 'back home' do for work in a world where the local steel mill is long since shuttered. It is my hope that other scholars will pursue these questions in rural, suburban and urban locations to provide studies against which this one can be evaluated. Finally, I hope that other scholars will test these conclusions, especially regarding participation churn, against labor force participation data in hopes of an even fuller picture of the causes and consequences of declining labor force participation among prime-age men.

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Social and Economic Costs of Inequality in the State of Virginia

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Abstract

This study examined selected social and economic costs of inequality in the state of Virginia. We explored the extent of inequality of place across the state, finding significant inequalities between counties on measures such as household income, poverty, college completion, single parenthood, and racial segregation. These inequalities of place were strongly associated with inequalities in the adult outcomes of children raised in different areas of the state, including unequal household income and unequal rates of upward mobility, college completion, incarceration, and marriage in adulthood. When examining the association between homicides and concentrated disadvantage in the capital city of Richmond, our mapping techniques demonstrated a strong association. Finally, we estimated that child poverty results in billions of dollars of economic costs to the state each year.

Keywords

Neighborhoods, communities, concentrated disadvantage, social mobility, inequality, Virginia, United States, child poverty, violence, poverty, life chances

Introduction

There has been a considerable amount of attention given to inequality-related issues in the United States in recent years, from the rise of multiple populist political candidates to the Black Lives Matter movement to Occupy to #MeToo to a variety of progressive policy proposals and beyond.[1]

A reasonable case could be made that this attention is warranted, given the available data. The top 10% of Americans owns 71% of the wealth and earns 46% of the income, compared to less than 2% (wealth) and 13% (income) for the bottom 50% (WID 2021). The Gini coefficient (0.390), relative poverty rate (18%), and relative child poverty rate (21%) in the U.S. are all higher than most wealthy OECD countries with recent data available (OECD 2021a & 2021b). Despite significant progress since the 1960s, African Americans still lag behind Whites[2] in

[1] Mitt Romney's proposed Family Security Act, for instance, shares many of the same principles as European-style child allowances, which might have been unheard of in past iterations of the GOP. See his plan here: https://www.romney.senate.gov/sites/default/files/2021-02/family%20security%20act_one%20pager.pdf .

[2] Throughout this article, we capitalize Black as a sign of respect and we capitalize White, in the words of Eve L. Ewing, to avoid giving Whiteness power by allowing it to remain supposedly neutral and invisible, to avoid 'reinforcing the dangerous myth that White people in America do not have a racial identity. . . Whiteness is not only an absence. . . Rather, it is a specific social category that confers identifiable and measurable social

terms of the percentage of household income that they earn (61% of Whites' income) and the wealth that they own (13%) (Wilson 2020; Kent & Ricketts 2021). There has been significant progress on gender equality over this same time period as well, but again much work remains, with full-time female workers making around 80-84% of their male counterparts' earnings (depending upon how those earnings are measured) (Blau & Kahn 2017; Eppard & Blau 2020; Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis 2021a & 2021b).

In this article we explore selected social and economic costs of allowing inequality to persist, focusing specifically on the state of Virginia. Examining all inequality measures would be beyond the scope of a single study, so we narrowed our inquiry to selected social costs of inequalities of place and the economic costs of child poverty.

Literature Review

Inequality between American Neighborhoods and Communities

There has been considerable growth in empirical evidence linking the unequal characteristics of place (neighborhoods, communities, counties, commuting zones, etc.) and inequalities in the adult outcomes of children raised in these different conditions. This association has received particular attention due to studies utilizing big data (such as the seminal work of Chetty et. al. 2014). As Sharkey and Faber note in their review of the literature, the 'American system of stratification is organized, in part, along spatial lines' and 'the spatial dimension of American inequality plays an important role in the maintenance and reproduction of inequality across multiple dimensions' (2014, p. 572).

The extant literature implicates several features of residential conditions[3] in connection with the life chances of people raised there, including (but not limited to) the socioeconomic profile of the neighborhood/community, degree of economic inequality, degree of racial segregation, the presence/quality of neighborhood/community institutions (including schools, childcare providers, healthcare providers, churches, police, social service providers, parks, and civic associations), the stability of the neighborhood population, available peer networks, adult supervision/role models in the area,[4] social cohesion (including trust, collective efficacy, social support, social connectedness, shared norms and expectations, and formal and informal social controls), presence of violence and/or gangs, exposure to pollution and other environmental burdens, predominant family structures, local marriage markets, local labor markets, characteristics of nearby neighborhoods, rates of foreclosures/vacancies/evictions, perceptions of neighborhood order/disorder,[5] and housing density, among other characteristics.

benefits' (Ewing 2020). We realize there is considerable debate about capitalization, and this is certainly not the only manner in which to handle this use of language. We do not make this language choice lightly, and our choice is not authoritative.

[3] We use 'residential conditions' throughout to refer to neighborhoods and communities where American children are raised. Another term used in the literature is 'residential contexts' (see Sharkey & Faber 2014).

[4] Sampson explains that, 'Seemingly banal acts such as the collective supervision of children and adult mentorship add up to make a difference' (2019, p.12).

[5] As Sackett explains, 'strong evidence indicates that shared *perceptions* of past disorder (that is, what people thought about a neighborhood years ago) are a better predictor of homicides in neighborhoods than are present levels of physical disorder' (2016). He goes on to discuss vacant lots and foreclosures, noting that, 'Vacancies and evictions can also lead to violent crime by destabilizing communities and creating venues for crime. A study of Pittsburgh found that violent crime increased by 19 percent within 250 feet of a newly vacant foreclosed home and that the crime rate increased the longer the property remained vacant. In 2016's *Evicted*, Desmond notes that Milwaukee neighborhoods in the mid-2000s with high eviction rates had higher violent crime rates the following year after controlling for factors including past crime rates. Desmond suggests that eviction affects

Inequality of Place and Upward Mobility

Inequality of place is heavily implicated in the likelihood of upward mobility for Americans across the life course. As Putnam notes, 'researchers have steadily piled up evidence of how important social context, social institutions, and social networks—in short, our communities—remain for our well-being and our kids' opportunities' (2015, p. 206).[6] This is particularly troubling given that the proportion of American families living in middle-income neighborhoods has been declining, while the proportion of families living in either poor or affluent neighborhoods has risen significantly over the last four decades (Bischoff & Reardon 2014). Children raised amongst concentrated disadvantage tend to have worse economic outcomes and less upward mobility compared to their counterparts in more advantaged areas (Chetty 2014; Chetty et. al. 2014; Wolfers 2015; Sampson 2019; Eppard et. al. 2020a, 2020b, 2020c).

The big data developed and utilized by Chetty and his colleagues (2014) has been particularly instructive. Chetty and his colleagues found significant variations in rates of upward mobility across American commuting zones, variations strongly associated with single motherhood (r = -0.76), social capital (r = 0.64), test score percentile (r = 0.59), income inequality (r = -0.58), fraction Black residents (r = -0.58), high school dropout rate (r = -0.57), fraction married (r = 0.57), and fraction religious (r = 0.52) (2014, Online Appendix Table VIII).[7]

In another important study, Chetty and his colleagues re-analyzed data from the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) experiment[8] (Chetty et. al. 2015). They found that compared to children who did not move, children who moved when they were young fared better in the areas of college graduation rates, likelihood of marriage, likelihood of single parenthood, economic performance, and the quality of their adult neighborhood of residence.[9]

Living amongst concentrated disadvantage at the neighborhood/community level appears to be detrimental for children even if their own individual household is not particularly disadvantaged. Chetty and his colleagues, for instance, found that single parenthood was strongly associated with upward mobility for all children (r = -0.76), as well as for children who themselves had married parents (r = -0.66) (2014, Online Appendix Figure XII). Sharkey

crime by frustrating the relationship among neighbors and preventing the development of community efficacy that could prevent violence' (Sackett 2016).

[6] Elsewhere he explains that 'growing class segregation across neighborhoods, schools, marriages (and probably also civic associations, workplaces, and friendship circles) means that rich Americans and poor Americans are living, learning, and raising children in increasingly separate and unequal worlds, removing the stepping-stones to upward mobility' (Putnam 2015, p. 41).

[7] Summarizing this work, Chetty explains: 'we find a strong negative correlation between standard measures of racial and income segregation and upward mobility. . . These findings lead us to identify segregation as the first of five major factors that are strongly correlated with mobility. The second factor we explore is inequality. [Commuting zones] with larger Gini coefficients have less upward mobility, consistent with the 'Great Gatsby curve'. . . Third, proxies for the quality of the K-12 school system are also correlated with mobility. . . Fourth, social capital indices—which are proxies for the strength of social networks and community involvement in an area—are very strongly correlated with mobility. . . Finally, the strongest predictors of upward mobility are measures of family structure such as the fraction of single parents in the area' (2014, pp. 5-6).

[8] The MTO was a 1990s federal government experiment which gave a number of American families who were living in public housing a voucher to move to better neighborhoods in order to see if it improved their lives.

[9] Summarizing this new analysis, Wolfers explains that: 'the next generation—the grandchildren of the winners of this lottery—are more likely to be raised by two parents, to enjoy higher family incomes and to spend their entire childhood in better neighborhoods. That is, the gains from this policy experiment are likely to persist over several generations' (2015).

found that even for children in families with incomes in the top three quintiles, growing up in a high-poverty versus a low-poverty neighborhood increases their chances of downward mobility by 52 percent (2009, p. 2).

Inequality of Place and Children's Success

Children raised amongst concentrated disadvantage tend to fare worse compared to children raised in more-advantaged areas (Massey & Denton 1993; Wilson 1996; Sampson et. al. 1999; Sampson et. al. 2002; Pebley & Sastry 2008; Sharkey 2009; Sampson 2012; Sharkey 2013; Sharkey & Faber 2014; Chetty et. al. 2015; Putnam 2015; Sharkey & Sampson 2015; Rojas-Gaona et. al. 2016; Sampson & Winter 2016; Sampson 2019; Eppard et. al. 2020a, 2020b, 2020c).

Compared to children raised in more advantaged areas, children in disadvantaged areas tend to develop worse cognitive skills, perform worse in school, and are less likely to complete high school and college (Bronzaft & McCarthy 1975; Evans & Maxwell 1997; Aaronson 1998; Plotnick & Hoffman 1999; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn 2000; Duncan et. al. 2001; Harding 2003; Stansfeld et. al. 2005; Sampson et. al. 2008; Schwartz 2010; Sharkey 2010; Sharkey & Elwert 2011; Wodtke et. al. 2011; Sastry 2012; Sharkey et. al. 2013; Sharkey & Faber 2014; Hamner et. al. 2015).[10] The extent of the negative impact is dependent upon the degree of neighborhood/community disadvantage, the period of childhood in which one is exposed, duration of exposure, which residential conditions one is exposed to, and individual vulnerability (Sharkey & Faber 2014).[11]

Sharkey's (2013) data revealed that poverty experienced by a child or their parent can have a substantial impact on the child's cognitive skills. The gaps between children from families who had never experienced poverty and those who had experienced poverty across generations was the equivalent of missing three to four years of schooling. Children performed well above average on tests of cognitive skills when neither they nor any of their parents were raised in a high-poverty neighborhood. If the child or one of their parents (but not both the child and any of their parents) was raised in a high-poverty neighborhood, cognitive scores dropped considerably. Children's scores dropped considerably more—scoring well below average—if a child and at least one of their parents were raised in a high-poverty neighborhood (Sharkey 2013, p. 119).

Although there are a variety of neighborhood/community factors which impact cognitive skills, academic performance, and educational attainment, school quality is clearly important. Reardon (2016), for instance, found a strong association (r = 0.78) between school district socioeconomic status and average academic achievement across the U.S.: 'Students in many of the most advantaged school districts have test scores that are more than four grade levels

[10] Wodtke and his colleagues (2011) found that being raised in a disadvantaged neighborhood reduced the probability of high school graduation by 10 to 20 percentage points. They found that the probability of graduation for Black children raised in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods instead of the most advantaged fell from 96 to 76 percent. They explained their findings: 'Our results indicate that sustained exposure to disadvantaged neighborhoods—characterized by high poverty, unemployment, and welfare receipt; many female-headed households; and few well-educated adults—throughout the entire childhood life course has a devastating impact on the chances of graduating from high school' (Wodtke et. al. 2011, p. 731).

[11] As Sharkey and Faber note, 'Individuals' residential environments are not experienced at a single point in time and then erased from their lives. Rather, there is strong evidence that the influence of the residential environment persists and accumulates, with consequences that extend over long periods of time and generations of families' (2014, p. 572).

above those of students in the most disadvantaged districts' (2016, p. 7). Schwartz (2010) tracked the longitudinal school performance of students who, despite living in public housing in the same county, had been randomly assigned to housing in different neighborhoods and thus attended different schools. Children in the school district's most-advantaged schools performed far better in math and reading than children assigned to the district's least-advantaged schools. Burdick-Will et. al. (2011) found that children experienced significant improvements on a variety of assessments of cognitive skills, reading, and math after they moved out of areas of concentrated disadvantage. And Chetty and his colleagues (2014, Online Appendix Table VIII) found strong correlations between upward mobility rates and both test score percentiles (r = 0.59) and high school dropout rates (r = -0.57) across U.S. commuting zones.

Disadvantaged residential conditions tend to have lower-quality institutions compared to more-advantaged areas (Small 2009; Schwartz 2010; Allard & Small 2013; Chetty et. al. 2014; Sharkey & Faber 2014; Putnam 2015; Future Ready PA Index 2021). In one such institution, schools, there is considerable variation in school environments and teacher quality across the U.S. In poor schools, students are more likely to interact with peers with a variety of characteristics which can negatively influence them, including lower expectations, fewer family resources to share, and less middle-class-approved behavior to model. Poor schools are also more likely to have to rely on less-experienced and/or less-effective teachers (Putnam 2015, pp. 172-173).

Children raised amongst concentrated disadvantage are at greater risk for adverse physical and mental health outcomes,[12] teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and criminal involvement and victimization (Peeples & Loeber 1994; Wheaton & Clarke 2003; Brady et. al. 2008; Sharkey & Sampson 2010; Stoddard et. al. 2011; Eppard et. al. 2020b; CDPH 2021).

Environmental burdens are distributed along racial and socioeconomic lines in the U.S. (UCC 2007),[13] and several researchers have demonstrated a link between these exposures and adverse outcomes. Some research, for instance, has established an association between exposure to environmental burdens like pollution, toxic waste, noise, and other burdens to inequalities in children's academic performance and educational attainment (Cohen et. al. 1973; Bronzaft & McCarthy 1975; Cohen et. al. 1980; Hambrick-Dixon 1985; Ransom & Pope 1992; Evans & Maxwell 1997; Lanphear et. al. 2005; Stansfeld et. al. 2005; Evans 2006; Currie et. al. 2009; Reyes 2012),[14] while others have explored how such exposure impacts children's health (Evans & Kantrowitz 2002; Stansfeld et. al. 2005; Entwisle 2007; Currie et. al. 2011; Sampson 2019).[15]

[12] As Gourevitch explains, 'One's Zip code is as important to one's health as one's genetic code. . . Those lack of resources are the basic determinants of health' (Guarino 2021).

[13] In a 2007 report from the United Church of Christ, researchers found that neighborhoods with commercial hazardous waste facilities in the U.S. had poverty rates that were 1.5 times greater than non-host areas, and 1.8 times greater in neighborhoods with multiple facilities. In addition, host neighborhoods were 56 percent non-White, compared to 30 percent in non-host neighborhoods. In areas with multiple facilities, the percentage non-White was 69 percent (UCC 2007, pp. 53-54, 73).

[14] Bronzaft and McCarthy (1975), for instance, showed that at one NYC school, students in some of the classrooms closest to noise from a nearby elevated train were three to four months behind their peers on the quieter side of school.

[15] Sampson explains the association between the racial composition of Chicago neighborhoods and exposure to lead: 'Drawing on comprehensive data from over one million blood tests administered to Chicago children from 1995 to 2013 and matched to over 2,300 geographic block groups, we found that black and Hispanic neighbourhoods exhibited extraordinarily high rates of lead toxicity compared with white neighbourhoods, in some cases with prevalence rates topping 90% of the child population' (2019, p. 14).

Inequality of Place and Violence

One's likelihood of committing or being a victim of a violent crime is strongly influenced by their neighborhood/community. Violent crime tends to be geographically concentrated in neighborhoods/communities experiencing concentrated disadvantage. As Sampson notes, 'concentrated disadvantage remains a strong predictor of violent crime' (2019, p. 13). Sharkey and his colleagues similarly explain that, 'crime is clustered in space to a remarkable degree' (2016, p. 629). Sackett explains that, 'Concentrated disadvantage, crime, and imprisonment appear to interact in a continually destabilizing feedback loop' (2016).[16]

When Sharkey mapped homicides across Chicago, he found a 'strikingly visible' (2013, p. 30) overlap between concentrated disadvantage and homicide.[17] Eppard and his colleagues (2020b) found a similar clustering of gun homicides in areas of concentrated disadvantage when mapping New York City, finding 'extraordinary overlap between clusters of gun homicides and areas of disproportionately high concentrations of Black residents, poverty, and single parenthood, and low concentrations of college graduates, high-income earners, and upwardly-mobile residents' (2020b, pp. 25, 29).[18]

Even within crime-burdened neighborhoods/communities, violent crime is not evenly distributed but is instead concentrated within narrow social networks as well as geographic 'hot spots' or 'micro places.' In a study of Boston police records over an almost 30-year period, for instance, fewer than three percent of micro places accounted for a majority of all incidents of gun violence. In another study of Boston, researchers found that 85 percent of gunshot injuries occurred within a single network of people that represented less than six percent of the city's population (Sackett 2016).

Violence negatively impacts the fabric of a community, the health of its residents, and the development of its children and their future educational and economic performance. Research has shown a relationship between exposure to violence and children's cognitive development, academic performance, health, and adult economic performance (Harding 2009; Sharkey 2010; Cutsinger et. al. 2011; Sampson 2012; Sharkey et. al. 2013; Sharkey & Faber 2014; Sharkey &

[16] Sackett goes on to explain that, 'Neighborhoods with more concentrated disadvantage tend to experience higher levels of violent crime. Numerous studies, for instance, show that neighborhoods with higher poverty rates tend to have higher rates of violent crime. Greater overall income inequality within a neighborhood is associated with higher rates of crime, especially violent crime. Sampson notes that even though the city of Stockholm has far less violence, segregation, and inequality than the city of Chicago, in both cities a disproportionate number of homicides occur in a very small number of very disadvantaged neighborhoods' (2016).

[17] He explains: 'the concentration of violence goes hand in hand with the concentration of poverty. There is a remarkable spatial clustering of homicides in and around neighborhoods with high levels of poverty. . . there are entire sections of this violent city where the most extreme form of violence, a local homicide, is an unknown occurrence. There are other neighborhoods where homicides are a common feature of life. . . these maps provide perhaps the most vivid portrait of what living in areas of concentrated poverty can mean in America's cities' (Sharkey 2013, p. 30).

[18] The authors go on to note that, 'Our analyses reveal that such overlap is present not only in New York City, but is typical in a number of American cities. . . not only does violence overlap with all of these measures of disadvantage, but all of these measures of disadvantage overlap with each other. Research suggests that each individual dimension of disadvantage constrains people's agency in significant ways independently of other dimensions—so facing multiple dimensions, as these residents do, makes life significantly more difficult than facing any one dimension individually. Research suggests that it is areas like these, which are burdened with not just one but several disadvantages, where violence seems to crop up most' (Eppard et. al. 2020b, p. 29).

Sampson 2015; Sackett 2016; Sampson 2019).[19] Children living in neighborhoods with high crime rates tend to have significantly worse economic performance later as adults (Sackett 2016). Disadvantaged residential conditions are more likely to foster conditions where females are coerced into sex, are harassed, and/or are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, with negative consequences for their sexual development, mental health, and likelihood of substance abuse (Sackett 2016). And a number of studies have shown that moving children out of disadvantaged and dangerous residential contexts and into more advantaged and less dangerous ones can improve their life chances (Sharkey & Faber 2014).

The Economic Costs of Child Poverty

Social scientists have long documented the manner in which poverty experienced early in life stunts children's development. Recently researchers have examined other impacts of child poverty, including its economic impact on the larger society. What they have found is that if children's capabilities and future potential across the life course are constrained by economic disadvantage, this then negatively impacts their economic productivity, health, and criminality in ways that create associated costs for the larger society. The Children's Defense Fund (1994) estimated that the annual economic costs of child poverty ranged from $36 billion to $177 billion due to the manner in which living in poverty during childhood suppressed individuals' educational attainment, development of job skills, and future economic productivity.

Holzer and his colleagues (2007, 2008) estimated that child poverty in the U.S. reduced the nation's economic output by $170 billion per year, increased crime costs by $170 billion per year, and increased health expenditures by $164 billion per year—for a combined cost of around $500 billion per year, which represented 3.8% of GDP.

Garcia and his colleagues (2017) estimated that high-quality early childhood interventions yielded an annual return on investment of 13 percent over the life course of disadvantaged children, equaling a substantial societal profit over time. In a similar vein, McLaughlin and Rank (2018) estimated that for every dollar spent on reducing child poverty in the U.S., the country would save at least seven dollars with respect to the economic costs of poverty. They estimated the annual costs of childhood poverty in the U.S. to be over $1 trillion, which represented 5.4 percent of GDP. These costs were the result of reduced adult earnings and the increased costs of crime, incarceration, healthcare, homelessness, and maltreatment associated with growing up poor.

There has been little other research on the economic costs of child poverty, and none to our knowledge focusing on a specific U.S. state as in our analysis.

Methods

Inequality of Place and Low-Income Children's Adult Success

All quantitative data utilized in our analyses come from the publicly-accessible Opportunity Atlas database housed at Opportunity Insights (2021). This database contains U.S. Census Bureau data as well as anonymous federal tax return data for over 20 million Americans. It

[19] Sharkey (2010) found that children perform substantially worse on assessments of cognitive skills administered within a week following a local homicide—likely due to the stress, shock, trauma, and/or fear caused by such an event—and that the negative effect was worse the closer the homicide was to their home.

allows researchers to examine the association between community of origin characteristics[20] (such as household income, poverty, college completion, racial composition, single parenthood, and a variety of economic/labor market indicators) and adult outcomes like household income, college graduation, incarceration, marriage, and upward mobility. We downloaded this publicly-accessible data and analyzed it using SPSS statistical software, which allowed us to construct descriptive tables, calculate multiple linear regression models, and graph bivariate scatterplots.

One of the many virtues of this database is that its data are available by demographic subgroup. Therefore, one can try to isolate the impact of place as much as possible by controlling for other variables, such as gender and household income. Due to a variety of considerations,[21] we focused on low-income men (born between 1978-1983, raised in households at the 25th income percentile, and tracked into their mid-thirties) in our analysis, exploring how the likelihood of success for an American from a low-income household can vary depending upon the neighborhoods and communities in which those households are situated.

First, we calculated multiple linear regression models determining which of the eleven origin county variables (college completion rate, share Black, employment rate, median household income, job density, job growth rate, math performance, poverty rate, single parenthood rate, wage growth, and social capital)[22] were most strongly associated with each of the five adult outcome variables (college completion rate,[23] household income,[24] incarceration rate,[25] marriage rate,[26] and upward mobility rate[27]) across all U.S. counties with available data. Then, we constructed scatterplots to illustrate some of the strongest associations (in bivariate form). Next, we constructed tables illustrating how all Virginia counties ranked on the five adult outcomes. Then, we included a heat map to illustrate variations in upward mobility across the state of Virginia. Finally, we constructed a table to illustrate the major inequalities in county characteristics present across the state of Virginia.

Estimating the Economic Costs of Child Poverty

Around 13% of Virginia's children lived in poverty in 2019 (Stebbins 2020; AECF 2021). To calculate the economic cost of this child poverty for the state we used figures from our previous work in McLaughlin & Rank (2018), which calculated the aggregate cost of child poverty for all fifty U.S. states in 2015. Using these figures as a starting point, we made adjustments for

[20] Units of analysis available in the Opportunity Atlas database were Census tract, county, and commuting zone. Even though commuting zones are perfectly acceptable units of analysis used by Chetty and others, we wanted something smaller and closer to 'neighborhood' size. In order to include the desired variables for this analysis the smallest unit available was county.

[21] One important consideration is that upward mobility processes may not be exactly the same for men and women, so combining them in the same analysis could be methodologically inappropriate. As one example, see the gender asymmetry demonstrated in Qian 2017. Another consideration is the impact of household income—by focusing on one income group, low-income men, instead of including all income levels, we control for household income's influence.

[22] For the definition of the social capital variable, see Opportunity Insights (2021).

[23] Fraction of low-income (25th percentile) male children who grew up in these areas who hold a bachelor's degree or higher in their mid-30s.

[24] Average household income for low-income male children who grew up in these areas when they reach their mid-30s.

[25] Fraction of low-income male children who grew up in these areas who were in prison/jail in their mid-30s.

[26] Fraction of low-income male children who grew up in these areas who were married in their mid-30s.

[27] Fraction of low-income male children who grew up in these areas whose household income was in the top 20% of national income in their mid-30s (national income measure based on children born the same year).

