OUR Journal

Oregon Undergraduate Research

Volume 23, Issue 2, Spring 2025

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Cover Art: "Where Else Is There"

Seberiana Lopez*

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.1*

"Fight the Power" by Public Enemy is a song that was created in collaboration with the movie "Do the Right Thing," directed by Spike Lee, to narrate the social injustices of the African American community. Following the prompt of my Advanced Digital Drawing class to listen to "Fight the Power" by Public Enemy to create a drawing, I was inspired to focus on the social injustices of gentrification in my illustration. This artwork is a visual representation of how marginalized communities continuously face injustices by disruption and separation from their communities and culture through acts of greed. Activists continuously work to research such serious topics to demonstrate the significant need for equality among BIPOC communities.

Medium: *Digital illustration, Adobe Photoshop, iPad Pro*

**Seberiana Lopez (seberianavlopez@gmail.com) is a Chicana artist from California majoring in Art and Technology with two minors in Art History and Entrepreneurship at the University of Oregon. Her career goals and artist's work are driven by her passions of wanting to create opportunity and success for people of BIPOC backgrounds. Seberiana has explored these goals in the practice of her art, work experience, and community building. Her work explores digital mediums in the forms of illustrations, videography, animations, branding content, and more.*

Meet the Editorial Board

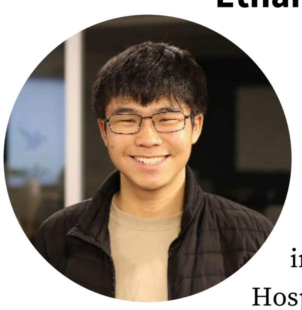
Kyla Schmitt, Editor-in-Chief

Kyla Schmitt graduated magna cum laude from the Clark Honors College in June 2025, earning dual degrees in Environmental Science (Bachelor of Science) and Humanities (Bachelor of Arts) with minors in Biology, English, and Economics. Kyla's academic interests include wildlife ecology, contemporary history and politics, and scientific and rhetorical writing. Her latest publication sought to characterize the native signal crayfish population in Tryon Creek, Oregon, and her recent honors thesis examined fungal diversity on Oregon white oak savannas. Beyond academia, Kyla coaches speech and debate, serves as a technical editor for Fall Creek, and spends plenty of time hiking and exploring the outdoors. She will continue her career in research this summer as a field technician studying the effects of climate change on the scarlet monkeyflower throughout its range.

Ava Sechrist, Senior Editor

Ava Sechrist is a third-year Clark Honors College student majoring in Psychology and English. She has further interests in Creative Writing. She has previously been involved in child development research at UO. Her independent research has explored the impacts of social media on weight-based bias and the effect of trauma on emotional granularity. In her free time, Ava enjoys reading, listening to podcasts, and going on adventures with friends.

Ethan Nguyen, Editor



Ethan is a junior student in the Clark Honors College majoring in Biochemistry. He is interested in performing research with a lot of potential in applied usage, especially for biomedical applications. Ethan is currently working in an organic synthesis research lab aiming to create novel molecules with potential applications in materials science and bioimaging. Outside academics, Ethan is involved in a lot of volunteering at places such as Food for Lane County and Hospice. His hobbies include jiu-jitsu and chess.

Charlotte Olds, Editor

Charlotte is currently a third-year Clark Honors College student majoring in neuroscience and psychology. She conducts research in a cognitive neuroscience lab, focusing on how experiences are organized into memories and the mechanisms that underlie the tendency to forget. Outside of the UO, Charlotte volunteers with HIV Alliance to help expand access to health services. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, running, playing the piano, and snowboarding.

Keegan Tippetts, Editor

Keegan Tippetts is a second-year student at the University of Oregon majoring in English with minors in Creative Writing and Political Science. He has a focused interest in storytelling in any medium, writing/directing film, theatre, prose, occasionally poetry, and maybe someday video games. He is fascinated with the way that art intersects with the human experience. A major point of inquiry for him is how perception is and can be altered by the art that people experience. He likes editing writing of all kinds and is always looking forward to something new to learn or do. Outside of academics, he spends most of his time writing or working on film projects, but also enjoys video games, hiking, obsessively listening to movie OST, cooking, and getting together with friends.

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Art Feature: “Glacial”

Chelsea Kropp*

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.2*

I interviewed 32 ice climbers. They want a bag that is simple, lightweight, and narrow, with a separate crampon carry and a wide belt for support. I designed a bag with a zip-over top that creates room for a helmet, a mesh base that allows wet items to drip, a mid zip that provides quick access for cold fingers, a wide belt for support, and a removable bottom section that adds storage while hiking and can be left at camp while climbing. “Glacial” captures these features and reveals the research that underlies the product design process.

