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## Preface

Welcome to Volume XII of *Oshkosh Scholar*, the undergraduate research journal of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. In the following pages students from mathematics, music, economics, and history present original research and engage important scholarly debates. A collaborative effort between students and faculty, *Oshkosh Scholar* aims to follow the process of academic journals as much as possible. All submissions go through a double-blind review before the student authors and their faculty mentors have the opportunity to revise and resubmit the articles. An interdisciplinary committee of faculty then selects the strongest papers for publication. Student editors are involved in the editing and production process. A student artist designs the cover. By publishing the best research and writing of our undergraduate students, *Oshkosh Scholar* celebrates the centrality of intellectual curiosity and the search for truth to the university's mission.

The six articles selected for publication in this volume demonstrate both the quality and the diversity of student research on campus. Caitlin Kirchner, from the Department of Music, introduces us to the rich history of traditional Appalachian folk ballads and the trope of the “murdered girl” ballad in particular. Focusing on the song “Shotgun Blues” by Abigail Washburn, Caitlin demonstrates how a modern artist has sought to invert the traditional gender stereotypes of the ballads, and make a statement against misogyny through a reinterpretation of the tradition. From the Department of Mathematics, Grant Kopitzke presents exciting new results on partition function research. Building on the work published in a previous volume of *Oshkosh Scholar* by UW Oshkosh alumnus Eric Boll, Grant identifies for the first time ever the self-similarity of the 11-regular partition function. This paper makes a truly original contribution to the field of partition function theory. Christopher Smith, from the Economics Department, also presents highly original research into the feasibility of using virtual economies as a tool for studying economic theory. Using the video game *EVE: Online*, one of the largest virtual economies in the world, he argues that the game's economy does function according to principles of microeconomic theory and can be used to predict and measure microeconomic behaviors.

The second set of articles comes from three history majors, who highlight the value of both historiographical questions and original archival research. Christopher Gauger re-engages an important historiographical debate in South African history on the relationship between the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Countering recent, revisionist claims about the influence of the SACP in the alliance, he argues that the relationship was strategic rather than ideological. David Wieczorek examines the history of the antiabortion movement in Wisconsin, illustrating aspects of the movement that differed from broader national trends. Finally, William Wasielewski advances our understanding of HIV/AIDS activism in Wisconsin through his research on the BEST Clinic, a Milwaukee clinic that played a critical role in the development of HIV/AIDS prevention programs during the 1980s and '90s.

I invite you to enjoy this excellent collection of undergraduate exploration and discovery. I would like to thank all of the student authors, the faculty mentors, the faculty reviewers, and the Selection Committee who contributed their time and efforts to this volume. Additional thanks go to Managing Editor Susan Surendonk, as well as

the student editors, Sydney Nelson and Natalie Dillon. Their hard work and dedication have been essential to making this edition of the journal possible. *Oshkosh Scholar* is a testament to the intellectual vitality of this university. I am proud to share this edition with you.

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“This design was inspired by the UW Oshkosh directional signs that are scattered throughout campus. UW Oshkosh students use these signs to find out where they are or where they are going. While there are many directions students can take in their academic careers, the directions that education, research, and scholarship can take students in are infinite.”

— Gideon Gorske

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## If I Had a Shotgun: Musical Protest against Misogyny in Murder Ballads

**Caitlin Kirchner**, author

Dr. Julia J. Chybowski, Music, faculty mentor

Caitlin J. Kirchner is a recent summa cum laude graduate with a bachelor of music in violin performance. This project began in a Topics in Music research course and was inspired by Caitlin's lifelong love of folk music. Some of the highlights of her undergraduate career include serving as the concertmaster of the University Symphony, premiering new music with the composition department, working as a music theory tutor through the Center for Academic Resources, and teaching music lessons at an after-school program. She currently runs a private lesson studio and manages a string quartet. One of her goals for the future is owning a music school.

Dr. Julia J. Chybowski earned a Ph.D. in music history from UW–Madison and is currently an associate professor of music at UW Oshkosh where she teaches a wide variety of courses about music history and cultures. Her research interests include nineteenth-century American popular music and the history of music education. She engages in both archival work as well as critical race, gender, and class theory and has presented original research at national and international meetings of the Society for American Music, the American Musicological Society, Feminist Theory and Music Conference, and at numerous college campuses and community events. Her published works can be found in *Grove Dictionary of American Music*, *Encyclopedia of American Musical Culture*, *American Music Research Journal*, *Journal of Ethnic History*, *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, and *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. Besides teaching and research, Dr. Chybowski's service to the UW Oshkosh campus and to the academic field of musicology shows her interest in pedagogy and educational reform.

### **Abstract**

Appalachian folk ballads have long been part of America's musical history. These ballads preserve many aspects of Appalachian culture, including murder. However, modern listeners may find the misogyny of murder ballads, particularly ballads from the nineteenth century, problematic. The stereotypical murder ballad from this period features a young woman killed by a young man without an apparent motive and little to no resistance from the victim. The aggressor seldom receives punishment for his crime. These peculiarities are stock tropes, collectively labelled "murdered girl" by scholars, and are rooted in the social shift surrounding the Industrial Revolution as well as nineteenth-century gender ideals. There are many popular contemporary songs protesting misogyny in the ballad tradition, but Abigail Washburn's "Shotgun Blues," appearing on the 2014 album *Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn*, is a notable inversion of the Appalachian folk ballad tradition. She combines traditional folk instruments with an assertive sonic landscape and juxtaposes "Shotgun Blues" with "Pretty Polly," a more traditional "murdered girl" ballad, which directly precedes "Shotgun Blues" on the album.

## ***Introduction***

“In almost all murder ballads in Appalachian music, it’s the woman who dies at the hands of some misguided male,”<sup>1</sup> writes modern-day folk singer Abigail Washburn in the liner notes for her recording of the traditional murder ballad “Pretty Polly.” A ballad (according to this project’s working definition) is a strophic song originating in the British Isles that has been preserved via oral tradition, and in some instances, with printed lyric sheets. Ballads, “Pretty Polly” among them, have a long history stretched across two continents. Collectors have found notated examples of strophic ballads dating back to the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>2</sup> Immigrants from the British Isles brought ballads to North America and occasionally distributed lyrics as broadsides, but ballad singing survived largely via oral tradition. Besides continuing ballad singing, eighteenth-century Americans invented new examples of the genre, which focused more on themes of confrontation and violence.<sup>3</sup> The ballad tradition continued to thrive into the nineteenth century, during which time many of the American murder ballads still known today came into existence.

Most commonly, murder ballads in the United States recount the story of a man dominating and killing a woman. Songs typically depict a passive female victim who does not resist her killer. Ballads usually reveal no specific motive for the killing, nor punishment for the murderer.<sup>4</sup> It is this violence toward and domination of women that Abigail Washburn protests in her original song, “Shotgun Blues.” She states, “I take the reins in this song and seek retribution for all the ladies.”<sup>5</sup> This is remarkable because Washburn directly protests the misogyny pervasive in the folk ballad tradition that she otherwise participates in.

Although Washburn’s overturning of misogyny resembles statements made by other female American folk and country artists, including “Goodbye Earl” by the Dixie Chicks or Gillian Welch’s “Caleb Meyer,” Washburn’s statement is a unique inversion of a tradition she otherwise respects. “Goodbye Earl,” like the rest of the Dixie Chicks’ repertoire, lacks a strong tie to the folk sounds and lyrical content of ballads from the British Isles. Gillian Welch’s “Caleb Meyer” falls close to the ballad tradition but lacks the striking musical characteristics of “Shotgun Blues.” Traditional ballad renditions are musically unobtrusive, but Washburn’s voice and instrumental accompaniment are assertive, powerful, and commanding. To further highlight the evils committed against women in murder ballads, Washburn performed “Pretty Polly” on the same album, placing it just before “Shotgun Blues.” Ballad scholars have discussed the misogyny of murder ballads and have written about the cultural influences and social impact created by murder ballads but have not discussed inversions of the traditional ballad pattern in detail; therefore, this paper will focus on these inversions and contrast them with the normative tradition. By writing a musically powerful response song in which the woman seizes control and seeks justice, Washburn protests women’s lack of agency in traditional murder ballads.

Before one can understand the significance of female agency in “Shotgun Blues,” one must examine the murder ballads produced during the nineteenth century, especially those originating in Appalachia, the geographical region with a particularly rich tradition of murder ballad singing. Ballads written in Great Britain came to America by way of immigrants to Appalachia, who also created new ones inspired by homicides committed in their new country. However, in the nineteenth century, there was a sudden shift in the nature of homicides. For the first time, many of the murders

reported in both Great Britain and America involved a young, single man killing a young, single woman, with whom he was usually romantically involved. Historian Daniel A. Cohen speculates this is due to the change in familial and sexual mores surrounding the Industrial Revolution.<sup>6</sup> In the literary world, there was a parallel movement that obsessed over the “beautiful female murder victim.”<sup>7</sup> The musical world, too, drew on femicide cases that were spread through the news and gossip. The result was a surge of murder ballads conforming to a set of stock tropes, or a “formula” in the words of scholar Anne B. Cohen. The formula is known as “murdered girl.”<sup>8</sup>

### ***“Murdered Girl” Formula***

“Murdered girl” ballads share certain tropes (or stereotypes) that work together to strip the female victim of control over her situation. Scholars Daniel A. Cohen, Lydia Hamessley, and Anne B. Cohen have noticed stock elements that appear in the following composite list: the innocence of the victim, the luring away and subsequent isolation of the victim by her killer, the victim pleading for her life (often on her knees), an outdoor setting, a romantic relationship between the victim and the assailant, the suggestion that the crime was the result of sexual transgression, the victim’s abandoned body that is vividly described, and the killer’s punishment or regret for the deed.<sup>9</sup> Anne B. Cohen also identified three main stock roles in a “murdered girl” ballad: murdered girl, lover-murderer, and grief-stricken family.<sup>10</sup> Of these, only the first two seem essential, since not every ballad refers to the victim’s family. The “murdered girl” is young, trusting, and innocent. She is helpless in preventing her death and a passive figure in the story. Her family and friends cherish her presence. Author Daniel A. Cohen adds that she is physically beautiful.<sup>11</sup> The lover-murderer, on the other hand, is calculating and without conscience. He is the only active character in the ballad, as the other dramatis personae have little influence on the events of the story, rather they react to them. The grief-stricken family is helpless—portrayed as careworn and teary-eyed in the aftermath of the murder. Mothers play an especially prominent role.

Although most “murdered girl” ballads feature the same stock tropes, their conformity to a single formula is odd considering their origins are in different murder cases. The explanation for this strange pattern can be found in the murder ballad tradition. If details of a particular crime did not adhere to the “murdered girl” formula, balladeers altered the facts. The variations of the “Pearl Bryan” ballad serve as a prime example. The earliest ballads mentioned her two killers, whereas later versions eliminated one man or blended the two into one. Early ballads also mentioned the beheading of Pearl’s corpse, whereas in newer variants she is stabbed, a more common method of dispatching the victim in ballads. However, the two real-life murderers beheaded her to keep the police from identifying her body. The likely cause of death was a botched abortion, not a stab wound.<sup>12</sup> Further blurring the truth was the simple passing of time, the potential for mishearings, and transformations common to musical practices preserved primarily via oral tradition.

A look at popular literary genres of the nineteenth century reveals the extent of the public’s fascination with objectified “beautiful female murder victims, and thus, a cultural tendency to objectify women.”<sup>13</sup> Many newspaper accounts and novels referred to women’s bodies as sexualized works of art. One such instance comes from an 1836 newspaper article by James Gordon Bennett that reported on the murder of

Helen Jewett: “The perfect figure—the exquisite limbs—the fine face—the full arms—the beautiful bust . . . all surpassed in every aspect the Venus de Medicis. . . . For a few moments I was lost in admiration at this extraordinary sight—a beautiful female corpse—that surpassed the finest statue of antiquity.”<sup>14</sup> The misfortune of her death is merely an afterthought to Bennett’s reaction as he ogles her body. Indeed, there is no reference to her murder.

Both the “beautiful female murder victim” phenomenon and the tropes of “murdered girl” reflect nineteenth-century cultural ideals for women, particularly their lack of agency. Wealthy (and usually white) women spent the bulk of their time cultivating “accomplishments” to demonstrate their good upbringing or serve as adornment in order to raise their fathers’ or husbands’ status. Women in middle- and working-class families were encouraged to emulate the behavior of their richer peers, even if their circumstances necessitated a more labor-oriented lifestyle. In almost every aspect of their lives, women were expected to be passive and submissive to men for their benefit, yet it was that subservience that ultimately cost many their lives. These cultural patterns were reflected in “murdered girl” ballads. Anne Cohen says in ballads, “the ‘good,’ morally approved characters are . . . passive sufferers.”<sup>15</sup> It is likely that many young women had spent so long learning to be sweet and demure that, when their lives were in danger, the only resistance offered (if any) was to plead with their assailants not to kill them. It is also plausible that balladeers exaggerated these qualities in female characters so their audiences would admire the victim’s moral perfection as well as her appearance.

The ballad “Frankie Silver” is one of the rare murder ballads in which the woman is the killer. Despite its potential for subversion, it still reflects the nineteenth century feminine ideal. Scholar C. Kirk Hutson briefly discusses the historical murder, saying that Frankie killed her abusive husband in self-defense.<sup>16</sup> The ballad leaves this point out entirely, instead claiming jealousy as her motive. Frankie is depicted as remorseful for the wrong she committed against her husband and terrified of meeting his ghost if she goes to hell to “bear [his sins] in his stead.”<sup>17</sup> The ballad is full of vivid imagery surrounding Frankie’s eternal suffering for her crime. Gender norms did not allow for women to be seen as moral and innocent (or at the very least, pitiable) if they took action. Therefore, in murder ballads, women either died without a fight or, like Frankie, they became objects of morbid sensationalism.

### ***“Pretty Polly”***

The lyrics of “Pretty Polly” contain many elements of the “murdered girl” formula, making it an excellent choice for Washburn if her goal in presenting it was to highlight the tropes before inverting them. In the first stanza, Willie entices Polly to go “O’er the mountains to the other side”<sup>18</sup> with him, thus isolating her from anyone who might help her. The outdoor setting is also typical. The couple is romantically involved, as the first stanza indicates they are planning to marry. Without question, she follows him. It is not until they have journeyed a long distance that she begins to get nervous and tells him “I’m afraid of your ways.” She then “began to weep” and Willie finally reveals his true intentions, stating that he has her grave freshly dug and waiting. Without any apparent resistance from Polly, Willie stabs her. Although this song does not mention a corpse as in other “murdered girl” ballads, it does refer to Polly’s flowing blood. The last stanza

has Willie address the audience, telling them that “For killin’ Pretty Polly I soon will be in Hell”<sup>19</sup>—his punishment for the crime.

Although the details are sparse, Polly’s character is clearly portrayed as a stereotypical, passive “murdered girl.” She is trusting and innocent, only questioning Willie’s motives when it is too late. She has no power to resist her murderer. In this version of the ballad, she speaks only once in the entire song, bursting into tears afterward. Her physical appearance, although not as detailed as the “beautiful female murder victim” ideal, is also referenced through her name—“Pretty Polly.” Willie is the typical, cunning killer, having planned how to entice Polly away from other people and also having already dug a grave to hide her body. This particular ballad lacks an appearance from Polly’s family, proving that their presence is not essential.

Like many other murder ballads, there is no specific reason given in the ballad for the murder, intensifying the misogyny. However, evidence suggests “Pretty Polly” is based on an actual homicide case; so, pertinent background information may be gleaned from contemporary accounts. Scholar C. Kirk Hutson asserts that Polly Aldridge and William Chapman were lovers from Kentucky, and William decided to kill her.<sup>20</sup> Folklore asserts she was pregnant with Chapman’s child.<sup>21</sup> This plot element, though nearly always left out of murder ballads, became a more common motive for a man to kill a woman in the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> With the Industrial Revolution came a new focus on individuality and mass migration to urban environments. Once away from their families of origin, many individuals (men in particular) felt less bound by the sense of collective responsibility and morality of their families and hometowns.<sup>23</sup> However, sex outside of marriage, even for engaged couples, remained taboo; therefore, couples maintained greater secrecy. Even though there was a decline in illegitimate pregnancies, the tendency to “get rid of the problem” by killing a pregnant girlfriend or fiancé became a more frequent way for a man to preserve his chances to advance in society. Even if she were not expecting, a man might still choose to murder his lover if the opportunity for a more advantageous match came along.<sup>24</sup> The well-known ballads “Rose Connelly” and “Pearl Bryan” feature murders that involve out-of-wedlock pregnancy. “Omie Wise” does too, but it is one of the few that explicitly reference the victim’s condition.<sup>25</sup>

Specific reasons for murder in ballads must, in most cases, be obtained from outside sources. However, the prevailing motive for all such homicides is misogyny itself. This overarching connection is somewhat hidden, as misogyny is not explicitly mentioned in the lyrics. Thus, someone who listens to murder ballads without analyzing or having a historical context in which to place them may never realize that there is always a motive, albeit a generalized one, presented for the killing. Instead, the listener may conclude that the victim was murdered for no reason at all, increasing the misogyny and perceived strangeness of “murdered girl” ballads.

### ***Influence on Culture and Social Mores***

The pervasive misogyny of “murdered girl” ballads is clear, but what is debatable is the level of influence they had on the culture and social mores of regions where they were sung. Were these songs merely the product of a violent culture, or did they serve to encourage increased violence? C. Kirk Hutson discusses research across multiple disciplines that suggests music and lyrics can and do influence behavior, including triggering violence. He notes that as long as a violent narrative is realistic

and the aggressor escapes punishment, test subjects who experienced the narrative were more likely to imitate the behavior.<sup>26</sup> While there is no evidence available to prove nineteenth-century men could be influenced by music as the modern-day test subjects were, it is possible given what scholars know about the function of the human brain. Furthermore, “murdered girl” ballads contain many of the same conditions that triggered violent behavior in the studies, such as fact-based narratives and a killer who often received no punishment. These ballads were part of everyday life, especially in the rural South and Appalachia, further reinforcing the violent message.<sup>27</sup>

### *“Shotgun Blues” and Ballad Performance Practice*

Although there is no outright mention of murder in the song, Abigail Washburn connects “Shotgun Blues” to the murder ballad tradition with lyrics that reference the plot tropes of “murdered girl” in order to invert them. Washburn sings that she would “hunt [the aggressor] down” if he was “in the woods”—an outdoor setting. The plea-on-bended-knee scene is missing in Washburn’s version of “Pretty Polly” but it appears here:

If I had a shotgun  
 You’d fall down on your knees  
 I’d get you talkin’  
 And you’d start beggin’ please<sup>28</sup>

Punishment for the criminal in “Shotgun Blues” comes from the victim, not from the legal system or nonhuman sources as in traditional murder ballads. This is another reversal of nineteenth-century gender roles. Women were sometimes blamed for a crime even if they were the victim, while men were often acquitted or given token sentences.<sup>29</sup> Even when male criminals were executed, they sometimes received sympathy from the public. In her study of ballads, musicologist Susan C. Cook writes that men in the nineteenth century were thought to have “hot and dry” temperments that explained irrational behavior.<sup>30</sup> Many men were able to make plea bargains on these grounds, whereas women, whose anger was supposedly muted by their temperments, had little success in getting their misdeeds classified as crimes of passion. Therefore, women often received harsher sentences for similar crimes.<sup>31</sup> In protest of these injustices, Washburn has her female protagonist speak of dominating her aggressor and making him pay for what he did to her. By doing so, the protagonist circumvents the corrupt system that favors men to ensure that she will receive justice. This woman is in the uncommon position of control, and she uses it to take revenge. Furthermore, she escapes the defamation received by Frankie Silver, despite both women being antagonized by a man. Here it is the original transgressor who is “no good.”<sup>32</sup>

The lyrics of murder ballads pose the main issue that Washburn protests, but the customary performance style is also problematic. Traditional ballad singers adopted a dispassionate delivery style when they sang, so as not to interject too much of their own opinions into the story. However, according to scholar Lydia Hamessley, the lack of emotion in their delivery may be interpreted by uninformed listeners as a tacit acceptance of the violence in the song. This creates a problem for the audience who does not realize that old-time balladeers regard themselves as living newspapers

rather than performers. They may feel it is unacceptable or misogynistic to listen to these songs, although they may enjoy the musical elements.<sup>33</sup> Despite being a modern performance, Washburn's version of "Pretty Polly" is informed by historical performance practice. Her vocals are dispassionate, save for a few key moments in the song. Washburn gives a slightly more intense inflection to her voice the second time she sings "Willie, oh Willie I'm afraid of your ways" and the line "your guess is 'bout right." However, the effect is extremely subtle, and may not even be noticed on the first few hearings. Additionally problematic for audiences who do not understand traditional ballad aesthetics is the up-tempo music that often accompanies murder ballads. Indeed, this music would be perfect for dancing. Washburn removes this barrier by choosing a more contemplative tempo. However, her style of banjo playing does conform to tradition. The banjo accompaniment is repetitive and hypnotic, and after a few moments, one no longer pays much attention to it and is free to focus on the lyrics. Washburn may have chosen to maintain this tradition to emphasize Polly's helplessness and passivity; just as the listener cannot do anything but be hypnotized by the music, Polly cannot resist her demise.