Virginia's share of each cost to derive Virginia's cost of child poverty for 2015. We then adjusted this figure for inflation to obtain Virginia's cost of child poverty for 2019.

Mapping Concentrated Disadvantage and Violence

Time and resource limitations did not allow us to analyze all major cities in the state of Virginia, so we focused on the state capital of Richmond. We obtained the Census tract characteristics (fraction Black residents, fraction college graduates, fraction poor, fraction single parents, and median income) and measures of low-income men's adult outcomes (fraction incarcerated, fraction married, and fraction upwardly mobile) for Richmond from the Opportunity Insights (2021) database. We divided each of these measures into equally-spaced quintiles to show the gradient of variation within each measure. We also obtained the locations of all homicides (n = 89) that occurred in the city between January 1, 2018 and November 30, 2020 (most current date at time of analysis) from the LexisNexis Community Crime Map (2020). Finally, we obtained Census tract boundaries (i.e., shapefiles) from the U.S. Census Bureau (2020) to visualize the data. More specifically, we created choropleth maps, as shown in Figure 6, to show the geographic variation in these measures in relationship to the homicide locations. All analyses were conducted using the ggplot2 package in R version 3.5.2.

RESULTS

Inequality of Place and Adult Outcomes

There was significant inequality between counties in social mobility. The percentage of low-income men who rose to the top 20% in adulthood was as high as 21% in Fairfax County and as low as less than 2% in Petersburg City (see Table 1). As a state, Virginia does not appear to fare well compared to the rest of the country on mobility for low-income men, given that 84% (112 out of 133) of the counties in the state had mobility rates below the national average. In a multiple linear regression model with all eleven origin county characteristics included, county single parenthood rate proved to be the strongest predictor of mobility (see Table 2). The scatterplot in Figure 1 illustrates the bivariate association between county single parenthood rate and upward mobility ($r = -0.50$). Figure 2 illustrates the wide geographic variation in mobility rates for low-income men across Virginia counties. Note how mobility rates are low in most of the state outside of the affluent Northern Virginia region.

Table 1. Virginia Counties Ranked by Upward Mobility Rates for Low-Income Men

VIRGINIA COUNTY	% UPWARDLY MOBILE	VA MOBILITY RANK
U.S. county average	9.92	-
Fairfax County, VA	21.12	1
Loudoun County, VA	20.29	2
Falls Church city, VA	20.13	3
Fairfax city, VA	20.00	4
Rappahannock County, VA	19.09	5
Norton city, VA	16.55	6
Clarke County, VA	15.50	7
Manassas city, VA	15.21	8
Arlington County, VA	14.00	9
Poquoson city, VA	13.89	10
Fauquier County, VA	13.44	11
Colonial Heights city, VA	13.37	12
Stafford County, VA	12.18	13
Warren County, VA	11.99	14
Prince William County, VA	11.98	15
Alexandria city, VA	11.63	16
Hanover County, VA	11.14	17
Albemarle County, VA	10.94	18
New Kent County, VA	10.55	19
Buchanan County, VA	10.40	20
Spotsylvania County, VA	10.11	21
Craig County, VA	9.87	22
York County, VA	9.83	23
Powhatan County, VA	9.77	24
Roanoke County, VA	9.69	25
King and Queen County, VA	9.61	26
Chesterfield County, VA	9.57	27
Charlottesville city, VA	9.44	28
Highland County, VA	9.25	29
Alleghany County, VA	9.14	30
Shenandoah County, VA	9.11	31
Frederick County, VA	8.88	32
Mathews County, VA	8.83	33
Charles City County, VA	8.79	34
Campbell County, VA	8.64	35
Amelia County, VA	8.62	36
James City County, VA	8.43	37
Montgomery County, VA	8.29	38
Westmoreland County, VA	8.22	39
Northampton County, VA	8.19	40
King George County, VA	8.07	41
King William County, VA	8.05	42
Page County, VA	8.04	43
Floyd County, VA	8.03	T-44
Henrico County, VA	8.03	T-44
Orange County, VA	7.99	46

Dickenson County, VA	7.92	47
Harrisonburg city, VA	7.87	48
Winchester city, VA	7.84	49
Tazewell County, VA	7.81	50
Accomack County, VA	7.77	51
Culpeper County, VA	7.76	52
Botetourt County, VA	7.60	53
Northumberland County, VA	7.48	54
Wise County, VA	7.38	55
Virginia Beach city, VA	7.34	56
Bedford County, VA	7.31	57
Russell County, VA	7.26	58
Lexington city, VA	7.24	59
Hopewell city, VA	7.22	60
Essex County, VA	7.17	61
Madison County, VA	7.15	62
Lancaster County, VA	7.12	63
Appomattox County, VA	7.09	64
Pittsylvania County, VA	6.98	65
Chesapeake city, VA	6.96	66
Williamsburg city, VA	6.93	67
Rockingham County, VA	6.83	T-68
Manassas Park city, VA	6.83	T-68
Bland County, VA	6.56	70
Bristol city, VA	6.49	71
Nelson County, VA	6.37	72
Cumberland County, VA	6.34	73
Amherst County, VA	6.27	74
Augusta County, VA	6.25	T-75
Fredericksburg city, VA	6.25	T-75
Isle of Wight County, VA	6.19	T-77
Washington County, VA	6.19	T-77
Gloucester County, VA	6.16	79
Prince George County, VA	6.13	80
Hampton city, VA	6.12	81
Bath County, VA	6.10	82
Franklin County, VA	6.03	83
Louisa County, VA	5.97	84
Prince Edward County, VA	5.79	85
Rockbridge County, VA	5.78	86
Buena Vista city, VA	5.74	87
Salem city, VA	5.67	88
Greene County, VA	5.63	89
Franklin city, VA	5.58	90
Patrick County, VA	5.50	91
Goochland County, VA	5.44	92
Staunton city, VA	5.41	93
Galax city, VA	5.40	94
Waynesboro city, VA	5.39	95
Pulaski County, VA	5.35	96
Lynchburg city, VA	5.33	97
Covington city, VA	5.31	98
Surry County, VA	5.27	99
Halifax County, VA	5.17	100
Newport News city, VA	4.97	101
Charlotte County, VA	4.90	T-102

Grayson County, VA	4.90	T-102
Mecklenburg County, VA	4.89	104
Suffolk city, VA	4.70	105
Brunswick County, VA	4.67	106
Southampton County, VA	4.64	107
Giles County, VA	4.56	108
Martinsville city, VA	4.49	109
Scott County, VA	4.42	110
Caroline County, VA	4.41	T-111
Smyth County, VA	4.41	T-111
Portsmouth city, VA	4.38	113
Radford city, VA	4.36	114
Henry County, VA	4.34	115
Buckingham County, VA	4.28	T-116
Greensville County, VA	4.28	T-116
Lee County, VA	4.28	T-116
Nottoway County, VA	4.19	119
Sussex County, VA	4.18	T-120
Norfolk city, VA	4.18	T-120
Danville city, VA	4.14	122
Wythe County, VA	4.05	T-123
Emporia city, VA	4.05	T-123
Roanoke city, VA	4.01	125
Lunenburg County, VA	3.94	126
Fluvanna County, VA	3.70	127
Carroll County, VA	3.56	128
Dinwiddie County, VA	3.29	129
Richmond County, VA	3.26	130
Richmond city, VA	3.12	131
Middlesex County, VA	2.93	132
Petersburg city, VA	1.65	133

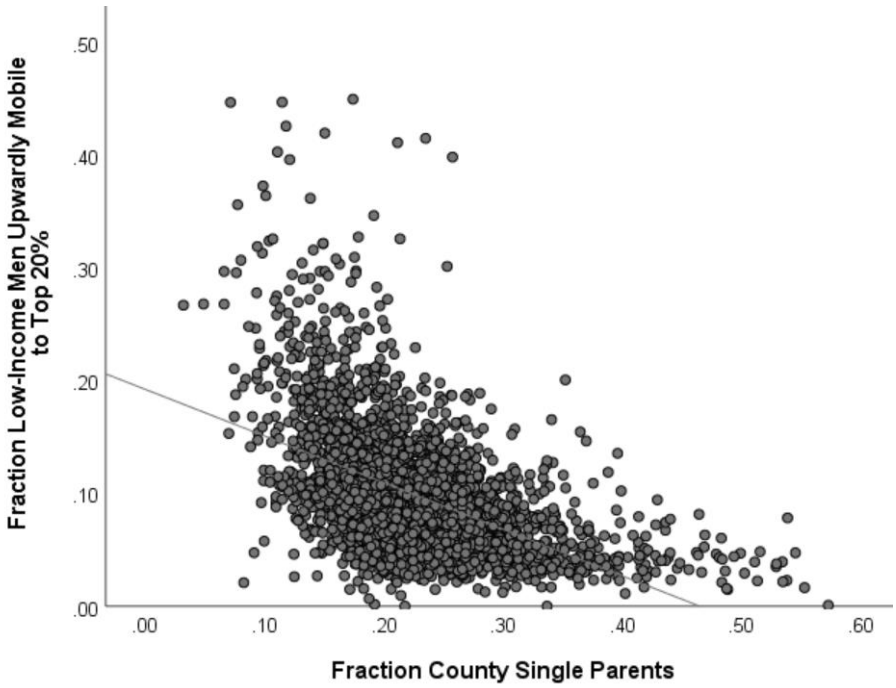
Note: The upward mobility measure used here is the percentage of low-income men who grew up in these counties who, in adulthood (their mid-30s), have a household income in the top 20% of the national income distribution for children born in the same year.
Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Table 2. Betas for U.S. Regression Models.

	Adult Outcomes for Low-Income Men				
Origin County Characteristic	Mobility	Income	College	Prison	Marriage
Household Income	–0.168***	–0.453***	–0.265***	0.221***	–0.615***
College Completion Rate	0.306***	0.283***	0.644***	–0.161***	0.167***
Single Parenthood Rate	–0.515***	–0.612***	–0.231***	0.391***	–0.575***
Poverty Rate	0.019	–0.044	–0.064	–0.060	–0.048*
Share Black	–0.052*	–0.091***	0.014	0.313***	–0.253***
Math Scores	–0.057**	–0.032	–0.010	0.062**	0.016
Employment Rate	–0.052	0.078**	–0.086**	0.053	0.091***
Wage Growth	0.123***	0.122***	0.027	–0.046**	0.051***
Job Growth	0.134***	0.069***	–0.001	0.084***	–0.019
Job Density	0.060**	0.071***	0.069***	–0.063***	0.049***
Social Capital	0.059**	–0.006	–0.012	–0.036	0.058***
Model r-square	0.330	0.522	0.262	0.362	0.750
Model significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

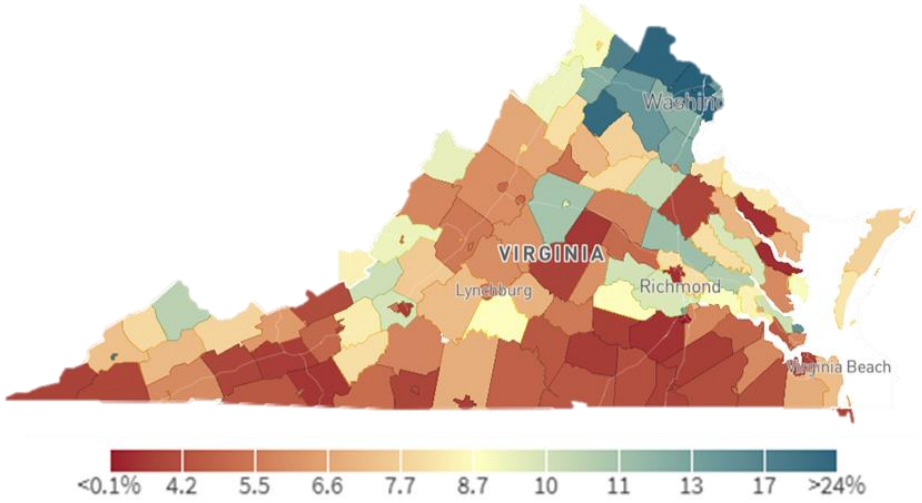
Note: *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Figure 1. Association between County Single Parenthood Rate and Mobility.



Note: r = -0.50***

Figure 2. Heat Map of Upward Mobility Rates of Low-Income Men Raised in Virginia Counties.



Note: The upward mobility measure used here is the percentage of low-income men who grew up in these counties who, when they reached adulthood (mid-30s), had a household income in the top 20% of the national income distribution for children born in the same year.
Source: Opportunity Insights (2021). Map reprinted with permission.

Other measures of adult well-being showed similar inequalities. The percentage of low-income men who graduated college was as high as 48% in Falls Church City and as low as 0% in places like Manassas Park City (see Table 3). As a state, Virginia appears to be below average compared to the rest of the country on college graduation for low-income men, given that 60%

(78 out of 129 with available data) of the counties in the state had college completion rates below the national average. In a multiple linear regression model with all origin county characteristics included, county college completion rate proved to be the strongest predictor of college completion for low-income men (see Table 2).

Table 3. Virginia Counties Ranked by College Graduation Rates for Low-Income Men

VIRGINIA COUNTY	% COLLEGE GRADS	VA COLLEGE RANK
U.S. County Average	13.74	-
Falls Church city, VA	48.16	1
Fairfax city, VA	42.46	2
Fairfax County, VA	37.11	3
Poquoson city, VA	34.51	4
Rappahannock County, VA	34.07	5
Lexington city, VA	28.90	6
Nelson County, VA	28.80	7
York County, VA	28.09	8
Alexandria city, VA	27.71	9
Loudoun County, VA	27.59	10
James City County, VA	27.25	11
Radford city, VA	26.14	12
Arlington County, VA	23.37	13
Salem city, VA	22.83	14
Franklin city, VA	22.79	15
Albemarle County, VA	21.60	16
Bland County, VA	21.10	17
Colonial Heights city, VA	20.88	18
Henrico County, VA	20.84	T-19
Roanoke County, VA	20.84	T-19
Buchanan County, VA	20.21	21
Northampton County, VA	19.57	22
Prince Edward County, VA	19.47	23
Chesterfield County, VA	19.43	24
Prince George County, VA	18.72	25
Westmoreland County, VA	17.99	26
Virginia Beach city, VA	17.65	27
Staunton city, VA	17.58	28
Charlottesville city, VA	17.57	29
New Kent County, VA	17.29	30
Bristol city, VA	17.18	31
Prince William County, VA	16.96	32
Accomack County, VA	16.83	33
Washington County, VA	16.59	34
Manassas city, VA	16.50	35
Williamsburg city, VA	16.41	36
Appomattox County, VA	16.34	37
Tazewell County, VA	15.74	38
Waynesboro city, VA	15.66	39
Wythe County, VA	15.65	40
Buckingham County, VA	15.59	41
Rockingham County, VA	15.22	42
Harrisonburg city, VA	14.96	43
Winchester city, VA	14.81	44
Hanover County, VA	14.31	45
Covington city, VA	14.27	46

Hampton city, VA	14.17	47
Campbell County, VA	14.16	48
Clarke County, VA	14.15	49
Buena Vista city, VA	14.13	50
Galax city, VA	14.09	51
Chesapeake city, VA	13.64	52
Middlesex County, VA	13.17	53
Warren County, VA	13.08	54
Lee County, VA	13.06	55
Lynchburg city, VA	12.93	56
Newport News city, VA	12.92	57
Mecklenburg County, VA	12.77	58
Madison County, VA	12.73	59
Patrick County, VA	12.70	60
Wise County, VA	12.21	61
Isle of Wight County, VA	12.08	62
Bedford County, VA	12.06	63
Pittsylvania County, VA	12.01	64
Orange County, VA	11.94	65
Southampton County, VA	11.87	66
Greensville County, VA	11.59	67
Richmond County, VA	11.51	68
Richmond city, VA	11.37	69
Dickenson County, VA	11.36	70
Bath County, VA	11.01	71
Roanoke city, VA	10.98	72
Lancaster County, VA	10.94	73
Montgomery County, VA	10.74	74
Fauquier County, VA	10.60	75
King George County, VA	10.57	76
Danville city, VA	9.59	77
Fluvanna County, VA	9.41	78
Suffolk city, VA	9.33	79
Culpeper County, VA	9.32	80
Stafford County, VA	9.27	81
Lunenburg County, VA	9.07	82
Portsmouth city, VA	8.96	83
Franklin County, VA	8.92	84
Brunswick County, VA	8.90	85
Fredericksburg city, VA	8.75	86
Norfolk city, VA	8.57	87
Smyth County, VA	8.54	88
Henry County, VA	8.53	89
Northumberland County, VA	8.00	T-90
Petersburg city, VA	8.00	T-90
Norton city, VA	7.67	92
Louisa County, VA	7.66	93
Frederick County, VA	7.63	T-94
Giles County, VA	7.63	T-94
Amherst County, VA	7.54	96
Spotsylvania County, VA	7.41	97
Caroline County, VA	7.38	98
Hopewell city, VA	7.31	99
Rockbridge County, VA	7.17	100
Grayson County, VA	7.11	101
Powhatan County, VA	7.04	102

Charles City County, VA	6.96	103
Augusta County, VA	6.87	104
Dinwiddie County, VA	6.75	105
Nottoway County, VA	6.11	106
Page County, VA	6.05	107
Shenandoah County, VA	5.93	108
Alleghany County, VA	5.43	109
Greene County, VA	5.35	110
Scott County, VA	5.19	111
Amelia County, VA	5.17	112
Botetourt County, VA	4.81	113
Carroll County, VA	4.56	114
Charlotte County, VA	4.01	115
Halifax County, VA	3.95	116
Floyd County, VA	3.74	117
Emporia city, VA	3.71	118
Gloucester County, VA	2.71	119
Surry County, VA	2.65	120
Goochland County, VA	2.64	121
Cumberland County, VA	2.23	122
Martinsville city, VA	1.69	123
Sussex County, VA	1.24	124
Essex County, VA	0.00	T-125
King William County, VA	0.00	T-125
Pulaski County, VA	0.00	T-125
Russell County, VA	0.00	T-125
Manassas Park city, VA	0.00	T-125
Craig County, VA	n/a	-
Highland County, VA	n/a	-
King and Queen County, VA	n/a	-
Mathews County, VA	n/a	-

Note: Counties with "n/a" entry did not have data available. The college graduation measure used here is the percentage of low-income men raised in these counties who had a bachelor's degree or higher by their mid-30s.
Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

The percentage of low-income men incarcerated in adulthood is as low as 0% in Highland County and as high as almost 14% in Williamsburg City (see Table 4). As a state, Virginia does not appear to fare well compared to the rest of the country on incarceration rates for low-income men, given that 80% (107 out of 133) of the counties in the state had incarceration rates above the national average. In a multiple linear regression model with all origin county characteristics included, county single parenthood rate proved to be the strongest predictor of low-income men's incarceration rate (see Table 2). Figure 3 illustrates the bivariate association between county single parenthood rate and low-income men's incarceration rate ($r = 0.52$).

Table 4. Virginia Counties Ranked by Incarceration Rates for Low-Income Men

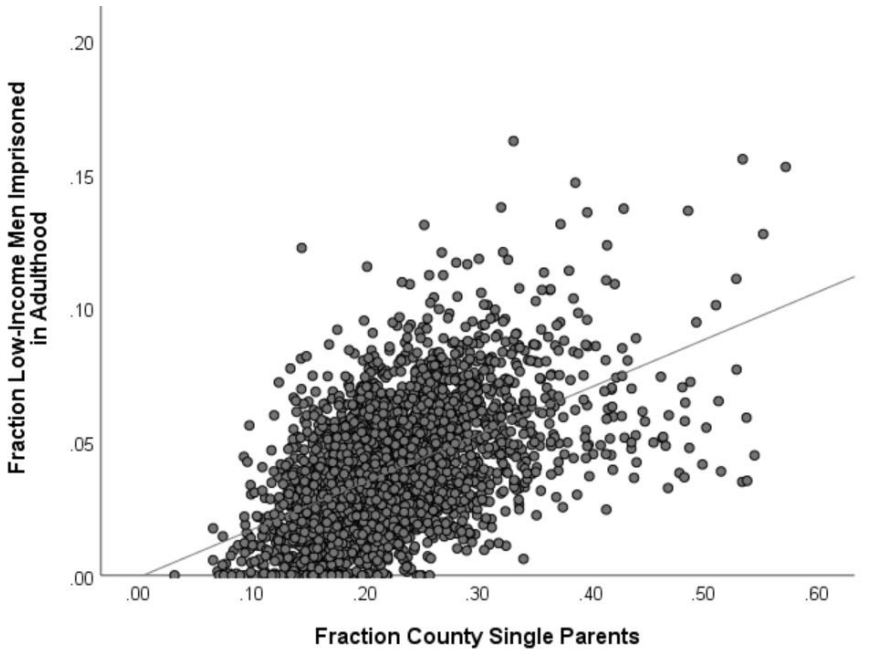
VIRGINIA COUNTY	% INCARCERATED	VA INCARCERATION RANK
U.S. County Average	3.93	-
Highland County, VA	0.00	1
Bath County, VA	0.64	2
Floyd County, VA	1.76	3
Falls Church city, VA	1.78	4
Fairfax city, VA	2.02	5
Rappahannock County, VA	2.09	6
Scott County, VA	2.16	7
Fairfax County, VA	2.32	8
Dickenson County, VA	2.40	9
Poquoson city, VA	2.49	10
Shenandoah County, VA	2.63	11
Buchanan County, VA	2.78	12
Goochland County, VA	2.84	13
Nelson County, VA	2.99	14
Buena Vista city, VA	3.02	15
Warren County, VA	3.10	16
Carroll County, VA	3.32	17
Rockbridge County, VA	3.35	18
Botetourt County, VA	3.42	19
Lancaster County, VA	3.48	20
Patrick County, VA	3.55	21
Charlotte County, VA	3.66	22
Amelia County, VA	3.69	23
Rockingham County, VA	3.72	24
Essex County, VA	3.81	25
Lee County, VA	3.90	26
Salem city, VA	3.96	27
Bland County, VA	4.07	28
Appomattox County, VA	4.16	29
Roanoke County, VA	4.23	30
Mathews County, VA	4.25	31
Colonial Heights city, VA	4.30	32
Cumberland County, VA	4.32	33
Montgomery County, VA	4.40	34
Grayson County, VA	4.41	35
Alleghany County, VA	4.46	T-36
Tazewell County, VA	4.46	T-36
Washington County, VA	4.50	38
Arlington County, VA	4.52	39
Gloucester County, VA	4.53	40
Albemarle County, VA	4.60	41
Manassas Park city, VA	4.61	42
Loudoun County, VA	4.68	43
Hanover County, VA	4.70	44
Smyth County, VA	4.73	45
Bedford County, VA	4.75	46
Bristol city, VA	4.78	47

Russell County, VA	4.85	48
Harrisonburg city, VA	4.89	49
Accomack County, VA	4.95	50
Galax city, VA	4.97	51
Alexandria city, VA	4.99	52
Powhatan County, VA	5.15	53
Northumberland County, VA	5.25	54
Amherst County, VA	5.27	T-55
Virginia Beach city, VA	5.27	T-55
Wise County, VA	5.31	T-57
Covington city, VA	5.31	T-57
King William County, VA	5.37	59
Prince William County, VA	5.51	60
Buckingham County, VA	5.59	61
Wythe County, VA	5.70	62
Augusta County, VA	5.74	63
Pulaski County, VA	5.80	64
New Kent County, VA	5.82	65
Campbell County, VA	5.83	66
Manassas city, VA	5.96	67
Spotsylvania County, VA	5.99	68
Lunenburg County, VA	6.05	69
Pittsylvania County, VA	6.06	70
Northampton County, VA	6.07	71
Dinwiddie County, VA	6.13	72
Nottoway County, VA	6.15	73
York County, VA	6.24	74
Norton city, VA	6.26	75
Winchester city, VA	6.29	76
Isle of Wight County, VA	6.32	77
Caroline County, VA	6.34	T-78
Middlesex County, VA	6.34	T-78
Madison County, VA	6.36	80
Chesterfield County, VA	6.39	T-81
Franklin County, VA	6.39	T-81
Page County, VA	6.39	T-81
Giles County, VA	6.40	84
Louisa County, VA	6.48	85
Frederick County, VA	6.50	86
Fauquier County, VA	6.53	87
Culpeper County, VA	6.67	88
Orange County, VA	6.68	89
Surry County, VA	6.78	90
Fluvanna County, VA	6.82	91
Clarke County, VA	6.91	92
Brunswick County, VA	6.93	93
Southampton County, VA	7.05	94
Prince George County, VA	7.06	95
Henrico County, VA	7.22	96
Waynesboro city, VA	7.31	97
Staunton city, VA	7.39	98
Stafford County, VA	7.47	99
Westmoreland County, VA	7.50	100
Craig County, VA	7.74	101
Halifax County, VA	7.86	102
Charles City County, VA	7.98	103

Hampton city, VA	7.99	104
Sussex County, VA	8.01	105
Mecklenburg County, VA	8.03	106
Emporia city, VA	8.04	107
James City County, VA	8.13	108
Henry County, VA	8.16	109
Prince Edward County, VA	8.29	110
Radford city, VA	8.36	111
Hopewell city, VA	8.50	112
Roanoke city, VA	8.63	113
Greensville County, VA	8.77	114
Newport News city, VA	9.03	115
Greene County, VA	9.07	116
Richmond County, VA	9.46	117
Chesapeake city, VA	9.66	118
King and Queen County, VA	9.96	119
Fredericksburg city, VA	10.36	120
Danville city, VA	11.04	121
Lynchburg city, VA	11.33	122
Norfolk city, VA	11.40	123
King George County, VA	11.55	124
Suffolk city, VA	12.08	125
Martinsville city, VA	12.35	126
Petersburg city, VA	12.77	127
Lexington city, VA	13.11	128
Franklin city, VA	13.14	129
Portsmouth city, VA	13.58	130
Richmond city, VA	13.64	131
Charlottesville city, VA	13.72	132
Williamsburg city, VA	13.77	133

Note: The incarceration measure used here is the percentage of low-income men raised in these counties who were incarcerated in their mid-30s.
Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Figure 3. Association between County Single Parenthood Rate and Incarceration.