"Shotgun Blues," however, is impassioned, and that is another way that Washburn demonstrates her opposition to misogyny. The opening of the track features a percussive banjo line that leads into wild-sounding staccato vocals from Washburn. She plays more with her vocal timbre in this track, creating a wide variety of sounds. At times her singing is irregularly timed, creating an improvisatory effect. Washburn ignores the traditional performance practice of ballads entirely to portray a woman no longer bound by rules. In so doing, she gains the agency that "murdered girls" have lacked for so long. There is no doubt that she is fully capable of getting revenge on her male enemy. In the first stanza, she says "I'd hunt you down and tell you / You're no good." Furthermore, the chorus finds her proclaiming:

. . . gimme a shotgun  
and don't you run now  
Cause if you run now  
you know what I have to do.<sup>34</sup>

No angry father, brother, sheriff, or posse here—this young woman is getting her own justice. Furthermore, Washburn sings the entire song from the woman's perspective. The man never speaks, a direct contradiction of ballad tradition where the story is told by the man or a third-person narrator. Indeed, the fact this young woman is still alive suggests that she is stronger than her sister-victims. However, unlike the "hot, uncontrolled" men of the nineteenth century,<sup>35</sup> the woman still has some restraint, proclaiming that she will chase her target down with a shotgun, not hang him like she would if she was "a big girl."<sup>36</sup> She also maintains a conscience, telling the man she would not seek retribution if he showed remorse, but alas ". . . boy you're just too mean."<sup>37</sup> The instrumentals also depart from ballad tradition in "Shotgun Blues" to challenge the sense of female passivity. The banjo lines change frequently and alternate accompaniment roles with virtuosic solos. Even in the accompaniment sections, the banjos provide attention-getting action that changes to reflect what Washburn is doing vocally. This is a direct contrast to "Pretty Polly," where the banjos live in their own

world and do not interact with the vocalist. The sonic landscape of “Shotgun Blues” is powerful and active, reflecting the character of the female protagonist.

### Conclusion

The trope of the “murdered girl” and nineteenth-century cultural norms explain women’s lack of agency in murder ballads. Within the context of nineteenth-century gender ideals, the victim’s passivity and the killer’s seemingly unprompted decision to murder his beloved make more sense than when viewed through a twenty-first century perspective. However, this historical perspective also serves to highlight the inequality of the sexes both in murder ballads and in the real-life homicides that inspired them. Abigail Washburn seeks to remedy the injustice of the inequality and powerlessness suffered by the victims of traditional murder ballads through her song “Shotgun Blues.” Although it came too late to aid the victims depicted in nineteenth-century murder ballads, perhaps it is the best way to honor their memories without romanticizing their fate.

### Notes

1. Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn, “Shotgun Blues” from *Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn*, CD, 11661-36262-02, 2014. Liner Notes.
2. Peter Wilton, “Ballad” in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, Oxford Music Online. Accessed March 9, 2017; W. H. Cummings, “Ballad” in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.
3. Alan Jabbour, “Folk Music in America” in *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians*.
4. Although there are ballads (“Frankie and Johnny” and “Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight,” for example) that feature a woman killing a man, there are few of these in ballad collections, suggesting they were not as familiar to collectors’ contacts and thus, not very widespread, or numerous in the first place.
5. Fleck and Washburn, “Shotgun Blues.”
6. Daniel A. Cohen, “The Beautiful Female Murder Victim: Literary Genres and Courtship Practices in the Origins of a Cultural Motif, 1590–1850,” *Journal of Social History* 81, no. 4 (1995): 285–86.
7. *Ibid.*, 277.
8. Anne B. Cohen, *Poor Pearl, Poor Girl! The Murdered-Girl Stereotype in Ballad and Newspaper* (Austin: University of Texas Printing Division, 1973), 4–5.
9. *Ibid.*, 8–38; Daniel A. Cohen, 278; Lydia Hamessley, “A Resisting Performance of an Appalachian Traditional Murder Ballad Giving Voice to ‘Pretty Polly,’” *Women & Music* 9, (August 2005): 15.
10. Anne B. Cohen, *Poor Pearl*, 10–21.
11. Daniel A. Cohen, *Murder Victim*, 277.
12. Anne B. Cohen, *Poor Pearl*, 10–21.
13. Daniel A. Cohen, *Murder Victim*, 277.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Anne B. Cohen, *Poor Pearl*, 6.
16. C. Kirk Hutson, “‘Whackety Whack, Don’t Talk Back’: The Glorification of Violence Against Females and the Subjugation of Women in Nineteenth-Century Southern Folk Music,” *Journal of Women’s History* 8, no. 3 (1996): 130.

17. The Lenoir Topic, "The Ballad of Frankie Silver." Accessed August 20, 2017. [www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/5458](http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/5458).
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# Self-Similarity of the 11-Regular Partition Function

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## Abstract

The partition function counts the number of ways a positive integer can be written as the sum of a non-increasing sequence of positive integers. These sums are known as partitions. The famous mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan proved the partition function has beautiful divisibility properties. We will consider the  $k$ -regular partition function, which counts the partitions where no part is divisible by  $k$ . Results on the arithmetic of  $k$ -regular partition functions have been proven by several authors. In this paper we establish self-similarity results for the 11-regular partition function.

## Introduction

A *partition* of a positive integer  $n$  is a non-increasing sequence of positive integers whose sum is equal to  $n$ . The integers in a partition are called *parts*. Figure 1 shows the partitions of 4.

- 4
- 3 + 1
- 2 + 2
- 2 + 1 + 1
- 1 + 1 + 1 + 1

**Figure 1.** The partitions of  $n = 4$ .

The non-increasing clause in this definition precludes the creation of new partitions by reordering a sum; for example,  $2 + 1 + 1$  is a partition of 4 while  $1 + 2 + 1$  is not.

From figure 1 we see that there are five partitions of 4. The *partition function*, denoted by  $p(n)$ , takes as input a positive integer  $n$  and outputs the number of partitions of  $n$ . Using this notation, we have  $p(4) = 5$ . Table 1 shows the first few values of  $p(n)$ .

**Table 1.** First ten values of  $p(n)$ .

$n$	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
$p(n)$	1	2	3	5	7	11	15	22	30	42

We see from table 1 that  $p(n)$  does not increase at a constant rate. Indeed, as  $n$  increases,  $p(n)$  increases at a much greater rate, as seen in table 2.

**Table 2.** Some more values of  $p(n)$ .

$n$	10	20	30	40	50
$p(n)$	42	627	5604	37338	204226

In the early twentieth century, Srinivasa Ramanujan noticed a striking property of the partition function: on particular linear progressions, the partition function is always divisible by a specific integer. Recall that if  $a$  and  $b$  are integers, we say that  $a$  is *divisible* by  $b$  if  $a = b \times k$  for some integer  $k$ . For example, 6 is divisible by 2 since  $6 = 2 \times 3$ , and 10 is divisible by 1, 2, 5, and 10 since  $10 = 1 \times 10 = 2 \times 5$ . One linear progression identified by Ramanujan is  $\{4, 9, 14, 19, \dots\}$ , which is given by the formula  $5n + 4$ . The first several values of  $5n + 4$  and  $p(5n + 4)$  are given in table 3.

**Table 3.**  $p(5n + 4)$  for  $0 \leq n \leq 9$ .

$n$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
$5n + 4$	4	9	14	19	24	29	34	39	44	49
$p(5n + 4)$	5	30	135	490	1575	4565	12310	31185	75175	173525

Notice that each of the values of  $p(5n + 4)$  ends in 0 or 5, which indicates that each is divisible by 5. In 1919, Ramanujan proved the remarkable fact that this divisibility property holds indefinitely, i.e. that  $p(5n + 4)$  is divisible by 5 for all non-negative integers  $n$ . He also proved divisibilities for 7 and 11; collectively these three divisibility properties are often referred to as the *Ramanujan congruences*.

**Theorem 1.** The Ramanujan congruences (Ramanujan, 1921):

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{For all non-negative integers } n, \\ &\quad p(5n + 4) \text{ is divisible by } 5, \\ &\quad p(7n + 5) \text{ is divisible by } 7, \\ &\quad p(11n + 6) \text{ is divisible by } 11. \end{aligned}$$

A natural question is whether the partition function satisfies similar divisibility properties for prime numbers other than 5, 7, and 11 (recall that an integer greater than 1 is called *prime* if it is only divisible by 1 and itself). In 1967, A. O. L. Atkin and J. N. O’Brien proved that for all non-negative integers  $n$ ,

$$p(157525693n + 111247) \text{ is divisible by } 13.$$

We note here that unlike the first Ramanujan congruence, this is a divisibility not readily apparent by numerical evidence. Indeed, the smallest example involves a number, namely  $p(111247)$ , that if written out would have over 300 digits.

A major breakthrough in this area occurred in the year 2000, when Ono proved that there is a divisibility property of this type for every prime at least 5.

**Theorem 2.** Ono’s theorem:

For every prime  $l \geq 5$ , there exist positive integers  $a$  and  $b$  such that  $p(an + b)$  is divisible by  $l$  for all  $n \geq 0$ .

Notice that in each of Ramanujan’s congruences the coefficient on  $n$  matches the integer that divides the function (e.g.,  $p(5n + 4)$  is divisible by **5**), which is not true of the Atkin and O’Brien example. Ramanujan’s congruences are unique in this regard, a fact proven by S. Ahlgren and M. Boylan in 2003.

The partition function  $p(n)$  is often referred to as the *unrestricted partition function*. New partition functions can be built by placing restrictions on the allowed partitions. One way to restrict partitions is by allowing no part to be divisible by a specific number. A partition is called *k-regular* if no part of the partition is divisible by  $k$ . To illustrate, consider the partition  $5 + 4$  of 9. This partition is not 2-regular since 4 is one of the parts, and 4 is divisible by 2. One can also verify that it is not 5-regular, and is not 4-regular. However, neither 5 nor 4 is divisible by 3, so this partition is 3-regular.

Similar to the unrestricted partition function, the *k-regular* partition function, denoted  $b_k(n)$ , counts the number of *k-regular* partitions of  $n$ . For instance, from figure 1 we see that the only 2-regular partitions of 4 are  $3 + 1$  and  $1 + 1 + 1 + 1$ , and hence  $b_2(4) = 2$ . As this example suggests,  $b_2(n)$  grows more slowly than  $p(n)$ ; we illustrate this in table 4.

**Table 4.** Some values of  $b_2(n)$  compared with  $p(n)$ .

$n$	10	20	30	40	50
$b_2(n)$	10	64	296	1113	3658
$p(n)$	42	627	5604	37338	204226

Recently, the search for Ramanujan-type congruences has been extended to the *k-regular* partition function. For example, in 2008 Calkin et al. proved the following congruences for  $b_5$  and  $b_{13}$ .

**Theorem 3.** (Calkin, et al., 2008): For all non-negative integers  $n$ ,

$$b_5(20n + 13) \text{ is divisible by } 2,$$

$$b_{13}(9n + 7) \text{ is divisible by } 3.$$

For purposes of illustration, the first few values of  $b_5(20n + 13)$  are given in table 5.

**Table 5.** First five values of  $b_5(20n + 13)$ .

$n$	0	1	2	3	4
$20n + 13$	13	33	53	73	93
$b_5(20n + 13)$	76	5192	123500	1765642	18356026

Note that for each  $n$  in the table,  $b_5(20n + 13)$  is divisible by 2. This trend continues for every  $n \geq 0$ .

**Motivation**

In recent years, a significant amount of research has been devoted to establishing *families* of Ramanujan-type congruences. In Theorem 3 we displayed a divisibility for  $b_{13}$ . In fact, Calkin et al. proved several others, which we show here.

**Theorem 4.** (Calkin et al., 2008): For all non-negative integers  $n$ ,

$$\begin{aligned}
 &b_{13}(9n + 7) \text{ is divisible by } 3, \\
 &b_{13}(27n + 22) \text{ is divisible by } 3, \\
 &b_{13}(81n + 67) \text{ is divisible by } 3, \\
 &b_{13}(243n + 202) \text{ is divisible by } 3.
 \end{aligned}$$

Note that each subsequent linear progression can be obtained by multiplying the previous progression by 3 and adding 1; for example  $3 \times (9n + 7) + 1 = 27n + 22$  and  $3 \times (27n + 22) + 1 = 81n + 67$ . The authors conjectured that this process can be continued indefinitely, producing an infinite family of Ramanujan-type congruences. This conjecture was proved by Webb in 2010. To better describe Webb’s proof the following definition will be helpful.

Given two integers  $a$  and  $b$ , we say that  $a$  is *congruent to  $b$  modulo  $m$*  if  $a - b$  is divisible by  $m$ . For example, 17 is congruent to 2 modulo 5 since  $17 - 2 = 15$  is divisible by 5, and 4 is congruent to  $-3$  modulo 7 since  $4 - (-3) = 7$  is divisible by 7. When  $a$  is congruent to  $b$  modulo  $m$  we denote this by  $a \equiv b \pmod{m}$ , e.g.  $17 \equiv 2 \pmod{5}$ . The reader may have noticed that if we divide 5 into 17, the quotient is 3, the remainder is 2, and  $17 \equiv 2 \pmod{5}$ . This phenomenon is general; as another example, 3 goes into 16 five times with remainder 1, and  $16 \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ . Because of this, every integer is congruent to either 0, 1, or 2 modulo 3. Note also that  $a \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  exactly when  $a$  is divisible by 3.

Returning to our discussion of  $b_{13}(n)$ , the key step in Webb’s proof was establishing the following relationship.

**Theorem 5.** (Webb, 2010): For all non-negative integers  $n$ ,

$$b_{13}(3n + 1) \text{ is congruent to } -b_{13}(9n + 4) \text{ modulo } 3.$$

This result can be interpreted in terms of *self-similarity*. To illustrate this notion, we display the first several values of  $b_{13}(3n + 1)$  modulo 3 in the following table (recall that every integer will be congruent to either 0, 1, or 2 modulo 3).

**Table 6.** Values of  $b_{13}(3n + 1)$  modulo 3.

$n$	0	<b>1</b>	2	3	<b>4</b>	5	6	<b>7</b>	8	9	<b>10</b>	11	12	<b>13</b>	14	15	<b>16</b>	17	18	<b>19</b>
$3n + 1$	1	<b>4</b>	7	10	<b>13</b>	16	19	<b>22</b>	25	28	<b>31</b>	34	37	<b>40</b>	43	46	<b>49</b>	52	55	<b>58</b>
$b_{13}(3n + 1)$	1	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>1</b>	0	2	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	2	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>1</b>

Note that the boldfaced values in the middle row of table 6 are of the form  $9n + 4$ . Extracting the values of  $b_{13}(9n + 4)$ , attaching a minus sign, and displaying them alongside the values of  $b_{13}(3n + 1)$ , we obtain the following:

**Table 7.** Comparing  $b_{13}(3n + 1)$  to  $-b_{13}(9n + 4)$ .

$n$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
$b_{13}(3n + 1)$	1	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
$-b_{13}(9n + 4)$	-2	-1	0	0	-2	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-2

Since  $1 \equiv -2 \pmod{3}$  and  $2 \equiv -1 \pmod{3}$ , this concurs with the statement in Theorem 5. The term *self-similarity* is used here because we have a relationship between the values of  $b_{13}$  on the linear progression  $3n + 1$  and those on a progression  $9n + 4$  that “sits inside”  $3n + 1$ .

Risking an analogy, picture a set of Russian nesting dolls, where the largest is black, the next largest is white, the next black, and so on. In a similar fashion, the sequence  $b_{13}(9n + 4)$  “lives inside”  $b_{13}(3n + 1)$  as its negative (“white inside black”). Note that if we were to repeat this process, we would have

$$b_{13}(27n + 13) \equiv -b_{13}(9n + 4) \equiv -(-b_{13}(3n + 1)) \equiv b_{13}(3n + 1) \pmod{3}$$

(and we’re back to black).

Once the self-similarity result in Theorem 5 was established, Webb obtained the promised infinite family of Ramanujan-type congruences in the following way. Recall that Calkin et al. proved that  $b_{13}(9n + 7)$  is divisible by 3, i.e.  $b_{13}(9n + 7) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . Next, note that  $9n + 7$  has the form  $3k + 1$  since  $3(3n + 2) + 1 = 9n + 7$ . This means that one can apply the result from Theorem 5 to conclude that

$$b_{13}(9n + 7) \equiv b_{13}(3(3n + 2) + 1) \equiv -b_{13}(9(3n + 2) + 4) \equiv -b_{13}(27n + 22) \pmod{3}.$$

Since  $b_{13}(9n + 7) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ , it follows that  $b_{13}(27n + 22) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . This process can be repeated as many times as we wish, yielding infinitely many divisibilities (including those in Theorem 4).

The focus of our research was to establish self-similarity results analogous to that in Theorem 5. We now state our main result.

**Theorem.** For all non-negative integers  $n$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} b_{11}(125n + 10) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 260) \pmod{5}, \\ b_{11}(125n + 35) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 885) \pmod{5}, \\ b_{11}(125n + 110) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 2760) \pmod{5}. \end{aligned}$$

In the next section we give an informal overview of our research methods, and in the final section we provide a proof of our theorem.

**Methods**

Recall that Webb’s argument for the infinite family of Ramanujan-type congruences for  $b_{13}$  had two key ingredients: the congruence  $b_{13}(9n + 7) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ , which provides a beginning, and the self-similarity result in Theorem 5, which enables one to use a single congruence to create more. Because of this, the first step was to identify potential congruences and self-similarities. We illustrate the former using the example

$b_{13}(9n + 7) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . Begin by calculating  $b_{13}(n)$  modulo 3 for all non-negative integers  $n$  within a specified range. We display the first 35 values here.

1, 1, 2, 0, 2, 1, 2, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2, 2, 1, 2, 0, 0, 1, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0

Next a computer script is used to search through this list of values for linear progressions that match the desired results. For example, the progression  $9n + 5$  picks out the following boldfaced values in the sequence:

1, 1, 2, 0, 2, **1**, 2, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2, 2, 1, **2**, 0, 0, 1, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, **1**, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 1, 0, **0**, 0, 0

Since this progression yields several values that are not congruent to 0 modulo 3, the script rejects it and moves on to the next linear progression. When the script arrives at  $9n + 7$  it finds

1, 1, 2, 0, 2, 1, 2, **0**, 1, 0, 0, 2, 2, 1, 2, 0, **0**, 1, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 1, 1, **0**, 0, 0, 0, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0, **0**, 0,

and tags this as a potential congruence since each term of the sequence is congruent to 0 modulo 3. Of course, we cannot test infinitely many values of  $b_{13}(9n + 7)$ , and therefore this congruence cannot be verified by computation alone.

To overcome this obstacle, we use the theory of *modular forms*. Over the past 25 years, modular forms have taken a prominent place in number theory. This is due in part to the major role they played in Wiles’s epochal proof of Fermat’s Last Theorem. Modular forms have three key properties that are critical to our work. First, every modular form has a Fourier expansion, i.e. an infinite sum of the form

$$a(0) + a(1)q + a(2)q^2 + a(3)q^3 + a(4)q^4 + \dots,$$

where  $a(n)$  is a function that takes nonnegative integers as input, and outputs complex numbers. As a shorthand, we will denote this sum by

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a(n)q^n.$$

Second, in some cases we can find modular forms whose Fourier coefficients (the  $a(n)$  function) carry number theoretic information. One example of this phenomenon is the weight 4 normalized Eisenstein series, which is defined by

$$E_4 := 1 + 240 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \sigma_3(n)q^n.$$

The coefficients in this series involve the function  $\sigma_3(n)$ , which sums the cubes of the divisors of  $n$ . If modular forms can be constructed so that our linear progressions are encoded within the coefficients, then we can bring the theory to bear. The third key

property of modular forms is that they are very rare, which brings us to a vital result—Sturm’s Theorem. The theorem states that if two modular forms are congruent modulo  $m$  up to a certain bound, they are congruent modulo  $m$  everywhere.

In order to relate the  $k$ -regular partition function to modular forms, generating functions will be used. For example, the infinite sum

$$p(0) + p(1)q + p(2)q^2 + p(3)q^3 + p(4)q^4 + \dots = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} p(n)q^n$$

is a generating function for  $p(n)$  (we adopt the convention that  $p(0) = b_k(0) = 1$ ). Note that this sum is simply another way to package the values of  $p(n)$ , but this change in viewpoint is extremely powerful, as we may think of this object as a single function of  $q$ . This generating function satisfies the identity

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} p(n)q^n = \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(1 - q^n)},$$

where the notation on the right-hand side is shorthand for the infinite product

$$\frac{1}{(1 - q)} \times \frac{1}{(1 - q^2)} \times \frac{1}{(1 - q^3)} \times \frac{1}{(1 - q^4)} \times \frac{1}{(1 - q^5)} \times \dots$$

As we will see in the next section, this expression allows us to relate the generating function of  $b_{11}(n)$  to modular forms.

**Results**

As mentioned previously, our main result is a set of analogues of the self-similarity result by Webb in Theorem 5.

**Theorem.** For all nonnegative integers  $n$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} b_{11}(125n + 10) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 260) \pmod{5}, \\ b_{11}(125n + 35) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 885) \pmod{5}, \\ b_{11}(125n + 110) &\equiv b_{11}(3125n + 2760) \pmod{5}. \end{aligned}$$

**Proof:** The generating function for  $b_k(n)$  satisfies the identity

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_k(n) q^n = \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(1 - q^{kn})}{(1 - q^n)}.$$

In order to use Sturm’s Theorem we must relate our  $k$ -regular partition functions to modular forms. To that end, we recall Dedekind’s eta function

$$\eta(z) := q^{\frac{1}{24}} \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n),$$

where  $q = e^{2\pi iz}$ , and  $z$  is a complex variable. We will write  $z = x + iy$ , where  $x$  and  $y$  are real numbers. Note the resemblance to the generating function of  $b_k(n)$ ; remarkably, one can also use  $\eta(z)$  to build modular forms.

We now provide some background on modular forms. Details will be omitted here in favor of illustrating some of these concepts as they arise in our proof. Given a positive integer  $N$ , let

$$\Gamma_0(N) := \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \in SL_2(\mathbb{Z}) : c \equiv 0 \pmod{N} \right\}.$$

Let  $\mathbb{H} := \{z \in \mathbb{C} \mid y > 0\}$ , and for  $\gamma = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \in SL_2(\mathbb{Z})$  and  $z \in \mathbb{H}$  define  $\gamma z := \frac{az+b}{cz+d}$ . Suppose  $k$  is a positive integer,  $\chi$  is a Dirichlet character modulo  $N$ , and  $f: \mathbb{H} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is holomorphic. Then  $f$  is said to be a *modular form* of weight  $k$  on  $\Gamma_0(N)$  with character  $\chi$  if

$$f(\gamma z) = \chi(d)(cz+d)^k f(z)$$

for all  $\gamma \in \Gamma_0(N)$  and  $f$  is holomorphic at the cusps of  $\Gamma_0(N)$ . Using standard notation, we denote the complex vector space of modular forms of weight  $k$  on  $\Gamma_0(N)$  with character  $\chi$  by

$$M_k(\Gamma_0(N), \chi).$$

We use  $\chi_d$  to denote the character  $\chi_d(n) = \left(\frac{d}{n}\right)$ .

Recall the weight 4 normalized Eisenstein series defined previously. This is a modular form on  $\Gamma_0(1)$  with trivial character. Since 240 is divisible by 5, it follows that  $240 \equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ . Hence, if we consider  $E_4$  modulo 5, we have that  $E_4 \equiv 1 \pmod{5}$ . Thus multiplying a modular form by powers of  $E_4$  does not change the form when considered modulo 5.

As mentioned previously, Sturm’s Theorem provides a method to test whether two modular forms are congruent. Let us make this more explicit. If  $f(z) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a(n)q^n \in \mathbb{Z}[[q]]$  and  $m$  is a positive integer, let  $\text{ord}_m(f(z))$  be the smallest  $n$  for which  $a(n) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{m}$  (if there is no such  $n$ , we define  $\text{ord}_m(f(z)) = \infty$ ).

**Sturm’s Theorem:** Suppose  $m$  is prime and  $f(z), g(z) \in M_k(\Gamma_0(N), \chi) \cap \mathbb{Z}[[q]]$ . If

$$\text{ord}_m(f(z) - g(z)) > \frac{k}{12} [SL_2(\mathbb{Z}) : \Gamma_0(N)],$$

then  $f(z) \equiv g(z) \pmod{m}$ , i.e.,  $\text{ord}_m(f(z) - g(z)) = \infty$ .

Note that  $[SL_2(\mathbb{Z}) : \Gamma_0(N)] = N \cdot \prod \frac{l+1}{l}$ , where the product is over the prime divisors of  $N$ . We will refer to the number  $\frac{k}{12} [SL_2(\mathbb{Z}) : \Gamma_0(N)]$  as the *Sturm bound*.

We now define the concept of *Hecke operators*. If  $f(z) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a(n)q^n$  and  $m$  is prime, then the action of the *Hecke operator*  $T_{m,k,\chi}$  on  $f(z)$  is defined by

$$(f|T_{m,k,\chi})(z) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (a(mn) + \chi(m)m^{k-1}a(n/m))q^n.$$

Note that if  $k > 1$ , then

$$(f|T_{m,k,\chi})(z) \equiv \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a(mn)q^n \pmod{m}.$$

We will use the abbreviation  $T_m := T_{m,k,\chi}$ . The *Hecke operator* is a linear transformation on  $M_k(\Gamma_0(N), \chi)$ . Note that  $T_m$  picks out every  $m^{\text{th}}$  coefficient of  $f$  modulo  $m$ . Applying  $T_m$  to our modular forms  $l$  times will allow us to isolate linear progressions of the form  $b_k(m'n + c)$ .

For the sake of brevity, we will only prove the first congruence stated in the theorem. We begin by constructing the functions

$$g_1(z) := \frac{\eta(11z)}{\eta(z)} \eta^{2750}(z) E_4^{8250}(z)$$

and

$$g_2(z) := \frac{\eta(11z)}{\eta(z)} \eta^{68750}(z).$$

By standard criteria on eta quotients (Ono, 2004), both  $g_1$  and  $g_2$  are modular forms in the space  $M_{34375}(\Gamma_0(11), \chi_{-11})$ . Considering  $g_1$  modulo 5 and using the previous identity for the generating function of  $b_k(n)$ , we have that

$$g_1(z) \equiv \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_{11}(n)q^{n+115} \cdot \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{2750} \pmod{5}$$

and

$$g_2(z) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_{11}(n)q^{n+2865} \cdot \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{68750}.$$

The first few terms of  $g_1(z)$  modulo 5 are as follows:

$$q^{115} + q^{116} + 2q^{117} + 3q^{118} + 2q^{120} + q^{121} + 2q^{123} + 2q^{125} + q^{127} + 4q^{128} + 2q^{129} + \dots$$

Since the coefficients of  $q^{115}$ ,  $q^{120}$ , and  $q^{125}$  are 1, 2, and 2 respectively, and recalling that the Hecke operator  $T_5$  picks out every fifth coefficient of the series, applying  $T_5$  to  $g_1(z)$  yields the following:

$$(g_1|T_5)(z) \equiv q^{23} + 2q^{24} + 2q^{25} + q^{26} + \dots \pmod{5}$$

In product form this sum can be written

$$(g_1|T_5)(z) \equiv \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_{11}(5n)q^{n+23} \cdot \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{550} \pmod{5}.$$

By the same reasoning, applying  $T_5$  three times to  $g_1$  and five times to  $g_2$  yields

$$(g_1|T_5^3)(z) \equiv \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_{11}(125n + 10)q^{n+1} \cdot \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{22} \pmod{5}$$

and

$$(g_2|T_5^5)(z) \equiv \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_{11}(3125n + 260)q^{n+1} \cdot \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{22} \pmod{5}.$$

Since the weight of our modular forms is  $k = 34275$  and the level is the prime  $N = 11$ , the Sturm bound is

$$\frac{34275}{12} \cdot 11 \cdot \frac{11 + 1}{11} = 34275.$$

A computation verifies that the first 34275 coefficients of these two series are congruent modulo 5. Hence, by Sturm's Theorem,  $(g_1|T_5^3)(z) \equiv (g_2|T_5^5)(z) \pmod{5}$ . Cancelling the common factor of  $\prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1 - q^n)^{22}$ , we conclude that

$$b_{11}(125n + 10) \equiv b_{11}(3125n + 260) \pmod{5}$$

for all  $n \geq 0$ . ■

### Conclusion

A significant amount of research has been devoted to proving Ramanujan-type congruences for the unrestricted partition function and the  $k$ -regular partition function. Self-similarity results have been established by several authors for  $b_k(n)$ , and these have been used to construct infinite families of congruences. Currently, we are researching possible base cases that, together with our self-similarity results, could lead to new

families of congruences. There is no doubt that future work will continue to explore the beautiful patterns and mysteries of partitions.

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## ***EVE: Online* as a Potential Microeconomic Model**

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### ***Abstract***

*EVE: Online (EVE)* is a video game with one of the largest virtual economies in existence. The question reigns, can a video game economy function realistically according to microeconomic theory? To test this, I examined multiple variables for a commodity in *EVE* over an extended period. I found that the commodity's price and demand acted in the same way that real-world commodity prices do. This suggests that *EVE*'s economy adheres to microeconomic theory. Knowing this, there are many useful applications for *EVE* as a tool to measure and predict microeconomic behavior and possibly even macroeconomic behavior.

### ***Introduction***

*EVE: Online (EVE)* is a video game set in outer space with seemingly little application for scholarship in economics. *EVE* may be a video game, but it is still useful in economics. Designed by Icelandic Economist Dr. Eyjólfur Guðmundsson, *EVE* has been affectionately nicknamed Spread Sheets, Math Simulator, and the most boring, thrilling game ever. The game is known for its steep learning curve and applicable mathematics, statistics, and economics. Guðmundsson calls the game a “national economics institute, statistics office and central bank” that models real-world economics, with an in-game economy estimated to be worth over 18 million USD (Gilbert 2014). If this is true, then the laws of supply and demand should hold. The law of demand states that, holding other factors constant, at higher prices people should demand less. At lower prices, people should demand more. The law of supply states that at high prices, companies want to supply more product and at lower prices less (Perloff 2009, 14). If these laws hold, at some price—what economists call the equilibrium market price—the quantity supplied should equal the quantity demanded. The purpose of this paper is to understand how well virtual market economies can operate according to basic economic principles. Do the online markets that evolve in *EVE* conform to the basic beliefs about supply and demand? In other words, can we find evidence that the laws of supply and demand hold in the virtual world?

## **Background**

The *EVE: Online* market is managed and led by Dr. Guðmundsson and his team of economists. They designed the market such that there is an unlimited amount of material to be collected throughout the universe. However, collecting materials takes time and resources. In other words, there are always opportunity costs and trade-offs for collecting materials. Due to these trade-offs, materials collected gain value. With unlimited resources, markets would fail to form, as every player could easily collect all the material supplies they wanted. Instead, much like the real world, players specialize and exchange in the market through the medium of money. Thus, this is a capitalist and free-trade model. Players may earn as many resources as they can, if they work to get those resources. But as we have seen in the real world, trying to start from nothing and rise to the top is a difficult task. Markets and businesses are established by real people in real time, with tens of thousands of players interacting within the virtual environment. Through these interactions, they can build and create wealth by partaking in economic transactions powered by free trade. Furthermore, players are free to establish businesses and create rules in an attempt to become significantly wealthier by way of specialization and optimization. *EVE* is a financial sandbox for businesses and free agents alike to flourish on a wave of economic proficiency. Because *EVE* successfully mimics real-world market conditions, it is an excellent place to study human behavior and test the “laws” of economics.

## **Literature Review**

Branes’s 2016 analysis of the functionality of *EVE: Online* commodity markets explains that the supply and demand for products and commodities are set by players. When players request to buy or sell an item, they create a bid order. These orders function the same way real-world commodity markets function, such as the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The higher the price on a sell order, the less demand there should be for it. Sell order prices are naturally more expensive than buy order prices. Suppliers would like to sell their products for the highest price possible, while buyers would like to pay the lowest price possible. Equilibria are formed through these market interactions.

Competitive markets have been studied with experimental models (Smith 1962). *EVE* can be viewed as a perfectly competitive market if it has all four of these properties (Perloff 2009, 225):

1. Consumers believe that all firms sell identical products.
2. Firms freely enter and exit the market.
3. Buyers and sellers know the prices charged by firms.
4. Transaction costs are low.

Because these properties are present in *EVE*, we have access to a new kind of experimental mechanism for observing perfectly competitive markets in the microeconomy. Dr. Guðmundsson, the chief economist at CCP Games, agrees. He states, “I had seen that in experimental economics they were running experiments with 20 or 30 people and getting results that were really in line with theory. So, I thought, with tens of thousands in the same boat, this could be awesome” (Casey 2010). Though not specifically addressing fantasy digital markets, these papers and comments reinforce my thesis that *EVE* markets should exhibit standard economic outcomes.

*EVE* has many firms, which are price takers and sell the same product. The perfectly competitive assumptions hold: many buyers, many sellers, perfect information, homogeneous products, and free entry and exit (Perloff 2009, 225). In this way, we should be able to view *EVE* as a holistic economic system. Although game theory provides useful insights for the real world, it plays a negligible role in *EVE* because all participants have perfect information, or at least the same information. Sociological and psychological barriers and biases can interfere with trade (Hansen 1985). With weak sociological and psychological barriers and perfect information, only weak economic games should form. However, there are rare cases when a large group of players will collect significant proportions of the total market supply of a commodity and destroy all of it to see the price skyrocket, thereby creating a monopoly and harnessing market power. These players are able to sell the commodity at significantly higher prices because of the shortage; however, *EVE* markets are not very susceptible to economical games.

Markets and auctions, specifically online auctions, have a long history of analysis (Klemperer 1999, Hansen 1985, Liu and Shiu 2013). As a result, there are clear expectations about how *EVE* markets should behave. With nearly perfect information, perfect competition, and an internet setting, *EVE* should abide by the principles of auction theory. That is, the more information available to each player, the easier the auction is to solve. This is why transactions take place rapidly in *EVE*. This study will further the limited research in online and video game market economies as valuable embodiments of real-life economies (Salter and Stein 2016, Cavender 2015).

### ***Model and Data Description***

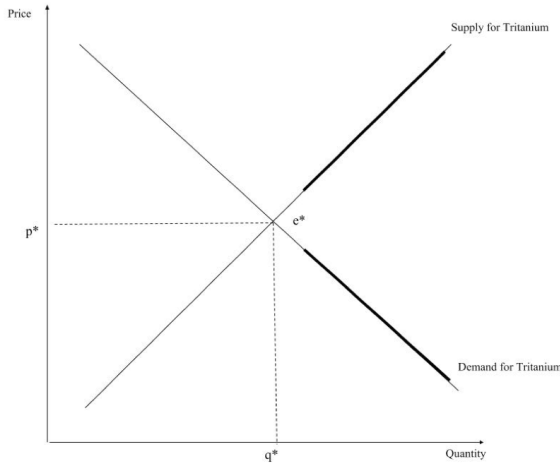
In my research, I focus on one particular commodity market, the market for Tritanium. This element is the most plentiful and most traded item in the game. It also has the lowest price. I follow this commodity market closely to see if the same variables that affect real-world prices similarly affect the video game price.

Basic economics suggests that demand is influenced by the number of buyers, income, prices of substitute products, preferences, and expectations about the future. Unfortunately, due to the nature of *EVE*, I was unable to gather data on some of these key factors, particularly the prices of complementary and substitute products. I also do not have information on consumer preferences. Supply determinants include the number of sellers, the prices of inputs, technology, and expectations about the future. Natural disasters or government regulation can also affect supply choices. I account for this by using a dummy variable for battles in the game. Again, in this case, I have little ability to collect data on some of the determinants, including the price of inputs (e.g., the value of game players' time) or expectations about the future.

However, this lack of data is not as detrimental as it might seem at first glance. The determinants of demand and supply are the factors that will shift the curves. Demand can increase, meaning at any price, people want more than before. Or, demand can decrease—at any price, people want less than before. Supply works analogously. Though this is an important part of market analysis, I am interested in a more fundamental question: whether the law of demand and supply holds. Thus, I can analyze the factors that shift the supply and demand curves—holding these factors constant—and ask whether there is evidence that demand exhibits a downward sloping

relationship between price and quantity. Similarly, supply exhibits an upward sloping relationship between price and quantity. Therefore, the auction literature is relevant.

As explained in the literature review, the way items are traded in *EVE* allowed me to look at both sell order and buy order prices and quantities. The buy orders represent the demand for Tritanium and the sell orders represent supply of it. This means that the bottom half of the demand curve and the upper half of the supply curve would be described from the data. The two lines from the data can be constructed, and from them, equilibrium can be identified. Figure 1 illustrates this concept.



**Figure 1.** The market for Tritanium.

*Note:* The bolded sections in the figure represent the distribution of price and quantity data for *sell orders* (supply) and *buy orders* (demand).

To estimate the equilibrium price, I use the following relationship:

$$\text{LogSOPrice} = \beta_0 + \beta_1\text{SOQuantity} + \beta_2\text{BOQuantity} + \beta_3\text{InteractionBOQuantity}/\text{SOQuantity} + \beta_4\text{LogBOPrice} + \beta_5\#\text{Players} + \beta_5\text{Battle}$$

*Sell order price* is the dependent variable. Independent or explanatory variables include the *sell order quantity in billions*, *buy order quantity in billions*, an interaction term between the two quantities, *buy order price*, the *number of players online*, and a dummy variable for battles. This dummy variable indicates whether or not a battle occurred on a given day. As is standard in econometric literature, both the sell order price and the buy order price are entered as the natural log of the price. This allows us to think about changes in percentage terms, rather than the arbitrary monetary metric of *EVE* (Gujarati and Porter 2010, 175). With these variables and relationships in mind, I arrived at the following hypotheses, based on economic theory.

Hypothesis 1: As the *sell order quantity* and *buy order quantity* increase, we expect the market equilibrium price (*sell order price*) to decrease. Per the law of demand, larger quantities available are associated with lower equilibrium prices.

Hypothesis 2: The supply and demand in *EVE* markets are affected by the same factors, and in the same way, that shift supply and demand in the real world. More battles should be associated with higher prices. When a battle is fought, material is destroyed. This loss in material causes a rise in demand for whatever was lost. Thus, as the demand increases, so should the price. Similarly, as the *buy order price* and the *number of players online* increase we should find that the *sell order price* increases also. Because buy orders represent the demand for Tritanium, as the price that buyers are willing to pay increases, then so will the price the sellers are charging. Furthermore, as the population in the game increases so will the demand for all products, increasing the *buy order price* and then *sell order price*.

All data concerning prices and quantities were collected from *EVE-Markets* (Muscaat 2017). This website is managed by hundreds of people who play the game. Battle information was collected from *EVEMaps* (Wollari 2017). I assign a 1 to battle if damage was done to any in-game property. Player data was from *EVE-Offline* (Chribba-OMG Labs 2017), which tracks the number of players online every hour. I collected data over a span of 100 days (N = 100); data were collected at the same time each day. Descriptions, summary statistics, and further information including predictions are found in table 1.

**Table 1.** Description of the data.

Variable	Description	Expected Relation to the Dependent Variable	Mean or Percent	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Sell Order: Price</i>	This is the average price at which players sold an item in their sell order on the day. It will be measured in ISK (game currency).	N/A	5,949	.0455	5,830	6
<i>Sell Order: Quantity</i>	This is the quantity that players sold when they put in a sell order on the day. It will be measured in billions of units. It is also the quantity demanded of sell orders.	Negative	77.11	15.95	60.39	122.90
<i>Buy Order: Price</i>	This is the average price at which players purchased a buy order of an item on the day. It will be measured in ISK.	Positive	4,571	.0612	4,500	4,82
<i>Buy Order: Quantity</i>	This is the quantity that players got of an item when they put in a buy order on the day. It will be measured in billions of units. It is also the quantity demanded of buy orders.	Negative	94.44	7.757	76.93	111.41
<i>Number of Players Online</i>	This is the number of players that are online during the specific date.	Positive	28,710.48	2,418.88	24,622	35,120
<i>War Reported?</i> 1 = yes 0 = no	This is a dummy variable, whether or not a war occurred on the day. I will only count wars in which ships or ISK are destroyed.	Positive	6%	.2387	N/A	N/A

From the summary statistics, I observe that the mean *sell order quantity* is actually lower than that of *buy order quantity*: 77.11 billion and 94.44 billion respectively. This is appropriate because economic theory would suggest that at higher prices, less is demanded. The expected correlation between *sell order quantity* and *buy order quantity* should, therefore, be negative. Correlations between all variables can be found in table 2.

Similarly, as *buy order price* increases so should the *sell order price*. The summary statistics indicate this is true. The mean *buy order price* of 4.571 is appropriately lower than the mean *sell order price* of 5.949, thus supporting my supposition that *buy orders* and *sell orders* can act as demand and supply. The observed difference in prices indicates that we are to the right of the classical equilibrium point in our market (figure 1).

The other two important variables in my model are *battles* and *number of players online*. I predict that as the *number of players online* increases, the overall demand, and therefore the price, for Tritanium should increase. *Battles* should have a positive effect on price because the repairs that are necessary for rebuilding and construction involve trillions in game currency (ISK) to repair. This increase of demand for rebuilding materials would result in an increase in *sell order price*. We observe that there is a 6% chance that there will be a battle on any given day and that player population will fluctuate between 24,622 and 35,120 players on any given day. Notice that the *number of players online* has a large standard deviation of 2,418.88 players. Thus, I anticipate that the market price will be highly responsive to whether there are people playing *EVE*.

**Table 2.** Correlations between variables.

	<i>Sell Order Price</i>	<i>Sell Order Quantity</i>	<i>Buy Order Price</i>	<i>Buy Order Quantity</i>	<i>Number of Players Online</i>	<i>Battle (1 = Yes)</i>
<i>Sell Order Price</i>	1					
<i>Sell Order Quantity</i>	0.0017	1				
<i>Buy Order Price</i>	0.4327	0.1118	1			
<i>Buy Order Quantity</i>	0.5775	-0.0786	0.0143	1		
<i>Number of Players Online</i>	0.3413	-0.3881	0.1220	0.2328	1	
<i>Battle (1 = Yes)</i>	-0.0859	0.1490	-0.0009	-0.0024	-0.0886	1

The most notable features I observe from the correlation matrix are the strong, positive correlations between *buy order price* and *buy order quantity* as associated with the dependent variable *sell order price* ( $r = 0.4327$  and  $r = 0.5775$  respectively). This makes sense and suggests *buy orders* are the demand for Tritanium; and thus, supply is very much determined by demand.

The independent variable *battles* has a weak, negative correlation with *sell order price* ( $r = 0.0859$ ). This suggests that *battles* will be relatively unimportant when determining *sell order price*. In a market where quadrillions of ISK are traded each day, an average battle costing less than 100 billion ISK will not have a substantial effect on

the economy overall. The weak, positive relationship between the *number of players online* and *sell order price* ( $r = 0.3413$ ) is consistent with predictions based on the law of demand. Although the relationship is weak, it may still be significant because the number of players online is an exogenous factor of the game.

### Regression

To examine the relationship between the variables and test whether the laws of supply and demand hold in *EVE*, I use multi-variate regression analysis. This is a standard econometric technique that allows me to summarize the relationship between a dependent variable conditional on several outcomes and independent variables. The final regression is reported in table 3.

**Table 3.** Regression results.

Variable Name	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	p-Value
<i>Buy Order Quantity in Billions</i>	-.00203 (.00069)	0.004
<i>Sell Order Quantity in Billions</i>	-.00331 (.00072)	0.000
<i>Interaction Term Between Sell Order Quantity and Buy Order Quantity</i>	.00003 (.000008)	0.000
<i>The Natural Logarithm of the Buy Order Price</i>	.69048 (.10312)	0.000
<i>Battle (Yes Or No)</i>	-.00280 (.00203)	0.170
<i>Number of Players Online</i>	8.58e-07 (4.11e-07)	0.039
<i>Constant</i>	.46484 (.18679)	0.015

*Note:* The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the sell order price.  
 $R^2 = 0.6558$  Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.6336$   $N = 100$

It is important to note the issue of simultaneous equation systems between my two variables, *sell order price* and *buy order price*. In econometrics, this means that the two variables both depend on the other and its error terms. Because of this relationship, the standard ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis may be both biased and inconsistent. For this study, the uncertainty of the error term hindered the development of an instrumental variable to describe the relationship between *sell order price* and *buy order price*. The relationship I found still holds the theoretically anticipated sign but the adjusted  $R^2$  and coefficients may be slightly inaccurate.

In the final regression, I observe an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.6336, explaining 63.36% of all the variation in *sell order price* by the variation in the six independent variables. For regressions based on social sciences data this adjusted  $R^2$  is quite strong. The final regression therefore demonstrates that I have a relatively strong ability to predict the *sell order price*.