Note: r = 0.52***

The average total household income of low-income men in adulthood is as high as $42,142 in Falls Church City and as low as $18,317 in Petersburg City (see Table 5). As a state, Virginia does not appear to fare well compared to the rest of the country on household income for low-income men, given that 89% (119 out of 133) of the counties in the state were below the national average on this measure. In a multiple linear regression model with all origin county characteristics included, county single parenthood rate proved to be the strongest predictor of low-income men's adult household income (see Table 2). Figure 4 illustrates the bivariate association between county single parenthood rate and low-income men's adult household income (r = -0.65).

Table 5. Virginia Counties Ranked by Household Income for Low-Income Men

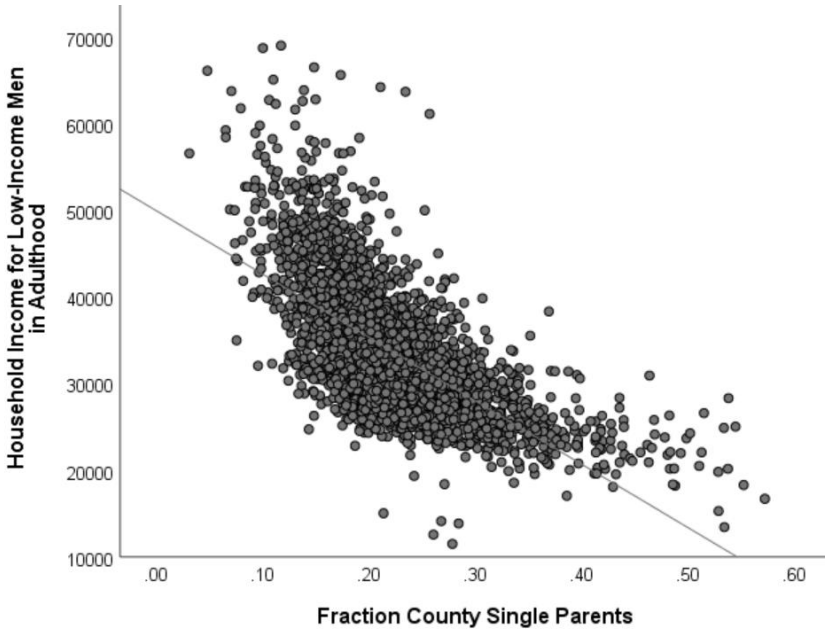
VIRGINIA COUNTY	AVERAGE INCOME ($)	VA INCOME RANK
U.S. County Average	33,567	-
Falls Church city, VA	42,142	1
Rappahannock County, VA	41,517	2
Fairfax County, VA	40,664	3
Fairfax city, VA	39,835	4
Loudoun County, VA	38,828	5
Poquoson city, VA	36,574	6
Buchanan County, VA	35,766	7
New Kent County, VA	35,279	8
Arlington County, VA	35,104	9
Highland County, VA	35,018	10
Manassas city, VA	34,645	11
Clarke County, VA	34,274	12
Essex County, VA	33,927	13
King and Queen County, VA	33,620	14
Bath County, VA	33,503	15
Warren County, VA	33,446	16
Botetourt County, VA	33,389	17
Rockingham County, VA	33,256	18
Dickenson County, VA	33,255	19
Augusta County, VA	33,146	20
Hanover County, VA	33,053	21
Rockbridge County, VA	32,763	T-22
Stafford County, VA	32,763	T-22
Prince William County, VA	32,756	24
Shenandoah County, VA	32,739	25
Bland County, VA	32,674	26
Roanoke County, VA	32,577	27
King William County, VA	32,338	28
York County, VA	32,173	29
Russell County, VA	32,163	30
Albemarle County, VA	32,100	31
Manassas Park city, VA	32,098	32
Northumberland County, VA	31,910	33
Alexandria city, VA	31,621	34
Powhatan County, VA	31,543	35
Harrisonburg city, VA	31,532	36
Frederick County, VA	31,389	37
Middlesex County, VA	31,305	38
Winchester city, VA	31,205	39
Fauquier County, VA	31,168	40
Tazewell County, VA	31,154	41
Lexington city, VA	30,935	42
Floyd County, VA	30,931	43
Amherst County, VA	30,839	44
Patrick County, VA	30,775	45
Alleghany County, VA	30,681	46
Bedford County, VA	30,666	47

Mathews County, VA	30,587	48
Nelson County, VA	30,538	49
Colonial Heights city, VA	30,395	50
Campbell County, VA	30,081	51
Chesterfield County, VA	30,058	52
Norton city, VA	29,978	53
Scott County, VA	29,928	54
Montgomery County, VA	29,800	55
Buena Vista city, VA	29,784	56
Salem city, VA	29,726	57
Page County, VA	29,620	58
Amelia County, VA	29,583	59
Appomattox County, VA	29,488	60
Covington city, VA	29,387	61
Franklin County, VA	29,281	62
Waynesboro city, VA	29,162	63
Spotsylvania County, VA	29,063	64
Virginia Beach city, VA	28,980	65
Craig County, VA	28,872	66
Accomack County, VA	28,871	67
Madison County, VA	28,865	68
Staunton city, VA	28,730	69
Wythe County, VA	28,727	70
Lancaster County, VA	28,698	71
Prince George County, VA	28,459	72
Charles City County, VA	28,360	73
Gloucester County, VA	28,285	74
Culpeper County, VA	28,192	75
Wise County, VA	28,124	76
Richmond County, VA	28,015	77
Giles County, VA	27,964	78
James City County, VA	27,898	79
Fluvanna County, VA	27,868	80
Pittsylvania County, VA	27,858	81
Grayson County, VA	27,806	82
Westmoreland County, VA	27,780	83
Lee County, VA	27,755	84
King George County, VA	27,705	85
Surry County, VA	27,699	86
Orange County, VA	27,644	87
Isle of Wight County, VA	27,617	88
Washington County, VA	27,512	89
Bristol city, VA	27,495	90
Henrico County, VA	27,493	91
Greene County, VA	27,154	92
Carroll County, VA	26,997	93
Southampton County, VA	26,889	94
Smyth County, VA	26,747	95
Sussex County, VA	26,689	96
Chesapeake city, VA	26,663	97
Fredericksburg city, VA	26,626	98
Hampton city, VA	26,477	99
Nottoway County, VA	26,438	100
Galax city, VA	26,358	101
Goochland County, VA	26,312	102
Henry County, VA	26,251	103

Franklin city, VA	26,127	104
Charlotte County, VA	26,096	T-105
Pulaski County, VA	26,096	T-105
Northampton County, VA	26,094	107
Buckingham County, VA	26,069	108
Caroline County, VA	25,956	109
Prince Edward County, VA	25,886	110
Lunenburg County, VA	25,803	111
Louisa County, VA	25,645	112
Hopewell city, VA	25,387	113
Brunswick County, VA	25,377	114
Cumberland County, VA	25,282	115
Newport News city, VA	25,047	116
Halifax County, VA	25,038	117
Mecklenburg County, VA	24,843	118
Lynchburg city, VA	24,479	119
Charlottesville city, VA	24,368	120
Williamsburg city, VA	24,293	121
Dinwiddie County, VA	24,239	122
Suffolk city, VA	24,162	123
Norfolk city, VA	22,980	124
Roanoke city, VA	22,907	125
Portsmouth city, VA	22,604	126
Radford city, VA	22,311	127
Danville city, VA	22,071	128
Greensville County, VA	21,543	129
Martinsville city, VA	19,642	130
Emporia city, VA	19,559	131
Richmond city, VA	18,381	132
Petersburg city, VA	18,317	133

Note: The income measure used here is the average annual total household income of low-income men raised in these counties when they reach their mid-30s.
Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Figure 4. Association between County Single Parenthood Rate and Income.



Note: r = -0.65***

The average marriage rate of low-income men in adulthood is as high as 55% in Bath County and as low as less than 15% in Petersburg City (see Table 6). As a state, Virginia does not

appear to fare well compared to the rest of the country on marriage rates for low-income men, given that 77% (102 out of 133) of the counties in the state had marriage rates below the national average. In a multiple linear regression model with all origin county characteristics included, county household income and single parenthood rate proved to be the strongest predictors of low-income men's adult marriage rate (see Table 2). Figure 5 illustrates the bivariate association between county single parenthood rate and low-income men's adult marriage rate (r = -0.72).

Table 6. Virginia Counties Ranked by Marriage Rates for Low-Income Men

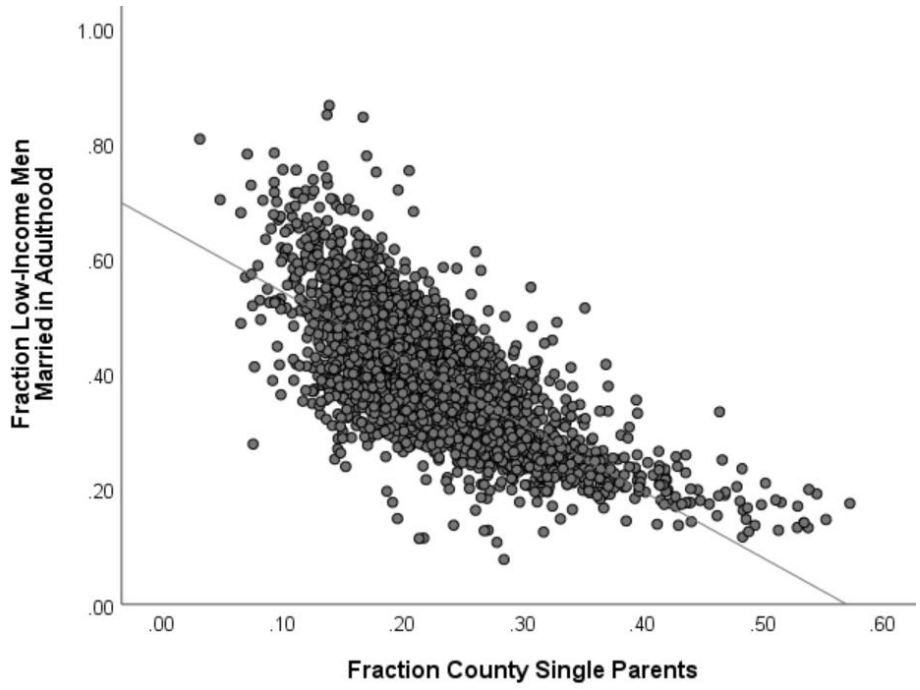
VIRGINIA COUNTY	% MARRIED	VA MARRIAGE RANK
U.S. County Average	39.87	-
Bath County, VA	55.32	1
Dickenson County, VA	52.02	2
Highland County, VA	51.40	3
Buchanan County, VA	51.09	4
Russell County, VA	47.78	5
Tazewell County, VA	47.21	6
Bland County, VA	47.09	7
Craig County, VA	46.74	8
Augusta County, VA	46.37	9
Rappahannock County, VA	45.43	10
Buena Vista city, VA	44.00	11
Lee County, VA	43.75	12
Grayson County, VA	43.60	13
Scott County, VA	43.47	14
Rockbridge County, VA	43.25	15
Wythe County, VA	43.18	16
Wise County, VA	42.92	17
Botetourt County, VA	42.90	18
Bristol city, VA	42.14	19
Patrick County, VA	41.91	20
Rockingham County, VA	41.82	21
Carroll County, VA	41.73	22
Warren County, VA	41.37	23
Norton city, VA	41.16	24
Franklin County, VA	41.15	25
Roanoke County, VA	40.97	26
Powhatan County, VA	40.85	27
Madison County, VA	40.49	28
Covington city, VA	40.28	29
Alleghany County, VA	39.97	30
Page County, VA	39.88	31
Bedford County, VA	39.66	32
Washington County, VA	39.00	33
Shenandoah County, VA	38.97	34
Nelson County, VA	38.95	35
Appomattox County, VA	38.94	36
Northumberland County, VA	38.89	37
Campbell County, VA	38.78	38
Poquoson city, VA	38.48	39
Harrisonburg city, VA	38.11	40
Salem city, VA	37.90	41
Montgomery County, VA	37.83	42
Smyth County, VA	37.56	43
Amherst County, VA	37.54	44
Floyd County, VA	37.38	T-45
Staunton city, VA	37.38	T-45
Giles County, VA	37.27	47

Charlotte County, VA	36.76	48
Fairfax city, VA	36.65	49
New Kent County, VA	36.38	50
Mathews County, VA	36.35	51
Pulaski County, VA	36.08	52
Fairfax County, VA	36.07	53
Gloucester County, VA	35.99	54
Fauquier County, VA	35.92	55
Frederick County, VA	35.90	56
Clarke County, VA	35.30	57
Loudoun County, VA	35.29	58
Albemarle County, VA	34.83	59
Galax city, VA	34.82	60
Greene County, VA	34.36	T-61
Middlesex County, VA	34.36	T-61
Cumberland County, VA	34.27	63
Stafford County, VA	33.86	64
Manassas city, VA	33.65	65
King George County, VA	33.62	T-66
Winchester city, VA	33.62	T-66
Henry County, VA	33.59	68
Culpeper County, VA	33.37	69
Pittsylvania County, VA	33.05	70
Hanover County, VA	33.04	71
Colonial Heights city, VA	33.01	72
Lexington city, VA	32.98	73
Waynesboro city, VA	32.67	74
King William County, VA	32.43	75
Arlington County, VA	31.98	76
Louisa County, VA	31.88	77
Orange County, VA	31.77	78
York County, VA	31.68	79
Accomack County, VA	31.61	80
Falls Church city, VA	31.60	81
Fluvanna County, VA	31.48	82
Lunenburg County, VA	31.37	83
King and Queen County, VA	31.28	84
Spotsylvania County, VA	30.91	85
Prince William County, VA	30.61	86
Radford city, VA	30.39	87
Chesterfield County, VA	30.13	88
Prince George County, VA	30.07	89
Prince Edward County, VA	29.96	90
Buckingham County, VA	29.94	91
Manassas Park city, VA	29.70	92
Amelia County, VA	29.51	93
Virginia Beach city, VA	29.23	94
Westmoreland County, VA	28.99	95
Nottoway County, VA	28.84	T-96
Lynchburg city, VA	28.84	T-96
Northampton County, VA	28.48	98
Lancaster County, VA	28.38	99
James City County, VA	28.10	100
Surry County, VA	28.01	101
Richmond County, VA	27.69	102
Halifax County, VA	27.62	103

Mecklenburg County, VA	27.39	104
Isle of Wight County, VA	27.36	105
Alexandria city, VA	27.01	106
Brunswick County, VA	26.64	107
Essex County, VA	26.51	108
Goochland County, VA	26.30	109
Roanoke city, VA	25.97	110
Hopewell city, VA	25.65	111
Fredericksburg city, VA	25.52	112
Chesapeake city, VA	25.51	113
Sussex County, VA	24.91	114
Hampton city, VA	24.90	115
Henrico County, VA	24.67	116
Caroline County, VA	24.61	117
Charlottesville city, VA	23.96	118
Newport News city, VA	23.60	119
Franklin city, VA	23.51	120
Danville city, VA	23.33	121
Southampton County, VA	22.99	122
Charles City County, VA	22.98	123
Williamsburg city, VA	22.15	124
Norfolk city, VA	21.10	125
Suffolk city, VA	20.80	126
Martinsville city, VA	20.70	127
Portsmouth city, VA	20.38	128
Greensville County, VA	19.91	129
Dinwiddie County, VA	18.55	130
Emporia city, VA	17.41	131
Richmond city, VA	14.79	132
Petersburg city, VA	14.73	133

Note: The marriage measure used here is the percentage of low-income men raised in these counties who were married in their mid-30s.
Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Figure 5. Association between County Single Parenthood Rate and Marriage.



Note: r = –0.72***

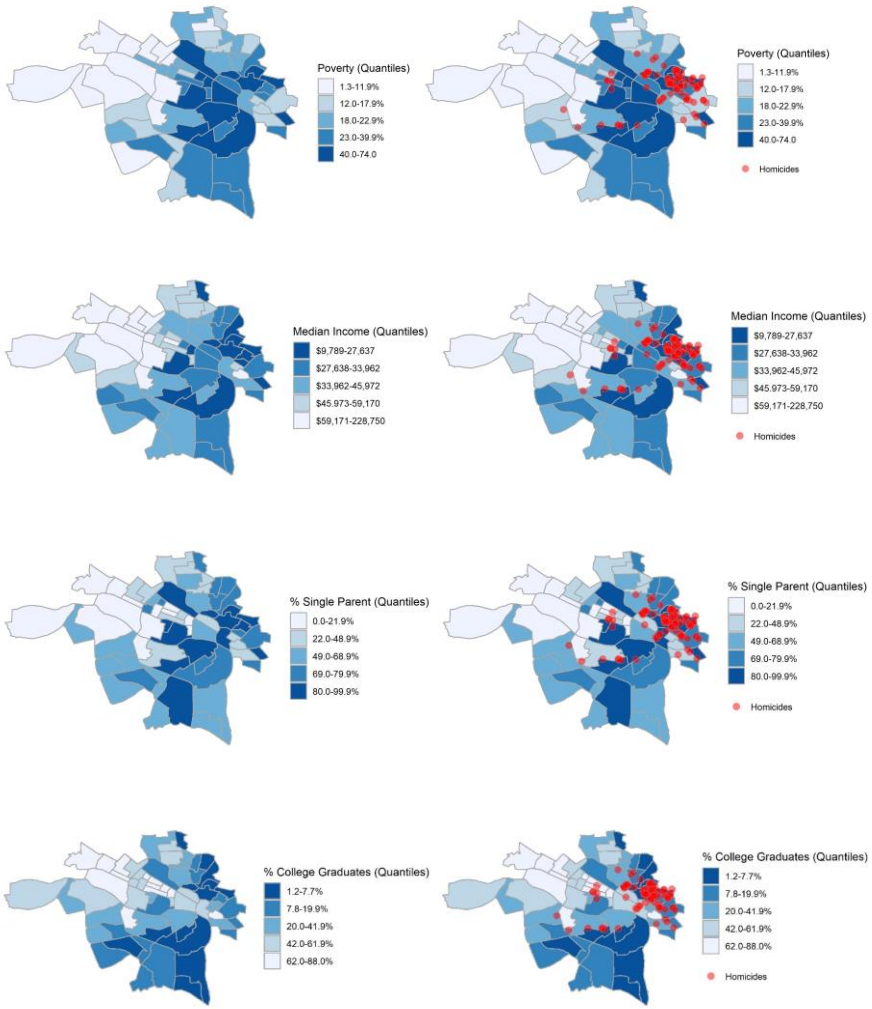
There was also significant inequality between counties in county characteristics. Table 8, for instance, demonstrates wide gaps across the state in county-level college completion (72

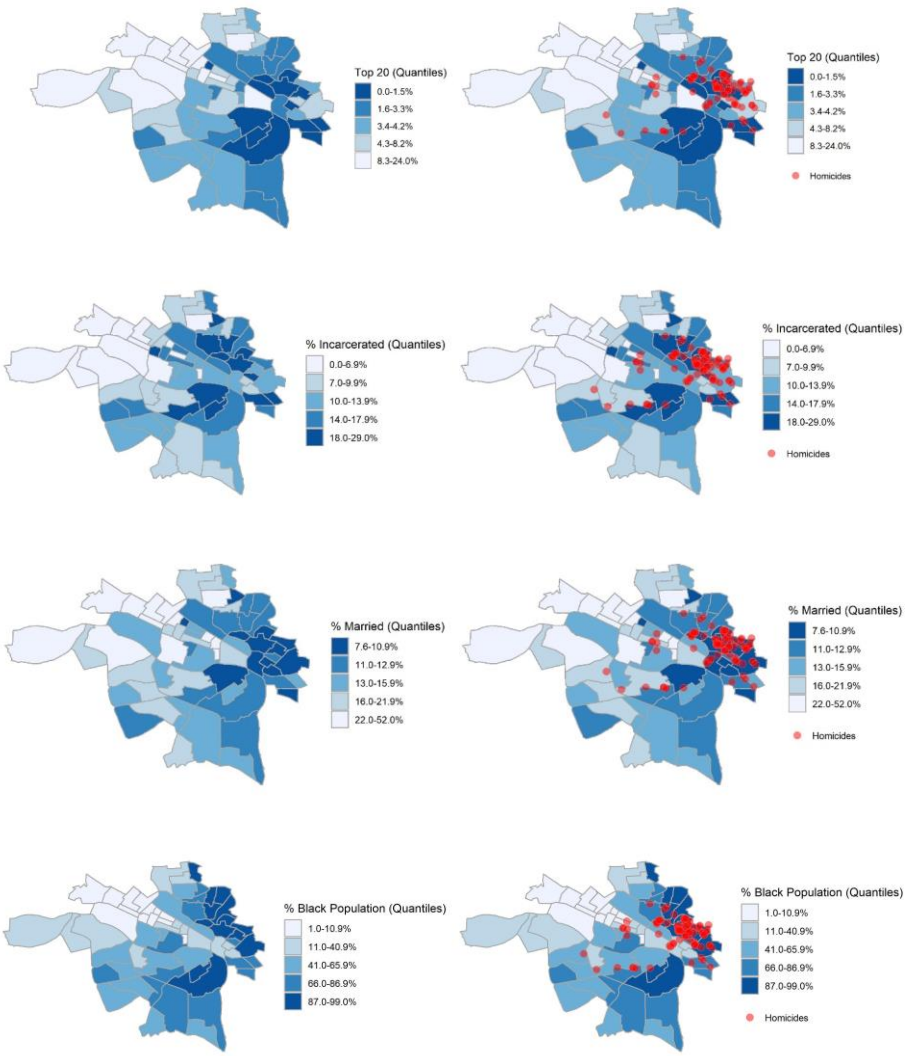
percentage point gap), poverty (41 percentage point gap), single parenthood (53 percentage point gap), household income ($101,865 gap), and racial segregation (79 percentage point gap).

Inequality of Place and Violence

Figure 6 demonstrates the visible association between clusters of homicides and concentrated disadvantage across the city of Richmond, VA. The largest homicide clusters are in the easternmost portion of the city. This area also has high levels of poverty and single parenthood, low household income and college completion, and poor adult outcomes for low-income men (in terms of upward mobility, incarceration, and marriage). Additionally, this area has high concentrations of Black residents, reflecting racial segregation. In the much more advantaged westernmost portions of the city, there are notably no gun homicides.

Figure 6. Mapping Concentrated Disadvantage and Homicides in Richmond, Virginia





Source: Authors' calculations using LexisNexis (2020) and Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Economic Cost of Child Poverty

Growing up poor reduces a person's earnings as an adult. Since Virginia's share of total GDP was 2.66% in 2015, we assigned 2.66% of the cost of reduced earnings from McLaughlin & Rank (2018) to find Virginia's share of this cost, which is $7.81 billion (see Table 7).

Child poverty also leads to increased street crime when poor children become adults. The state of Virginia was responsible for 1.32% of U.S. violent crime in 2015, so we assigned 1.32% of the cost of increased street crime from McLaughlin & Rank (2018) to find Virginia's share of this cost, which is $2.65 billion.

Virginia was also responsible for 2.08% of U.S. health expenditures, 2.61% of the U.S. homeless population, and 2.06% of U.S. child maltreatment referrals in 2015, so we use those percentages to adjust the figures from McLaughlin & Rank (2018) to obtain costs of $3.99, $1.20, and $0.83 billion for increased healthcare costs, homelessness, and child maltreatment, respectively.

Finally, Virginia held 2.89% of state prisoners in the U.S. during 2015, so we assign 2.89% of the corrections costs and social costs related to incarceration from McLaughlin & Rank (2018), which yields corrections costs of $3.54 billion and social incarceration costs of $2.40 billion for Virginia.

Summing these costs yielded an aggregate cost of child poverty of $22.43 billion for Virginia in 2015. When we adjusted this figure to 2019 dollars using the inflation calculator provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), the resulting cost was $24.37 billion, or about 42% of Virginia's operating expenses in 2019 (see Virginia Department of Planning and Budget 2020).

Table 7. Estimating the Economic Costs of Child Poverty in the State of Virginia.

U.S. cost description	U.S. cost (in billions)	Virginia's share	Virginia cost (in billions)
Reduced earnings	$294.0	2.66%	$7.81
Increased victimization costs of street crime	$200.6	1.32%	$2.65
Increased health costs	$192.1	2.08%	$3.99
Increased corrections and crime deterrence costs	$122.5	2.89%	$3.54
Increased child homelessness costs	$96.9	1.24%	$1.20
Increased social costs of incarceration	$83.2	2.89%	$2.40
Increased child maltreatment costs	$40.5	2.06%	$0.83
Total cost of child poverty in 2015	$1029.8	-	$22.43
Total cost of child poverty in 2019 (inflation adjusted)	$1118.8	-	$24.37

Source: Authors' calculations based using data from McLaughlin & Rank (2018).

Table 8. Summary of Inequalities in Virginia County Characteristics

	VA Average	Smallest	Largest
% college graduates	25.5%	8.5%	80.2%
Poverty rate	14.9%	2.7%	43.8%
Single parenthood rate	33.7%	14.7%	67.2%
Median household income	$54,579	$25,676	$127,541
Fraction Black	19.6%	<1%	79.7%

Source: Authors' calculations using Opportunity Insights (2021) data.

Discussion & Conclusion

Previous research suggests that there is significant inequality of place in the U.S., and our results align with these previous findings. There were large gaps between counties in their characteristics, such as college completion (72 percentage point gap), poverty (41 percentage point gap), single parenthood (53 percentage point gap), household income ($101,865 gap), and racial segregation (79 percentage point gap) (refer back to Table 8). In terms of low-income men's adult outcomes, there were major inequalities between counties in upward mobility (high of 21% and low of less than 2%), college completion (48% versus 0%), incarceration (0% versus 14%), household income ($42,142 versus $18,317), and marriage (55% versus less than 15%) (refer back to Tables 1 and 3-6).

Previous research suggests that neighborhood- and community-level characteristics are strongly associated with these outcomes, and our results align with these previous findings. Single parenthood was particularly impactful—despite the presence of several control variables in the multiple linear regression models, single parenthood still had the largest Beta value in the upward mobility, household income, and incarceration models, and was almost as impactful as household income in predicting marriage.[28] This is consistent with the seminal work of Chetty and his colleagues (2014), which found single parenthood to be the variable most strongly associated with mobility across U.S. commuting zones. Other county level characteristics that were particularly impactful in our regression models were college completion (predicting upward mobility and college completion), household income (household income and marriage), and racial segregation (incarceration) (refer back to Table 2).

Previous research suggests that violence tends to erupt in areas of concentrated disadvantage in the U.S., findings which align with our mapping of homicides and concentrated disadvantage in Virginia's capital city of Richmond. There was visible overlap between clusters of homicides and high levels of poverty, single parenthood, and racial segregation, low household income and college completion, and poor adult outcomes for low-income men (upward mobility, incarceration, and marriage). There were no homicides in the much more advantaged westernmost portions of the city (refer back to Figure 6).

As previous research also suggests, the cost of childhood poverty in Virginia is significant. According to our analysis, allowing child poverty to persist costs the state billions of dollars in the resulting decrease in potential adult earnings and increase in costs related to crime/incarceration, health, homelessness, and maltreatment (refer back to Table 7).

In summary, (a) major inequalities of place are apparent in the state of Virginia, (b) these inequalities likely have a significant influence on the unequal life chances of children raised in the state, (c) these inequalities are likely associated with one's likelihood of violent crime involvement and victimization, and (d) economic deprivation is economically costly to the larger society, not just disadvantaged individuals themselves.

[28] There are a variety of reasonable responses one might have to our findings concerning single parenthood, including (a) whether this blames single parents for their children's outcomes, or (b) whether this could be a spurious relationship. On the first question, our research does not offer much clarity. We can speculate based on previous research, however, that while single parenthood is in part a personal decision within the control of those involved, it is also in part a result of forces outside of one's control. The difficulties of forming and maintaining relationships amidst concentrated disadvantage (economic insecurity, unemployment, failing institutions, crime, mass incarceration, etc.), for instance, are well-documented—for just a few examples, see McLanahan & Sandefur 1994, Hays 2003, Edin & Kefalas 2005, and Hertz 2006. On the second question, there are a variety of unmeasured dimensions of disadvantage that could be confounding variables. The ones we did include in our models (such as poverty), however, did not change the fact that single parenthood was an important factor. If poverty was simply 'lurking in the background' and boosting the perceived impact of single parenthood on children's outcomes when measured in a bivariate manner, then the impact of single parenthood should have dropped considerably or been statistically insignificant in the multivariate models, but that did not happen. Furthermore, previous research supports the notion that single parenthood is disadvantaging independent of other variables that might be related, such as income and education (Hymowitz 2006; Chetty et. al. 2014; Kearney & Levine 2017). Kearney and Levine (2017), for instance, found a marriage premium at various ages and educational attainment levels. And Chetty and his colleagues (2014) found that not only were community single parenthood rates strongly correlated with upward mobility for all low-income children, but they were also strongly correlated with upward mobility for low-income children who themselves grew up in married-parent households.

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A Dozen Images Made in or Near Youngstown, Ohio, That Show Why People Need Both Jobs and Fish

Alice Whittenburg

Abstract

Economy vs. ecology. That's one way to frame the debate that once raged in Youngstown, Ohio, between those who focused on the health of the Mahoning River and those who gave priority to the health of the local economy and the jobs it provided. The latter point of view was often stated in terms of 'Jobs, not fish!' and its proponents asked: Compared to jobs in steel mills, which make it possible for workers to have homes and a decent way of life, what does it matter that fish can't live in the river? Initially, the steel industry benefitted a surprisingly small number of people, mostly owners and investors who treated workers as a resource to be exploited, much like the air and water. But later, thanks to union struggles, workers lived well in the Mahoning Valley, and environmental problems, such as a dirty river, were viewed as a necessary evil. In fact, the foulness of the river assured residents that the mills were going strong and were a source of prosperity.

In Youngstown today, deindustrialization has made economic insecurity a fact of life, and the Mahoning, once known as the dirtiest river in the United States, is home to many species of fish. The story of the changes that have taken place in the river landscape centers around the supposed incompatibility of having both jobs along the river's banks and fish in its waters. Ideas from cultural geography can teach us how to view a landscape where so much conflict has played out.

When geographer James S. Duncan presented the idea of a landscape as texts which communicate and transmit information, he also argued that reading the landscape can reveal how power relations have played out in a given region.[1] Sherry Lee Linkon and John Russo built on similar notions in *Steeltown USA: Work and Memory in Youngstown* as they showed how people's memories, experiences, and struggles are represented in the landscape. Linkon & Russo also noted that conflict and landscape have a reciprocal relationship. 'Landscapes not only are constructed by economic and social conflict,' they stated, 'but also reinforce such divisions of power.' (Linkon & Russo, 2002, pp. 15-16). Such a reading of the Mahoning River landscape yields a complex story about the ways people transformed the natural world in order to benefit from it and then lived with the environmental consequences of that transformation. Though this story is very much about how power and class relations have played out there, in the twentieth century such conflict was often overshadowed by tensions between advocates for steel workers and advocates for the river. Recently, however, the growing understanding of the concept of environmental justice, which has been applied to working-class issues by, among

[1] More at Medlicott, Carol Ann. (2014) Cultural landscape. *Reader's Guide to the Social Sciences*, ed. Jonathan Michie. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis; specifically, see Duncan, James S. (1990) *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

others, Christina Robertson & Jennifer Westerman in their call for a working-class ecology (Robertson & Westerman, 2015) and Karen Bell in her agenda for a just transition to sustainability (Bell, 2020), lays the groundwork for alliances between environmentalists and working-class people that were not present when the Mahoning River was an 'industrial stream.' Cultural geographers have also shown us that depictions of a landscape contribute to its meaning(s).[2] Building on such ideas, Linkon & Russo examined the landscape of Youngstown through the lens of images and stories, and this essay will view the more specific landscape of the Mahoning River by examining a dozen images created in or near Youngstown since the early twentieth century. Not all of these images depict the river itself, yet all help to clarify the way the conflict between economy and ecology has played out in the Mahoning Valley.

Keywords

Mahoning River, Youngstown, Ohio, environmental justice, steel industry

Image 1. Vincent Aderente, Legend of Council Rock, 1910. Photo courtesy of Glenn Liston King, author of *Vincent Aderente, American Muralist*.

Near the edge of a grassy park on the east side of Youngstown, Ohio, lies a large boulder. This massive rock, legend says, was split by lightning in 1755 while a group of American Indians celebrated a victory in the French and Indian War. The boulder has a name – Council Rock – and it also has an off-center cleft running through it, though most of the rock is still intact. [3]

In 1910 Vincent Aderente painted the 'Legend of Council Rock' mural, which still hangs inside the Mahoning County courtroom in downtown Youngstown.[4] The mural is also known as 'Indians Celebrating the Victory Over Braddock,' and it portrays a group of Native American men, women, and children sitting and standing around a large boulder from which one of the men seems to be giving a blessing. The painting depicts twenty people, but they must constitute only a small part of the group because, at least according to the legend, hundreds were killed when a lightning bolt later struck the rock. That the legend of Council Rock centers around a large human toll during a victory celebration might seem like *schadenfreude* on the part of the

[2] Again, see Medlicott; specifically, see Daniels, Stephen and Cosgrove, Denis. Introduction: iconography and landscape. (1988) *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the symbolic representation, design and use of past environments*. Stephen Daniels and Denis Cosgrove, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[3] Heineman, Ted. (n.d.). The Legend of Council Rock. *Riverside Cemetery Journal*. http://riversidecemeteryjournal.com/Places/Places/page9.html
[4] Ricciutti, Gerry. (May 1, 2019). Work underway to restore 110-year-old mural in Mahoning County courtroom. WKBN First News 27 website. https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/work-underway-to-restore-110-year-old-mural-in-mahoning-county-courtroom/

legend's creators – implying that these Native people paid with their lives for defeating Braddock – but the painting itself depicts not their terror and destruction but the calm that came beforehand.

What came much earlier beforehand was the presence of Native Americans in the Mahoning Valley – thousands of years before European settlers came.[5] At the time Europeans arrived, Iroquois and Delaware peoples, among others, were fishing in or hunting near the river, using it for transportation, and living in small settlements nearby. The name Mahoning is said to be of Lenape (Delaware) origin, and Native uses of the river were compatible with the well-being of a riparian habitat.[6] By the early nineteenth century, however, most Native Americans had been forced out of the eastern United States, and then the Mahoning River began to serve the needs of industry.[7] That's when it became emblematic of a conflict between economy and ecology.

In the introduction to a book of photos called *Youngstown, Ohio,* published in 1912, author A.B. Christy claimed that the city was 'regarded second only to Pittsburg [sic] among the leading iron and steel centers of the world...' Reasons cited for why this was so included the city's location near 'inexhaustible mines of the ore regions,' 'endless coal fields of Pennsylvania,' and the fact that it was 'watered by an inexhaustible stream from which the valley derives its name.'[8] It is notable that the Mahoning River was referred to as a stream, but more so that the word inexhaustible appeared twice in one short page of text.

A belief that the land, air, and water were inexhaustible resources there for the taking was consistent with the brutal process of wresting the so-called New World from its original inhabitants. And attitudes toward the Mahoning River during the twentieth century clearly showed a connection between these two mindsets. In 1965, testifying before a Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) commission on the pollution of the river, Congressman Michael Kirwan said that the Mahoning, '…is now and always has been and, I trust, always will be, an industrial stream.' He dismissed the absence of fish as largely a concern of 'our sporting population,' and concluded by saying that while Native Americans might once have fished in a pristine Mahoning River, '[t]he Indians had no television to watch and no jet planes on which to ride. And I ask you now, who was better off, the Indians or you and I, here, today? If losing the fish in the industrialized stretch of the Mahoning was the penalty we had to pay, then I say, and I think you will agree, it was a penalty worth paying.'[9]

The idea that people must choose between the health of the land and their own economic well-being was a common theme in Youngstown during the twentieth century, and though such debate rings hollow now that the mills have mostly closed down and the health of the river has

[5] American Indians and Early America. *Ohio History Central*. https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/American_Indians#American_Indians_and_Early_America
[6] Gannett, Henry. (1905). *The origin of certain place names in the United States*. Washington: Government Printing Office. Via Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_9V1IAAAAMAAJ/page/n195/mode/2up
[7] Saunt, Claudio. (23 April 2020). Indian removal. *aeon*. https://aeon.co/essays/the-worlds-first-mass-deportation-took-place-on-american-soil
[8] Christy, A.B. (1912) *Youngstown, Ohio*. Portland, Me., L.H. Nelson Co. Via Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/youngstownohio00chri/page/n5
[9] Groves, E.R. (February 24, 1965) Local Folks Were a Little Indignant Over Federal Hearing on Mahoning River Pollution. *Farm and Dairy*. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

improved, the consequences of viewing a river as an ‘inexhaustible stream’ or an ‘industrial stream’ are still worth examining – along with the notion that, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at least, human beings in the Mahoning Valley were also regarded as inexhaustible, industrial resources.

Image 2. Philip Koch, ‘Coke Ovens, Leetonia, Ohio,’ vine charcoal drawing, 2015-2017, from the collection of Allen Memorial Art Museum in Oberlin, OH; used by permission of the artist.

In this drawing by landscape painter Philip Koch, the curve of a vegetation-covered hillside is mirrored by the shapes of saplings reaching toward the sun. The two irregular dark openings that dominate the lower half of the drawing, however, lend an ominous tone to the otherwise tranquil scene. These ragged holes represent the entrances to in-ground coke ovens which were once used to transform local low-grade coal into the coke needed to make iron and steel. Two hundred such ovens, built in Leetonia about twenty-five miles from the Mahoning in 1866, burned 24-hours a day in what must have seemed like a small but intense corner of hell. Though

the ovens ceased operating during the Great Depression, they remain as a monument to one of the region's earliest conflicts between economy and ecology.[10]

When he made his first version of this drawing, Koch was Artist in Residence at the Burchfield Penney Art Center, which gave him a chance to work on location in some of the same landscapes Charles Burchfield had painted a century earlier.[11] Though Burchfield tended toward a kind of landscape painting that depicted vegetation, hills, sky, and living creatures with an almost fantastical intensity, his early work had also focused on the consequences of industrialization for people and the natural world.

In 2015 Koch followed Burchfield's lead to Leetonia where the 1918 painting 'Abandoned Coke Ovens' had gotten its inspiration; the painting shows the gaping holes left by burning ovens and the resultant trauma for people whose homes face the blasted, blighted scene. This was just one example of mining and industrial operations that had reduced land around Burchfield's nearby hometown of Salem to a 'raw, shattered landscape.'[12] Koch considers Burchfield's work to be an example of early and genuine environmental consciousness, and he says, 'Each generation needs a new image of what our earth looks like in our time. There will always be a need for landscape painters to show us where we live.'[13]

In 1844, shortly before the Leetonia coke ovens were built, coal also helped to shape the future of the Mahoning River landscape. The discovery of a particularly dense, dark coal that didn't require a separate coking process made the expansion of the local iron- and steel-making industries possible. A few decades later, more than twenty blast furnaces had been built, mostly along the Mahoning River from which water could be drawn for industrial processes. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, p. 19) Conflict between mine-owners and workers, especially over low wages, led to several strikes at local mines; but by the early twentieth century, Youngstown had ceased to be a 'community of small-scale industries, farms, and shops' and had become a city of steel mills. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, pp. 21-24) The population grew as people came to find jobs in the mills, and the river took on its role as a servant of industry.

[10] Nelson, Elisabeth R. (n.d.) Leetonia Beehive Coke Ovens. *Atlas Obscura*. https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/leetonia-beehive-coke-ovens

[11] Koch, Philip (May 10, 2016). Blistering Vision: Burchfield's Coke Ovens. Burchfield Penney Art Center website. https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/general/blog/article:05-10-2016-12-00am-blistering-vision-burchfield-s-coke-ovens/

[12] Weekly, Nancy. (n.d.) Deserted Miner's Home. Burchfield Penney Art Center website. https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/exhibitions/exhibition:12-12-2014-02-22-2015-deserted-miner-s-home/

[13] Burchfield Penney Art Center (n.d.) Time Travel in the Burchfield Archives: Philip Koch. Burchfield Penney Art Center website. https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/exhibitions/exhibition:04-13-2018-07-29-2018-time-travel-in-the-burchfield-archives-paintings-by-philip-koch/

Image 3. Photo of Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company Housing by Kaeleigh Herstad, 2018; used by permission.

This 2018 photo by Kaeleigh Herstad, taken for her own blog,[14] is much like one that appeared in a 1930 ad from Sheet & Tube's Buckeye Land Company.[15] The ad described rental units in Campbell which offered hot and cold running water, sewer lines, electricity, and were 'easy walking distance' to the north gate of the Campbell Works, though of course the windows had shutters then instead of plywood coverings and the roofs were watertight. In 1917 and 1918, these homes were built by Youngstown Sheet & Tube for their employees because having a decent place to live was something workers valued highly and meeting their needs also contributed to the company's stable operations.

In the early 1900s, back when the city of Campbell was still called East Youngstown, most of the homes for mill workers there lacked sewer lines and indoor plumbing. According to one account, there was also garbage in the streets and a 'clinging, all-pervasive mud.'[16] Many of the workers were immigrants from eastern and central Europe, and it was partly their living conditions, along with their anger over low wages, that motivated them to go on strike in 1916.

It was a violent strike, resulting in eight deaths and twelve injuries, and it was a destructive strike, in which much of East Youngstown was burned to the ground. A grand jury indicted Sheet & Tube for mistreatment of its workers, though a state judge later overturned that indictment. But in response to the disruption created by the strike, Sheet & Tube built four plats

[14] Herstad, Kaeleigh. (October 8, 2018). 'The Workingmen's Colony': Labor Conflict and Historic Preservation in Campbell, Ohio. Kaeleigh Herstad's blog. https://kaeleighherstad.com/2018/10/08/the-workingmens-colony-labor-conflict-and-historic-preservation-in-campbell-ohio/

[15] Joo, Johnny. (June 18, 2018). Youngstown Sheet & Tube: The First Concrete Pre-Fab Estate in the World. *Architectural Afterlife*. https://architecturalafterlife.com/2018/06/youngstown-sheet-tube-the-first-concrete-pre-fab-estate-in-the-world/

[16] Fitch, John A. (January 22, 1916). Arson and Citizenship. *The Survey*. East Stroudsburg, Pa., etc., Survey Associates. https://archive.org/details/surveycharityorg35survrich/page/478/mode/2up?q=East+Youngstown

of workers' housing. The homes in East Youngstown that were located downwind from the Campbell works were designated as a rental area for recent immigrants and African-Americans, groups which were, in turn, segregated from each other. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, pp. 28-29 and p. 35) The 1930 ad, by the way, stated that the homes it pictured were 'for white workers.'

It's notable that the living conditions in East Youngstown helped to bring about the 1916 strike. People lived in East Youngstown because they could walk to the mill, but they couldn't tolerate the poor sanitation and the garbage and the mud, in addition to their low wages and unacceptable working conditions. The foulness of the nearby Mahoning may also have taken a toll because there was human waste as well as industrial effluent in the river by that time. When the Mahoning flooded in 1913, for example, low-lying homes and workplaces were inundated with contaminated river water.[17]

The problem of raw sewage in the Mahoning persisted well into the twentieth century because sewage treatment facilities were expensive to build and cities chose to dump their waste into the river instead. The impetus for change, at least in terms of eliminating human waste from the water, had more to do with the interests of the steel industry than concerns for public health. In 1933, a Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. engineer called for water from a nearby lake to be released into the Mahoning because the river water wasn't '…diluted sufficiently, causing bad odors and miasmatic conditions affecting the men in the mills.'[18] And in 1936 industry spokesmen complained that the solid waste in the river clogged the pumps used for the mills' water intake.[19] Long after the 1916 strike, the waste products of nearby mills and communities would have made life for workers difficult – and nearly impossible for fish.

[17] Mahoning Valley Historical Society. (March 14, 2013). The Flood of 1913. Mahoning Valley Historical Society website. https://mahoninghistory.org/2013/03/14/the-great-flood-of-1913/

[18] *The Youngstown Vindicator*. (August 18, 1933). Boehme Says Release to River Was Step to Guard Health. *The Youngstown Vindicator*. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

[19] May, Paul. (September 2, 1936). National Board Will Study Mahoning River Sanitation. *The Youngstown Vindicator* [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

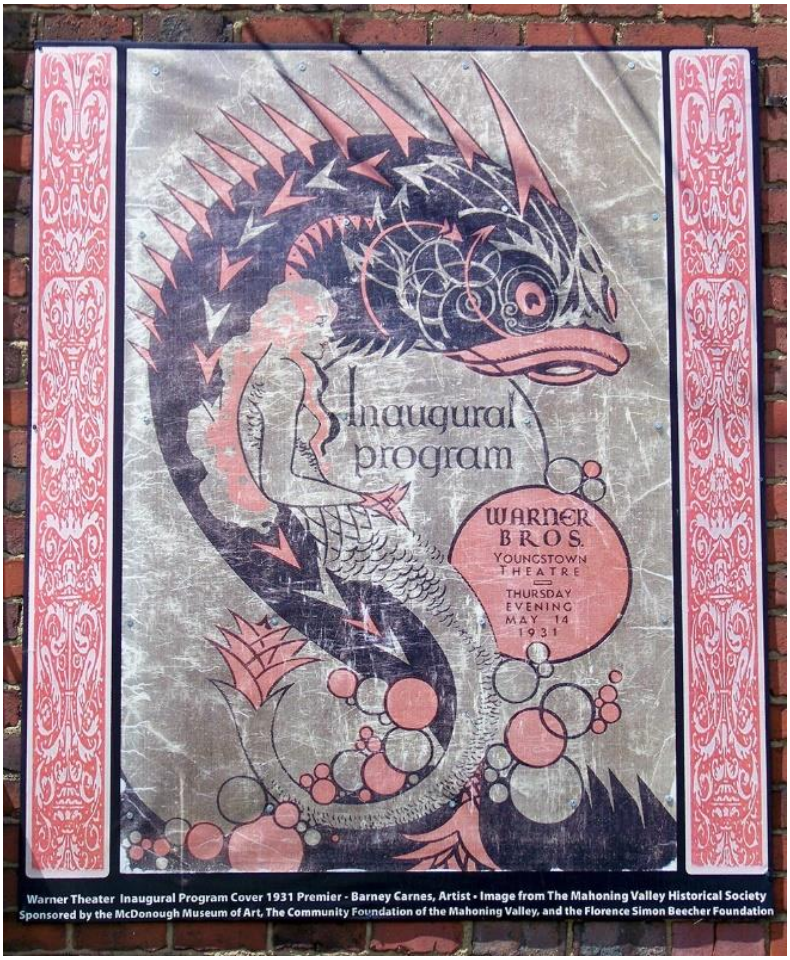

Image 4. Mural of Warner Theatre Inaugural Program Cover 1931 Premier, Barney Carnes, Artist. Photo by the author. Used by permission of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society, Youngstown, Ohio.

On a brick wall near the viaduct over the Mahoning River in Girard, Ohio, there's a mural of a fantastical fish. It has a full-lipped mouth and more than a dozen spines protruding from its arched back.[20] It looks like a carp from a Japanese wood block print, but it also has a distinct Art Deco quality. Cleaving to the fish's side is a much smaller mermaid with a curved tail. Bubbles rise from below the two creatures and seem about to burst against the arrow-like markings on the fish's body. The largest of these bubbles contains the text: 'Warner Bros. Youngstown Theatre' and a date of May 14, 1931.

The fish and its mermaid companion were designed by graphic artist Barney Carnes to appear on the cover of a program for the 1931 theatre opening in downtown Youngstown.[21] The Warner brothers, founders of the eponymous film studio, grew up in Youngstown, and the opening was a posh, invitation-only event. The new theatre was just a few blocks from the Mahoning, and some well-dressed invitees would likely have crossed the river that night when they came to watch the premier of a film called *The Millionaire*. It's appropriate that a carp-like fish appeared on that program cover because the carp is a symbol of prosperity, and this

[20] *Tribune Chronicle*. (October 3, 2016). Murals beautify downtown Girard. *Tribune Chronicle*. https://www.tribtoday.com/news/local-news/2016/10/murals-beautify-downtown-girard/
[21] Guerrieri, Vince. (February 2017) Screen Legends. *OhioMagazine.com.* https://www.ohiomagazine.com/ohio-life/article/screen-legends

event attracted prosperous people to see a film that celebrated good fortune, despite the downturn the economy had recently taken.

The movie, as fantastical as the fish in its own way, opens with scenes of workmen who love their boss, the sterling James Alden, a Henry Ford sort of man whose employees so admire him that the most respectful of them names his son after Alden. This millionaire has been told by his doctor to retire and has been encouraged to do so by his wife, but he loves his work, he wants to work; he looks out the window at Alden Engineering shimmering in an industrial haze and he hates to leave it. But when he moves to California and, on the sly, succeeds in building up a small gas station business, he begins to recover some of his old vigor; in this way the film implies that productive work is important, even to a millionaire.

The Mahoning River at that time was also recovering some of its old vigor because the Great Depression was in full swing and consequently the steel mills were not. A 1932 article in *The Youngstown Vindicator* announced that 'They're Fishing in the Mahoning Now That the Mills Are Down' and contained one of the first instances of the widely quoted local dictum that jobs should be more important to the people of the Mahoning Valley than fish.[22] Because when there are no jobs there are fish, and when there are fish there are no jobs – or at least that's the way it always seemed to be.