Taking the natural logarithm of both *buy order price* and *sell order price* simplifies comprehension variable relationships. As opposed to calculating miniscule increases and decreases in the arbitrary online currency, I can interpret the estimated coefficients as percentage increases and decreases. An increase in *buy order price* by 1% will increase the *sell order price* by 0.69%. This is consistent with the law of demand and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

An increase of 1 ISK of the *sell order quantity* or the *buy order quantity* reduces the *sell order price* by 0.3% or 0.2%, respectively ( $p < 0.05$ ). In other words, higher quantities available result in a lower market equilibrium price, just as we would expect given the law of demand.

An interaction term allows us to see if there is a compound effect created by *sell* and *buy order quantities*. I find that if both the *sell order quantity* and *buy order quantity* increase at the same time, their combined ability to reduce the *sell order price* is mitigated by 0.004% ( $p < 0.05$ ). This is also consistent with the classic supply and demand model. We know that when quantity demanded increases, then the supply price will decrease. However, if quantity demanded increased at the same time for both types of transactions, the combined effect shouldn't be as large because demand price is also falling.

As the *number of players online* increases by 1000, the *sell order price* increases by 0.0858% ( $p < 0.05$ ). Because demand is partly dependent on the market size, more people will shift the demand curve to the right, resulting in a higher market price. The variables discussed so far have been statistically significant and of the expected sign, indicating that the *EVE* market for Tritanium conforms to basic economics principles.

*Battles* was my only statistically insignificant variable ( $p = 0.170$ ). Although the sign on the estimated coefficient is positive, indicating that more battles are associated with higher prices, I cannot say with confidence that there is really an effect. We see that if there is a battle on a day, the *sell order price* of Tritanium will decrease by 0.28%. This is logical because if there was a battle, the *sell order quantity* demanded would increase, causing the *sell order price* to decrease. If I had looked at the local economies where the *battles* had taken place, I may have seen more conclusive results with the *battles* variable. Because the battles are such small economic changes in such a very large economy, their effects are not as significant. It is also possible that the effects of battles on price don't emerge until several days afterward when people start to rebuild.

## Conclusion

The evidence suggests that *EVE* adheres to real-world microeconomic assumptions. It appears that game theory and auction theory are both testable mediums in *EVE*. Furthermore, the data show a relationship between supply and demand that are accurate according to microeconomic theory. My research indicates that further experimentation would be worthwhile. Next time, perhaps, I would create a variable that accounts for

the dual relationship between *sell order price* and *buy order price* and their error terms. If my results are found to be accurate on multiple or all occasions, it is reasonable to say that economists can use *EVE* and possibly other video game environments to study economics. If game designers were to enforce fiscal or monetary policy, they would observe the effects of that policy as created by real people. *EVE* functions as Dr. Guðmundsson intended: an observable universe that abides by and functions in all the ways that classical economic supply and demand would suggest. Knowing that *EVE* functions in an accurate economic way shines new light on modern econometrics.

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## Reds and Patriots: The Alliance of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party

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### **Abstract**

During the apartheid era in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) was allied with the South African Communist Party (SACP), presenting a united opposition to the white minority government. After apartheid was dismantled and multiracial democracy and equal rights were instituted, the ANC and the SACP maintained their alliance following their rise to power. To this day, the parties remain partners, although South Africa has not become a Communist state. Fears during the apartheid era that black majority rule would lead to Communism did not come to fruition. However, some contemporary scholars have argued that the SACP was the stronger party in the alliance, and that it wielded considerable influence over the ANC and its paramilitary wing, the Umkhonto we Sizwe. These scholars claim that the ANC was subservient to the international Communist movement, which verifies one of the apartheid regime's critiques of the ANC. In this paper, I argue that the ANC was the leading party in the anti-apartheid alliance and was not controlled by the Communists, and that the ANC and the SACP, despite having common interests and leftist orientations, were guided by different ideologies, interests, and long-term objectives. The ANC was primarily concerned with national self-determination for black Africans, while the SACP adhered to Marxism-Leninism and sought the creation of a socialist workers' state. Nelson Mandela and other ANC leaders, including black Communists, were primarily dedicated to nationalist goals. This paper also debunks the notion that the Freedom Charter, the anti-apartheid movement's declaration of goals and principles, was a blueprint for a socialist state.

## **Introduction**

The struggle to end apartheid in South Africa required a mass movement of diverse groups and individuals united by the desire to defeat a common enemy. A divided opposition would have been unable to topple the oppressive apartheid system. Necessity drove anti-apartheid organizations to work together, setting aside their differences to pursue their mutual interests. In South Africa, the anti-apartheid resistance was led by the African National Congress (ANC), a political party dedicated to African nationalism. Its most important ally during the apartheid era was the South African Communist Party (SACP), which, as its name implied, adhered to the Communist ideology espoused by Marx and Lenin. This alliance was powerful, and although it took decades for apartheid to finally be dismantled in the early 1990s, the efforts of the ANC-SACP alliance were monumental. The alliance achieved its shared goal of ending the apartheid regime and ushering in a truly democratic South Africa.

During the apartheid years, the South African government routinely accused the African National Congress of being a Communist-front organization. The government portrayed the party as merely a puppet of Communist forces attempting to establish a socialist regime. They claimed that such a regime would be the inevitable outcome of black-majority rule. Nelson Mandela claimed that the South African government accused the ANC of being Communists in order to demonize them and out of the belief that black Africans were incapable of thinking for themselves or fighting for their political rights without the help of white agitators.<sup>1</sup> An SACP pamphlet from 1989 exemplified this; it presented claims made by State President P. W. Botha. “Botha says the Communist Party are using the ANC as a Trojan Horse,” the pamphlet read, “that once liberation has been achieved the SACP will oust the leadership of the ANC and capture power for itself. Botha argues that the SACP wants to establish a communist dictatorship in South Africa and it is not interested in democracy.”<sup>2</sup> These accusations by the apartheid-era government proved to be unfounded. South Africa was not transformed into a Communist state after apartheid was dismantled and a government led by the ANC was voted into office.

Nevertheless, some contemporary scholars have argued that the SACP actually did exert significant influence over the ANC. One notable scholar, Stephen Ellis, claimed that the SACP exerted *de facto* control over the ANC by placing Communists into the ANC’s leadership structure. He further alleged that Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the paramilitary wing of the ANC, was created and controlled by the SACP.<sup>3</sup> Since the SACP was in allegiance with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, this allegation implied that the ANC was controlled by the Soviets and the international Communist movement. Even today, there remains considerable debate over the extent of Communist influence on the ANC.

Giving weight to the arguments of these scholars is the revelation that Nelson Mandela had been a member of the South African Communist Party and had served on the party’s Central Committee. Both the ANC and the SACP revealed this information to the public upon Mandela’s death in 2013.<sup>4</sup> During his lifetime, Mandela had denied being a member of the SACP, unwilling to lend credence to the arguments of the ANC’s critics. The SACP reported that Mandela remained a close friend of the Communists until his final days.

If the ANC was controlled by Communists, then one of the key arguments made by the defenders of apartheid—that the ANC was a Communist-front organization—has been verified. Perhaps the apartheid-era government of South Africa, along with its American and British benefactors, was correct regarding the true nature of the ANC. This revelation might be uncomfortable for some of the ANC's supporters, who have steadfastly denied such claims. The evidence of Mandela's closer ties to the SACP forces us to ask again if the Communists truly were "pulling the strings" of the ANC. How much influence did the SACP have over the ANC? Was the alliance between the two parties formed out of ideological brotherhood or for more practical reasons? Did ANC members consider building a socialist state their dominant goal, or were they concerned primarily with nationalist and racial interests?

Although the African National Congress and its leaders were influenced by left-wing ideology, they were always dedicated to African nationalism; their primary goal was the abolition of racial supremacy and the creation of a free and democratic South Africa. In this paper, I argue that the ANC was neither controlled by Communists nor dedicated to Communist ideology, and that it was the more powerful party in the anti-apartheid alliance. In addition, I explore the relationship between the ANC and the SACP, examining the objectives of these two parties and the interests they shared. Finally, I discuss the ideological and political devotions of Mandela and other ANC leaders. In this paper, I intend to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between the ANC and the SACP.

Aside from addressing the historical allegations levied by the South African government during the apartheid era, as well as the arguments of recent scholars, there is another important reason to analyze the relationship between the African National Congress and South African Communist Party. The ANC has ruled South Africa since its victory in the country's first post-apartheid general election in 1994. During its time in power, the ANC has embraced a social democratic path and has continued to maintain a capitalist economic system. Mandela, during his presidency, adhered to the economic liberalism of his white National Party predecessors. Despite the fears of some opponents of black-majority rule, South Africa has not become a socialist state. The ANC describes itself as a "disciplined force of the left,"<sup>5</sup> but that does not imply that it is a socialist party. Indeed, the fact that South Africa continues to maintain capitalism leads one to wonder if the ANC was ever loyal to Communist ideology.

### ***The Emergence of the ANC-SACP Alliance***

The relationship between the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party originated with the founding of the latter in 1921. The SACP, like other Communist parties around the world, was loyal to the Soviet Union and took its ideological guidelines from the Kremlin.<sup>6</sup> It initially supported the all-white South African Labour Party but terminated its ties when Labour entered into a coalition government with Afrikaner nationalists. The SACP then worked to recruit black Africans into its ranks. The party assisted Clements Kadalie, the first black leader of a national trade union in South Africa, in organizing his Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICWU). However, Kadalie eventually adopted more moderate strategies after traveling abroad and learning the practices of British trade unions. This alienated him and the ICWU from the Communists.<sup>7</sup> The SACP turned its efforts to

developing a labor movement within the African National Congress. At the time, the Communists had little sway over members of the ANC, who continued to be influenced by the traditional chiefs of their tribal homelands.<sup>8</sup> The Communists attracted support from black Africans because white Communists treated them as equals, a new experience for many ANC members who had only known racism from whites.<sup>9</sup> The SACP intensified their recruitment efforts in the 1930s.<sup>10</sup> Starting in 1940, after A. B. Xuma became the leader of the ANC, the Communists began working within the party to attract a following from the rapidly growing, urbanized African workforce.<sup>11</sup>

As Communists proliferated within the ranks of the ANC, they faced opposition from some of the younger, more nationalistic members of the party. In particular, members of the ANC Youth League were extremely concerned about the growing Communist presence and influence within their party. They saw Communism as a foreign ideology that would corrupt the ANC's ideals.<sup>12</sup> They distrusted the SACP's predominately white policymakers, their emphasis on class conflict rather than racial conflict, and their hopes for an eventual socialist revolution.<sup>13</sup> To the Youth Leaguers, Communist ideology was a cloak for white paternalism. The SACP's notion of class struggle did not appeal to black South Africans, who had been singled out for oppression along racial lines, not class ones.<sup>14</sup> Anton Lembede, the founding president of the Youth League, felt that African self-confidence and initiative would be undermined if white Communists joined or worked with the ANC.<sup>15</sup> Nelson Mandela, who had joined the ANC in 1944 and became a prominent member of the Youth League, was suspicious of white influence on the ANC. Although Mandela had befriended many white Communists, he had disapproved of cooperating with the SACP.<sup>16</sup> He worried that the Communists were trying to take over the ANC under the guise of joint action. From his perspective, the Communists had superior education, experience, and training, and because of these strengths, they would end up dominating the ANC. Mandela viewed South African Indians in a similar light, and he opposed their influence on the party as well.<sup>17</sup> "I believed that it was an undiluted African nationalism, not Marxism or multiracialism, that would liberate us," he later wrote in his autobiography.<sup>18</sup> Mandela and other ANC members feared that if the ANC worked too closely with the white-dominated SACP, then whites would hijack the anti-apartheid movement and direct it according to their own ideologies and objectives. The ANC's goal of liberating black South Africans from racial oppression would be compromised if whites became its *de facto* leaders. For some of the more nationalistic ANC members, Communism was a Trojan horse that only benefited the interests of white opponents of apartheid.

However, Communism proved to be appealing to many black Africans. For years, white Communists had been the only political group in South Africa who were willing to treat black Africans as equals. White Communists were willing to interact with black Africans on a regular basis, to eat with them, speak with them, live with them, and work with them. They were the only whites who seemed willing to help blacks achieve political rights and a fair stake in society.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it came as no surprise that black Africans tended to equate Communism with freedom and equality, and that encouraged them to sympathize with the ideology.

Mandela was one of the more rabid anti-Communists within the ANC during this time. He physically broke up SACP meetings by storming their stages, tearing up their

signs, and seizing control of their microphones.<sup>20</sup> At the ANC national conference in December 1949, Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and other Youth Leaguers introduced a resolution that would have expelled all Communist Party members from the ranks of the ANC. The resolution was soundly defeated.<sup>21</sup> It failed because the ANC's general view at the time was that every adult was entitled to become a member of the party.<sup>22</sup> Among those who voted against the resolution were some of the most conservative members of the party. They believed that the ANC was established to be a "Parliament of the African people," accommodating all individuals united by the common goal of national liberation, regardless of political differences.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, Mandela continued his campaign against Communist influence in the ANC. He notably interrupted a speech by veteran Communist leader J. B. Marks and stole the stage from him to launch a tirade of his own.<sup>24</sup> However, Mandela's opposition was faltering. The argument of the ANC's elders, that the party should welcome anyone who believed in its ultimate goal, was beginning to convince him that letting Communists into the party's ranks would be beneficial.<sup>25</sup> His personal turning point came in 1950. The Transvaal branches of the ANC, the SACP, and the South African Indian Congress held a convention in March. There, they passed a resolution calling for a one-day general strike on International Workers' Day (May Day) to demand the abolition of the pass laws and other discriminatory legislation. Although Mandela supported the objectives of the strike, he initially felt that the SACP, which had heavily lobbied for the strike, was trying to "steal the thunder" from the ANC's own plans for national protests.<sup>26</sup> However, the May Day strike attracted popular support, an achievement that impressed members of the ANC Youth League.<sup>27</sup> On May 1, 1950, Mandela and fellow ANC member Walter Sisulu witnessed the May Day protest in Orlando West, part of the Soweto township near Johannesburg. While observing from a distance, they watched in horror as white police officers opened fire on the predominately black crowds. Eighteen protesters were shot and killed. The violent suppression of this peaceful demonstration left a significant impression on Mandela.<sup>28</sup> He saw firsthand the dedication of African workers to organized labor, despite the risk of police violence. He praised the Communists for supporting the cause of African nationalism. Mandela already had a number of friends and acquaintances who were Communists, and he came to admire them for their devotion to their cause and their hardworking attitudes.<sup>29</sup> After this turning point, Mandela grew interested in an alliance with the Communists.

Shortly after the May Day protests, the South African government passed the Suppression of Communism Act, which formally banned the South African Communist Party. However, the bill was drafted in a broad manner that effectively criminalized any organizations that encouraged "political, industrial, social, or economic change" within South Africa through "the promotion of disturbance or disorder."<sup>30</sup> The act not only suppressed the SACP. It suppressed the ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations, effectively making support for racial equality synonymous with believing in Communism.<sup>31</sup> This draconian act sparked the formation of an official alliance between the ANC and the SACP. The two parties realized they faced a common enemy in the South African government. It was time for them to join forces and create a united opposition movement. The ANC became increasingly active in promoting strikes in cooperation with the Communists.<sup>32</sup> They began by organizing a National Day

of Protest on June 26, 1950, in order to condemn the May Day massacre and the Suppression of Communism Act.<sup>33</sup> This was the beginning of a united struggle against the apartheid regime.

### *The Nature of the ANC-SACP Alliance*

The alliance between the ANC and the SACP changed the attitudes of the two parties toward each other. The SACP, which had seen the ANC as “irrelevant” and “petite bourgeoisie,” developed a more positive perception and brought multiracial and internationalist attitudes to the party.<sup>34</sup> The relationship that developed between the two parties was mutually binding. The Communists helped build up the ANC, and the growing ANC provided fertile recruiting grounds for the SACP. Thus, a significant overlap in membership between the two parties developed, with many Communists becoming local leaders in the ANC.<sup>35</sup> Despite their political differences, the ANC and the SACP were united by the common goal of national liberation in South Africa.<sup>36</sup> Both parties were dedicated to abolishing apartheid and ending white supremacy.<sup>37</sup> They both supported the Freedom Charter, the declaration of principles for a free, democratic, and nonracial South Africa. The SACP justified its alliance with the ANC by alluding to their shared goal of “national democracy,” which was envisioned as a transitional stage on the road to Communism. Capitalists would still exist during this stage, but their political and economic power would be restrained. Soviet ideological theorists during the 1950s had advocated collaboration between Communists and “national bourgeoisie” against imperialism in colonial and semi-colonial lands.<sup>38</sup>

The ANC-SACP alliance emerged out of both ideological agreement as well as the existence of common interests and foes. “It is true that there has often been close co-operation between the ANC and the Communist Party,” Mandela said during the Rivonia Trial in 1964. “But co-operation is merely proof of a common goal—in this case the removal of white supremacy—and is not proof of a complete community of interests.”<sup>39</sup> Many years later, at the relaunching of the South African Communist Party in 1990, Mandela claimed that the ANC-SACP alliance was *not* just a “marriage of convenience.” “We talk of an alliance precisely because we are two independent organisations with political platforms and long-term goals that do not necessarily converge,” he said. But he observed that there was more that united the parties than divided them, for they were both dedicated to a “people-centered and people-driven programme of democratic transformation.”<sup>40</sup> Oliver Tambo, the longtime secretary general of the ANC, said the relationship between the parties was not “an accident of history,” nor was it “a natural and inevitable development.” It was not a “paper alliance” negotiated at conference tables, but a “living organism” that had grown out of mutual struggle. The ANC and the SACP had a common goal of abolishing apartheid, ending white-minority rule, and establishing the right to self-determination for all South Africans. They were mutually reinforcing, and they influenced each other in their own ways.<sup>41</sup> Of course, the two parties also had enough differences to warrant a clear distinction between them. Their alliance may not have been entirely one of convenience, but it was not purely driven by ideological unity either.

During the Rivonia Trial, Nelson Mandela maintained that the alliance between the ANC and the SACP was forged for the sake of a common goal: the end of white supremacy in South Africa. He brought up the example of how the United States and

Britain had allied with the Soviet Union during World War II to defeat Hitler, but that alliance did not turn either of those two countries into Communist states, nor did it mean their leaders Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill were Communists.<sup>42</sup> Mandela highlighted further examples of Communists allying with national liberation movements. He mentioned the role that Communists played in the anti-Axis resistance movements during World War II. He noted their alliances with nationalists in anti-colonial struggles, such as in Algeria, Indonesia, and Malaysia.<sup>43</sup> He reminded the court that Chiang Kai-shek, a bitter enemy of Communism, had nevertheless sided with the Communists to free China from foreign oppression.<sup>44</sup> Just because nationalists allied themselves with Communists to fight against a common enemy did not make them Communists themselves—sometimes the enemy of one’s enemy must become one’s friend.

Racial tensions persisted during the early stages of the ANC-SACP alliance. Black members of the ANC were fearful that the SACP, a party largely controlled by whites, would seize control of the anti-apartheid movement. These tensions existed within the SACP itself. Moses Kotane, the secretary general of the SACP during the 1960s (and a black South African), blamed “white intellectuals” for the failure of the MK’s sabotage campaign and the arrest of Mandela and other ANC members at the Rivonia farmhouse in 1963.<sup>45</sup> These tensions would later lead to ANC and black SACP leaders “Africanizing” the guerrilla war in South Africa by transforming the MK into an organization dedicated to African nationalism. This prevented the MK from being used to advance the goals of the white-dominated SACP.

Stephen Ellis claimed that the 1969 ANC conference in Morogoro, Tanzania, was the moment when the SACP was finally able to consolidate its control over the ANC. The conference was assembled to resolve internal divisions within the ANC, which had erupted due to the lack of a true vanguard element in the party and disagreement over the party’s identity. The failures of MK guerrilla campaigns in neighboring Rhodesia in the late 1960s prompted the ANC to hold the meeting. At Morogoro, party leaders decided that “external ANC structures” (i.e. elements of the ANC in exile outside of South Africa) could recruit non-Africans into their ranks. For the ANC elements inside South Africa, only Africans were allowed to join their ranks or serve on the ANC’s National Executive Committee.<sup>46</sup> The SACP did not wrest control of the ANC at this conference. Instead, the ANC simply clarified who was allowed to represent the party inside and outside South Africa.

From the beginning, the ANC was the undisputed leader of the anti-apartheid alliance. Members of both the ANC and the SACP recognized the ANC’s leadership position. Nelson Mandela on numerous occasions described the relationship between the two parties as such. During his presidential term, when addressing a celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SACP, Mandela said that the ANC’s leadership was the result of the party being a “force that brings together all the strands, the classes, strata and groups that are the dynamo of liberation and social change.” In other words, the party served as a popular front for all South Africans, regardless of their social or ethnic group. “All these forces have found a home in the ANC because it represents the social and political base for real freedom, for the transformation of our society into a truly democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united nation.”<sup>47</sup> Oliver Tambo, in a 1985 interview with the *Cape Times*, said that the SACP realized that the ANC was

leading the struggle against apartheid, and although the membership of the two parties sometimes overlapped, the individuals who were members of both recognized the distinctions between them.<sup>48</sup>

Joe Slovo, a white Communist who led the SACP during the later years of apartheid, also recognized the ANC's leadership role. He rejected the notion of sinister motives in the ANC-SACP alliance. "The alliance between the Communist Party and the ANC has no secret clauses," he said. Slovo believed that the alliance was based on complete respect for each party's independence and the integrity of their internal democratic processes. This mutual respect was responsible for the lasting strength of the alliance.<sup>49</sup> In a 1988 pamphlet issued by the SACP, Slovo wrote, "The main core of the whole democratic struggle . . . is the ANC which stands at the head of the liberation alliance." The ANC, as "head of this alliance and prime representative of all the oppressed," welcomed people of all social classes into its ranks. The party was described as a "revolutionary nationalist organisation with popular roots," but it was not a populist party. Slovo wrote that the ANC recognized that the different social classes in South Africa each had their own long-term aspirations.<sup>50</sup> Slovo believed that it would be a mistake for the ANC to adopt a socialist platform, despite its bias toward the working class (which was because the majority of South Africans were working class). "If [the ANC] adopted such a platform," wrote Slovo, "it would destroy its character as the prime representative of all the classes among the oppressed black majority."<sup>51</sup> Slovo believed that the ANC should remain a national liberation front with broad appeal to the masses.

A notable example of the ANC's leadership in the anti-apartheid alliance was its decision to engage in guerrilla warfare against the South African regime. Ellis claimed that the SACP initiated the armed struggle. However, as Paul S. Landau noted in his assessment of Communist influence on the ANC, the SACP stuck to a more orthodox approach to resistance, preferring sabotage and militant strike enforcement. Moses Kotane believed that any order to engage in violent resistance had to be issued by a proper central command. Conversely, the ANC faction led by Mandela desired to engage in guerrilla warfare to provoke a revolution against the apartheid regime.<sup>52</sup> The "ambitious" plans for guerrilla war drawn up by the ANC sparked disagreement within the SACP. Some Communist leaders, such as Joe Slovo and Govan Mbeki, supported the schemes, while others, such as Kotane and Rusty Bernstein, were opposed, at least initially.<sup>53</sup> The ANC proved to be more flexible and more forward-thinking than the hesitant SACP on the matter of armed struggle.

The ANC also retained control over Umkhonto we Sizwe, or MK, its paramilitary arm. The high command of the MK, from its inception, answered only to the National Executive Committee of the ANC. SACP members who joined the MK high command were ordered to cease attending their party's meetings.<sup>54</sup> ANC leaders such as Tambo and Kotane (who also still led the SACP, but had gradually accepted the need for guerrilla warfare) banned independent political activities by SACP members in the MK. These measures were implemented to prevent the chain of command under the ANC from being disrupted and to deter the SACP from trying to exert influence or control over the MK.<sup>55</sup> Kotane, despite being a Communist himself, helped shape the MK into an African nationalist organization. The military struggle against apartheid came to be "Africanized" inside South Africa. The MK's membership eventually

consisted almost entirely of black Africans, a development that was sternly criticized by non-African SACP leaders such as Yusuf Dadoo, who protested the exclusion of Coloureds and Indians from the paramilitary's ranks.<sup>56</sup>

As international opposition to apartheid increased, the ANC welcomed the support of the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement. The Communist Bloc vocally opposed colonialism and was sympathetic to national liberation movements. "Although there is a universal condemnation of apartheid, the communist bloc speaks out against it with a louder voice than most of the white world," Mandela stated during the Rivonia Trial.<sup>57</sup> The ANC turned to the Soviet Union and other Communist states for support because many Western nations, although condemning apartheid, were reluctant to help the leftist ANC due to the Cold War climate. Meanwhile, the Soviets and other Communist states were providing weapons and training to the ANC and the MK. The Communists had also "shown the way to triumphant revolution" in Cuba and Vietnam, which served as inspirations for the ANC.<sup>58</sup> After its banning by the South African government and its subsequent exile, the ANC found itself operating in closer proximity to the SACP and its international benefactors. SACP members continued to have a presence within the ranks of the ANC, ensuring that Marxist ideas would remain discussed in internal party debates. The ANC also became acquainted with African Marxist movements such as the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), both of which fought against Portuguese colonial rule and secured the independence of their nations.<sup>59</sup> By the late 1970s and early 1980s, many younger ANC members had become sympathetic to Marxism, inspired by the victory of Communist guerrillas in Angola and Mozambique and intriguing stories from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Cuba. They were also influenced by South African Communist heroes, regardless of their races. The "fascist" South African regime was seen as being in collusion with the capitalists, justifying the younger members' beliefs in revolutionary Marxism.<sup>60</sup> Oliver Tambo later praised the Soviet Union for its support of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and for anti-colonial and anti-imperialist causes in general.<sup>61</sup>

Although the Soviet Union and other Communist states provided crucial support for the ANC, they did not control the party. Their support for the ANC was limited to financial and material assistance, which helped keep the party alive. But at no point did international Communists control the ANC. Until the mid-1970s, Soviet leaders had little faith in the success of national liberation movements in sub-Saharan Africa. They never attempted to build an African military force that could seriously threaten the South African regime, even after the Soweto uprising of 1976. In reality, the MK simply requested piecemeal support from the Soviets, and the requests were usually granted.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, independent African countries (which vigorously opposed the apartheid regime) proved to be more critical to the ANC's survival, providing training for MK fighters and land for military bases.<sup>63</sup>

The support of the Communist Bloc was appreciated by the ANC, but it was an obstacle to the end of apartheid. The leaders of the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, were not sympathetic to the ANC, which they viewed as a Communist party. The American and British governments thus supported the South African regime as a bulwark against Soviet influence in Africa.<sup>64</sup> Successful negotiations between the

South African government and the ANC only began after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the ending of the Cold War. South African President F. W. de Klerk believed that the ANC would be weaker—and less of a threat—without its Soviet benefactor. This was one of the factors that prompted de Klerk to begin the negotiations that led to the dismantling of apartheid.<sup>65</sup>

### ***The Freedom Charter***

The Freedom Charter, the anti-apartheid movement's declaration of its core principles and its desire for a democratic and non-racial South Africa, was accused by critics, both South African and foreign, of being a Communist document. Supporters of the charter rejected claims that it was a blueprint for turning South Africa into a socialist state. They insisted it proclaimed principles instead of policies. Michael Harmel, the SACP's Marxist historian, claimed that the Freedom Charter stemmed from the tradition of human rights proclamations that included the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, as well as the more modern United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>66</sup> It could trace its origins to these earlier documents proclaiming the basic rights of the people. Nelson Mandela described the Freedom Charter as a revolutionary document that targeted the existing institutions of political and economic power in South Africa. Despite its revolutionary nature, it was "by no means a blueprint for a socialist state." It called for the transfer of political power not to one social class but to "all people of this country, be they workers, peasants, professionals men, or petty bourgeoisie."<sup>67</sup>

Accusations that the charter was "Communist" centered on the fact that it advocated the nationalization of certain industries and the redistribution of resources to the masses. The document declared that "The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth!" It advocated breaking up the financial, gold-mining, and agricultural monopolies in South Africa and "democratizing" such enterprises, redistributing their wealth in a fair manner.<sup>68</sup> These measures could be considered quasi-socialist, as some of the means of production would be placed under collective ownership. However, the primary intent was to enable the growth of a "non-European bourgeois class" that would for the first time have ownership of productive property in its name. Mandela said that "private enterprise" would "flourish as never before" under this new economic system.<sup>69</sup> In 1956, he wrote an article for *Liberation* magazine in which he claimed that the Freedom Charter would unleash an African-style capitalism when implemented.<sup>70</sup> Mandela believed the charter would create an economy where South Africans of all races could freely participate and enjoy prosperity.

During the Rivonia Trial, Mandela denied the claims that the Freedom Charter was a socialist blueprint. He acknowledged that the document advocated a nationalization of industrial monopolies, banks, and mines—which were controlled by white owners—in order to redistribute wealth to poor blacks. However, Mandela noted that the National Party, the ruling party of the white-minority government, had previously endorsed the nationalization of gold mines when they were controlled by foreign capital so that their wealth could be redistributed to Afrikaners. The Freedom Charter's economic goals would "open up fresh fields for a prosperous African population of all classes, including the middle class," according to Mandela.<sup>71</sup> He further stated that the

ANC had never “advocated a revolutionary change in the economic structure of the country, nor has it, to the best of my recollection, ever condemned capitalist society.”<sup>72</sup>

The idea for the Freedom Charter did not emanate from the Communists. Although one key figure in drafting the document, architect Rusty Bernstein, was a member of the SACP, the charter was conceived and revised by nationalists within the ANC.<sup>73</sup> It originated with one of the ANC’s elder statesmen, Z. K. Matthews. In August 1953, as president of the Cape ANC, he formally proposed the creation of a multiracial constitution for a future, democratic South Africa. He said, “I wonder whether the time has not come for the ANC to consider the question of convening a National Convention, a Congress of the People, representing all the people of this country irrespective of race or colour to draw up a Freedom Charter for the democratic South Africa of the future.”<sup>74</sup> Mandela viewed the charter as “a document born of the people.” It was a genuine expression of the South African people instead of being imposed by outside agitators as some of its anti-Communist critics had claimed.<sup>75</sup> The charter did not contain explicitly Communist content. Jack Simons, a member of the regrouped SACP from the University of Cape Town, described the charter as non-Communist, since it did not advocate for either the abolition of social classes or public ownership of the means of production. Simons said that the proposed nationalization of industries in the charter was closer to state capitalism than to Communism.<sup>76</sup>

### ***Nelson Mandela’s Ideology***

Nelson Mandela’s views on Communism have been subject to much speculation. The posthumous revelation that he was a leading member of the SACP makes this issue more important to analyze. He was introduced to Communist ideology in the early 1940s while working as a clerk at the law firm Witkin, Sidelsky & Eidelman in Johannesburg. He befriended two Communists who worked there, Gaur Radebe and Nat Bregman. Through Bregman, Mandela began attending Communist Party meetings and multiracial social gatherings.<sup>77</sup> During this period Bregman introduced Mandela to Michael Harmel, one of the SACP’s most prominent thinkers, and Mandela spent much time in his company.<sup>78</sup> Despite befriending Communists, Mandela initially opposed their attempts to join or influence the ANC, not out of personal antipathy, but out of a desire to preserve the ANC’s core ideology of African nationalism.

After dropping his opposition to Communists within the ranks of the ANC, Mandela began conversing regularly with Moses Kotane, the general secretary of the SACP and a member of the executive council of the ANC. Seeking to enhance his understanding of Marxism, Mandela began reading Communist literature. He was attracted to the idea of a classless society, which, in his mind, was similar to the communal nature of traditional African cultures. He subscribed to Marx’s dictum: “From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs,” which he compared to the Golden Rule. Mandela became fascinated by dialectical materialism, which allowed him to better understand the racial and economic oppression that afflicted the African people. He was also delighted by Marxism’s call for revolutionary action.<sup>79</sup> He managed to reconcile his belief in African nationalism with the ideas he gathered from Marx.

During the Rivonia Trial, Mandela detailed his ideological views and inspirations. “I have always regarded myself, in the first place, as an African patriot,” he stated.<sup>80</sup> His motivation to fight against apartheid was inspired by the tales his tribal elders

in the Transkei had told him—tales of his people’s ancestors fighting to defend their fatherland. “I hoped then that life might offer me the opportunity to serve my people and make my own humble contribution to their freedom struggle,” he said.<sup>81</sup> His decision to establish Umkhonto we Sizwe was inspired by the example of his ancestors;<sup>82</sup> although in previous circumstances he had credited the Cuban Revolution as an inspiration for the MK’s armed campaign.<sup>83</sup> Mandela explained that although he had read Marxist literature and had been influenced by Marxism, he was not himself a Communist. Other nationalist leaders such as India’s Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah, and Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser had also been swayed by Marx. “We all accept the need for some form of socialism to enable our people to catch up with the advanced countries of this world and to overcome their legacy of extreme poverty,” Mandela observed. “But this does not mean we are Marxists.”<sup>84</sup>

Mandela said that he was influenced by political ideas from throughout the world, from the West and the East. As an activist he strove to be impartial and objective, tying himself to no particular system other than some form of socialism, which he saw as necessary for elevating the African people’s economic situation. Mandela respected Western political treatises and institutions, and he spoke approvingly of the Magna Carta, the English Petition of Right, and the American Bill of Rights. He praised the British Parliament, which he considered the most democratic institution in the world, and he admired the independence and impartiality of the British judicial system. He also expressed praise for the American system of government, including the United States Congress, the doctrine of separation of powers, and the independence of the American judiciary.<sup>85</sup> The Western parliamentary systems that Mandela admired were considered reactionary and undemocratic by Communists. Despite the claims directed against him, Nelson Mandela did not fight to create a Communist state. He had Marxist influences, and he considered himself a socialist, but he was first and foremost an African nationalist, dedicated to liberating his people from racial oppression.

While Mandela did not subscribe to Communist ideology, other leaders of the ANC were more sympathetic. Govan Mbeki was fascinated by Communism after attending a course on Marxism-Leninism taught at Fort Hare University in the early 1930s. He also learned about dialectical materialism from Max Yergan, an African-American Communist.<sup>86</sup> By the early 1980s, some ANC leaders, such as Harry Gwala (a “real Stalinist” according to Walter Sisulu<sup>87</sup>) and Mbeki, saw the Communists as the “dominant force” in the alliance between the ANC and the SACP. Gwala even suggested that the ANC adopt “The Internationale,” the song of international socialism, as its official anthem.<sup>88</sup> Mbeki believed that racial oppression was a result of class conflict. He did not believe that black Africans could benefit from capitalism, denying Mandela’s claim that African free enterprise would “flourish as never before” after the end of apartheid.<sup>89</sup> These men were a minority among the ANC’s leaders, however. The leadership of the party was firmly committed to nationalist interests and goals.

Mandela and several other ANC leaders joined the SACP by 1960, and some, like Mandela, served in leadership positions within the party. However, they did not join the party because they agreed with Communist ideology or wanted to establish a Communist state; Mandela and his brethren joined the SACP as a “strategic act” to foster cooperation between that party and the ANC.<sup>90</sup> Their desire was to maintain the

unity of the anti-apartheid alliance—to keep the disparate parties moving toward their common goals—despite ideological differences.

### ***The Goals of the ANC and the SACP***

The African National Congress advocated for African nationalism, which continues to be its driving ideology. It has always been that party's ideological creed, as Mandela mentioned in the Rivonia Trial.<sup>91</sup> "It is not the concept of African Nationalism expressed in the cry, 'Drive the White man into the sea,'" he pointed out. "The African Nationalism for which the ANC stands is the concept of freedom and fulfillment for the African people in their own land."<sup>92</sup> The ANC constitution dedicated the party to creating an egalitarian, democratic South Africa free from oppression and discrimination of any kind.<sup>93</sup> The party was open to anyone who agreed with its core principles, regardless of one's political views. "My own views on the subject had not altered in many years," Mandela wrote in his autobiography. "The ANC was a mass liberation movement that welcomed all those with the same objectives."<sup>94</sup> Thabo Mbeki, the son of Govan Mbeki (and later president of South Africa), stated that the ANC was not a Communist organization but a national liberation movement. He said that the ANC's primary goal during its existence was to get rid of the apartheid system. The SACP allied with the ANC because they had a common enemy in the South African government.<sup>95</sup> Whereas the SACP emphasized class conflict (as was typical with Communist parties), the ANC sought harmony between the social classes.<sup>96</sup> Despite its nationalist and non-Communist stance, the ANC was, and still is, a left-wing political party. A 2015 party conference declaration confirmed this status, stating that "the ANC is not and has never been a communist organisation," but noting that "the ANC has always been anti-imperialist in nature and pro-working class."<sup>97</sup> Still, the fact that a party is leftist does not automatically make it Communist or Marxist.

The South African Communist Party explicitly adhered to Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of Communist parties around the world. It sought to establish a workers' state. "Instead of apartheid—the Communist Party stands for the unity and friendship of all sections of the South African people, in a united, democratic non-racial South Africa; and end to segregation and Bantustans," read a pamphlet they issued in 1989.<sup>98</sup> "Instead of exploitation and profiteering by the bosses—the South African Communist Party stands for socialism: workers' ownership and control of means of production and distribution, an end to poverty and unemployment." Mandela described the differing ideological natures of the ANC and the SACP during his Rivonia Trial statement. "The Communist Party sought to emphasize class distinctions whilst the ANC seeks to harmonize them," he said. "This is a vital distinction."<sup>99</sup> After the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and other parts of the world, the SACP transitioned to a form of democratic socialism. The Communists would serve as the parliamentary representatives of the working class in a pluralist non-racial South African democracy. They rejected the "self-perpetuating power" and "implications for corruption and dictatorship" that had defined Soviet-style Communist states.<sup>100</sup> The SACP reformed in the wake of Communism's international collapse, drifting away from orthodox Marxism-Leninism and toward democratic participation in the political process.

Many black SACP members who joined the ANC ended up pursuing the ANC's nationalist goals instead of Communist ones. Black SACP members serving on the

ANC National Executive Committee were committed to African nationalism first and Communism second because they were Africans themselves; thus, they had a greater stake in eradicating white supremacy. They placed their racial and ethnic interests ahead of their class interests.<sup>101</sup> Moses Kotane, the SACP secretary general and a leading member of the ANC, helped transform the MK into an organization largely populated by black Africans who were committed to African nationalism. Joe Slovo, a leading white member of the SACP (and later the secretary general of the party), complained that the ANC, due to its autonomy in decision-making, was co-opting prominent SACP members like Kotane and convincing them to focus on the ANC's objectives at the expense of the SACP.<sup>102</sup> Black Communists within the ANC developed more loyalty toward nationalism than Marxism-Leninism.

The ANC continued its alliance with the SACP after the fall of apartheid. Mandela believed that the alliance allowed the ANC to pay attention to the interests of the poor, the downtrodden, and the disadvantaged.<sup>103</sup> "The African National Congress seeks to build a better life for all South Africans, especially the poor," he said at the SACP's ninth party congress. "In this endeavour, we can only benefit from alliance and critical engagement with organisations which have put this objective high on their agenda. The SACP is one such foremost champion of the interests of the working class and the poor."<sup>104</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The struggle against apartheid in South Africa was long and brutal. It required cooperation on a national scale between parties whose views did not always align. Only a mass liberation movement could topple such an oppressive system and build a free country in its place. The African National Congress and the South African Communist Party were united by their common interests: the abolition of apartheid and the dismantling of white minority rule in favor of a non-racial democracy. However, the two parties had their own creeds, and despite influencing each other, they were independent entities. The ANC maintained the leadership position throughout the history of its alliance with the SACP. At no point was the ANC controlled or dominated by Communists, contrary to the claims of the apartheid-era South African government and its supporters or contemporary scholars who have kept the academic debate alive. The dynamic was the other way around. The ANC was the clear leader in its alliance with the SACP. Were the Communists the ones who were being dominated by their allies? As Nelson Mandela famously wrote in his autobiography: "The cynical have always suggested that the Communists were using us. But who is to say that we were not using them?"<sup>105</sup>

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# The Abortion Rights Struggle in Wisconsin

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## *Abstract*

The purpose of this paper is to examine the history of the antiabortion movement in Wisconsin and place it in a broader, national context. The debate can be summarized as the fight over two conflicting personal liberties: the right of the unborn child to exist juxtaposed to a woman's right to have control over her own body. Twenty-one archival boxes from nine different collections at the Wisconsin Historical Society formed the basis of the research for this project. The primary focus is on correspondence between conservative politicians from Wisconsin and their constituents between 1968 and 1980 at both the state and national level. Through these letters some observations can be made: religion, especially Catholicism, played a major role in developing and guiding Wisconsin's antiabortion movement, and Wisconsin's antiabortion movement did not fit the national trend of developing antiabortion activism only after *Roe v. Wade*. The paper further aims to give the reader a glimpse into the fierce political activism that Wisconsin is famous for.

## *Introduction and History of Abortion in America*

Wisconsin's struggle for abortion rights, though not entirely alone in its progression, was not the same as the rest of the nation's. Historians Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore and Thomas J. Sugrue state in their overview of American history after World War II that Protestant evangelicals were the most vocal group supporting antiabortion legislation.<sup>1</sup> However, this does not seem to have been the case in the state of Wisconsin. In America's Dairyland, the single loudest voice opposing abortion during this period belonged to the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic organization, as well as adherents to the Catholic faith and Catholic clergy. Especially vocal in the movement's early stages were Catholic professionals such as lawyers, doctors, and professors. Though numerous evangelical groups eventually sent pamphlets, brochures, and other literature on abortion to politicians, they did so later in the movement after Catholics had established the support network necessary for the antiabortion movement to flourish. The sheer number of signatures on petitions, belonging to hundreds of

people in Milwaukee and its surrounding suburbs alone, indicates that the Knights of Columbus was far more outspoken than its evangelical counterparts. The idea that the Catholic Church played a key role in the antiabortion movement is also supported by anthropologist Faye D. Ginsburg who notes that “the Church provided an infrastructure, communications network, material backing, ideology, and people—in short, the resources and organizational facility that helped mobilize the movement in its early stages into a national presence.”<sup>2</sup> Additionally, sociologist Kristin Luker interviewed 11 of the earliest members of California’s antiabortion movement, whom she described as “Catholic male professionals.”<sup>3</sup> The evidence in the political correspondence in Wisconsin also shows that the state’s antiabortion movement was initially very small, and that well-educated Catholics helped form the basis of opposition to liberalized abortion.

Another instance in which Wisconsin’s antiabortion movement differs from the national trend is in its progression. The antiabortion movement is often seen as having two stages: pre- and post-*Roe v. Wade* (frequently abbreviated as *Roe*). A typical interpretation of the antiabortion movement before *Roe* is that there was little effort to push an antiabortion agenda.<sup>4</sup> In general, this is an accurate assessment. Luker notes that there were few members of the early antiabortion movement in California; the original group was around a dozen members.<sup>5</sup> Ginsberg supports this sentiment, saying that “for many right-to-life activists, the date of the Supreme Court ruling marks a turning point at which they converted to and joined the movement.”<sup>6</sup> This indicates that there was little opposition to attempts to liberalize abortion in the early stages. However, this interpretation does not fully match the progression of the antiabortion movement in Wisconsin. The image of California’s antiabortion movement that emerges from Luker’s work is one of a three-staged movement: pre-Beilenson bill, post-Beilenson bill, and post-*Roe*. This closely resembles the progression of Wisconsin’s antiabortion movement: pre-Wisconsin abortion law overturn, post-Wisconsin abortion law overturn, and post-*Roe*. It also supports the idea that states whose antiabortion movements had faced smaller legal setbacks before *Roe* were more likely to have a different progression than the two-stage one presented in the work of Gilmore and Sugrue, or Ginsberg.