Image 5. William Gropper, *Youngstown Strike,* 1937. Museum Purchase 1985. Collection, The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio. Used by permission of Craig Gropper.

In June of 1937, artist William Gropper came to Youngstown to cover the Little Steel Strike, and he was outside Republic Steel at the Stop 5 gate on Poland Avenue when the Women's Day massacre took place.[23] Note that the Little Steel Strike didn't get its name because it was a little thing but because the workers were striking for the right to join a union and receive

[22] *The Youngstown Vindicator*. (June 23, 1932). They're Fishing in the Mahoning Now That the Mills Are Down. *The Youngstown Vindicator*. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

[23] Gropper, William. (July 3, 1937). Gropper Visits Youngstown. *The Nation*. From A Special Collections Research Center Exhibition at Syracuse University Library. https://library.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/g/Gropper/LargeImage/GropperVisitsYoungstown_P14.jpg

better treatment at the mills owned by companies collectively known as Little Steel.[24] (U.S. Steel was Big Steel
and had already been unionized.)

Gropper wrote that women had brought their children with them so they could picket in support of their striking husbands. When the police told them to go home where they belonged, the women refused, and they were teargassed. Strikers responded to their cries and joined in the resulting fray.
Gropper made a series of drawings – as intense and expressionistic as Käthe Kollwitz prints – to accompany his story. They showed workers reacting to teargas, handkerchiefs to their faces; a woman supporter holding one fist in the air while an anxious child grasps her other arm; police firing into the crowd; a dozen men and women falling and fleeing while armed men lurk menacingly under an archway; and other similar scenes. The *Youngstown Strike* painting is sometimes said to depict the 1916 strike, but it is similar in emotional tone to Gropper's drawings of the Women's Day massacre.[25] He reported that two strikers were killed and twenty-eight were injured that day, very near to the Mahoning, just outside Republic Steel.

During the Little Steel Strike, some workers chose to stay in the mills and work.[26] The company air-lifted food and supplies to them. These workers really did have the same kind of loyalty to their bosses that the fictional Millionaire's employees felt for him, but for many workers choosing to support the strike was a less complicated decision than choosing between having a job and having a healthy river.

The river was being killed then, too, but in a slow-mo sort of way as it passed by the mills and picked up heat and toxins. Life was probably not so bad for the river and the fish during the strike. But the strikers did eventually go back to work and, although it took a few years, they got to join the Steelworkers Union. Then came World War II with a consequent need for lots of steel, and the mills heated up again and the fish began to die again, and for a while there were lots of jobs again.

[24] Blake, Benjamin. (February 2008). Ohio's Steel Mill War. The Little Steel Strike of 1937: Big Steel and Little Steel. *Cleveland History*, Issue 3.
https://academic.csuohio.edu/clevelandhistory/Issue3/articles/steelpage2content.htm??
[25] O'Brien, Dan. (August 19, 2019). Framing History Is Butler's Art. *The Business Journal*. 2021.
https://businessjournaldaily.com/framing-history-butlers-art/
[26] Republic Steel Corporation. 1937 Little Steel Strike scrapbook. Youngstown Historical Center of Industry & Labor. See description. https://ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p15005coll10/id/4852/

Image 6. General View of Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company, Night View Campbell Works, 1942, Newberry Library, Curt Teich Postcard Archives; public domain image.

In this night view of the Campbell Works, the mill is a colorful place, maybe even a beautiful one. The mill buildings with bright yellow windows have a cheery, homelike quality, and the tall flares appear almost celebratory, like fireworks or birthday candles. The dark green hills behind the mill seem unscathed by the workings of industry; the tranquil blue river reflects the sky and the glow of a few yellow-orange flames. Only the railroad tracks that skirt the lower edge of the picture and the bridges across the river seem completely utilitarian, a drab latticework of connective tissue. And in this idealized depiction of the industrial process, no workers can be seen.

Flares like the ones in this image were there to burn off coke gas and other flammable byproducts of the steelmaking process, and like the soot and smoke in the air, they were a sign that people had jobs and the mills were going strong.[27] In 1941 when this postcard by an unknown artist was printed by the Curt Teich Company, the Sheet & Tube was producing the steel needed for the war effort, and later, Sheet & Tube products were used to make consumer goods during times of postwar prosperity.

Images like these are examples of what Sherry Lee Linkon and John Russo call promotional materials about the steel industry and Youngstown, and they showed how impressive and significant the process of steelmaking could be. What such images failed to acknowledge, however, was how hard the work could be or how divisive race and ethnicity and class could be. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, p. 69) Neither, for the most part, was there an acknowledgement of the damage being done to the natural world.

[27] For a more contemporary example, see Vergano, Dan. (April 6, 2019) People Are Getting Sick from a US Steel Factory That Is 'Grossly Violating' Health Standards, Experts Say. *BuzzFeed News*. https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/danvergano/us-steel-pollution-asthma-clairton-pennsylvania

Yet even in an image like this one there appears, in thrall to the hot, dirty business of making steel, a sluggish flow of water, a river, the Mahoning, which was caught up in the process. It was also used up by the process. How could the water support any fish in the midst of all this? The water had to be given over to the needs of steel, and only when there was a strike, from July to November of 1959, did the river recover a little, did the fish make a small comeback. [28]

Among other operations, there was a coke plant at the Campbell Works. 'Hot, heavy, hazardous' is a phrase that was used to describe certain jobs at the mill, such as those in the coke plant where fumes could be toxic and the heat could be extreme. These jobs often went to African-American workers who were also forced, because of housing discrimination, to live closer to the mills where air quality was poor, as in the company housing in Campbell.[29] These were among the significant things that weren't acknowledged in any image of a beautiful mill.

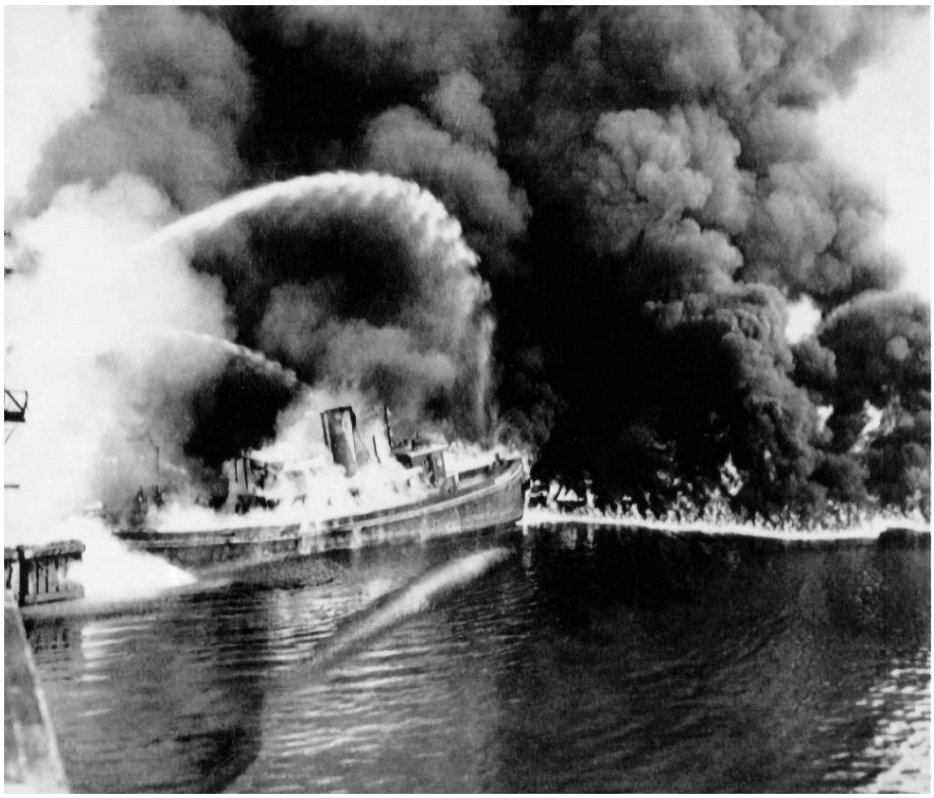

Image 7. A fire tug fights flames on the Cuyahoga River near downtown Cleveland on June 25, 1952. *The Plain Dealer*. Photo © 1952 *The Plain Dealer*. All rights reserved. REPRINTED/USED with permission.

The setting of this well-known photo isn't Youngstown, but it could be. A river is on fire. As flames impinge on the oil-slicked water, clouds of black smoke billow into the sky. The crew on a small tugboat works hard to fight the fire. The odd blend of water, flame, and smoke calls to mind a surrealist painting, yet the scene is not fantastical.

[28] Johnson, Linda J. (February 5, 1995, page 11; see sidebar Watching the River Flow). Overflowing Sewage Adds to Problem. *The Youngstown Vindicator*. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

[29] For another view of environmental racism and the steel industry, see Tony Buba's video: How Race, Class, and Pollution Define | Braddock, PA: Part 2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iaiv8-PSltw&list=PLZVnnAt5_5laazgQtL4gc0vMqvMvhp8Hl&index=3

This photo of the burning Cuyahoga River appeared in the August 1, 1969, issue of *Time*.[30] The issue was widely read because it covered another water-related scandal, the incident at Chappaquiddick. The article described the Cuyahoga as so polluted by industrial waste and sewage that it 'oozes rather than flows,' and said the river couldn't support any living things, 'even leeches and sludge worms that usually thrive on wastes.' The photo shocked readers, and *Time*'s coverage elicited outrage about the state of waterways in the United States.

To be accurate, the photograph of the burning Cuyahoga used by *Time* shows a fire from June 25, 1952, because there were no photos of the June 26, 1969, fire the article describes.[31] The Cuyahoga had caught fire many times, and the incident didn't receive much coverage in Cleveland. Industrial rivers like the Mahoning and the Cuyahoga burned because of oil or grease-soaked debris dumped into the water by the mills.[32] In fact, at that time, the Mahoning and the Cuyahoga weren't really rivers – that is, ecosystems of moving water; instead, they were industrial ancillaries and so they burned as industry did.

The next day Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes held a press conference at the site of the fire, and he later testified before Congress, calling for laws to clean up Cleveland's waterways. His efforts helped bring about the Clean Water Act and the EPA.[33]

But the Mahoning River didn't benefit much from these new laws and agencies, at least not right away. In the early 70s the Ohio Water Pollution Control Board set 'Fresh water fishery' standards on the Mahoning's industrialized stretch,[34] but in 1973 Ohio Governor Gilligan was asked by industry to lighten that requirement.[35] In 1974 the EPA agreed to compromise.[36] The idea of a fresh-water fishery so near the mills conflicted with the notion that steel was more important than fish.

[30] Latson, Jennifer. (June 22, 2015). The Burning River That Sparked a Revolution. *Time*. https://time.com/3921976/cuyahoga-fire/
[31] Ohio History Central. (n.d.) Cuyahoga River Fire. Ohio History Central site. https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Cuyahoga_River_Fire
[32] Dykstra, Peter. (June 9, 2019). A river burns through it. *Environmental Health News*. https://www.ehn.org/cuyahoga-river-50th-anniversary-fire-2638730182.html
[33]DeMarco, Laura. (September 19, 2019). The Burning River: A look back at the twisting history of the Cuyahoga. *The Plain Dealer*. https://www.cleveland.com/life-and-culture/g66l-2019/05/bf83f6d14d5980/the-burning-river-a-look-back-at-the-twisting-history-of-the-cuyahoga-vintage-photos.html
[34] *The Youngstown Vindicator*. (September 30, 1971). Steel, OE Protest River Costs. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]
[35] *The Youngstown Vindicator*. (December 19, 1973). Ask Gilligan Cut River Standards. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]
[36] *The Youngstown Vindicator*. (January 15, 1974). Agree to Ease River Cleanup. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

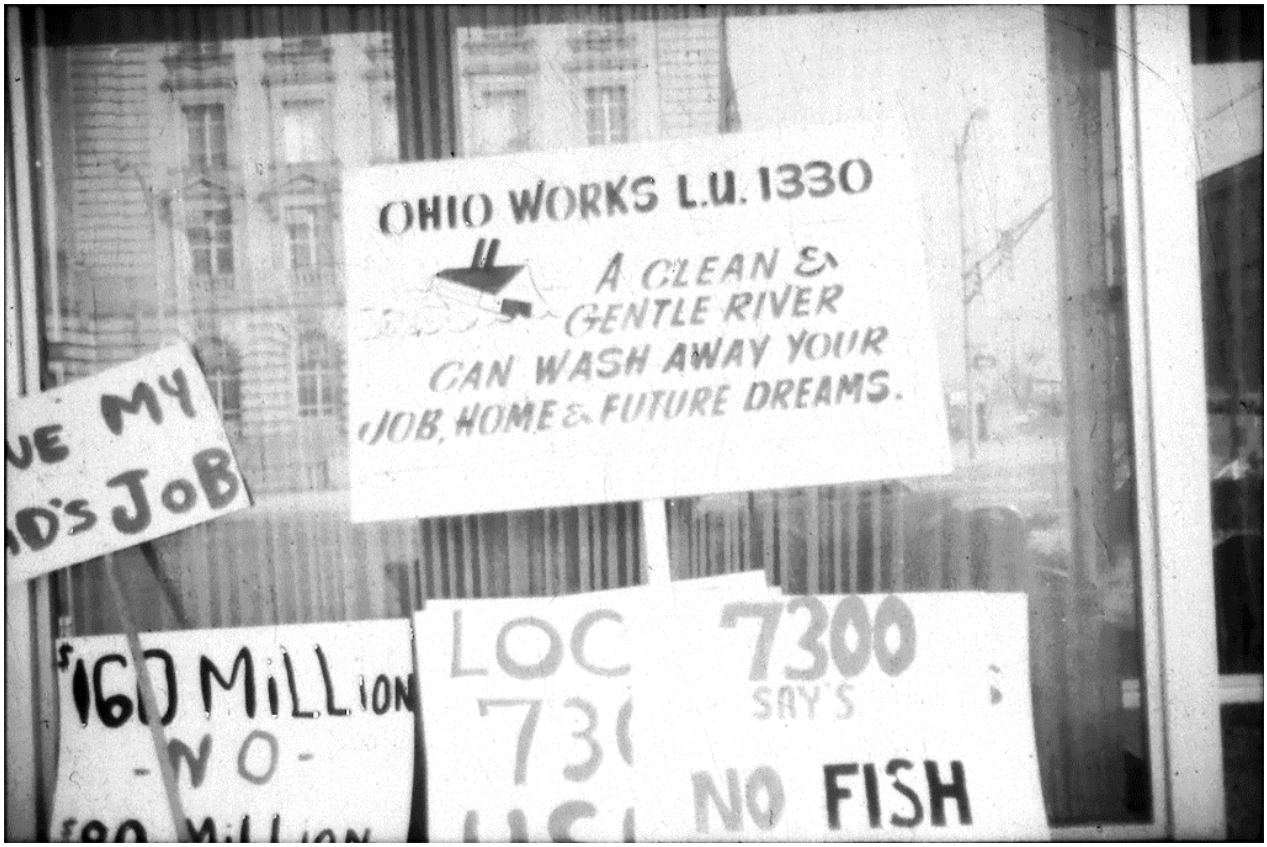

Image 8. Signs at January 1974 EPA hearing at the Voyager Inn in Youngstown, Ohio; photo from *Grassroots Magazine* archives, taken by Al Garcia, used by permission of Kathryn Wozniak

In 1974 Al Garcia took this photo in downtown Youngstown at a demonstration outside an EPA hearing about the Mahoning River. Hand-lettered signs like the ones on the left and lower edges of the picture were carried by many of the steelworkers who turned out that day to oppose stricter controls on what the steel industry could do to the river.

At the hearing, according to the *New York Times*, the community expressed fears that cleaning the river would lead to economic ruin, so '[w]hile an endless line of local public officials and other witnesses paraded before the packed meeting room, all of them condemning the proposed requirements, 500 steelworkers marched outside carrying signs that read, 'We want jobs, not fish' and 'Steel, not eel.''[37] But the professionally printed sign at the center of Garcia's photo bears a less strident, almost poetic message: 'A Clean & Gentle River Can Wash Away Your Job, Home & Future Dreams.' A small picture of a mill building floating in choppy water balances out this message from the USWA local at the Ohio Works of U.S. Steel.

Viewed more than forty-five years later, this placard gives a sense that the sign-maker understood why people would want a river to be clean and gentle – compare it to Congressman Kirwan's pragmatic declaration that the Mahoning always would be an 'industrial stream.' But however eloquent it might have been, the message printed on this sign also represented a point of view that clearly lacked forethought. Because in the 1970s the Steel Valley was changing in ways that many working people at that demonstration likely would not have expected. And

[37] Rattner, Steven. (April 5,1976). Jobs and Not Fish Win in Ohio Steel Town. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/1976/04/05/archives/jobs-and-not-fish-win-in-ohio-steel-town-jobs-not-fish-win-in-ohio.html

these changes had little to do with the cleanliness of the river. A short description of the events of just four years – from 1973 to 1977 – will illustrate the harsh unpredictability of this pivotal time for steelworkers in the Mahoning Valley.

In 1973, the leadership of the Steelworkers Union entered into the Experimental Negotiating Agreement with the steel industry, which would mean workers could not strike when contracts expired. The 1.4 million rank and file members were not consulted about nor did they get to vote on the ENA. At the Brier Hill Works of Sheet & Tube, the Rank and File Team won office and began to fight against these concessions.[38]

In 1974 the struggles of African-American workers, including activists at the Brier Hill Works,[39] yielded results when nine steel companies and the Steelworkers Union signed consent decrees after the federal government filed suit against them, charging discrimination on the 'bases of race, sex and national origin.'[40] (Unfortunately, though some workers of color found new jobs in departments other than those to which they had previously been relegated, by the time real change began to take place, deindustrialization was also underway.[41])

In 1976 the above-referenced *New York Times* article, with the apt title of 'Jobs – Not Fish – Win in Ohio Steel Town' explained to the nation why the EPA had decided to 'allow the Mahoning to remain dirty,' despite the heartfelt testimony of local environmentalists like Professor Lauren Schroeder.[42] This was said to have been done to protect workers' livelihoods because the steel companies depended on the river, just as the workers depended on their jobs at the mills, and environmental regulations would upset that delicate balance.

And then in September of 1977, the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company announced that it would shut down the Campbell Works and lay off the workers there.[43] Soon after, another Sheet & Tube plant, as well as operations of U.S. Steel and Republic Steel, followed suit. More than 10,000 jobs were lost in the steel industry and thousands more supporting jobs disappeared. And the industry that had said it would have to eliminate jobs if forced not to pollute the river, closed down not long after it received exemptions. After that, at least for a while, the Mahoning Valley had neither jobs (in the steel industry at least) nor fish.

[38] Whittenburg, Alice. (March 1974). Challenging the ENA: Steelworkers Demand the Right to Strike! *Grassroots Magazine*. Progressive Printers, Youngstown, Ohio. https://alicewhittenburg.com/grassroots_magazine/grassroots_march_1974.pdf
[39] Whittenburg, Alice. (March 1974). Interview with Jim Davis, 'Discrimination in Steel: Past Practice of Union and Company.' *Grassroots Magazine*. Progressive Printers, Youngstown, Ohio. https://alicewhittenburg.com/grassroots_magazine/grassroots_march_1974.pdf
[40] UPI. (August 19, 1975). U.S. Court Upholds Steel Industry Pact to End Job Bias. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/1975/08/19/archives/us-court-upholds-steel-industry-pact-to-end-job-bias.html
[41] Franklin, Stephen. (February 18, 2007). Blacks battled for rights before downsizings. *Chicago Tribune*. https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/chi-070218-black-steelworkers-story-story.html
[42] Whittenburg, Alice. (June 17, 2017). The Mahoning River in 2017. Other Homes and Gardens blog. http://otherhomesandgardens.blogspot.com/2017/06/the-mahoning-river-in-2017.html
[43] Lawson, H. William. (September 17, 2007). Remembering Black Monday. Mahoning Valley History blog. http://mahoninghistory.blogspot.com/2007/09/remembering-black-monday.html

Image 9. Picket sign at a demonstration at McDonald Works of U.S. Steel, 1980. Steve Cagan, photographer. Used by permission.

Steve Cagan's photo is simple but effective: in it a single hand-made picket sign containing two words – 'Jobs Now' – rests on a low cement wall. To the left of the sign there's an abandoned safety helmet. To the right of the sign is an open door through which a stairway can be seen. The doorsill is very worn.

When plant closures were announced, steelworkers in the Mahoning Valley fought against them. Among others, there was a protest at the McDonald Works of U.S. Steel.[44] Picketing workers carried signs that read 'Keep McDonald Works Open' and 'Keep Jobs in Steel.' During that time steelworkers came together with community activists to form an Ecumenical Coalition that struggled tirelessly to keep the mills from shutting down. Save Our Valley was their demand, but it was not met.[45]

Earlier, in 1977, the EPA released a list of the toxic substances that had been dumped into the Mahoning River each day when the nine steel mills were still operating: they included 400,000 pounds per day of suspended solids, 70,000 pounds per day of oil and grease, 9,000 pounds per day of ammonia-nitrogen, 800 pounds per day of zinc, 600 pounds per day of phenolics and 500 pounds per day of cyanide. [46] But when the mills closed down this noxious flood was abated.

[44] Schiller, Zach. (February 26, 2019). Reflections: Staughton Lynd on Youngstown's steel mill closings. Policy Matters Ohio blog. https://www.policymattersohio.org/blog/2019/02/26/reflection-staughton-lynd-on-youngstowns-steel-mill-closings

[45] Alperovitz, Gar. (September 25, 2017). Black Monday, '77, When the Mill Shutdown in Youngstown Gave Birth to the Rust Belt. BillMoyers.com. https://billmoyers.com/story/black-monday-77-mill-shutdown-youngstown-gave-birth-rust-belt/

[46] Friends of the Mahoning River. (n.d.) About the River. Friends of the Mahoning River website. Retrieved August 27, 2021. https://friendsofthemahoningriver.org/about-the-river/

From the viewpoint of the river, the valley was saved. From the viewpoint of the steelworkers, the valley was unsaveable.

Image 10. Photo of the Jeannette blast furnace at the Brier Hill Works of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, 1992. Photo by Harald Finster, used by permission.

German photographer Harald Finster specializes in industrial and architectural photography, and in 1992 he photographed the Jeanette blast furnace, which at the time was one of the oldest blast furnaces in the United States. On his StahlArt site, Finster expresses an awareness that he has been documenting a world that is in danger of disappearing.[47]

The Jeanette furnace stood, not far from the Mahoning River at the Brier Hill Works of Youngstown Sheet & Tube, from the time of its creation in 1917-18 until it was destroyed in 1997. It was 90 feet tall, weighed 500 tons, and produced more than 11 million tons of steel.[48] It is the Jeanette blast furnace Bruce Springsteen sings about in 'Youngstown,' addressing it as 'my sweet Jennie.'

In the 1980s and 90s when the means of steel production in the Mahoning Valley were being dynamited out of existence, fish were returning to the waters of the Mahoning.

[47] Finster, Harald. (May 23, 1992.) Steelworks in Youngstown and Warren (Ohio) and Frequently Asked Questions. StahlArt site. http://www.hfinster.de/StahlArt2/archive-Youngstown-en.html and http://www.hfinster.de/StahlArt2/FAQ-en.html

[48] the sweet jenny land company (n.d.) the sweet jenny land company website. http:/sweetjennylandcompany.com/jeanette_furnace.htm

Deindustrialization was not a healthy process for the people of the Mahoning Valley, and the first fish to come back to the river were not healthy either.

In 1994, EPA workers stunned river fish and examined them; this is what they found: 'Lesions and tumors around their gills. Bacteria-eroded fins and scales. Fish blinded since birth.'[49] All but two of two dozen fish were deformed in some way. But considering that PCBs, cyanide, ammonia, oil, and creosote had been left behind in the sediments of the river, among other toxins, this was probably not a surprise.

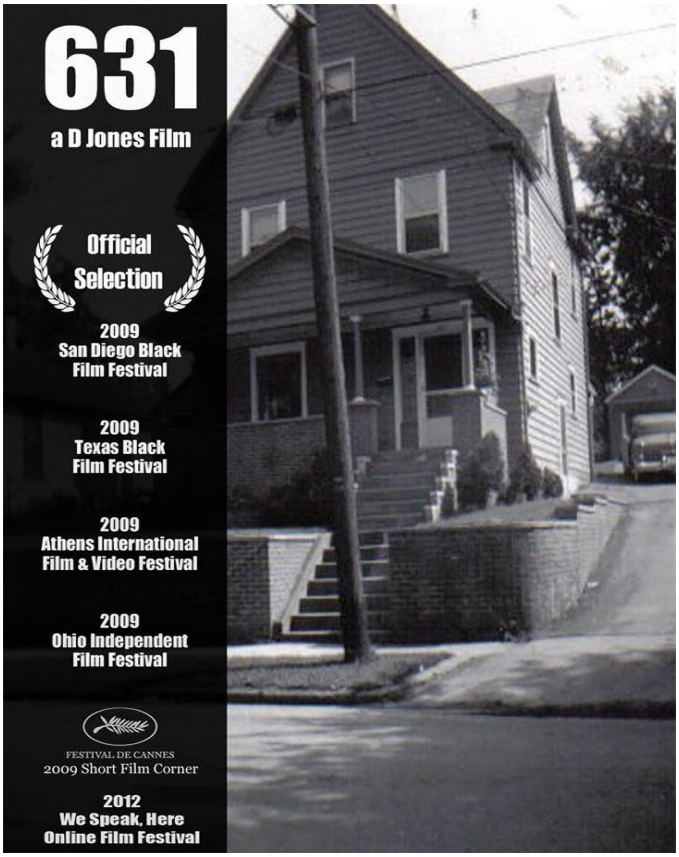

Image 11. Poster for *631*, a short film directed and produced by djones, 2008; used by permission.