Before the Wisconsin law banning abortion was overturned in 1970, there was almost no opposition or religious rhetoric used in correspondence between constituents and their representatives. Yet, after Wisconsin’s abortion law was found unconstitutional, there was an enormous increase in the number of letters that referenced scriptures, God, or other biblical themes. This initial spike in correspondence died down by 1972. However, in 1973, after *Roe* was decided, religious rhetoric was used in correspondence again, remaining a central argument used by opponents of liberalized abortion laws through the present. Since there was such a significant increase in religious objection to relaxing abortion laws in Wisconsin between 1970 and 1973, the narrative of opposition to abortion beginning only after *Roe* does not work well in Wisconsin.

### ***The Fight for Contraceptive Rights: The Foundation for Abortion Rights***

To better understand the path to *Roe* and the struggle against legalized abortion, one must first recognize the battle for contraceptive rights that was determined by the

Supreme Court's decision in *Griswold v. Connecticut*. Estelle Griswold was a doctor who opened a birth control clinic in Connecticut with the intention of challenging an antiquated Connecticut law that prohibited anyone from distributing information pertaining to birth control. After her clinic opened, she was arrested and convicted under this law. She ultimately appealed her case all the way to the Supreme Court. The court found the Connecticut law to be unconstitutional since the court's majority believed there was an implied right to privacy for an individual, especially married couples who sought to use contraceptives to plan when they would have children. The justices found that the right to privacy existed in previously established legal precedents from the Third, Fifth, and Ninth Amendments.<sup>7</sup> In order for the abortion rights campaign to proceed, privacy rights needed to be established. Without a right to privacy, the state could compel a pregnant woman to carry her fetus to term. The fight for access to contraceptives was fused with the fight for abortion rights. Without Connecticut's contraceptives ban being overturned by the Supreme Court, neither a pro-choice movement nor an antiabortion movement would have taken off.

Similar to the fight for contraceptive rights in Connecticut, there was also a significant campaign to secure contraceptive rights for the unmarried in Wisconsin. In the late 1960s, Wisconsin's contraceptives law allowed only married women to procure contraceptives; however, single women wanted access to birth control as well. Riding on the Supreme Court's decision in favor of a right to privacy, many in Wisconsin argued that if married persons were allowed access to contraceptives, then everyone, including single people, should be allowed access. Examining letters sent to Republican politicians in Wisconsin in the 1960s, the general trend that Gilmore and Sugrue posited holds true: most people wanted to have access to birth control.<sup>8</sup> Compared to modern political stances, it is perhaps surprising to note that most of those who wrote to their representatives were in favor of access to contraceptives in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Indeed, it was only after *Roe* that an increase in religious opposition to birth control began growing.

Nevertheless, there was still some opposition to contraceptives in the late 1960s. A Wauwatosa woman who wrote to State Representative Jack D. Steinhilber—a Republican from Oshkosh—in December 1969 was outraged to hear that Steinhilber had voted in favor of a contraceptives bill that would allow single women to have access to birth control. The woman believed that the bill's passage would bring about “the destruction of the traditional Judaeo-Christian family.”<sup>9</sup> Her opposition was not uncommon, even if it was in the minority. The typical argument given by those opposed to contraceptives on religious grounds was that if sex was no longer solely about procreation, then sex itself became the end. Sex would lose its sacredness. Instead of having sex to reproduce, sex would become a pleasure without any meaningful purpose, and a child would be the unwanted or unpleasant by-product of a lustful and sinful moment. Should this happen, they argued, there would be no reason to get married, and children would be raised by single parents and be forced to grow up in a fractured home. Those who opposed unwed couples using contraceptives believed that the use of birth control would destroy the core American ideal of the family. This also explains why they fought as strongly as they did; they perceived the relaxation of the contraceptives law as a direct attack on the sanctity of human life.

Some of those opposed to the liberalization of Wisconsin's contraceptives law cited moral objections rather than purely religious ones. The distinction between them

is difficult to define, as many group the two together. A Milwaukee woman in favor of the original Wisconsin contraceptives law stated that “the use of contraceptives involves itself directly with the marital act.[ . . . ] The contraceptive has only one use! We cannot close our eyes and say that the unmarried are obtaining the contraceptive with a legal and moral purpose in mind!”<sup>10</sup> The “legal” portion of her argument comes from Wisconsin’s anti-fornication and anti-adultery laws, which made it illegal for an unmarried couple to have sex, even if consensual. She essentially suggested that any use of contraceptives outside of wedlock could only be used for fornication and adultery. This was a common reason used by those who argued against contraceptive rights on moral or religious grounds.

An often-cited concern among constituents who favored contraceptive rights was population growth. One gentleman from Milwaukee was concerned that “the titanic problem of population management is a survival problem. . . .”<sup>11</sup> Many people writing to William A. Steiger, the Republican representative for Wisconsin’s Sixth Congressional District from 1967 until his death in 1978, expressed similar sentiments. To them, the issue of birth control centered around whether the population and economy could support such rapid, unrestrained growth. Many believed that it could not, as many prominent scientists began publishing statistics on the effects of uncontrolled growth. The fight for access to contraceptives for all can be summarized as an issue opposed by many religiously motivated people. The rhetoric that began circulating in the battle against contraception helped frame the argument that would be used in the fight against abortion.

### ***Abortion Becomes a Larger Issue***

As stated previously, abortion was not always a fiercely contested issue. Many who opposed abortion did not actively speak out; they assumed that everyone else saw the issue from their perspective that abortion was murdering the unborn.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the first significant increase in letters opposing abortion that contained explicit religious references started in 1970. Before then, abortion was not a major factor in correspondence between constituents and their representatives. In fact, in Governor Warren P. Knowles’s received correspondence from 1968 to 1969 only five letters mentioned the issue of abortion.<sup>13</sup> Had abortion always been an issue in the American mainstream, one would expect to find more correspondence mentioning it in the traditionally conservative districts examined. Hence, abortion started out as a relatively unimportant issue, one that people did not concern themselves with on a regular basis.

Sociologist Dallas A. Blanchard notes that an organized resistance to the liberalization of abortion did not occur until after reform measures made their way into state legislatures.<sup>14</sup> This more closely fits the general trend that existed in constituent correspondence in Wisconsin. It is also supported by Luker, who states that opposition to liberalizing abortion laws in California increased after 1967 with the passage of the Beilenson bill.<sup>15</sup> Though the growth was small, there was an increase in the opposition to abortion liberalization. With the initial introduction of legislation that sought to legalize abortion in the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1969, there came an enormous surge of people opposed to any liberalization of the existing law. Although the bill eventually died in committee, this demonstrated the religious Right’s influence on American politics.<sup>16</sup> By the 1970s there was a dramatic increase in correspondence to

representatives dealing with the issues of who should have access to contraceptives and abortion. This fits with the general narrative that Gilmore and Sugrue present: in the late 1960s and early 1970s, feminists set their sights on abortion rights, making it a central objective of their movement.<sup>17</sup> With feminism and the Left working hard to secure abortion rights, there was an accompanying increase in resistance to abortion liberalization. In the 1970s Wisconsin State Senator Carl W. Thompson sent a questionnaire to constituents of Rock and Dane counties. Of the more than 1,500 responses he received, over 60 percent were in favor of allowing abortion on the condition that it would be facilitated by a licensed physician.<sup>18</sup> This lends support to the idea that public approval of abortion rights was growing. However, this trend is not reflected in the extant correspondence between constituents and representatives. People felt that abortion rights were important, but not important enough to contact their political representatives. Perhaps this is indicative of the mixed feelings that many had about abortion, or that more effort was given to mobilize support on an individual basis.<sup>19</sup>

One recurring belief in Wisconsin's antiabortion rhetoric before *Roe* is that allowing abortion in America would lead to the collapse of American society and the American family. This concern for the preservation of the family has been linked to the fight against Communism during the Cold War and a retreat from the constant fear of nuclear annihilation.<sup>20</sup> H. A. Bombera, acting as a representative for the approximately 6,000 members of St. Francis and the Rosary groups around Stevens Point, plainly stated that their groups came to the consensus that "in its essence, sex freedom is pagan, a way that has let Communism spread and destroy many people. It is a way to weaken our own country."<sup>21</sup> Bombera's remarks indicate that there was the perception that liberalized abortion laws would lead to the destruction of America; true Americans were capitalists, Christian, and above all else, waited until marriage to have sex. For Bombera and like-minded individuals, the fight for abortion rights was introduced by "atheistic [C]ommunists" from the Left in an attempt to destroy America from within. For some on the religious Right, the only way to prevent this was by attacking the emerging abortion rights movement. Indeed, the mentality that "modern trends reek[ed] of Socialist thinking" maintained a presence throughout the antiabortion movement well into the 1980s.<sup>22</sup>

The fear of nuclear annihilation also caused an increased concern for family. Sufficient correspondence exists to suggest that it was a significant issue for the antiabortion movement. Citing Marjorie Lewis Lloyd's book *The Way Back* Mrs. Max Sieracki stated in a letter that "there are only two days in history that you need to remember. You can forget all the rest of them. One is the date Jesus Christ was born. The other is August 6, 1945."<sup>23</sup> This reference is to the first use of an atomic bomb in combat, with America's dropping of "Little Boy" on Hiroshima. The implication here was that the only two days worth knowing were the day the world was saved through Christ and the day the world was doomed by man. Mrs. Sieracki was worried that the use of atomic weapons and the liberalization of abortion legislation might signal the biblical Armageddon and the end of the world.<sup>24</sup> Hence, religion began to play a significant role for some when the fear of complete nuclear destruction entered the realm of possibility.

### ***Wisconsin's Abortion Law is Overturned***

On March 5, 1970, Wisconsin's Eastern District Court ruled that the state's law on abortion was unconstitutional, further spurring the antiabortion movement.<sup>25</sup> The law was overturned in part because of its confusing wording on what constituted a "quick" child. Though seldom used today, the terms "quick" or "quicken" refer to a fetus that has begun moving in the womb and has been used as a marker for viability since antiquity.<sup>26</sup> The District Court also found Wisconsin's antiabortion law unconstitutional because of the right to privacy that *Griswold v. Connecticut* firmly established, thus compelling the federal judges to decide that "the state may not . . . deprive a woman of her private decision whether to bear her unquicken child."<sup>27</sup> The court's decision shifted the focus from the more antiquated notion of viability being tied to quickening to one more grounded in modern medicine. This was due to the progress of obstetric medicine, which allowed for earlier and earlier stages of fetal development to be viable.

Following the court's ruling on Wisconsin's abortion law, the first major spike in correspondence to elected officials occurred. As noted previously, the language used in the letters became much more religious after Wisconsin's abortion law was overturned. The first letter reflecting this view was sent to Governor Warren P. Knowles from a Catholic priest in Milwaukee.<sup>28</sup> His letter supported two of Blanchard's claims: first, that Catholics were among the first to organize against abortion liberalization and second, that widespread opposition did not start until after abortion reform bills began being introduced in state legislatures.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, petitions opposing abortion on the basis that America was "founded on the Judeo-Christian concepts which recognize God as the Author of all life" and that "the government should not sponsor and promote programs contrary to these concepts" began circulating in Wisconsin after the court's decision.<sup>30</sup> By the end of 1970, dozens of petitions were mailed to state representatives from antiabortion groups, most of which were supported by religious organizations. Hence, it stands that the first major resistance to the liberalization of abortion laws in Wisconsin came from Catholics and other religious groups.

To persuade those who were not as religious to oppose abortion legislation, the antiabortion movement introduced themes of legality into their arguments. One such example came in 1971 from a hospital administrator in Appleton who argued: "The abortion issue is not a 'religious issue'. The laws of God—the Ten Commandments—are eternal, they do not change. The abortion issue is one of constitutionality. The Fifth Amendment guarantees, 'No person shall [ . . . ] be deprived of life [ . . . ] without due process of law.'"<sup>31</sup> The intention of this argument was to nullify the pro-choice complaint that the antiabortion movement was solely based on religious grounds. Additionally, the argument that abortion would lead to a genocide against infants and fetuses on the scale of the Holocaust was another early rallying point for the antiabortion movement. Despite this gruesome description, the correspondence decrying abortion almost completely disappeared in 1972, with only a few letters being sent to representatives. This is likely due to numerous laws attempting to liberalize abortion failing in the Wisconsin Assembly; there was no need to lobby against abortion if legislation making it legal never went into effect in the first place.

Of the little correspondence sent to politicians in 1972, most of the letters contained some form of religious rhetoric. One letter, sent by the Knights of Columbus group in Marshfield, represented more than 900 people. They argued against abortion

on the pretext of the biblical Fifth Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill.”<sup>32</sup> This further exemplifies the argument that the Catholic Church had a pivotal role in the initial development of the antiabortion movement. Additionally, it suggests that the Church continued to play a significant role in rallying people around the antiabortion movement. Most importantly, the use of biblical themes introduces the argument that even today remains unsolved: Is a fetus a person? If a fetus is a person, then it could be argued that abortion is murder. If not, then when does life begin? For those on the religious Right, the answer was obvious: life begins at conception and to interfere with a fetus’s development is a heinous offense. The introduction of important metaphysical questions could not have happened without well-educated clergymen and other Catholic professionals becoming involved in the growing debate. Without the Catholic Church, the antiabortion movement might have died before it had time to fully develop in 1973.

### ***Roe v. Wade and the Changed Antiabortion Movement***

On January 22, 1973, the Burger Court headed by Chief Justice Warren Burger made what was arguably their most important decision in *Roe v. Wade* and its accompanying case *Doe v. Bolton*.<sup>33</sup> *Roe* determined that women had the right to an abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy without state interference. In the second trimester, weeks 13–24, the state may intervene “in ways that are reasonably related to maternal health.” In the third trimester, the state may then choose to regulate abortion freely if it so desired.<sup>34</sup> After *Roe* the antiabortion movement finally began to work in more concerted efforts.

In the aftermath of another legal defeat, members of religious organizations, especially the Catholic Church, voiced their opposition to abortion. The dwindling opposition to abortion liberalization in 1972 was rekindled almost overnight by the Supreme Court’s decision. Equally as sudden, a series of legislation to overturn the Supreme Court’s decision began to circulate throughout the Wisconsin State Legislature. AJR 31, one of the more heavily lobbied bills considered by the Legislature, sought to write into law the belief that life begins at conception, a position that Luker notes as being heavily supported by most Catholics.<sup>35</sup> Though the bill would likely have been challenged in court had it been passed, it nevertheless marked a change in the effectiveness of religious groups trying to introduce legislation into state legislatures. The Wisconsin state deputy for the Knights of Columbus, Eugene Sonnleitner, stated in a letter to members of the Judiciary Committee that people who opposed abortion should “write to their legislators and tell them their thoughts on abortion” and reassured the members on the committee that he “shall instruct and urge every member and their families to triple their efforts and ‘output’ favoring the right to life.”<sup>36</sup> Religious orders and organizations appear to have been increasing their involvement in the political sphere where they had not been active before the issue of abortion came to prominence.

AJR 31 may not have become law in Wisconsin, but at the national level there were many who supported the idea behind it: a fetus is a person whose life begins at conception and who thus needs to be protected. The Human Life Amendment (HLA) was one such measure that garnered support among religious groups. Yet, supporters of the HLA did not always agree on what course of action should be taken to ensure

that the right to life was guaranteed as a constitutional right. The two most popular proposals among HLA supporters were the Witherspoon Amendment and the Noonan Amendment. Though they were almost identical in practice (they both made clear that the right to life was a constitutionally defended right), the major difference was that the Noonan Amendment would allow for states to make exceptions to the prohibition on abortion.<sup>37</sup> Congressman Steiger felt that the Noonan Amendment was the better option because it allowed for states to make exceptions on grounds such as rape, incest, or severe developmental problems, situations that he felt warranted exceptions to a national ban on abortion.<sup>38</sup> In many ways, the amendment that one supported was indicative of how one felt about abortion as a whole. Those who supported the Witherspoon Amendment were among the 15 percent who opposed abortion in all circumstances while those who supported the Noonan Amendment were somewhere in the middle—individuals who were neither completely in favor of nor completely against abortion.<sup>39</sup> Supporters of the Witherspoon Amendment largely based their decision on religious convictions. Indeed, this split among supporters of the HLA is indicative of a new, hard-line religious conservatism.

Though support for abortion rights was substantial across the nation, there is little evidence of this support in the actual correspondence to Wisconsin politicians. Wisconsin State Senator Carl W. Thompson noted that an April 15, 1973, article from *Parade* magazine claimed that a majority of people were in favor of having a law with no restrictions on access to abortion. He was surprised by this since he had received more than 100 letters seeking legislation imposing restrictions on abortion.<sup>40</sup> Congressman Steiger also noted in 1977 that “all toll [sic] my administrative assistant has counted 1,217 postcards and letters” that dealt with abortion legislation or the Human Life Amendment.<sup>41</sup> An additional 1,000 people in Sheboygan supported the HLA as well.<sup>42</sup> Although there were letters in support of abortion rights, there were far more lamenting the Supreme Court’s decision on *Roe v. Wade* in January 1973. This could simply reflect the fact that liberals had won the right to abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and did not feel the need to show their support of the Supreme Court’s decision. It might also be suggestive of a lack of pro-choice correspondence in predominantly conservative districts. Most likely, however, the increase in opposition to abortion liberalization came about because of the success of the pro-choice movement.

An unusual aspect of Wisconsin’s struggle for abortion rights is the religious opposition to the liberalization of abortion laws based on the First Amendment’s freedom of religion clause. Many are familiar with the Left’s argument that antiabortion legislation impedes a woman’s freedom, but few are familiar with the religious Right’s argument that a woman’s freedom to choose interferes with her religious liberties. A Milwaukee man wrote to Assemblyman Kenneth J. Merkel in March 1973 proclaiming that abortion is “a violation of one’s moral code and promote[s] Humanism as the State Religion.”<sup>43</sup> His argument was that by allowing a woman to obtain a legal abortion, the state would be taking a religious stance against Christianity. Similarly, a woman from New Holstein sought information on whether the Supreme Court’s decision would override people’s “rights to ‘freedom,’” indicating that she believed the *Roe* decision might force people to abandon their faith.<sup>44</sup> The attitude of many of the constituents was that the United States had “an Atheistic public education system which denies

[the] younger generation any knowledge of God or His laws.”<sup>45</sup> The religious Right felt that the Left was assaulting their right to choose a religion; the government approving abortion meant to them that humanism was the state religion. Additionally, there were some who argued that the religious freedom of those who believed that abortion was murder would be trampled on with the legalization of abortion.

### ***The Religious Become Political***

When *Roe v. Wade* was decided, the Supreme Court let loose the fury of many religious people in the United States who felt that the government was sanctioning the murder of unborn children. However, as angry as many people of religious groups were, they did not have sufficient political power to effect the change they wanted to see. President Richard Nixon voiced his support of the “right to life” by supporting “the sanctity of human life, including the life of the yet unborn.”<sup>46</sup> With a politician who acknowledged their struggle and supported their position, conservative Christians found a political ally who they hoped could keep their movement going. When Nixon resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal, the movement floundered. It needed someone to support its cause, but there was no one immediately there to do so. The way to advance the antiabortion movement was clear: in order to pass the restrictive laws conservative Christians wanted, they would have to elect politicians who would support their ideas. Therefore, many antiabortion supporters wrote to their political representatives. Rather than trying to change the minds of their current politicians, they could elect new ones who already supported their views. Politicians such as Catholic priest Robert Cornell, who was elected to Congress in 1975 and served as Wisconsin’s Eighth District Representative until 1979, were already strongly in favor of the antiabortion movement. Robert Cornell is a perfect example of this trend, as he was a clergyman who was elected due to concerns that the religious ideals of his constituents were not being heard in Congress. Although a member of the Democratic Party, Cornell’s successful election demonstrated that there was a push for the representation of religious ideals in politics.

The introduction of widespread evangelical support for the antiabortion movement did not coalesce until the mid-1970s. Though there had been some minor support of the movement by evangelical groups in the early 1970s, the primary supporters and founders of the movement were predominantly Catholic. The number of Protestant organizations and congregations writing to legislators in the mid-1970s increased significantly compared to the early 1970s. One such instance is that of Immanuel-Trinity Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac writing to Congressman Steiger to support the HLA and oppose “this black cloud [abortion] which drips with the blood of babies as it hangs over the land which we love.”<sup>47</sup> The church itself had over 2,000 members in 1977, indicating that this was a commonly held belief by many in the area. Additionally, letters such as Henry Gomulka’s to Congressman Cornell that claimed Father Cornell “as our spokesman could be most instrumental in helping our Christian Nation” and Ray and Edna Bosin’s to Congressman Steiger that declared “I hope you fear the sure judgement the nation faces, unless we do an about face—Back to God & His righteous [sic]” indicate that much of the correspondence in early 1977 was religious in nature.<sup>48</sup> Members of Wyldewood Baptist Church in Oshkosh also sent Congressman Steiger a letter stating that they had “hundreds in our congregation

who are against abortion and they are keenly interested in the way you [Congressman Steiger] vote on this issue.”<sup>49</sup> These letters indicate two things: that evangelicals were becoming incredibly vocal in their opposition to abortion by 1977 and that members of religious organizations began lobbying their congressional representatives much more frequently on the issue of abortion.

By 1976 members of the antiabortion movement clearly understood that for their views on abortion to become law they would need the support of legislators. As Victor Graef, a vocal Sheboygan man and member of the local Knights of Columbus chapter put it, “Bring the Abortion Plank into open. *That* is where you gain millions of votes from all religious minded people of both parties who *believe* abortion is *murder*. . . .”<sup>50</sup> He followed this statement with the argument that “This will prove folly of double talking murdering Democrats who felt they didn’t need religious minded voters and will lose face if they change platform now and follow suit.”<sup>51</sup> At a rally in Philadelphia in August 1976, President Gerald Ford was noted as receiving the “longest and loudest applause when he talked about the right to life.”<sup>52</sup> All of this points to the determination shared by members of Wisconsin’s antiabortion movement to advance their agenda of criminalizing abortion and establish a permanent Human Life Amendment. To do so they would need to become politically active and lobby intensely for their goals.