This poster for the short film *631* by Derrick Jones (artistically known as djones) features a photo of his family's Youngstown home at 631 Ridge Avenue, the way it looked when his mother was a child. The two-story house has a safe and sheltering appearance, with a sturdy retaining wall that was added, among other improvements, after Jones' grandparents bought the property in the 1950s. Jones grew up there, too, and over many years family gatherings took place in the house, though it also began to need repairs the family was unable to make. Eventually they moved out.

In *631* the importance of the time when Jones' family called the place home is revealed through old photos and the reminiscences of family members. But a poignant sense of loss is expressed

[49] Johnson, Linda J. (February 5, 1995). Sick Fish Tell a Tale of Pollution. See sidebar The Mahoning River Basin, which used data from the Ohio EPA. *The Youngstown Vindicator*. [Source: Clippings file on Mahoning River at the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County]

in the voiceover at the end of the film: 'You know, I look back on that house, and I think that it's unfair that the only thing that's keeping you from preserving your history or building your legacy in that home is that you just don't have the money to do it. I don't mean the money to get something. I mean the money to keep what's yours.'[50]

Twenty years or more before Jones' grandparents bought the house at 631, Youngstown's rate of home ownership was the fifth highest in the country. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, p. 73) This was largely possible because jobs in the steel industry paid good wages, but in fact many workers, like Jones' grandfather, had professional or managerial jobs. Good jobs paying good wages for working people represented the positive side of what the Mahoning Valley had to offer in the twentieth century.

The fact that Jones' family could buy a house like the one at 631, could make memories there and live a decent life, was one of the reasons immigrants came to Youngstown and African-Americans arrived from the South during the Great Migration.[51] But as early as the 1920s, Youngstown had become a 'balkanized' city, in which people were divided according to race, national origin, and whether or not they were native born. (Linkon & Russo, 2002, p. 31) This division was encouraged by the steel companies in the hopes that workers wouldn't band together and organize for better conditions.

At the EPA hearing in 1974, the sign warned that 'A Clean and Gentle River' would wash away your home, and in fact many homes like the one at 631 Ridge have been all but washed from the landscape. But it's always worth remembering that it wasn't the (mostly rescinded) EPA regulations that shut down the steel industry in Youngstown. What closed the mills and created empty lots and abandoned houses was inequality of political and economic power. Steelworkers and their allies couldn't force the steel industry to keep the mills open or to sell them to the workers.[52] Exacerbated by a racial wealth gap, this inequality of power eventually led to the destruction of neighborhoods. These are problems that no river seems yet to have washed away.

[50] *631* is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjWR5oi1kno. The filmmaker's bio and a list of his projects can be found on his website at https://adjonesfilm.com/.

[51] For more about The Great Migration, go to University of Washington's America's Great Migrations Project website. (n.d.) The Great Migration (African American). https://depts.washington.edu/moving1/black_migration.shtml

[52] Justia US Law site. (Argued June 18, 1980. Decided July 25, 1980.) Local 1330, United Steel Workers of America, and Frankgeorges, et al., Plaintiffs-appellants. v. United States Steel Corporation, Defendant-appellee, 631 F.2d 1264 (6th Cir. 1980). https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/631/1264/86708/

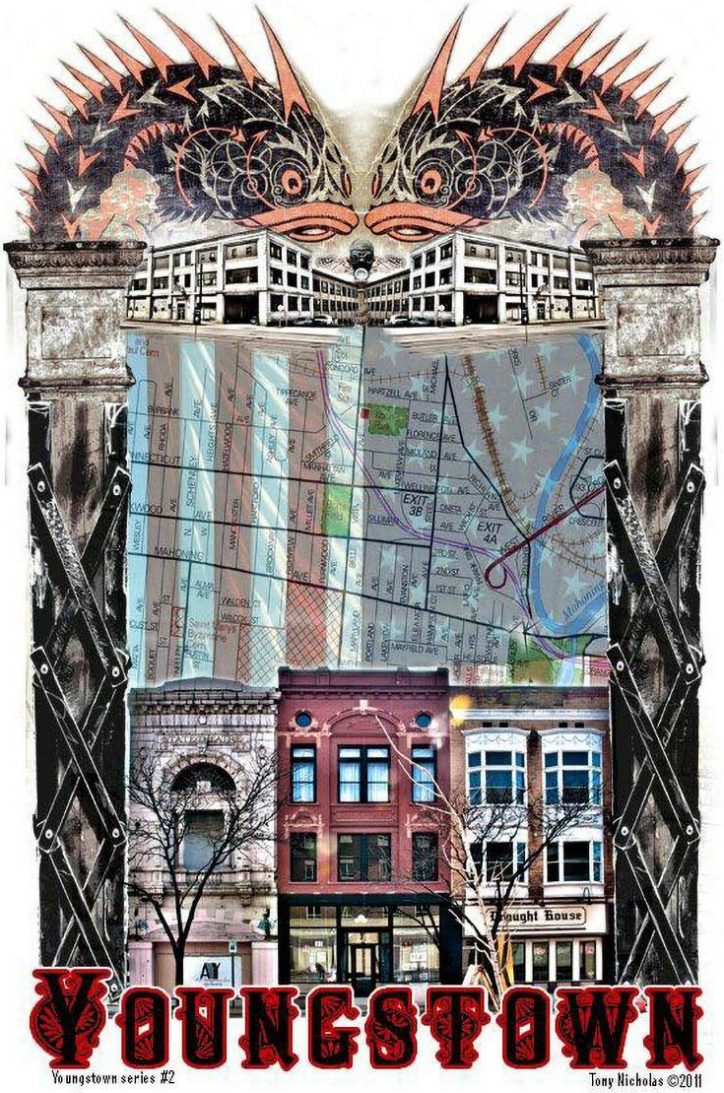

Image 12. Poster from Youngstown series #2 by Terry Nicholas, 2011. Used by permission.

Available as a poster, this collage by Tony Nicholas contains images of past and present events in the Mahoning Valley and also gives a nod to the notion of Rust Belt chic.[53] At the top of the collage, mirrored images of the fantastical fish from Barney Carnes' 1931 design make a comeback, along with the companion mermaid. Below them, the Ward Bakery building, which the Ward Bakery Market, Artists, Makers and Collectors call home, is also mirrored; and, like a treasure map hidden in plain sight, a bit of the near west side is shown, which includes a segment of the Mahoning River.

Artists in Youngstown in the 21st century struggle to reinvent themselves, just as workers must do during deindustrialization, and the lore of the Steel Valley has inspired local arts and crafts.

[53] Doig, Will. (May 12, 2012). Rust Belt chic: Declining Midwest cities make a comeback. *salon*. https://www.salon.com/2012/05/12/rust_belt_chic_declining_midwest_cities_make_a_comeback/

The river, too, is prospering once again. That there is now a Youngstown Foundation Amphitheatre for outdoor concerts and a park next to the river is all the more surprising, considering the state of the Mahoning just a few decades ago.[54] And the rejuvenated river is celebrated each year at Riverfest. As for the fish: According to the 2021 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory, you can now expect to catch yellow perch, bluegill, common carp, northern pike, rock bass, smallmouth bass, walleye, and channel catfish in the Mahoning River. These fish should be eaten with some degree of caution because of contamination by mercury and PCBs, though compared to what the river could support fifty years ago, this report suggests remarkable biodiversity.[55]

On the other hand, over that same fifty years, the relentless process of deindustrialization has caused the number of good working-class jobs in the Mahoning Valley to continue to decline.

Conclusion

Despite the improved health of the river, the Mahoning watershed is still affected by the conflict between economy and ecology, as are the people who make their homes in the former Steel Valley. Currently, this conflict centers around hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking. Fracking and related processes are usually carried out in sparsely populated rural areas and so are less visible than the nine steaming, glaring, smoking mills that once lined the Mahoning River, but concerns about the costs to the environment and benefits to local people are as relevant as they were a hundred years ago.[56]

In their introduction to *Working on Earth: Class and Environmental Justice*, Christina Robertson and Jennifer Westerman tell the story of a water well in Pennsylvania that was contaminated by hydraulic fracturing; they then describe the conflict that develops between

[54] Morrison, Marah. (June 12, 2019). Amphitheater Promises to Spread Green Across Downtown. *The Business Journal*. https://businessjournaldaily.com/amphitheater-promises-to-spread-green-across-downtown/

[55] Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory. (2021). See the 2021 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory Table on page 17. https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/cd619fce-6bcb-4e15-9bf4-8d4d50e4155f/2021+Ohio+Sport+Fish+Consumption+Advisory+Final_05.11.2021_Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_M1HGGIK0N0JO00QO9DDDDM3000-cd619fce-6bcb-4e15-9bf4-8d4d50e4155f-nDcENzX

[56] Most often, it's wastewater injection sites that create environmental problems in the Mahoning watershed. Worrisome local consequences have included a 4.0 magnitude earthquake in 2011 and an accident at an injection site which caused oily wastewater to contaminate wells and wetlands in Vienna in 2015. See Gaffney, Austin. (December 3, 2018). Ohio Communities Are Becoming a Dumping Ground for the Fracking Industry. *National Resources Defense Council website*. https://www.nrdc.org/stories/ohio-communities-are-becoming-dumping-ground-fracking-industry. Fracking also produces radioactive waste, some of which is processed in the Mahoning Valley. See (August 8, 2021). Disposal of radioactive fracking waste alarms activists. *The Vindicator*. https://www.vindy.com/news/local-news/2021/08/disposal-of-radioactive-fracking-waste-alarms-activists/ It's also true that fracking has created several types of jobs in the former Steel Valley. These have included non-union millwright, maintenance, and other positions at French company Vallourec, which opened a plant at the site of the former Brier Hill Works of Sheet & Tube in 2012. Vallourec manufactures steel pipes for the oil and gas industry. See Kromer, Christopher. (September 30, 2018) Vallourec ramps up hiring in area as gas market improves. *Tribune Chronicle* website. Retrieved December 11, 2021. https://www.tribtoday.com/news/local-news/2018/09/vallourec-ramps-up-hiring-in-area-as-gas-market-improves/ In a city that has faced the kind of economic devastation Youngstown has seen in recent years, these jobs have been most welcome. As a result, environmentalists have sometimes been met with negative reactions to their anti-fracking campaigns. See Zremski, Jerry. (May 19, 2014). Youngstown, Ohio, is a city changed by fracking. *The Buffalo News*. https://buffalonews.com/news/local/youngstown-ohio-is-a-city-changed-by-fracking/article_4c2540b7-49ea-5649-a13e-4da825642b00.html

those who benefit from jobs and other financial incentives of fracking and those who suffer the environmental consequences. This conflict splinters communities as the familiar tensions play out between ecology and economy.

Robertson and Westerman note that working-class people often face a dual injustice as they are exposed to both precarious economic circumstances and environmental harms. This dual injustice is 'reinforced by a social hierarchy where the most affluent groups amass wealth and dominate decision making while assuming less risk of exposure to environmental hazards,' but the choice between jobs and the environment is a false one that harms both working people and the natural world. Instead, Robertson and Westerman call for a working-class ecology that 'challenges industrial policies and practices that divide economic security from environmental health, forcing workers, communities, all sentient beings, and the land to pay dearly for the cost of making a living.' (Robertson & Westerman, 2015, p. 3)

Arguably, the increasingly mainstream notions of environmental justice and wholistic health have made the need for a working-class ecology clearer. For one thing, the decision made by a state-appointed manager to change the source of drinking water for the city of Flint, Michigan, to the Flint River has raised people's consciousness enormously.[57] And the justifiable anger of Flint residents over the contamination of their drinking water, as well as the resistance of Native American water protectors at Standing Rock, have brought issues of race and class to the forefront and have fueled a desire for environmental justice. In the Mahoning Valley in the 21st century there has also been a growing consciousness that the link between economy and ecology is human well-being, understood in a wholistic way.[58] Because working-class people and people of color are more likely to experience environmental harms, they are increasingly seen as necessary coalition partners in the move toward sustainability.

In *Working-Class Environmentalism: An Agenda for a Just and Fair Transition to Sustainability*, Karen Bell, who has considerable experience as an environmental activist and environmental justice researcher in the UK, expresses her belief that our current situation is at a 'tipping point' in which environmmental issues are 'now increasingly being recognized as fundamental to human health and wellbeing.' (Bell, 2020, p. 12) She calls attention to the destructive nature of classism and encourages environmentalists to change tactics and recognize that working-class people are important allies. She also points out that the environmental movement should focus on 'companies and governments as the main culprits of unsustainability' and not simply call for changes in personal choice and behaviors. (Bell, 2020, pp. 210-211).

[57] It wasn't just coincidence that the corrosive river water leached lead from the pipes of Flint households and created a nightmare for Flint residents, particularly parents who must worry about the long-term effects of lead on their children's health. The Flint River, like the Mahoning, was a 'workhorse' of the industrial era and had been contaminated by human and industrial waste. Treatment of contaminants made the water corrosive and able to leach the lead from Flint households' pipes. See Carmody, Tim. (February 26, 2016). How the Flint River got so toxic. *The Verge*. https://www.theverge.com/2016/2/26/11117022/flint-michigan-water-crisis-lead-pollution-history The state-appointed manager justified the use of river water as a cost-saving measure, but hundreds of millions of dollars must now be spent to try to address the problems this created – and of course, no amount of money can reverse the devastating effects of lead on young children.

[58] 21 WFMJ. (August 13, 2019). Trumbull NAACP holds community meeting to deter fracking. *21 WFMJ website*. https://www.wfmj.com/story/40914458/trumbull-naacp-holds-community-meetingto-deter-fracking

Focusing scrutiny on companies and governments instead of on the behavior of individual citizens can also help us to read the Mahoning River landscape more accurately and to understand the power relations that played out there. After all, it was the steel industry that made the final decision (with the aid of the EPA) not to clean up the river and later made the decision to close down the mills without listening to the demands of the workers and the community. In the future, if environmentalists and working-class people begin to see their common interests and take into consideration such power relations, the conflict between economy and ecology will be easier to resolve. Because people need jobs, it's true, and they need homes, but people also need clean water and a healthy environment in order to live well. And if human beings have a clean and healthy environment, the fish will prosper, too. So in addition to living their own supple, shiny, scaly, slippery lives, fish will function as one of many indicators that real prosperity has arrived at last.

Author Bio

Alice Whittenburg grew up in the Mahoning Valley when it was the Steel Valley, and her father worked at Republic Steel. As a member of Progressive Printers Collective, which published the short-lived *Grassroots Magazine*, she attended a 1974 EPA hearing on the Mahoning River in downtown Youngstown. A lifelong interest in the conflict between economy and ecology began at that hearing and inspired this essay.

She now lives in Tucson, Arizona, and co-edits the online magazine *The Cafe Irreal*. Her essays and fiction have appeared in *3:AM Magazine*, *The Ekphrastic Review*, *Atlas & Alice*, and *Eclectica Magazine*, among others. She is a member of the National Writers Union Tucson Chapter and editor of the Tucson Peace Calendar.

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Reviews by Jennifer Forsberg, Isabel Roque, and Rebecca Temple

The Handbook of Working-Class Studies, *published this year, is such a mammoth volume that most of us are still working our way through it. Since it's too big for one person to review in a timely fashion, we asked three relative newcomers to working-class studies to give us a comprehensive account of the volume. Jennifer Forsberg walks us through Parts I and III on methods and work & community; Isabel Roque, through Parts IV and VI on culture and activism; and Rebecca Temple, on Parts II and V on education and representation.*

Part I: 'Methods and Principles' & Part III: 'Work and Community' by Jennifer Forsberg

Part I: 'Methods and principles of research in working-class studies' and Part III: 'Work and Community' map the *how* and *why* of working-class studies. The two sections survey and expand the critical map of working-class studies as both positional and site-situated to showcase the social, cultural, historical, and biopolitical pressures of class identity.

As a foundation, Sherry Lee Linkon identifies the scholarly personal narrative as the signature genre of the field, arguing that it showcases a 'hybridized narration' that offers both class memory and analysis, and reflects 'communities and systems' in addition to individual lives (20). This Part I *multiplicity* and *hybridity* is best exemplified by Jane A. Van Galen's exploration of *First in Our Families,* a digital storytelling workshop for first-generation college students that builds community among first-generation students and their peers, while facilitating discussions of equity and inclusivity inside and outside of academic institutions (p. 47; p. 45).

Such multiplying effects are rooted within environmental stimuli, further exemplified in Part III when Geoff Bright details the re-imagining of working-class histories in England's coal field 'Ghost Labs.' These collaborative community/activist/arts workshop(s) narrate both the lived-experience and cultural afterlife of select deindustrialized sites through affective means (p. 215). Participants reveal the 'entangl[ed] reminder of lingering trouble' in class history in the UK and its consistent 'haunting' of eras old and Brexit-new (p. 214).

Similarly, site-specific narration takes precedence in Part I in Christine J. Walley's 'Exit Zero Project', a multimedia and multigenerational ethnographic endeavor in Southeast Chicago. Walley's activist call for innovative modalities aims to promote a meaningful local archive and convincingly highlights the need for diversified methodologies that position class as an ever-changing and relational history, identity, and culture (p. 70).

The critical challenge to capture individuals, communities *and* systems provides the context for Joseph Entin's Part I call to return to Marx-based theoretical anchorings in order to foster new modes of learning, telling, and historicizing. However, most provocative is Entin's championing of Sartrean 'seriality,' a concept that aims to make meaning from *within* multiple social patterns and across stories. In addition to the aforementioned studies, the notion of 'seriality' is instrumental in the study of deindustrialization, a topic that takes priority in Part III, as it offers patterns of change in working-class life through narratives of neoliberal precarity.

Steven High emphasizes the need for oral history as global lived experience in the growing interdisciplinary study of deindustrialization. In doing so, High captures a non-linear historical progression that can recognize both the active 'political resistance' of individuals and the 'cultural persistence or erasure' individuals face (p. 171). These persistent biopolitical patterns of change, as Patrick Korte & Victor Tan Chen's study suggests, leave deep, traumatic effects on workers into the 21st century, calling for further study of the demoralizing impact of economic dislocation.

In addition to communities and systems, Part III impressively showcases deindustrialization through the mental and/or physical effects of precarity on the working *body*: as collective anger expressed by displaced workers in High, as 'industrial disease' in Arthur McIvor (p. 166), and in Kathryn Marie Dudley's direct correlation between deindustrialized Massachusetts and opioid addiction. These narratives of health and wellness address the need for critical study that does not 'reproduce the traumatic effects of deindustrialization' (p. 208). In other words, these scholars offer not just *multiplicity* and *hybridity*, but what Dudley calls the 'futurity' of working-class study, working-class communities and working-class life.

Collectively, Parts I and III prove that more malleable methods can call attention to not only the individual narratives of class, but also the material realities of class. This includes the working body, encompassing healthcare, nutrition, and psychiatry. But it also includes site-specific studies like environmental studies or urban planning to better examine what McIvor calls 'work-health cultures' that exhibit influence on the body (p. 190). These offerings promote evolutionary scholarship and activism able to oscillate between story and theory, the local and global, and individuals and their diverse community settings.

Part IV: 'Cultures' & Part VI: 'Activism' by Isabel Roque

In Part IV on 'Working-class cultures,' Jack Metzgar argues that working-class culture is genuine in the sense that it has an internal coherence that is separate and distinct from middle-class culture. In contrast to the middle-class, 'working-class culture emphasizes *being* and *belonging*, not *achieving* and *becoming.*' And he cites Barbara Jensen as exploring 'the exciting potentials of middle-class *becoming* and the warm advantages of working-class *belonging*' (p. 231). Jensen herself examines the devastating psychosocial consequences of precarity among younger working-class people who have to face more extreme working conditions than previous generations. Betsy Leondar-Wright argues that we need stronger progressive social movements and that building them depends on understanding how class culture differences among activists causes internal misunderstandings and tension. Class inclusiveness requires class consciousness and class identities, i.e., a cultural lens regarding the differences between working-class and middle-class activists.

According to Jessi Streib, class has a culture, but if people misrecognize their own class position, how can they share a culture? The denial of class cultures belies our experiences, for class shapes how people make sense of the world. Culture includes tastes (likes and dislikes), worldviews (orientation ideas toward the world), dispositions (habitual tendencies), and linguistic styles (how we talk). Sarah Attfield holds that popular culture is an important place to look for working-class representation and working-class expression. She focuses on working-class culture and its misrepresentation in Australian media, which places white and aggressive working-class masculinity at the centre of narratives about what it means to be Australian. Derived from Marx, Weber and Bourdieu's understandings of class, these chapters reveal how class is formed, played out and reproduced in real settings.

In Part VI on 'Activism and Collective Action,' Karen Gaffney focuses on the issue of activism regarding college community, seeking to look at all classes from the point of view of working peoples' lives, experiences, needs, and interests. Terry Easton uses the same approach, focusing on the voices, images, and reflections of a diverse group of day laborers and affordable housing activists. Leslie Hossfeld, E. Brooke Kelly, and Julia F. Waity study workers who labor at the production of healthy food but cannot afford to buy it and the resulting global struggle for food justice. Michael Zweig focuses on race and class, two different structures of power that are mutually determined, stressing that the foundation for a progressive future requires a patriotic, morally based, class-conscious movement that unites all segments of the working class.

Through the use of oral history, Michele Fazio captures the everyday lives of citizens who have endured the spiralling effects of job loss and economic precarity since the 1980s. Fazio stresses the importance of this project for strengthening the academic skills of her students and for developing a working-class studies activist approach to service-learning. Isabel Roque explores new forms of organising from below, especially cyber-activism. In the 21st century, a new class power, activism, and unionism are being rebuilt in the service sector, especially among workers who deal with digital platforms. This is bringing new synergies at a national and international level, reinventing the sense of traditional unionism, and engaging with other social struggles for labor and human rights. Joseph Varga examines how unions and members of the working class and their supporters are establishing repertoires of contention to meet the needs of contemporary struggles over worker's rights. He stresses that scholars of working-class activism, union organizing, and working-class culture need to analyse the post-Fordist period with a critical eye regarding the repertoires of contention used in the struggle for decent living standards and workplace voice.

These essays are an extremely valuable resource for working-class studies activists, academics and students, seeking to bring a more inclusive approach regarding class consciousness and solidarity, and breaking down traditional gender, race, and class divisions.

Part II: 'Education' & Part V: 'Representations' by Rebecca Temple

Relying upon the myth of the American Dream, the institution of public education appeals to students who wish to pursue their individual goals, advance in social influence, or contribute to the prosperity of their communities. Part II of the *Handbook* invalidates this mythological ideology by exploring the deeply engrained cultural divisions and discriminatory practices in education that often thwart working-class and first-generation students from realizing this dream.

The current standard policies and procedures in education reflect the dominant middle-class culture built upon the prejudice of classism. Classism is a powerfully subversive force that is often overlooked in American society due to the prevailing belief that an individual can determine their success by relying upon their own strength. The writers of the essays in 'Class and Education' completely discredit this flawed ideology. Through analysis of the psychological conflicts of cultural mismatching and isolation, the debilitating physical effects of stress, and the financial anxieties that routinely impede working-class and first-generation students in academia, each writer provides evidence to support the argument that we 'need an alternative way to think about education' (p. 80).

Drawing upon both extensive scholarly research and their own personal experiences and applications, the essayists provide strategies designed to fight the cyclical reproduction of social class in school and after graduation. For example, scholars Colleen Clements and Mark Vagle propose five principles of social class-sensitive pedagogy to examine the systemic problem of poverty; Lisa Kirby shows how 'content and pedagogy' are crucial to implementing Workin- Class Studies in a curriculum; Bettina Spencer offers several approaches to battling classism on campuses; and Colby King and Sean McPherson present the success of the class coalition at Bridgewater State University. Deborah Warnock's essay ends this section with re-examination of the many issues that exacerbate social class inequalities in education but, as Diane Reay hopes, current political climates and increasing awareness will provide opportunities to make changes in public education that will grant us our 'alternative view of education,' one that empowers everyone in its inclusivity and unity.

Visual, literary, and dramatic artistic creations shape, reflect, and communicate the values and concerns and establish the identity of a community. Section V of the *Handbook* presents scholarship that investigates a wide range of cultural production and depiction of the working-class in various media with an attempt to 'expand the commons,' as Janet Zandy suggests (p. 354).

In her chapter entitled, 'Mapping working-class art,' Zandy unpacks the 'intersecting and shaping elements' that contribute to the almost limitless aspects of working-class art, asking questions such as: 'How does working-class art work?,' 'How can we start to see art making through the lens of a working-class perspective?' and 'How does it reflect, perhaps serve, the interests of ordinary people?' (p. 345). The essays in this collection contribute some answers to these questions, and through analysis of artistic representation, they expand the awareness of the culture and realties of working-class life.

The struggles between the working-class precariat and forces of power are often embattled in spaces that are transitory, unstable, unwelcoming, and in some instances, closed. Christiane Scholte analyzes two texts that narrate the lives of Asian 'petro-migrant' taxi-drivers among Dubai's urban landscape, in private flats, and through well-known tenement houses. Tom Zaneillo examines five significant movements of film that illustrate the lives of American migrant workers, Chinese internal labor migrants, workers in waste and toxic zones, the working class directly affected by Wal-Mart, and fictionalized workers in virtual reality. Carol Quirke challenges the supposed absence of working-class representation in post-Depression documentary by exploring the photography of Arthur Leipzig, Dan Weiner, and Robert Frank.

Continuing this notion of 'things left out,' Ben Clarke insists that working-class literature has been unfairly excluded from academia and offers suggestions for ways these texts can be read differently to re-define what counts as literary. Simon Lee accentuates the importance of

setting in films that depict working-class lives as it provides tension between the grit of the individual character's tenacity and the physical grimy grit of the spaces in which they work and live. From the space of prison, Nathaniel Heggins Bryant calls for solidarity between workers on 'both sides of the wall' with his argument that US prison writing and literature are forms of 'intellectual labor and . . . potential sources of resistance' (p. 381). And, finally, Jennifer Forsberg examines three millennial television sit-coms that situate working-class female bodies as vulnerable and marketable but mask social and economic inequality and division.

Reviewer Bios

Jennifer Forsberg is a senior lecturer in the College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities at Clemson University in South Carolina.

Isabel Roque is a researcher at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, a member of the Call Center Workers Union, and a Ph.D. candidate in Labor Relations - Sociology at the University of Coimbra in Portugal.

Rebecca Temple is a high school English teacher in Madison, Mississippi, and a graduate student in Rhetoric and Composition at Texas A& M University-Commerce.

Rank, M., Eppard, L., and Bullock, H. (2021) *Poorly Understood: What America Gets Wrong About Poverty*. Oxford University Press.

Review by Ryan Pettengill

Arguably no politician weaponized the misunderstanding surrounding poverty quite as effectively as Ronald Reagan. In a 1976 campaign speech in Asheville, North Carolina, Reagan invoked widely-held yet mostly false assumptions regarding persons benefiting from public assistance. Using the racially-charged term 'welfare queen,' he implied this individual was a product of urban America, had several children (many of whom were from different fathers), and committed fraud to unjustly claim more than her fair share of public assistance. In essence, these individuals were not only celebrating their poverty but *profiting from* it. In the process, Reagan distorted an already misunderstood concept – poverty in America. Mark Robert Rank, Lawrence M. Eppard, and Heather E. Bullock challenge these misconceptions in *Poorly Understood*. In the process, the authors shed light on who the poor are, why poverty exists, what causes poverty, the social safety net designed to address poverty, how institutionalized inequality (based on race, sex, class, etc.) oftentimes leads to poverty, as well as what might be done to substantially reduce the level of poverty in the United States.

Rank, et al. begin their analysis by determining who the poor are, where they live, and how long they tend to experience poverty. The authors believe that a central driver of the myths surrounding poverty is an 'us' versus 'them' understanding of the issue (p. 7). Many Americans believe that the poor are concentrated in cities, hold few professional skills, and will remain mired in their condition indefinitely. In other words, poor people are outliers in American life. But the authors find that poverty is much more pervasive than Americans like to believe. Statistically speaking, most Americans will experience poverty at some point in their lives (p. 10). Rank, et al. find that the poor can be found in virtually any location across the country. In fact, they point out that in terms of sheer numbers, suburbia now holds the dubious honor of housing the largest conglomeration of poor people. Although most of these individuals experience poverty only in brief, fluid spells, poverty is anything but an outlier in American life. Indeed, economic 'insecurity is in fact something that happens to most of us' (p. 27).

With respect to why poverty exists in the United States, Rand, et al. point to the lack of availability of jobs with which individuals can support themselves or their families. While the common assumption is that poor people are lazy or lack adequate skills to compete in a modern job market, the authors insist that the American economy has produced an inordinate amount of low-paying jobs that leave workers economically insecure and vulnerable to the ebb and flow of the market. Complicating matters, policymakers – playing upon the myth that poverty is in many ways unavoidable – have successfully scaled back public welfare programs that have been effective in reducing poverty. According to the authors, this myth 'breeds apathy and an acceptance of the status quo' (p. 68). The authors reject the myth and claim that it 'is simply incorrect to argue that poverty cannot be substantially reduced' (p. 64). Pointing to President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, they highlight a period in which the American

government made a concerted effort to not only address poverty but also the underlying social circumstances that perpetuate it.

The tolerance of poverty, as the authors note, is not without social consequences. Specifically, childhood poverty results in the American taxpayer spending more money in the long run. The authors believe that the societal costs of poverty are the product of public policies that have favored the economic elite, namely through tax cuts for the wealthy. Rand, et al. believe that the persistence of poverty has much less to do with specific character flaws of the poor and much more to do with systemic inequality. This inequality results in 'a range of troubling societal conditions, including lower life expectancy, worse health conditions, reduced child well-being and academic performance, crime and incarceration, drug abuse, teenage birthrates, and lower levels of trust…' (p. 145).

Why, then, do Americans continue to cling to the status quo and accept poverty as an inevitable byproduct of free market capitalism? Rand, et al. believe poverty represents the 'American nightmare' (p. 164). The American dream is grounded in the concept of opportunities being endless in the United States, the assumption being that anyone willing to work hard and play by the rules has the capability to rise in this world. So, this being the case, there must be something wrong with the individual who is mired in poverty – they have not worked hard enough, made poor decisions, or acquired enough skills. As Rand, et al. point out, to 'acknowledge that poverty is simply endemic to America as a whole is to challenge the very core of the nation's ideals and creed' (p. 165). It is easier to simply write off the poor as outliers and exceptions to the rule.

One key challenge in making sense of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century economy is balancing the concept of new opportunities with new vulnerabilities. Indeed, the economy *did* add millions of jobs but it did so in the emerging service-based sectors, which tended to pay low wages and offered few benefits. With respect to poverty, most teachers, scholars, and activists emphasize downturns in the American economy and how they translated into unemployment, which then translated into poverty. As historians like David Kennedy note, throughout the Great Depression, hundreds of thousands of workers lost their jobs on a weekly basis. The calamities that resulted from this unemployment ran the gamut: malnutrition, homelessness, an assortment of health challenges, etc. In essence, being unemployed was an important part of being 'poor.' As *Poorly Understood* observes, poverty had changed by the late twentieth century. Now it was possible to be poor yet still employed. Saul Alinsky would describe these individuals as 'have some, want more.' In *Rules for Radicals*, Alinsky stresses how important it is to reach out to individuals like these and bring them into the broader fight for economic justice, lest they become prey to the Wallaces or Nixons of the world. To that end, the current political backdrop of Trumpism and the impulse to explain away large, complex concepts in overly simple, bite-sized anecdotes makes *Poorly Understood* even more timely. Even though misinformation presents a powerful challenge, the authors believe that the twenty-first century offers a unique opportunity to 'reshape general perceptions to better align with the actual realities rather than the myths of poverty' (p. 180). They note the way the Me Too and Black Lives Matter movements have effectively used social media to fight against sexual harassment/assault and police brutality. They believe social media has the potential to spread awareness and call people to action with respect to standing up to injustice and poverty in America.

A more thorough understanding of poverty helps bring agency to the American working class. In that respect, *Poorly Understood* makes a valuable contribution to working-class studies. Moreover, it is grounded in an interdisciplinary approach, making it relevant to academics from a wide range of backgrounds. Perhaps most important of all, *Poorly Understood* teases out the misconception that poverty is not a racial problem or a regional problem but an American problem, giving labor and social activists a launching pad from which to delve into a deeper conversation with those standing on the sidelines and stress the urgency of the matter when it comes to poverty in America.

Reviewer Bio

Ryan S. Pettengill teaches history at Collin College in Texas. He is a labor historian whose work focuses on the intersection of working-class activism and American radicalism throughout the twentieth century. His most recent book is entitled *Communists and Community: Activism in Detroit's Labor Movement, 1941-1956*.

Damaske, S. (2021) *The Tolls of Uncertainty: How Privilege and the Guilt Gap Shape Unemployment in America.* Princeton University Press.

Review by Robert D. Francis

To begin her book, *The Tolls of Uncertainty*, sociologist Sarah Damaske invokes the famous Depression-era portraits of the unemployed by Dorothea Lange. For Damaske, like Lange a hundred years ago, the goal is 'to see the unemployed and take up her [Lange's] call to action' (p. xi). Through interviews with one hundred unemployed workers, including many in the working class, Damaske undoubtedly accomplishes the first goal. Whether she accomplishes the second will be in the eye of the reader.

The theme of the book emerges early: 'the tolls of unemployment are both more numerous than we previously imagined and not evenly shared by the unemployed' (p. 4). The book is based upon interviews with 51 men and 49 women between 2013 and 2015 who had lost a full-time job and received unemployment from the state of Pennsylvania. Just over half of the cases were working class, defined in this research as those who held jobs that did not require a college degree. The predominant whiteness of the sample is reflective of the field site but makes conclusions about race more difficult to draw from these cases alone.

The book is divided into three sections that follow the experience of unemployment: Part I: Losing A Job; Part II: The Fallout; and Part III: The Search. Although Damaske and her team interviewed 100 people, she focuses on the stories of four people to provide a narrative thread throughout the book: Tracy, a working-class woman; Neil, a middle-class man; Joan, a middle-class woman; and Anthony, a working-class man. We meet others along the way as Damaske unfolds the experience of job loss.

Damaske does not focus exclusively on working-class people, but the fact that her data tell stories of unemployment across social classes is a strength of the book. Having male and female subjects in both working-class and middle-class jobs allow for fruitful comparisons. It is no surprise that working-class people sometimes react differently to job loss than their middle-class counterparts. For example, Damaske writes that job loss is so common among her working-class male respondents that many of them displayed less anxiety when they lost work compared with those in the middle class, despite the fact that the working-class men were in more unfavorable economic circumstances.

For many readers, Damaske's topline findings will not be surprising: unemployment 'generates and reproduces inequalities between the employed and the unemployed, but also among the unemployed' (p. 9). White respondents on average fare better than respondents of color; men fare better than women; and those from the middle class fare better than those from the working class. As she writes, 'people from groups that have historically been marginalized—white women, the working class, and people of color—are the ones whom we have left behind' (p. 34).

While Damaske's headlines might be unsurprising, the real success of the book is in the stories of unemployed people. Each chapter is written with empathy and rigor as Damaske seamlessly weaves the stories of her respondents with existing academic literature about unemployment. Her writing is accessible and avoids jargon, making the book available for a wide audience. She points out when her findings support existing work, as well as when her findings seem to break new ground. For those in classrooms, the book is ripe for use with students.

Damaske's central finding, around which she builds two of her eight chapters, is what she calls the 'guilt gap,' by which she means the fact that women in her study exhibit more guilt about their unemployment than men. The guilt gap affects both health and household. While previous research finds that women have healthier habits than men, the guilt woman feel about their unemployment lead women in the study to defer health insurance and health care in favor of kids and partners. Men show no such deference where their own health is concerned. Damaske also finds that women in the study bear the lion's share of the household duties when unemployment hits, even in cases where couples tried to share duties equitably during employment. Unemployed middle-class men—often buoyed by savings, severance, and high-earning spouses—see unemployment almost as a vacation from domestic duties. Working-class men are more likely than middle-class men to look for work right away, but they too are not likely to step up at home when out of work, even if their partner is still working.

I found myself particularly interested in Damaske's observations about the labor market pathways of her subjects. By using a life course approach, Damaske has each person's full employment (and unemployment) history, allowing her to document what led to the job loss. She finds three distinct labor market paths: lockstep, in which respondents had job stability, few employers, and rare job loss; chronic unemployment, in which 'losing a job was just another part of having a job' (p. 41); and transitory, which is between the other two. Resonant with my own work among working-class men, she finds that workers stick with jobs that stick with them. But page after page of the book is filled with testimonies of the many ways in which workers were cast aside. While tales of full plant or company closures are virtually absent from these stories (a notable difference from the working-class literature of the 1980s and 1990s), there is a new normal of 'small batch' firings that can almost be described as casual. I think of Damaske's story of Alana, the top salesperson at a local business for *sixty* straight months, who was unceremoniously fired within a week of asking for raise.

I was also especially interested in the chapter about returning to work, in which Damaske describes the approach her respondents took after job loss. She identifies four types of job search among her respondents: Deliberate, Take Time, Urgent, and Diverted. This is another area where social class differences emerged: 'the working class appear doubly disadvantaged—both in their financial precarity and in how their insecurity constrained their [job] searches' (p. 179). These searches take place within the parameters of Pennsylvania's unemployment insurance (UI) system, which Damaske touches on in this chapter and elsewhere in the book. I think there was a missed opportunity to make the UI system, including the caseworkers, more of a central character. For example, in my own work among working-class men in Pennsylvania, I found a gamesmanship between unemployed men and the UI system that seems absent among Damaske's cases.

In some respects, one of the most telling findings about the working class is in the data Damaske and her team failed to gather. She and her team attempted to contact respondents about a year after the initial interviews, and they were unable to find half of the working-class

men they had spoken with just a year earlier. Phone numbers out of service, emailed returned, and addresses changed. She supposes that many relocated, but their absences speak volumes about the insecurity and precarity of these men's lives. In the final chapter, 'One Year Later', Damaske and her team find the working-class men and women struggling, about equally as likely to have fallen even further behind.

Compelling as the book is, some readers might find themselves looking for more meta-analysis. Damaske is disciplined in sticking within the bounds of her data, but a polemic against capitalism this book is not. Damaske is not dispassionate, but as an academic, she leans into her interviews, leaving it to the reader to decide how to translate her findings into action. Damaske says at the book's beginning that she wants to follow Lange's footsteps into action, but I suspect that some readers might want more radical solutions than the policy suggestions she offers in the book's final few pages: clearer UI rules, more generous UI benefits, fewer job search requirements, and a societal safety net with better childcare and healthcare supports.

There is always an element of chance with the timing of any research. As Damaske notes at the outset, her research on unemployment took place in the middle of a decade of unprecedented economic growth, half a decade after The Great Recession and half a decade before the worldwide pandemic. COVID-19 had emerged when she was reviewing her final draft, so she could at least nod to recent developments in the book. She heads off critics by asking what we might learn about job loss during relatively good times, answering her own question by suggesting that if unemployment is devastating and unequally shared in times of plenty, one can only imagine the toll during bad times. We will need current work to understand employment—and unemployment—in our COVID-19 moment; however, *The Tolls of Uncertainty* provides us an invaluable backdrop that is a must-read for any who are concerned about unemployment—and the unemployed.

Reviewer Bio

Robert Francis is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. His research interests include U.S. poverty and inequality, the working class, and rural communities. His work has appeared in *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences, Socius*, and the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.

Bell, K. (2020). *Working-Class Environmentalism: An Agenda for a Just and Fair Transition to Sustainability*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Review by Jennifer Westerman

The silhouettes of 29 coal miners are etched into the long, black granite memorial in the community of Whitesville, West Virginia. The miners stand alongside one another, some with their arms draped across the shoulders of others. Shaped like the contours of the Appalachian Mountains along its top edge, the Upper Big Branch Miners Memorial is a tribute to those workers who perished in an explosion in the Upper Big Branch Mine in nearby Montcoal. The verse 'Come to me, all you who labor, and I will give you rest' is inscribed in unadorned lettering across the base of the monument. Prior to the 2010 Upper Big Branch Mine explosion, more than 1,000 safety violations had occurred in the mine since 2007; federal health and safety regulators had shut down operations 60 times in 2009 alone.

I was reminded of this haunting memorial when I started reading the opening chapter of working-class scholar-activist Karen Bell's book, *Working-Class Environmentalism: An Agenda for a Just and Fair Transition to Sustainability*. Bell describes the devastating 2017 Grenfell Tower fire in the Lancaster West Estate social housing complex in north Kensington, west London, which resulted in the deaths of 72 mostly working-class residents, recounting a series of misguided decisions and management oversights and years of residents' health and safety concerns that had gone unaddressed. As with the Upper Big Branch Mine, working-class people were seen as disposable, replaceable, or simply not seen at all. 'In the UK and around the world,' Bell argues, 'working-class people are killed and injured through living and working in toxic and dangerous environments every day, largely invisibly, out of public sight and awareness' (p. 2).

Bell, whose research examines the political, geographical, and environmental dimensions of working-class studies and environmental justice, has for more than a decade written about environmental classism, and through her work, amplified the voices of working-class people. A senior lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environment at University of the West of England, Bell was previously a community development worker and environmental justice campaigner who has lived on council estates in the UK throughout her life. *Working-Class Environmentalism* is, in many ways, a remarkable culmination of her life's work so far.

Bell's primary aims involve thoroughly and thoughtfully defining environmental classism and working-class environmentalism, a discussion that is rich with nuance and purpose and made even more meaningful by the inclusion of insights from 27 working-class interviewees and Bell's personal experiences in environmental and social justice activism. Although workers and working-class experiences in the UK on council estates and other working-class and working poor areas figure prominently in the book, Bell's articulation of environmental classism as both socially

produced and preventable is deeply relevant to anyone who has considered who benefits and who pays when working-class people are left out of environmental decision-making and so often dismissed as anti-environmental.

Of particular significance to the field of working-class studies is Bell's discussion of class as both an analytical category and as lived experience in the context of environment and development, with emphases on intersectionality, disparate environmental burdens, and health disparities and outcomes. Bell demonstrates throughout *Working-Class Environmentalism* that 'using a framework that focuses solely on any single issue will not be sufficient to capture the form and extent of injustice that most working-class people experience' (p. 19). Bell's emphasis on intersectionality illuminates the fact that 'class cannot be experienced outside of other identities' (p. 15). Defining class thus involves the interplay between and among education, occupation, and intergenerational economic and social mobility; the material distribution of wealth and income; the concerns with how class origins shape life chances and opportunities; the unequal distribution of environmental harms; and the intersection of 'recognition,' status, and valuing (pp. 30-5).

According to Bell, 'environmental classism' results when working-class lives are devalued and dehumanized and when these conditions are connected to environmental inequality; indeed, 'working-class people carry the environmental burdens of society' (p. 72). Ange, one of the interviewees, put it this way: *'I heard the rubbish that come to [local area] has come from London. Why do they put the rubbish on a train and bring it here? There could be anything in it. If it is safe, why don't they burn it in London? Why do they bring it here where we live?'* (qtd. in Bell, p. 89). As Bell notes, environmental classism 'could not happen without the wider inequalities in society that produce social class' (p. 171). Ending environmental classism will require a more inclusive environmental movement, Bell asserts, one that seeks out, values, and is shaped by working-class experiences.

Bell inspires readers to take this knowledge and awareness and actively use it to disrupt patterns of injustice, unproductive divisions between social classes, inequitable institutional structures, and mainstream environmental policymaking and capitalist practices that are rooted in the separation of working-class people and their labor from environmentalism and environmentalists. The arc of *Working-Class Environmentalism* mimics this trajectory as Bell moves from foundational theories on class to environmental classism and from awareness of environmental attitudes, practices, and policies that leave out working-class people, to a call for embracing a working-class environmentalism that would challenge existing unjust systems and institutions and uphold environmental human rights as the measure of a just and sustainable society. This welcome social justice perspective on environmentalism and environmental policy-making highlights the ways in which working-class people and the working poor experience and respond to environmental inequalities. Bell calls on her readers and others to build a more inclusive environmentalism that will 'benefit, include, and respect working-class people' (p. 138). Learning from the environmentalism of the world's poor, efforts by trade unions to address environmental problems, and social movements for worker health and safety will enable a radical socio-ecological transformation. Bell asserts: 'we must build alliances between social and environmental movements and extend these movements to support the widest scope of humans and ecologies possible' (p. 232).

While the finality of the Upper Big Branch miners' lives is cast in solid stone, the debate over the right way to memorialize the Grenfell Tower victims is ongoing. The fire-ravaged shell of Grenfell Tower is wrapped in white sheeting with a banner hanging at the top that reads 'Grenfell Forever in our Hearts,' a sacred, yet impermanent, memorial. The building rises higher than those surrounding it, standing in stark relief against the sky. In this way, Grenfell is a symbol of Bell's purpose in writing this book: to call attention to landscapes of injustice for working-class and working poor people. 'Grenfell,' Bell writes, 'made classism visible' (p. 2).

Reviewer Bio

Jennifer Westerman is Associate Professor of Environmental Humanities and Department Chair in the Goodnight Family Department of Sustainable Development at Appalachian State University. She is co-editor of *Working on Earth: Class and Environmental Justice*, co-author of several articles on the social justice dimensions of education for sustainable development, and co-editor-in-chief for the journal *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*.

Attfield, S. (2020) *Class on Screen: The Global Working Class in Contemporary Cinema.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Review by Tom Zaniello

It goes without saying that this would be an essential book for any film scholar, film teacher, or film buff in the Working-Class Studies Association. But another strength of Sarah Attfield's book is that almost anyone in the WCSA would also find this book extremely helpful. She discusses important films that all of us should be familiar with, but she also brings us many neglected gems and underappreciated films. Her focus on films from 2000 to 2020 also makes it a timely and revealing guide to how labor has been portrayed all over the world in the last twenty years.

Sarah Attfield knows that the scale of 'class on screen' is global, but she proceeds bravely and brilliantly through more than 140 films, some of them well-known, others reasonably familiar to most film-goers, but many more without the recognition they deserve. With a keen eye and a large reservoir of experience, she proceeds to take us on a guided tour of important categories of culture and their films. In addition to the 140 primary choices for discussion, she often comments on related films and other films in a director's career.

Her interdisciplinary approach, her 'focus on the lived experiences of working-class people,' and her detailed intersectionality paying close attention to the characters in the films as they 'face layers of oppression due to their class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, and gender' are exemplary. Her working-class background growing up in council estate housing in London makes her a sensitive and caring commentator.

The book will therefore benefit not only those who make film studies their primary area of teaching and research, but it also provides those in other areas of working-class studies with a great introduction to the importance of films about class on a global scale. Her filmography lists 140 films that she discusses in some detail. Numerous others, not listed, are used for further elaboration of ideas raised by the primary group of 140. Both sets of films are important: the primary 140 which support her different chapter topics are obviously essential, but the secondary group, sometimes discussed in a few sentences or a paragraph or two, nonetheless offer additional important films often supplying an even greater cinematic context for the first group.

Five major topics are discussed in separate chapters; all of them are of great contemporary concern and all help form part of our necessary understanding of the state of labor films at this time.

The first group is *Work and Unemployment*, whose primary goal is to evaluate the representations of work in cinema 'in terms of their authenticity and nuance,' especially focusing on unemployment, including both urban and rural working classes. Five of the films discussed I would categorize as essential to understanding precarity in world labor: Ken Loach's take on London delivery drivers in *Sorry We Missed You*, Boots Riley's surreal American call center tale in *Sorry*

to Bother You, Ji-Young Boo's South Korean Big Box unionization drive in *Cart*, Ramin Bahrani's New York City push-cart worker in *Man Push Cart*, and Fan Lixin's 'internal' Chinese migrants in *Last Train Home*.

The second group is *Working Class Culture*, which dissects whether this culture 'binds communities together' or 'distracts ... people from their exploitation' or in what ways that culture is 'common around the world.' The subtopics are revealing: music and subculture, sport, and 'life on the streets and disaffected youth.' Such films as Jia Zhngke's *Unknown Pleasures*, Fernando Meirelles's *City of God*, and Stephen Chow's *Shaolin Soccer* about urban subcultures in China, Brazil, and Hong Kong, respectively, have had significant exposure in the USA and elsewhere. Attfield's placement of their significance in understanding a classic of cultural analysis, Dick Hebdidge's 1979 *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, illuminates the importance of film's role in interpreting working class resistance and struggle within dominant capitalist culture.

Films of *Immigration and Diaspora* make up the third group that focuses on 'immigrants, members of diasporas, refugees and asylum seekers,' especially films by immigrants of the Global South and diasporic filmmakers from the Global North. While there have been other studies of immigrant films, this chapter adds an important 'Detour into Palestinian Cinema,' certainly one of the neglected areas in films studies that Attfield's book hastens to repair. One of the films, *Five Broken Cameras*, a co-production of Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers, has been available for some time, but should be even more widely seen.

The fourth major group, *Gender and Sexualities*, turns to a 'detailed look at the intersections between class, gender, and sexuality,' focusing mainly on 'the experiences of women ... in light of feminist theory' but with a concern that 'gains by white middle-class feminists in the west' have not always benefitted working women around the world. One director, Spain's famous Pedro Almodovar, receives detailed attention because of his 'transgressive' and 'taboo' portrayal of so many fascinating female characters. Important films by women, especially Rungano Nyoni's *I Am Not a Witch*, set in an African village, and Celine Sciamma's *Girlhood*, set in a Parisian public housing estate, also receive incisive commentary.