Victor Graef further opined that at the Democratic National Convention in New York, Democrats disregarded the abortion issue entirely, resulting in “over 29 million Democrats who are now in a quandry [sic] all over the U.S.A.”<sup>53</sup> He concluded that members of the Democratic Party who continued to tolerate abortion would alienate countless Democrats who were supporters of the antiabortion movement. For Graef, the Republican Party had the chance to sweep these newly disillusioned voters into their ranks and defeat the Democrats on the national and state levels. He noted that Herbert Brucker, editor of the *Hartford Courant* (Hartford, Connecticut) from 1944 to 1966, believed the Republican Party was “in search of an issue” and that if they did not pick one soon, they might disappear like the Whig Party “when they failed to face up to the great national schism that finally exploded in the Civil War.”<sup>54</sup> For Graef, this issue was abortion, and if the Republican Party did not press its advantage in 1976, they might not be around much longer.

The sentiment that abortion should become a major political stance did not belong to Victor Graef alone. A Fond du Lac man sent a newspaper clipping to Congressman Steiger in 1976 that argued “a politician who embraces abortion and who backs the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on this issue should be politically dead.”<sup>55</sup> Others similarly wrote to their representatives expressing their lack of support for any politician who supported abortion rights. A Wauwatosa woman congratulated George Klicka, a Wisconsin state representative, on his successful reelection in 1979 and expressed that “it’s wonderful having one representative who is still God-fearing, and willing to stand up for such an issue [opposition to abortion].”<sup>56</sup> This indicates that many in the antiabortion movement were seeking to elect their political leaders based, at least in part, on their stance on abortion. Those religiously opposed to abortion understood its ability to polarize the political system and help establish their presence in politics, while ensuring that their demands were being heard.

### ***Religion Begins Causing Tensions within the Right***

Although the antiabortion movement suffered a major blow when it failed to pass either the Witherspoon or Noonan Amendments, it was able to win a small victory with the passage of the Hyde Amendment in 1976. The Hyde Amendment prohibited the use of federal funding for abortions, a stance that members of the religious Right supported because they felt the use of federal funds for abortion opposed their First Amendment right to freedom of religion. The Hyde Amendment was perhaps the single greatest achievement in the 1970s for the antiabortion movement because those opposed to abortion lacked the necessary political capital to push the issue further. Too few legislators endorsed either the Witherspoon or Noonan Amendments. There were sufficient votes to pass a Human Life Amendment, but divided neither side could prevail. This problem was caused largely by the Catholic Church and its refusal to budge on its stance that only the Witherspoon Amendment should be passed. The Noonan Amendment was much more likely to be passed, but as the Catholic Church refused to compromise on the issue, neither the Witherspoon nor Noonan Amendments stood a chance of passing.<sup>57</sup>

The issue became even more politically charged when the antiabortion movement became divided on whether or not one was soft or hard on the right to life, in much the same manner that politicians during the Cold War feared appearing soft on Communism. Sister Agnes Louise wrote an angry letter to Congressman Steiger expressing her view that Steiger was being too soft on abortion rights.<sup>58</sup> Steiger only supported legal abortion in two situations: rape and incest, and even then, only in extreme extenuating circumstances.<sup>59</sup> The mere accusation of being soft on abortion necessitated a defense of one's position on the issue. Sister Agnes Louise claimed that Steiger had said 87 percent of Wisconsin's Sixth District opposed the HLA, a statistic Steiger claimed he never told anyone nor believed himself. Nevertheless, Steiger's hand was forced and he assured Sister Agnes that he did indeed support the HLA, albeit only as the Noonan Amendment. The religious Right was beginning to demonstrate its ability to pressure politicians by targeting politicians' stance on key issues. The Right thus began showing signs of distress as its members came under attack from those of an even more conservative viewpoint.

The Catholic position supporting the Witherspoon version of the HLA often put the Church at odds with what Congress could legally and realistically pass. The rhetoric that supporters of the Witherspoon Amendment used suggests that it would have never passed a vote, and even if it did, it would be quickly repealed on the basis that it infringed on First Amendment rights. When Sister Lucile Kolbeck wrote a letter begging "that our States and our Congress reconsider and pass a Human Life Amendment that relates human life to God and Divine creation with a truly Christian philosophy," she utilized the type of language that many supporters of the much stricter Witherspoon Amendment used.<sup>60</sup> This language would have forced the U.S. government to recognize that life was given by God, a position that would have made the government take a purely Christian viewpoint. Many on the Right understood that this likely could not have passed, and even if had it passed it would not have lasted long as a law. This did not matter to many in Wisconsin's antiabortion movement; if they could not pass their agenda with the support of moderates, they would need to replace them with like-minded politicians.

## Conclusion

The history of Wisconsin's struggle over liberalized abortion simultaneously does and does not fit into the national trend. Correspondence between Wisconsin's constituents and their representatives does not support Gilmore and Sugrue's claim that evangelicals were the loudest voice, at least at first. Instead, Catholic professionals were the first major and vocal opponents to liberalized abortion laws. This is further supported by Luker, Blanchard, and Ginsberg, who argued that Catholics played major roles in developing and supporting the antiabortion movement. Although evangelicals became involved post-*Roe*, their influence would have been more limited without utilizing the resources and authority of the Catholic Church. What was most unusual about Wisconsin's antiabortion movement was the progression that it took. The movement had three distinct stages as a direct result of legislative defeats suffered before *Roe*. This makes Wisconsin relatively unique since the antiabortion movement had already begun mobilizing before much of the nation. Gilmore and Sugrue may be right that on a broad, national level antiabortion movements were spearheaded by evangelicals and emerged after *Roe v. Wade*, but in states like California and Wisconsin, where the movement had already faced legal setbacks, this trend does not fit.

Wisconsin's antiabortion movement is a vital piece in understanding numerous aspects of the 1960s and 1970s. Not only does the movement illustrate the motivation of those who opposed liberalizing abortion laws and the actions of antiabortion radicals in the 1980s, it also helps explain the emergence of religious conservatism and polarization that has gripped the American political stage. Having turned the private, personal lives of women into a political battleground, the Left and the feminist movement forced the Right and religious conservatives to respond to their demands. The unusual nature of Wisconsin's antiabortion movement creates a much more complete picture of Wisconsin's rich history of political activism and makes it a valuable part in understanding the political and social unrest of the 1970s.

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# The Heart of the Gay Community: How a Small STD Clinic in Milwaukee Played a Large Role in Wisconsin AIDS Prevention

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## ***Abstract***

The history of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (AIDS/HIV) activism is becoming a topic of intense research. However, much of the published history focuses on nationwide groups or AIDS hotspots in New York City and California. This paper focuses on the Brady East STD Clinic (BEST), a small group in Milwaukee, and the role it played in AIDS/HIV prevention during the AIDS epidemic, a time period roughly defined as 1981–1997. Although BEST had existed since 1974 with one identity or another, it was truly born at the same time as the AIDS crisis became newsworthy. BEST’s involvement in AIDS/HIV prevention is examined through two facets: its involvement in the creation of important AIDS/HIV groups in Milwaukee, such as the Milwaukee AIDS project, and the work done by leaders at BEST through the years.

## ***Introduction***

Over the past two decades, the average U.S. citizen’s concern about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) has dwindled. This can be attributed to the creation of medicines that have prolonged the life of HIV/AIDS patients; before those medicines were created, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and AIDS were considered death sentences. As HIV/AIDS fades from the conscience of Americans, historians are turning their attention to the time period when AIDS treatment and prevention were urgent public concerns. This period of time extends roughly from 1981 through 1997. In his book and documentary, *How to Survive a Plague*, journalist David France focused on the overarching themes of this period: patient activism, governmental neglect, and the personal nature of the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, France aimed most of his attention on New York City with smaller portions of his work mentioning HIV/AIDS’s impact on San Francisco and Los Angeles.

By March 1989, 88,096 people in the United States had contracted AIDS, with 433 cases in Wisconsin.<sup>1</sup> By numbers alone, Wisconsin was not a location on the forefront of AIDS prevention. However, to ignore what Wisconsin did to try to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS would be a mistake. It is important to attempt to find out how organizations in cities other than New York City, San Francisco, and Los Angeles tried to help during the AIDS crisis. One such organization pressed into action on AIDS prevention in Wisconsin was the Brady East STD Clinic (BEST) in Milwaukee. Of the 433 AIDS cases in Wisconsin in 1989, 11 percent were discovered at BEST;<sup>2</sup> ultimately, BEST became the most effective clinic in the state for diagnosing HIV/AIDS. BEST had an oversized role in the crisis because until the late 1980s its clientele was largely homosexual men and, at that point in time, HIV/AIDS largely affected homosexual men. Even in 1988, when BEST's yearly number of patients treated was much larger than earlier in the decade due to its HIV testing, 47 percent of its patients were homosexual men.<sup>3</sup> BEST's practices as a clinic, as well as its role in the fight against AIDS, would lead to it being called a "model for the rest of the country" by Eldon Murray, one of the founders of Milwaukee's Gay People's Union.<sup>4</sup> This high regard for BEST demonstrates that there is a lesson to be learned about how small organizations helped address the AIDS crisis across the United States.

### ***BEST Before AIDS***

While BEST may not be as famous as other HIV/AIDS organizations, simply because AIDS in Wisconsin in the 1980s and early 1990s was not as widespread as in California or New York, it deserves to be recognized as an exemplar of community AIDS activism during the epidemic. BEST was in contact with activists from New York in the early 1980s in hopes of finding out how to slow the spread of AIDS. It used increasingly large grants to start the Milwaukee Aids Project (MAP), which eventually came under the control of the Aids Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW). BEST created a women's health clinic that tested for AIDS at a time when women were forgotten by AIDS activists and pharmaceutical companies. Though the Brady East STD Clinic is a small and often unheard-of clinic, it played a major role in the fight against the spread of AIDS in Wisconsin by cultivating good relationships with the state and city government, as well as being highly regarded by the community most affected by AIDS in the 1980s.

The Brady East STD Clinic had a difficult path leading up to the AIDS epidemic. In 1974, eight years before AIDS first came to the attention of BEST, the Gay People's Union (GPU) of Milwaukee started the Gay People's Union Examination Center for Venereal Disease (ECVD).<sup>5</sup> One of the main reasons the GPU started the clinic was a sense of fear in the gay community<sup>6</sup> about going to other medical centers in the city. Various groups, including the Gerald Earl Meyers Fund, the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, and the City of Milwaukee's Health Department, supported the GPU's efforts to launch the examination center. John K. Gruhlke, a public health educator with Milwaukee's Division of Health Education, wrote to the GPU that "the need for such special interest satellite examination stations," such as one serving the gay community, "is very great and should significantly contribute to an increase [in] awareness of the magnitude of the problem and a reduction in the number of diagnosed cases of venereal disease among the Gay Population."<sup>7</sup>

By 1977, the GPU ECVD had become the GPU Venereal Disease Clinic and was able to test and treat patients for diseases.<sup>8</sup> In 1980, the clinic changed names to comply with a federal ruling in which clinics could no longer use the term “venereal disease”; it became the GPU Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic. However, this name change lasted for only a year before the clinic separated from the GPU. Even more troublesome for the clinic than the constant name changes was eviction from its building when the landlords discovered the nature of the work being done in the clinic.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, the gay community of Milwaukee was no stranger to discrimination. Raids of “gay baths” (a term used to refer to clubs where gay men sought sexual partners) by police were common throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>10</sup> When this turbulent period for the clinic was finally over in July 1982, the Brady East STD Clinic (BEST) established itself as a separate entity, ready to care for the gay community of Milwaukee.

BEST already had a history of working hard for the gay community of Milwaukee by the time AIDS became newsworthy. One of the most important undertakings by BEST in its early days was to seek advice and counsel from renowned gay clinics. Mark Behar, a member of the BEST Board of Directors and a luminary of BEST in the late 1970s and early 1980s, wrote an impassioned letter to Chuck Kiley of the Minneapolis Gay Community Service Center (GCSC). In the letter, Behar thanked Kiley for his tour of the Minneapolis GCSC and expressed his thoughts about how he hoped BEST could follow the standard the GCSC had set.<sup>11</sup> Behar’s most important contact, however, was Dale Shaskey, the administrator at the Howard Brown Memorial Clinic in Chicago. By 1977, the Brown Clinic was renowned in the Midwest for the service and discretion it provided to patients. Shaskey’s explanation of the risks of being a publicly funded versus a privately funded clinic was important. Publicly funded clinics were responsible for sharing information with government officials, whereas privately funded clinics were not. Because of their mistrust of Chicago politicians, the Brown Clinic remained privately funded.<sup>12</sup> BEST, on the other hand, was funded through donations from clients as well as grants from the City of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin. BEST would go on to have a strong working relationship with the city and the state.

### ***The Early Days of AIDS***

The AIDS epidemic first started receiving minimal news coverage in 1981, and the Brady East STD Clinic was not far behind in addressing the issue. In July 1981, an article ran in the *New York Times* about a rare disease called Kaposi’s sarcoma, a type of cancer that only affected roughly one in three million people. The *Times* referenced it as a “gay cancer,” which at the time led David France, author of *How to Survive a Plague*, to assume that the *Times* was not-so-subtly attacking the gay community.<sup>13</sup> At the time of the article, few knew what was on the horizon for homosexual men across the world. Within months, it became clear that some sort of disease was affecting homosexual men in New York City and San Francisco. As homosexual men started dying in New York from what was beginning to be called Gay Related Immune Deficiency (GRID), people began seeking answers. In January 1982, Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC), the first non-profit activist organization formed to fight the AIDS epidemic, was founded under the leadership of Larry Kramer and Lawrence Mass,

early activists in the fight against AIDS. Kramer was fueled by his fear of catching the disease, and Mass's lover had already fallen ill with it.<sup>14</sup>

Milwaukee's location and size meant the percentage of the gay community affected by AIDS would always pale in comparison to New York City, but BEST kept itself and Milwaukee's gay community informed about the disease from the beginning. In June 1982, less than a year after the initial *Times* article, Sue Dietz spoke at the BEST board meeting about Kaposi's sarcoma and how there would soon be extensive media coverage about "gay diseases."<sup>15</sup> It is clear that BEST was adamant about making sure they could serve the gay community of Milwaukee with knowledge about this new disease, as evidenced by Board of Directors member Mark Behar traveling to the National Coalition of Gay Sexually Transmitted Diseases conference in Dallas that August. There, Behar met with fellow gay activists from all over the country, including Lawrence Mass from GMHC. Behar learned valuable information that he could take back to BEST and recognized the important role organizations such as GMHC and BEST would play in the looming AIDS epidemic. Behar realized that the coming together of gay activists would be "a model of health care involvement and decision making on the part of a community never before seen in the U.S. by any group."<sup>16</sup>

The Brady East STD Clinic moved quickly in late 1982 to prepare for the inevitability of Wisconsin's first case of AIDS, and the first patient was diagnosed in February 1983.<sup>17</sup> Two people were indispensable to BEST during this period, and they pressed hard to make BEST vital in the fight against AIDS. The first of these was Mark Behar. He attempted to convince BEST's Board of Directors to create a committee at BEST that would alert the community about AIDS. Although they rejected Behar's idea, the Board of Directors passed a motion to have BEST's established Education Committee fill the role of Behar's proposed AIDS Committee.<sup>18</sup> Behar's other big move in the fall of 1982 was to reach out to Larry Falk in Boston. Falk was collecting blood from homosexual men all over the country to try to find biological markers for AIDS.<sup>19</sup> BEST met Falk's request for blood samples and, in exchange, Behar was put in contact with an acquaintance of Jim Curran, "the CDC's point-man for the new disease."<sup>20</sup> Behar's hard work and ability to network meant that BEST could make a real difference in spreading information and conducting valuable research. Behar was a charismatic and clearly respected voice in the gay community. This is evidenced by his appointment to Governor Anthony Earl's Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues.<sup>21</sup>

The fight against the spread of AIDS was carried out by both activists and doctors. If Mark Behar was the most important AIDS activist at BEST, Roger Gremminger was its most important doctor. BEST might not have been able to get through its 1981–1982 troubles if it were not for Gremminger. After being evicted from a building they had occupied since 1974, BEST's founders had trouble locating a new building to host their clinic. Gremminger, who had been the medical director at BEST since 1979, came to the rescue by purchasing a building at 1240 E. Brady Street and contracting with the clinic. The clinic still resides at this location after purchasing the building from Gremminger in 1989.<sup>22</sup> Some of Gremminger's work in 1982 and 1983 included applying for state grants.<sup>23</sup> Gremminger was also considered a valuable contact for members of the Wisconsin State Assembly. Members of Representative David Prosser Jr.'s office contacted Gremminger when the latest information about AIDS was needed.<sup>24</sup> Gremminger and BEST were held in high regard by state politicians in Madison.

BEST and its volunteers demonstrated early in the AIDS crisis that they had the resources and people dedicated to doing whatever it took to prevent the spread of AIDS. One of the earliest AIDS crisis issues was the use of blood for transfusions from donors who did not know they had AIDS. Author David France estimated that by early 1982 tens of thousands of people had been given infected blood during transfusions.<sup>25</sup> Various organizations across the country believed the blood supply needed protection. Lawrence Mass and the AIDS Network from New York City advised that all donated blood be tested for diseases such as Hepatitis B and AIDS. The AIDS Network, as well as activist groups in San Francisco and Boston, encouraged self-screening and questionnaires to help identify at-risk donors.<sup>26</sup> Gremminger and BEST made sure contaminated blood did not appear in Wisconsin.<sup>27</sup> Gremminger was in constant contact with the Blood Center of Southeast Wisconsin as well as with the Medical College of Wisconsin. The importance of the work Gremminger and the Blood Center did together cannot be overstated. To understand the significance of their efforts, one only has to look at the case of Ryan White, a thirteen-year-old boy from Indiana who contracted HIV from a blood transfusion. White was ostracized and removed from his school because of his community's fear of AIDS. Life for White and his family became a living hell. Store cashiers refused to touch their hands and, worse yet, their home was vandalized.<sup>28</sup> Gremminger made it his mission to prevent this from happening in Wisconsin.

Indeed, one of Gremminger's most important achievements was educating the public about HIV/AIDS as best he could. While Behar had originally proposed a committee on AIDS, it was Gremminger who possessed the organizational skill necessary to create a plan for its creation. Gremminger called his committee the BEST Task Force on AIDS; its goal was to network, educate, research, and survey the AIDS crisis.<sup>29</sup> The BEST Board of Directors approved the task force in February 1983.<sup>30</sup> Gremminger disseminated information about AIDS and AIDS prevention through various means. He spoke at the Medical College of Wisconsin in November 1983.<sup>31</sup> He reached out to newspapers such as Chicago's *Gay Life*, a paper with high readership in Milwaukee. Gremminger hoped information he provided to *Gay Life* would reach the gay community of Milwaukee.<sup>32</sup> In the summer of 1983, he took part in a panel TV show titled "A Calm Look at the AIDS Crisis," sponsored by the Milwaukee Public Library and aired in Milwaukee.<sup>33</sup> Gremminger also was interviewed by magazines, such as the *Cream City Special Edition*, where he gave advice and updates on the probability of people in Milwaukee having AIDS.<sup>34</sup>

Gremminger's and BEST's crowning achievement in the first few years of the AIDS epidemic was coordinating the Great Lakes Lesbian/Gay Health Conference (GLL/GHC). Starting in the summer of 1983, BEST looked toward creating a large event where AIDS workshops could disseminate information. Mark Behar and Douglas Johnson worked with Gremminger on the plan. Douglas Johnson had been with the clinic since 1977 and would go on to play a large role during the 1980s. The conference occurred February 17–19, 1984. According to the BEST Board of Directors, the event was a smashing success.<sup>35</sup> The event was co-sponsored by BEST, the Howard Brown Memorial Clinic in Chicago, and the Cream City Association Foundation (CCF) in Milwaukee. The purpose of the GLL/GHC was for BEST and Howard Brown to spread information to other health clinics about AIDS and how they could help their communities.<sup>36</sup>

Helping coordinate GLL/GHC won BEST many admirers. BEST's efforts to educate the public about HIV/AIDS were appreciated by other AIDS activists throughout the Midwest. Nancy Clark from the Free Medical Clinic in Iowa City was one of several people who wrote BEST requesting assistance. "We are interested in receiving more of your publication entitled 'AIDS,'" Clark wrote BEST. "We feel it is valuable educational and preventative material for our clients."<sup>37</sup> The publication was a pamphlet that described what knowledge there was of AIDS at the time and gave tips on how to reduce one's risk of contracting the disease.<sup>38</sup>

As many of the activists, doctors, and scientists across the country who fought AIDS became physically and mentally burned out, so too did Roger Gremminger. It was not uncommon for people involved in the fight against AIDS to become too exhausted to continue. In the case of some medical workers, exhaustion pushed them to limit how many AIDS patients they dealt with on a regular basis.<sup>39</sup> From the latter half of 1982 through the first half of 1984, Gremminger did everything possible to fight the spread of AIDS. At this time he was also the medical director at BEST, serving on its Board of Directors, and trying to study for his Board Certifying Examination in Emergency Medicine.<sup>40</sup> To better understand how hard Gremminger worked, consider his description of his activities in the 1983 end-of-year *BEST Medical Directors Report*:

In November the Wisconsin Medical Journal devoted the entire issue to the problem of AIDS and I had published within it a feature article "Taking a Sexual History." In addition I joined the Milwaukee Infectious Disease Society, attended several of the monthly meetings, and did a presentation for that group. In June, August, and November I attended meetings of the National AIDS Prospective Epidemiological Network (NAPEN) and volunteered to help serve as regional coordinator for the Great Lakes area. I appeared on three 1/2-hour TV programs on AIDS (Channels 6, 10, and 12). I gave several other talks throughout the year to the Milwaukee Blood Center, the Network in Waukesha, WGLN in Steven's Point, St. Mary's Hospital of Racine, employees of St. Joseph's Hospital of Milwaukee, and finally to the entire community at a workshop on the Milwaukee Council on Drug Abuse upon December 3rd.<sup>41</sup>

***Expanding Power: The Rise of Dietz and Clite, and the Creation of the Milwaukee AIDS Project***

Though Gremminger and Behar continued to be on the BEST Board of Directors through 1985, the two figures would no longer loom large at BEST. Sue Dietz and Nova Clite became the two lead figures in 1984. Dietz had been a volunteer at the clinic for seven years, and by 1984, she was serving as the president of the Board of Directors.<sup>42</sup> She and Clite were the people most responsible for the creation of the Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP), which would become BEST's grandest achievement. MAP's formation was triggered by a \$2,000 grant sponsored by CCF, a philanthropic organization aimed at helping nonprofit groups in Milwaukee's gay community. CCF was looking to fund an organization in Milwaukee committed to spreading AIDS awareness and it reached out to BEST and Dietz particularly because CCF considered

BEST “the only health-care organization in the area set up by and for the health needs of gay people.”<sup>43</sup> Around the same time that Dietz received this letter, she had an experience familiar to many who spent their lives fighting the AIDS epidemic: learning that a friend had been diagnosed with AIDS. Dietz combined her desire to help her friend with the resolve to make use of CCF funding to initiate the Milwaukee AIDS Project.<sup>44</sup>

MAP grew large and impactful due to the dedication of Dietz, Clite, and BEST volunteers and employees. Once contacted by CCF in early 1984, BEST decided the optimal way to utilize funds would be through a “media blitz” about AIDS.<sup>45</sup> Over the course of 1984, the Milwaukee AIDS Project Committee was developed at BEST. By the end of the year, the plan was to have MAP act as a wing of BEST.<sup>46</sup> At around the same time, MAP came up with six groups it wanted to target to raise AIDS awareness: racial minorities, business groups, professional groups, political groups, youth organizations, and religious organizations.<sup>47</sup>

BEST successfully pursued various grants to help get MAP off the ground because it had cultivated good relations with important people in the City of Milwaukee. Nova Clite, Mark Behar, and Douglas Johnson presented a proposal to Milwaukee Alderman Paul Henningson with the hope that he would use his seat on the Milwaukee Common Council’s Finance Committee to promote the proposal.<sup>48</sup> Knowing how passionate Behar, Clite, and Johnson were at advocating for AIDS awareness, it is no surprise that they were awarded a \$15,000 City of Milwaukee grant in early 1985.<sup>49</sup>

BEST wanted to do more than just reach out to other groups in Milwaukee; it wanted to develop a prevention program and an AIDS Technical Advisory Council, which would be comprised of people from the community, the blood centers, and the city health department.<sup>50</sup> Both increased grant funding, and the intense rate of AIDS expansion in Wisconsin played a part in BEST’s expanding goals. In September 1984, only 12 cases had been diagnosed in the state. Less than six months later, the number had doubled to 24 cases.<sup>51</sup> The group BEST turned to for additional support of MAP was the U.S. Council of Mayors. BEST asked various organizations to write letters of support to the Council in hopes of securing a grant. Based on the variety and number of letters sent, there was no doubt that BEST was an essential part of the community. As Nova Clite once said, the clinic was indeed the “heart of the gay community.”<sup>52</sup> Letters of support came from Jeff Davis, the state of Wisconsin epidemiologist; the Gay Community at UW–Milwaukee; the Business Association of Milwaukee; St. Benedict the Moor; Paul Henningsen, the Fourth District alderman of Milwaukee; the Gay Peoples Union; the National Organization for Women’s Wisconsin chapter; the Mount Sinai Medical Center; Constantin Panagis, the City of Milwaukee’s commissioner of health; and Governor Earl’s Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues. This overwhelming support was enough for the Council of Mayors. In April 1985, the Council awarded BEST a grant of \$18,730 for the Milwaukee AIDS Project.<sup>53</sup> Combined with the grants from CCF and the City of Milwaukee, MAP launched with \$35,530.

The Milwaukee AIDS Project had grown so fast that it could no longer remain under the watch of BEST. Therefore, a new organization was created to oversee it. In late 1985, the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) was formed. The goal of ARCW was to “establish itself as the major clearinghouse and informational resource for all nongovernmental AIDS programs in Milwaukee.”<sup>54</sup> While this move did take

responsibility of MAP away from BEST, it did not take away BEST's achievement in creating MAP. BEST would continue to play a huge role in the AIDS crisis. However, that year BEST suffered the loss of two of its most important people, Nova Clite and Sue Dietz. The pair decided to leave BEST so they could continue working with MAP and focus on AIDS prevention.

### ***Turbulent Times: The Late 1980s and the Rise of Nationwide HIV/AIDS Politics***

The period of 1985–1987 saw BEST dealing with nationwide HIV/AIDS concerns. One of these issues, which started in 1985, surrounded HTLV-3/LAV (HIV) testing. In 1985, a blood test became available to see if a patient had been infected with HIV, the infectious virus that, if contracted, eventually would lead to AIDS. However, there were various issues with the test. The most concerning of these issues was a high percentage of false negatives. A false negative meant people who had AIDS or HIV were not testing positive for HIV.<sup>55</sup> One of the major concerns at BEST was that there was no protocol in place for explaining to patients that they were HIV positive. BEST decided that they would administer the test as long as certain standards were followed: that patients needed to be educated about what HIV positive meant compared to AIDS, that the people administering HIV tests were trained with the most recent information on the virus, that written materials on HIV be provided for patients, that confidentiality be maintained, and that HIV testing be done at separate times from the normal clinic times.<sup>56</sup> It is clear from the standards that BEST wanted to test people and make sure they were treated humanely.

The creation of the Women's Alternative Clinic (WAC) was one of BEST's biggest achievements during the latter half of the 1980s. At this time women played a small role in the AIDS crisis. Women were nearly completely excluded from AIDS drug trials until Michael Callen started the Community Research Institute (CRI).<sup>57</sup> The CRI was a loose grouping of underground clinics in NYC that was not sanctioned by any governmental body.<sup>58</sup> Even though accepting women into drug trials could produce nothing but benefits, BEST did not follow the same path as CRI because it didn't want to jeopardize its good relationship with the city and the state. BEST was more concerned with collecting information on AIDS than advancing drug trials. WAC was open once a week for women to receive various tests, including HIV tests. BEST prided itself on WAC offering "health care services to women provided by women."<sup>59</sup> Although WAC never had as many patients as the regular HIV clinics at BEST did, its operation demonstrated BEST's commitment to reach out to every segment of the population affected by AIDS.

Douglas Johnson, who had been with BEST since 1977, became the next important leader and steered the clinic through one of its most challenging endeavors. With the departure of Behar, Clite, and Dietz, and with Gremminger taking on an even more limited role, it was up to Johnson to lead the clinic during the last half of the 1980s. One of Johnson's biggest accomplishments was giving a heartfelt speech at a Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Health public hearing. Johnson gave this speech in 1987, a year that saw the rise of one of the biggest antagonists in AIDS prevention history. Jesse Helms, an ultra-conservative Republican senator from North Carolina, introduced legislation in 1987 to prevent government funding for any organization that dealt with homosexuality or premarital sex. Both MAP and BEST were worried

they would lose funding because they both advised practicing safe sex, which many in the conservative movement viewed as synonymous with premarital sex.<sup>60</sup> While various organizations such as ACT-UP, a direct-action oriented AIDS group, vigorously protested Helms, BEST did not.<sup>61</sup> The main reason BEST did not protest was because at its heart, it was an STD clinic. Secondly, BEST had an excellent relationship with state and local government and did not want to put itself in jeopardy of becoming a target. However, Johnson gave an impassioned speech that year about legislation affecting HIV/AIDS patients, as well as organizations that served them. Johnson spoke out against mandatory HIV testing for homosexuals or employees; he spoke in favor of guaranteeing that HIV-positive people would not be discriminated against. The most effective of Johnson's pleas, however, was his reflection on his time fighting AIDS:

As director of the HIV alternate test site at the Brady East STD Clinic, as a former chairperson with the Milwaukee AIDS project, and having seen friends and brothers diagnosed and die from AIDS, I have come to know this disease quite well; its ravages, its pain, and its suffering that it inflicts on others. But just as the disease can inflict pain and suffering onto others, certain measures, regulations, and proposals, thought to help stop AIDS, can also have the potential to inflict pain and suffering. The question then we have to ask ourselves is what price are we willing to pay to stop the further progression of this disease?<sup>62</sup>

What was known as the Helms Amendment passed 96–2 in the U.S. Senate and created a dark cloud over the AIDS crisis in the late 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>63</sup> Fortunately, both BEST and MAP were spared from any serious fallout from the Helms Amendment.

Once more accurate HIV testing became commonplace in 1986, BEST saw an increase in patients and had to devise different means of reaching patients.<sup>64</sup> With HIV testing now being more reliable, BEST's HIV clinics started to get booked up far ahead of time.<sup>65</sup> The accuracy of new HIV tests had two profound impacts on BEST. First, more clients, many of whom were heterosexual, visited the HIV clinics. Secondly, since the clinics were filled so fast with heterosexual patients, BEST looked for new ways to reach homosexual patients. In 1988, BEST received a \$40,000 grant from the state of Wisconsin to provide "On Site Testing" for HIV.<sup>66</sup> Wisconsin and BEST identified various gay bars in Milwaukee as sites for mobile testing clinics. BEST displayed how much it cared about the gay community in Milwaukee by setting up mobile clinics; if the patients could not come to the clinic, the clinic would go to them.

Although the 1980s witnessed BEST becoming an important player in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Milwaukee and statewide, many of the same issues that befell famous AIDS activists in other cities impacted BEST volunteers. One of the major factors that affected BEST during the decade was the revolving door of leadership. However, this was not at all rare for organizations during the AIDS crisis. Just as Gremminger burned out after his non-stop crusade, so did other prominent AIDS activists. One such person was Michael Callen, a man best known for a 40-page pamphlet on safe sex that he coauthored in the early days of the crisis. He also started the Community Research Institute, which broke down barriers preventing minorities and women from being included in AIDS drug testing. By the end of the 1980s, Callen

had watched dozens of friends die and could no longer participate in the fight.<sup>67</sup> Then there was Mark Behar. His ability as an activist was unmatched at BEST in the 1980s, but along with his charisma and ability to motivate people, he sometimes rubbed people the wrong way—as did Larry Kramer. Kramer was instrumental in starting two important organizations during the 1980s: Gay Men’s Health Crisis and ACT-UP. People within both organizations grew tired of him though, and he focused on other pursuits.<sup>68</sup> Sue Dietz and Nova Clite left BEST to steer MAP. Peter Staley, arguably the most famous grassroots activist during the AIDS crisis and a founding member of ACT-UP, helped a segment of the organization known as T + D leave and become a separate organization called the Treatment Action Group. T + D had been the actual research wing of ACT-UP, and Staley believed research and treatment had become more important than direct action.<sup>69</sup>

***Stability and Leadership: The 1990s and Beyond Under Walker and Uecker***

The stability in leadership that BEST lacked during the 1980s finally arrived in the 1990s with Ross Walker and Erv Uecker. The men, in a relationship since 1956, began volunteering at BEST in the late 1980s.<sup>70</sup> By the early 1990s, Walker had become president of the Board of Directors and Uecker was voted in as the secretary. Together, these two provided the stability that was missing from BEST in the 1980s. Walker, in particular, carried with him a distinct air of professionalism. In a letter to Milwaukee Mayor Norquist, Walker was not afraid to condemn ACT-UP, even though they were on the same side of the AIDS battle. Walker, referencing a protest recently staged by ACT-UP and MAP, said “the recent ‘demonstration’ by ACT-UP at your office and in City Hall and the hostile attitude of MAP toward the Health Department seem, at least to me, to be unwarranted and over-reactive.”<sup>71</sup> With the more cautious Walker and Uecker at the helm, BEST cemented its legacy as an organization capable of working with the City of Milwaukee on the fight against AIDS.

During the 1990s, BEST continued to operate as an STD clinic, but its activism took different directions. In 1993, the Milwaukee Indian Health Centers coordinated a project that would “assess the HIV prevention needs to Milwaukee County residents.”<sup>72</sup> The project was a large undertaking in which various segments of Milwaukee’s population would be targeted. Statistics gathered in the project would help determine where exactly AIDS prevention was lacking. Since the early days of the epidemic, AIDS had often been seen as a homosexual disease that mainly affected white men. In his book *Victory Deferred*, John-Manuel Andriote argues the media’s portrayal of AIDS as “a white homosexual disease” imperiled minorities who remained “at great risk for years to come because of a lack of information about the disease.”<sup>73</sup> Once minority populations composed the largest segments suffering from AIDS in the 1990s, it became clear that a new approach to outreach was needed in Milwaukee. BEST’s role in the project was smaller than in previous projects. It is clear, however, that BEST was an important member of the project due to its experience with collecting health information from the community.

During the 1990s, BEST became so well known in Milwaukee that it printed monthly newsletters answering people’s questions about AIDS. In 1993, BEST entered into a contract with Milwaukee Area Television Access to host a three-hour call-in show on Thursday nights during which people had their questions about HIV/AIDS answered on the air. Seemingly nothing was off limits as they “discussed

all aspects of HIV from the need for testing, the types of testing, transmission, and safer sex practices.”<sup>74</sup> A year after the weekly television show had started airing, BEST began publishing special editions of its quarterly newsletter, *BestD Answers Health Questions*, featuring Bob Ambeland and Dr. Kelly Balliet, the hosts of the television program. Both the television show and the special newsletters serve to demonstrate that by the mid-1990s, BEST had evolved into a full-scale HIV clinic and testing center. Most importantly, the gay community fully relied on BEST for information and updates about HIV/AIDS.

### **Conclusion**

Has the AIDS crisis ever truly ended? There is still no cure for the disease. However, an argument could be made that the AIDS crisis ended in 1996 when the drug Crixivan<sup>®</sup> was found to suppress HIV for a long period of time. The drug was “responsible for a 50 percent reduction in deaths” from HIV during a study.<sup>75</sup> The end of the AIDS crises didn’t mean the end of BEST’s activism. It continued on with various projects, including partnering with ARCW on a new program called “OUTreach.” The program was similar to the mobile HIV testing program BEST started in the late 1980s, but encompassed a wider array of information and tests.<sup>76</sup>

The Brady East STD Clinic looms large in the story of HIV/AIDS research and activism in the state of Wisconsin. Before groups like ACT-UP were formed, BEST had been active in the fight against AIDS. It was present at important events such as the Denver conference in 1983, and it had contacted people such as Larry Kramer and Lawrence Mass of GMHC. At the heart of BEST were the activists and doctors who made up its core. Mark Behar’s charisma drew people to him and allowed BEST to keep making contact with people all over the country. Roger Gremminger’s extraordinary efforts deserve further scrutiny. With the workload he took upon himself between 1982 and 1984, he was clearly an important researcher and doctor in the early years of the AIDS epidemic. Nova Clite and Sue Dietz were the brains behind the creation of the Milwaukee AIDS Project, which led to the Aids Resource Center of Wisconsin, a group still very active today. Who can count the possible lives saved by a project so impactful? Finally, Ross Walker and Erv Uecker steered BEST into a more reserved role, but one that helped BEST solidify its place as an essential part of the gay community during the AIDS crisis.

### **Notes**

1. *Wisconsin Aids Update*, April 1989, box 5, Brady East STD Clinic Records, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Libraries, Archives Department, Milwaukee, WI (hereafter known as “BCR”).
2. Ibid.
3. BEST Directors Report–1988, box 3, January 1989, BCR.
4. Bill Meunier, “BESTD Clinic 25 Years Young . . .,” *WI Light*, 8–14 December 1999, 7–8.
5. Gay Peoples Union Venereal Disease Clinic Director’s Report–1977, box 1, 1977, BCR.
6. Throughout this paper I have used both the descriptors “homosexual” and “gay.” There are various reasons for this. This paper focuses on almost 20 years, a period in which the vogue terminology for members of the LGBT

community was changing. Added to this is in what capacity these people are being referenced. When talking about their own community, the people in this paper usually used the term “gay.” However, scientists and doctors tended to reference individuals as “homosexual,” probably to emphasize more of a biological difference than a cultural difference. Therefore in this paper I have attempted to use “gay” when writing in general about the community, about specific people, or when it was clear from the texts and research that “gay” was the term being used. I tried to reserve “homosexual” for medical and scientific writing.

7. John K. Gruhlke to Alyn W. Hess, 20 September 1974, box 6, BCR.
8. GPU VDC Director’s Report–1977, box 1, 1977, BCR.
9. History of the Brady East Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic Inc., 1982, box 4, BCR.
10. “Gay Group Considers Suit on Police Raids,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 18 July 1978, 5; Medical Director’s Report–1983, box 1, 16 January 1983, BCR.
11. Mark Behar to Chuck Kiley, 15 November 1977, box 5, BCR.
12. Dale M. Shaskey to Mark Behar, 29 December 1977, box 5, BCR.
13. David France, *How to Survive a Plague: The Inside Story of How Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016) 13–16.
14. *Ibid.*, 31–32.
15. Farwell Street Clinic Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 14 June 1982, box 1, BCR.
16. Mark Behar’s Conference Notes, August 1982, box 1, BCR.
17. Joe Manning and Susan Trebach, “First Case of AIDS Reported in State,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 17 February 1983, box 1, BCR.
18. Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 16 September 1982, box 1, BCR.
19. Larry Falk to Mark Behar, 5 October 1982, box 1, BCR.
20. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 38.
21. “Governor Names Gay, Lesbian Council,” *Kenosha News*, 1 April 1983, 2.
22. History of BEST, 1982, box 4, BCR; Roger Gremminger to Deborah Reed, 12 June 1989, box 5, BCR.
23. Grant Application, 1 December 1982, box 1, BCR.
24. Roger Gremminger to Steve Frederick, 16 August 1983, box 1, BCR.
25. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 59–60.
26. John-Manuel Andriote, *Victory Deferred: How AIDS Changed Gay Life in America*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999) 62–63.
27. Medical Director’s Report–1983, 17 December 1983, box 1, BCR.
28. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 199–200.
29. BEST Medical Director’s Report, 1982, box 1, BCR.
30. Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 23 February 1983, box 1, BCR.
31. “AIDS to be Discussed,” *Milwaukee Journal*, 6 November 1983, 7.
32. Roger Gremminger to Karlis Streips, 26 October 1982, box 1, BCR.
33. “TV Show to Take a Look at AIDS,” *Milwaukee Journal*, n.d., 9.
34. “A Cream City Special Edition Interview with Roger Gremminger and Mark Behar,” *Cream City Special Edition*, May 1983, 7.
35. Board of Director’s Meeting Minutes, 25 April 1984, box 2, BCR.

36. Great Lakes Lesbian/Gay Health Conference Brochure, February 1984, box 5, BCR.
37. Nancy Clark to Brady East STD Clinic, 13 June 1983, box 1, BCR.
38. AIDS Pamphlet, Spring 1983, box 6, BCR.
39. Andriote, *Victory Deferred*, 350–51.
40. Roger Gremminger to BEST Board of Directors, 25 July 1984, box 2, BCR.
41. Medical Director's Report–1983, 17 December 1983, box 1, BCR. Of note: at a NAPEN conference in Denver that Gremminger and Behar attended, the National Association of People with AIDS was formed, and the “Denver Principles” were created. This was arguably the start of the patient advocacy movement and would become a mainstay of the fight against AIDS.
42. Mark Behar to Jay Garland Memorial Scholarship Fund Search Committee, 26 December 1977, box 1, BCR.
43. Don F. Schwamb to Sue Dietz, 22 January 1984, box 2, BCR.
44. Dick Jones, “Living with AIDS,” *Milwaukee Journal*, 19 October 1986, 238–39.
45. Finance Committee Minutes, 28 March 1984, box 6, BCR. CCF's original request had been for more informational publishing about AIDS. Nova Clite, chair of BEST's Finance Committee, believed that BEST's own literature about AIDS was already enough and that the money should be spent on preventative means. Clite believed that there was such denial about AIDS in the gay community that optionally picking up a pamphlet did little. Nova Clite was not alone in her beliefs; author David France wrote about Gaetan Dugas (famously mislabeled patient-0 of the AIDS epidemic) who, until his dying days, complained that there was no proven link between sex and the spread of AIDS.
46. Milwaukee AIDS Project Committee Charter, Undated, box 6, BCR.
47. AIDS: A Proposal to Reach High-Risk Populations with Health Information, October 1984, box 6, BCR.
48. Nova Clite to BEST Board of Directors, 10 October 1984, box 6, BCR.
49. Douglas Johnson to Unknown, 22 January, box 6, BCR.
50. Ibid.
51. BEST News, September–October 1984, box 6, BCR; BEST Board of Directors Special AIDS Meeting Minutes, 7 January 1985, box 2, BCR.
52. Asha Sharma, “Clinic for Gays Celebrates 10 Years of Service,” *Milwaukee Journal*, 35.
53. Nova Clite to J. Thomas Cochrane, 10 April 1985, box 6, BCR.
54. AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin Flyer, 13 December 1985, box 2, BCR.
55. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 185.
56. BEST Medical Committee Meeting Minutes, 4 April 1985, box 2, BCR.
57. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 397.
58. Ibid., 288–89.
59. BEST Fundraiser Brochure, 7 April 1997, box 4, BCR.
60. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 23 November 1987.
61. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 319–20.
62. Douglas Johnson Speech to Assembly Committee on Health–Public Hearings, 1987, box 5, BCR.
63. Edward Koch, “Senator Helms's Callousness toward AIDS Victims,” *New York Times*, 7 November 1987, 27.

64. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 214–15.
65. BEST Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 15 April 1987, box 2, BCR.
66. Contract between BEST and state of Wisconsin, 15 December 1988, box 3, BCR.
67. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 397–98.
68. *Ibid.*, 83–84.
69. *Ibid.*, 448–49.
70. Margo Huston, “Gay Activists Encouraging Community Center,” *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, 3 March 1996, sec. 3B.
71. Ross B. Walker to John Norquist, 20 July 1993, box 3, BCR.
72. Bill Erwin and Paul Nannis to BEST, August 1993, box 7, BCR.
73. Andriote, *Victory Deferred*, 66–67.
74. BestD Clinic News Newsletter, vol. 2, no. 2, 1993, box 7, BCR.
75. France, *How to Survive a Plague*, 505–07.
76. Memorandum of Understanding between BEST and ARCW, 18 January 1996, box 7, BCR.

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