The final major section is *Race and Class in Australian Indigenous Film* which details the 'intersections of class with race, but with a specific focus on films made by Indigenous Australians' that 'challenge the colonizer's gaze and use film as a method of self-representation (through storytelling).' In addition to films of the Palestinian diaspora, this important film culture offers films that Attfield is especially keen to highlight. Many films that she discusses I didn't know about and now want to see as soon as possible. Warwick Thornton's *Samson and Delilah*, for example, follows two young people who leave their 'remote Indigenous community' and face poverty and racism traveling to the town of Alice Springs. Although there is risk in depicting the addiction and 'personal trauma' of the Indigenous characters, Attfield argues that the director's cinematic portrayal is worth it.

One nice touch I found very helpful is Attfield uses chapter-end bibliographies. Not only are these convenient but they also immediately contextualize the important issues raised. Attfield's range throughout the book is obvious from these bibliographies but also from the text itself. She often develops points that too many of us have easily missed – for example, the use of Multicultural

London English (MLE), a working-class dialect that combines Cockney, Jamaican, African, and South Asian accents common among millennial London working-class youth. In brief, it is the 'vernacular of council estates and of UK grime music and epitomizes the multi-ethnic nature of London working-class communities.' She also points to films that use this dialect, making London symbolic of the global and communal working-class she is so keen—and able—to demonstrate in films from around the world.

Readers already familiar with some of the films she discusses will be gratified to discover more of the same; those plunging into this subject for the first time will be rewarded as well.

Reviewer Bio

Tom Zaniello directed the Honors Program and taught film studies at Northern Kentucky University; he has also been an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland and the National Labor College of the AFL-CIO. He is the author of three guidebooks to labor films: *Working Stiffs, Union Maids, Reds, and Riffraff: An Expanded Guide to Films about Labor* (2003), *The Cinema of Globalization: A Guide to Films about the New Economic Order* (2007), and *The Cinema of the Precariat: The Exploited, Underemployed, and Temp Workers of the World* (2020).

DiPaolo, M. (2021) *Fake Italian: An 83% True Autobiography with Pseudonyms and Some Tall Tales*. Bordighera Press.

Review by Michelle M. Tokarczyk

Fake Italian is a quintessentially American, quintessentially twentieth-century *bildungsroman*. Damien Cavalieri, its protagonist, is haunted by the feeling that he is a 'fake Italian.' He had no Italian-American friends in his elementary school, despite Staten Island's being a New York City borough heavily populated by Italian-Americans. As Damien reaches adulthood he comes to terms with his ethnic background, as well as with other crucial identity questions, such as masculinity and intellectuality.

Fake Italian spans Damien's youth from the ages of eleven to twenty-two. The book begins with his first day of middle school and his fateful decision to leave the gifted program because its students could not study Italian, and Damien wants to learn the language of his ancestors. But his move places him with less intellectual students for whom reading is uncool, and Damien unwittingly reinforces their perceptions by wearing a suit on the first day of classes. His classmates, many of whom are Italian-American, read his bookishness as a sign that he is Jewish, which intensifies Damien's feelings that he is not an authentic Italian. He endures mockery from girls and boys alike; worse, boys beat him and pelt him with stones. (His mother rescues him.) Damien endures by acting on the advice of his martial arts instructor Master Park (a woman) to use humor as a defense. The pages of *Fake Italian* are filled with self- deprecating, ironic humor.

As a member of Generation X, Damien belongs to the first cohort of latchkey children who spent hours a day with television shows and comic books. Damien makes countless references to iconic movies and television shows, such as *Jaws* and *Colombo*, as well as to Marvel comic characters—especially Wonder Woman. For Damien, popular genres such as science fiction, horror, and fantasy represent an escape from his insular environment, but also a possibility that alternative lives are possible.

Fake Italian is not about working-class identity. Damien bemoans the cookie-cutter appearance of Staten Island houses constructed for the working- and lower-middle classes. Usually, he describes himself and his family as middle class. However, the marriage of Damien's parents' is a fascinating depiction of gender and class dynamics. Working-class studies' scholars might describe this marriage as a cross-class one. His mother was making steady progress toward her doctorate in English; but she was married, had two children, and a spouse whose earnings were scant. She struggled to balance motherhood, teaching, and graduate studies. When her request for a leave of absence from the NYU graduate program was callously refused, she withdrew from the program, forfeiting the possibility of a tenure-track appointment teaching literature as well as composition. Luckily, she got a position teaching composition and eventually earned tenure. Damien, however, compares his mother's work of grading hundreds of remedial composition papers to a factory job. Significantly, she appears to be a changed person when she retires. In contrast, Damien's father,

traumatized by childhood experiences, works at a series of low-level positions, making his wife the breadwinner. He clings to markers of masculinity, remaining unwilling to help with household chores and expecting his wife to put dinner on the table. His sons follow his example, if with some guilt. The accumulated force of institutional sexism in both marriage and academia is too powerful to be overcome.

During his high-school years Damien, who identifies with his mother far more than with his father, struggles to form his own vision of manhood. He's chagrined by his father's flirtatious ways and his grandfather's reputation as a sex maniac. Friends press Damien to have a sexual experience, but he is more eager for a love relationship. Yet the girls to whom he is attracted are unavailable. Arwen, a Jewish soon-to-be heiress whose family will disown her if she marries a gentile, is his love for years. She reciprocates his feelings, but cannot act on them, and eventually marries someone else. Despite his disappointments in love, Damien remains unwilling to 'hook up' for sex. He is too sensitive and respectful of women to behave in this way.

In many ways, Damien is ill-fitted for a capitalist patriarchal society. During his college years this mismatch crystalizes in an argument with Sergio, a business major, who sees his undergraduate degree as a ticket to financial success. Damien, in contrast, sees his college years as an opportunity to learn about himself and acquire knowledge. In a nation where action is prioritized over thought, intellectuals such as Damien are marginalized. Similarly, although a Catholic and a Republican, Damien recoils from anti-choice Catholics who are unable to empathize with women. His need to solidify and live his values results from a tragedy: his best friend, Mitchell, was killed in a car accident. He wants to honor his friend's life by being as compassionate and as astute as Mitchell was.

To immerse himself in his heritage, Damien travels to Italy. Here he has a pivotal conversation about Italian identity. In response to Damien's bemoaning his 'fake' status, a stranger tells him that Italy was never meant to be a nation of one people. There are many types of Italians, and those who emigrated are among the best of them. More provocatively, the stranger states that the imposter syndrome is a technique of class warfare designed to impede solidarity. Ultimately, the stranger leaves Damien with the clichéd but very useful advice that he should be himself.

Overall, *Fake Italian* is an engaging and very well-written reflection on coming of age as an Italian-American male intellectual. Yet a book of 543 pages makes considerable demands on readers' time. The story of Damien's infatuation with Arwen might be condensed. Similarly, the numerous pop culture references—many of which will be unrecognizable within a few years—could be pruned. *Fake Italian,* however, is a valuable and enjoyable text for those interested in ethnicity, popular culture, and contemporary forms of the *bildungsroman*.

Reviewer Bio

Michelle Tokarczyk is professor emerita of English and an emerita affiliate of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Goucher College. In addition to edited volumes on working-class literature and critical studies of Maxine Hong Kingston, Sandra Cisneros, Dorothy Allison, and E.L. Doctorow, she has published two volumes of poetry, *Bronx Migrations* and *The House I'm Running From.*

Carby, H. (2019) *Imperial Intimacies*: *A Tale of Two Islands*. Verso.

Review by Jamie Owen Daniel

As has often been discussed, one of the most common components of working-class memoirs is the trauma of feeling one has had to give up a sense of belonging, of being rooted in a working-class community, culture, and family, in order to work as an academic or in another professional field. In order to 'move up,' one has to learn new ways of self-presentation, new cultural norms, that can make one feel less at home at 'home' and that one belongs 'neither here nor there.'

Another typical component is an insistence on combining autobiography and data/research, the first traditionally marked as 'personal,' or merely personal, the latter as more 'objective,' detached, generalizable, and therefore 'factual.' For many of us, this insistence on the legitimation of our personal experience as a valuable way of knowing is the greatest strength of these memoirs. Christine Walley, Jack Metzgar, and others have provided us with brilliant foundational examples of this form of what Sherry Linkon refers to as 'scholarly personal narratives.'

Hazel Carby's challenging memoir both confirms the value of using academic research and analytical skills to enrich a very personal memoir and complicates the assumption that the writer necessarily ever belonged, ever felt at home, in the working-class culture and community in which she was raised. In her case, trauma was caused by growing up in that community, not by leaving it. In documenting her experience and that of her mixed-race family, she raises important questions for how we generalize about working-class memoir writing.

Carby was born in 1948 in Devon, England, the eldest of two children of a white working-class mother and a Black RAF pilot born and raised in Jamaica who settled in England after the war. The rich social density of her memoir, which laboriously details the work lives of her forebearers, also characterizes other memoirs by British working-class women academics, from Carolyn Steedman's 1986 *Landscape for a Good Woman* to Alison Light's more recent *Common People*: *In Pursuit of My Ancestors*. Steedman, born in 1947, and Light, 1955, like Carby document the labor of their working-class parents' families and the extent to which they had to constantly uproot themselves to find work. Both write from the same period of childhood, but with no attention to the growing racial tensions within the class at that time, when unprecedented numbers of non-white subjects of the British colonies emigrated to Britain for work. For both Steedman and Light, the English working class was white.

For Carby, pointedly, there was the white working class and then her multiracial working-class family, constantly antagonized and belittled by the former. In one of the book's chapters in which the sense of anger that runs throughout the book is most apparent, she documents her father Carl Carby's pride in having served his country—Great Britain—as a fighter pilot, even after government officials mocked him and refused to believe his claims of having served.

As the book documents, juxtaposing family history with documentation, the dissolution of the British Empire after World War II meant the loss of status and the resources from the colonies upon which Britain had depended. It also meant the loss of jobs at home in ports, mills, coal yards, and manufacturing. To complicate these losses, the image of the Empire that was constantly reinforced and celebrated had been one of white Britains dominating brown and black colonial subjects, to whom they were assumed to be intellectually and culturally superior. The presence of Black Jamaicans like Carby's father in post-war Britain troubled and gave the lie to that image, resulting in both fear and deep resentment.

This resentment has been constantly exploited, sometimes explicitly (for example, in Peters Griffith's 1964 parliamentary campaign slogan, 'If you want an [n-word] for a neighbor, vote labour') and sometimes more indirectly, as a way to maintain the idea that proper Britishness, and especially Englishness, is white, and to keep the British working class divided against itself. As Jamaican-born cultural theorist Stuart Hall pointed out in 1980, 'Britain's long imperial hegemony, and the intimacy of the relationship between capitalist development at home and colonial conquest overseas, laid the trace of an active racism in British popular consciousness…penetrating deep into the working class itself.'

Carby's memories of childhood are thus dominated by racialized humiliation at school, from teachers as well as other children who refused to acknowledge her as British, and by tension at home due to limitations her parents faced because of their interracial marriage. After repeatedly being asked 'where are you from' and responding that she was, like her classmates, born in England, she recalls how

> [s]chool friends would ask, 'but how did you get here'? Being black British was incomprehensible, an impossibility between two mutually exclusive terms. Insisting that she was both placed her at the nexus of a domestic ambiguity that made her white teachers and classmates uncomfortable, so she learnt to live with being an unresolvable contradiction…Being black, there was no flexibility or malleability to her unbelonging. (p. 84)

Using what Adrienne Rich famously referred to as the 'asbestos gloves' of the third person to be able to write about experiences too painful to refer to directly, Carby's first person 'I' becomes 'the girl' when she writes about being thus humiliated and silenced by other children and teachers. And 'the girl' was also silenced, until this writing, about having been raped as a nine-year old by a white neighborhood boy, who afterwards 'issued a warning, 'just don't tell anyone.' She never did' (p. 58).

Race and gender dominate this memoir—both of which are embodied, quite literally, in her body but also, as she discovers, in her name. After much painstaking research, the trained historian learns that 'Carby' was the name of a working-class white Englishman who, like others who were able to 'jump class' in this way throughout the colonial Empire, became a wealthy plantation owner in Jamaica. Her research reveals not only that he enslaved Black people, but also that he most likely impregnated an enslaved Black woman who was one of her Jamaican ancestors. Just as she was assaulted as a child by a white neighbor boy, her very name is a reminder of the racialized sexual violence that was commonplace in Jamaica and elsewhere, during the supposedly

'civilizing' colonial occupation. She is thus, with bitter irony, a 'child of Empire,' but not in the way white British children were taught to understand themselves to be.

Imperial Intimacies confirms that there is no one working class that is positioned once and for always outside of or in opposition to dominant interests and ideologies. The extent to which white working-class Britain has been coopted by the fantasy of a common nationalist identity is well documented here. Rather, there are working-class histories sometimes radically differentiated by place, gender, and so often, by race, that sometimes intersect but often do not. For Carby, as for many other Black British scholars and activists, 'race ' in Hall's words, '[has been] …the modality in which class is 'lived,' the medium through which class relations are experienced, the form in which it is appropriated and 'fought through.' This has [had] consequences for the whole class.'

Thus, if Carby, who since 1984 has taught at Yale and written extensively on African-American, Black feminist, and Black Atlantic writers and thinkers, understands herself as belonging anywhere, it is not to the English working-class, but to the Black Atlantic diaspora of those whose classed experiences have been as complex and alienating as hers.

Reviewer Bio

Jamie Owen Daniel, a former assistant professor of English at University of Illinois-Chicago, is a retired union organizer and contract negotiator for the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

Nurse T. with Sheard, T. (2020) *A Pandemic Nurse's Diary.* Hard Ball Press.

Review by Jeanne Bryner

Being a critical care nurse demands creativity, cutting-edge knowledge and common sense. This country of the most acute illnesses requires physical stamina, dedication to being a team member, excellent assessment skills and adaptability to change. ICU nurses are constantly observing, listening and processing a cacophony of machines, their patients' and colleagues' body/verbal language, a plethora of medications, and physician orders and prioritizing needs before implementing treatments. They assess and evaluate after each new treatment. A never-ending wheel of needs turns. The nurse responds.

This is a non-fiction book about nursing during the COVID-19 pandemic in a New York City hospital. Nurse T with Timothy Sheard show the reader the plight of nurses who lack supplies and adequate staff but by their hearts and wit continue to show up day after day during a global pandemic. Essential workers, their life is on the line.

With two decades of experience, paper pants, shirt and face mask to protect her, Nurse T navigates the territory between her ICU COVID patients and death in New York City, 2020. She steers us through the pandemic's ambush, its surrounding misinformation, her months of duty, heartache, frustration and resolve. Her daily notations bring us so close to the bedside, we feel her breath inside the mask, the weight of her sweat dampening her scrubs. And we are relieved by her questions, the way she advocates for cutting-edge treatments and challenges authority about the lack of PPE and the outdated infrastructure of her home hospital. She is the nurse we want for our family, friends and ourselves.

Nurse T parts a curtain and reveals how shadowy healthcare delivery is even today, even in a country with deep pockets and brilliant minds. She bears witness to her lack of knowledge about COVID and supplies. We watch as her twelve-bed ICU unit takes on four COVID cases, then, every single bed and eventually, her entire hospital becomes a COVID hospital. She and other nurses question 'droplet only' precautions. COVID is a virus. And the Manhattan hospitals have installed fans in every ICU room to blow the virus outside. Why not here? Why not for the Medicare/Medicaid patients? This staff of caregivers? There's been no educational in-service on this new virus and her supervisor doesn't know if there will be. The pharmacy is low on first line sedation/anesthesia drugs and in the dark about when supplies will be filled.

Many of her patients are Black or Latino. They have multiple diseases, and now, COVID. The world news about the virus 'is not good.' We are beside her stepping into 'pools of bloody fluids' and placing ice bags to a fevered body. When blood clots clog the breathing tubes or lungs or invade her patients' brains, we want the new breathing tube to be patent, the lungs to clear and full neurological cognition to be restored. We sigh and share her dread when any higher up tells her 'we must have a meeting and discuss these concerns.' Our hearts do a happy dance when face shields and N95 masks arrive, purchased by a union for the staff of her hospital.

We want her fifteen- minute lunch or break to be longer and wrapped in silence. We want the first line drugs to *always* be available to sedate those terrified patients on the ventilators. We want more hands on deck to turn the patients prone. We want the families to be able to visit their loved ones.

When colleagues become her patients, it seems like things cannot become worse. When she knows that fifty percent of the patients on ventilators die; she feels her care is robotic. This constant wrestling with Death and staying in a nearby motel with colleagues and not seeing her family . . . It takes a toll. She has to talk a three hundred pound plus man into staying in his bed. After so long in the bed, his legs won't hold him. And she'll not be able to lift him from the floor. We want to hold our hands on either side of his full face and say, 'Listen to her, buddy. She knows her stuff.' We trust this voice who questions why Remdesivir trial treatments are denied to her hospital.

Nurse T and Timothy Sheard draw on their own critical care nursing experiences and reflections about the unending struggles of equitable healthcare delivery the world over. The voices of nurses are underrepresented in social, political and economic landscapes. This is a history we really need because it illuminates the lives of marginalized populations. Policies can be changed and infrastructure updated, if we are willing to stand up and use our bullhorn. Nurse T has done this with her book, and she admits to PTSD, and the value of counseling for her and her colleagues after the floodgates of COVID patients. This shared narrative is extremely valuable for all workers. We all wear masks. We go about our tasks smiling, nodding and performing, but so much boils underneath. We are not super human. There is no shame in letting go of angst with another professional or in a group or alone using a journal. Managers need to be questioned and informed of concerns; then, if there's no movement toward resolution,
go higher up the ladder.

She acknowledges the multiple layers of change to be addressed. No easy answers exist, but first, issues must be brought out of the shadows to be examined. She has done this. Nobody should have to fear for their life as they prepare for a work day, but nurses did and some of them died. Terror cannot be tamped down. With a clear eye and honest voice Nurse T has shared her experiences with us in one book. She is a brave person who made it through the wilderness changed. Timothy Sheard spent four decades in nursing. The book's motive is not an indictment. It is not written with anger or malice. These are reasonable statements about lack of communication, desperate needs for more staff, and how crucial it is to update existing structures.

The pandemic is still very active. Never mind what billionaire is orbiting earth inside his rocket. There's work right here, right now. We trust these voices that bear witness. We are reshaped from their memorable stories and thankful for this narrative.

Reviewer Bio

Jeanne Bryner is a retired emergency room nurse, writer and teacher. Born in Appalachia, she writes about working-class lives, and teaches writing workshops in schools, universities and community venues. She has several books in print and lives near a dairy farm with her husband, David.

Daniels, J. (2021) *Gun/Shy.* Wayne State University Press.

Review by William DeGenaro

Jim Daniels has been a working poet for upwards of forty years, perhaps known best to readers of *The Journal of Working-Class Studies* for his earliest collections and chapbooks. These early works drew on his experience growing up the son of a Michigan autoworker. His fantastic 1990 volume *Punching Out,* for instance, consists of a cycle of poems about Digger, a young man whose father gets him a job on the assembly line, initially as a summer gig. We witness Digger learning the ropes, becoming acclimated to factory norms, joining the UAW, and eventually becoming a lifer at 'Ford's.'

In these early poems, Daniels used vivid and precise markers of Warren, Michigan, most prominently its car factories but also its burger stands and bars, its trajectory from Democratic stronghold to home of the 'Reagan Democrat,' and its proximity to Detroit and the racial dividing line of 8 Mile Road. Before there was Eminem, there was Jim Daniels.

For much of his four-decade career, Daniels has also taught creative writing in Pittsburgh, and his experiences learning the middle-class conventions of academe have provided compelling material for his accessible, often-autobiographical brand of free-verse poetry. One of Daniels' abiding themes has been the complex range of emotions triggered by straddling two different worlds. Poet Cynthia Cruz has called this sensation 'the melancholia of class,'[187] which Cruz defines as the wonder, confusion, alienation, and guilt that accompanies growing up working class but moving into a middle-class world.

Daniels' explorations of that theme and that affective state have fed a prolific career as a poet (over two dozen books and chapbooks), editor, occasional fiction and screenplay writer, and frequent reader and speaker at working-class studies conferences.

In his newest collection of poetry, *Gun/Shy,* Daniels offers perhaps his most evenly balanced look at the two very specific worlds he's inhabited. Indeed, about half of the book's fifty-two poems exist in the world of 1960s/1970s working-class suburban Detroit, and the other half take place in the world of contemporary, middle-class suburbia. Poems existing in the latter world are particularly interesting when considered in the context of Daniels' broader body of work. In the more contemporary poems, Daniels sustains attention on the aforementioned straddling of class lines—long a concern of his poetry—but also allows his work to drift toward new shores like reflections on caring for senior parents and beginning to confront one's own mortality.

Similarly, these present-day poems deepen the resonance of the poems in *Gun/Shy* that are about childhood and adolescence back in Michigan. Both sets of poems in the collection seem to have the same, seemingly autobiographical narrator at two different points in his life. And there is much

[187] See Cruz, C. (2021) *The Melancholia of Class: A Manifesto for the Working Class*. Repeater.

symmetry between the 60s/70s poems and the contemporary poems beyond that consistent narrative voice. Daniels juxtaposes snapshots of his narrator sneaking a joint behind his parents' backs with snapshots of his narrator fifty years later caring for those parents once they're infirmed. In one poem, our narrator is home sick, cartoons on the television, watching his mom mending clothes on her sewing machine. A few pages later, that same narrator is taking his parents to have a will drawn up. The narrative that emerges is both compelling and focused. *Gun/Shy* is a satisfying read, even when presenting unsettling realities.

Daniels frequently juxtaposes images of childhood and adolescence in the two milieus at the heart of *Gun/Shy*'s narrative, allowing a rich paradox to emerge. The pains of growing up are in some ways consistent across the working-class and middle-class contexts, but that angst is experienced differently due to real and impactful material conditions. In 'The New Math,' Daniels' narrator describes watching movies with his daughter:

> …When I was a kid, we had no
> futons or streaming. But we had guardian angels
> and undisputed national champions.
> Okay, your dad's a fibber…

The speaker in the poem is aware of the small moments as well as the small markers signifying generational and class divide. Elsewhere in *Gun/Shy,* that speaker takes his kids snorkeling and to museums and on vacations, while remembering his own youth working in a party store, smoking behind the garage, eating his mom's 'hamburger surprise.' Daniels never preaches and never draws universal conclusions, preferring instead to document difference. But again, the paradox is that for all the contrastive imagery of working- vs. middle-class family life there are many shared experiences too. Take for example 'Poison Control,' where we learn that a childhood friend of the narrator and the narrator's own son both struggled with similar mental health issues. There are adolescent pains in *Gun/Shy* informed by social class and there are adolescent pains that transcend class divides.

Nor is class the only factor informing the lived experiences and emotional vulnerabilities of the characters we encounter in *Gun/Shy.* Indeed, the narrator's youth and adolescence are marked by working-class identity but also social and political context (including the Detroit uprisings of 1967, which looms large in several poems in the collection), substance abuse, and familial love. And the narrator's parental perspective is informed by his class mobility but also generational dynamics, region and geography, and much more. Interestingly, few poems focus on the workplace; instead, home life is in the foreground. If *Punching Out* was an ode to the factory floor, the 60s/70s poems in *Gun/Shy* are odes to a paneled basement, classic rock on the stereo, and a hint of weed in the air.

Few poems in the collection engage with the period of time between the narrator's teen years and the present day. The book's narrative jumps back and forth between the Vietnam era and the Trump era with very few mentions of the intervening decades. Readers are left to make inferences about those decades. One of the few exceptions is a terrific poem that appears late in the collection, 'The Secret Agent Briefcase,' in which the narrator recalls his entry into academe:

> When I got my professor gig, my parents
> bought me a narrow hard-sided briefcase
> with a combination lock. You could sit on it.
> Stand in principle on it. Smack it upside your
> head to get your smarts going. You could not
> squeeze many books into it…
>
> …I carried it to school
> My first fall until a colleague joked
> *You got a bomb in there? …*

The narrator eventually stashes the briefcase in the back of his closet, aware of the ways it marks him as different. I won't reveal the briefcase's ultimate fate, but suffice to say the poem's conclusion both illustrates and complicates the briefcase as a performative prop.

Gun/Shy has a great deal to offer those new to the poetry of Jim Daniels as well as those who have followed his work for many years. It is both another entry in his series of reflections on class, work, and family, as well as a signal that his work is tackling new milieus and themes, most notably mortality. Another memorable poem from late in the collection, 'Tying My Show at the New Pornographers Concert,' places the narrator at a contemporary indie rock concert, enjoying the show while also 'looking for someone my age.' He writes, 'I'm 59, going on whatever's next.' Readers of *Gun/Shy* will definitely find themselves eager to find out what's next for Daniels and his still-engaging poetry.

Reviewer Bio

William DeGenaro is Professor of Composition & Rhetoric at the University of Michigan Dearborn where he teaches composition and creative writing. He's served Fulbright Fellowships in Lebanon and Jordan and his scholarly work on composition pedagogy, academic serving learning, and working-class rhetorics has appeared in journals including *Rhetoric Review, Journal of Basic Writing,* and *WPA: Writing Program Administration.*