Medium: *Mixed medium.*

Chelsea Kropp (chelseakropp29@gmail.com) graduated in June 2025 from the University of Oregon’s Product Design program with a passion for turning creative ideas into purposeful, marketable products. With a love for all forms of art, she’s drawn to Product Design for the way it channels her instincts into tangible outcomes. Outside of school, she enjoys reading, exploring the outdoors, music, and of course art. Her work is driven by curiosity, imagination, and a desire to create things that resonate.

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Journal Editorial: "Phi Beta Kappa Induction Remarks"

Christopher P. Long*

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.3*

This journal editorial is an abridged version of the Provost's remarks at the University of Oregon Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony on June 14, 2025, which the Provost's Office has graciously offered for inclusion in this issue of the Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal. Since its founding in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa has celebrated excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and championed freedom of thought. As America's most prestigious academic honor society, it is uniquely equipped to advocate for the value and benefits of liberal arts and sciences education; the University's Alpha of Oregon chapter recently celebrated its centennial anniversary.

Today, as we induct a new generation into the nation's oldest academic honor society, we do more than confer a distinction, we affirm a commitment: a commitment to curiosity, to intellectual rigor, and to the hard-won joy of understanding. We mark not only personal achievement, but a shared faith in the university as a sacred place of transformation and of truth-seeking. In a time when these ideals are under siege, such faith is no small thing.

Phi Beta Kappa has always stood for the life of the mind, for the belief that the liberal arts and sciences are not luxuries but necessities; that freedom of thought is not an abstraction, but the condition of our collective flourishing; that ideas, tested and challenged in open exchange, are the very engines of a vibrant democracy. Today, we celebrate students who have excelled within that tradition. And we also acknowledge the mounting pressures it now faces.

The threats are no longer veiled. In recent years, and with escalating force under the current federal administration, we have seen policies that seek to narrow, censor, and constrict the mission of higher education. Federal funding for basic and applied research—the fuel of human progress—has been haphazardly cut or reallocated to serve partisan aims. Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives have been vilified and dismantled, ignoring that diversity of backgrounds, diversity of thought, and diversity of experiences are what make research and teaching excellence possible. International students and faculty—whose ideas and presence have enriched our campuses and communities for generations—now face unjust restrictions on visas, work permits, and legal status.

These are not isolated skirmishes. They are symptoms of a deeper, organized effort to redefine what education should be and who it should serve, to discredit expertise, to replace complexity with control, and to transform the university from a place of inquiry into a place of indoctrination. Yet, I believe—as did the founders of Phi Beta Kappa, as did the leaders of this nation throughout the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries—that public universities serve the public good through research and education, by exploring and generating new ideas, and by teaching future citizens to discern how to live meaningful lives.

**Christopher P. Long (provost@uoregon.edu) is the provost and senior vice president at the University of Oregon. He identifies integrity, trust, equity, collaboration, and excellence as the core values that inform his leadership as the chief academic officer at the University of Oregon. Provost Long has more than $7 million of funded research projects, including the Mellon funded Less Commonly Taught and Indigenous Languages Partnership with the Big 10 Academic Alliance, the Public Philosophy Journal, and HuMetricsHSS. An expert in both ancient Greek and contemporary continental philosophy, Provost Long's extensive publication record includes four books:* The Ethics of Ontology *(SUNY 2004),* Aristotle On the Nature of Truth *(Cambridge 2010),* Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy: Practicing a Politics of Reading *(Cambridge 2014), and* Reiner Schürmann and the Poetics of Politics *(Punctum 2018).*

As the 1965 legislation that created the National Foundation for the Arts and the Humanities so succinctly puts it: “Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens.”[1] To make good on this demand of democracy itself, we must support, sustain, and defend the public research university as a sacred space of inquiry and learning. To call the university a “sacred” space is not to infuse it with a holiness founded upon religious dogma, but to recall the connotations of the Latin *sacrare*, which means “to set apart” and “to dedicate.” The university is set apart as a space dedicated to the search for truth and the cultivation of the habits of dialogue and thinking that awaken us to the world and deepen our relationships with one another.

The university is a sacred space for thinking in its most active voice. The activity of thinking is rooted in what Hannah Arendt calls the human condition of natality, the capacity to bring something new into the world. Thinking thus acts in unpredictable ways. This is one reason ideologues and demagogues find universities so dangerous and seek to control them. The university, however, can only be a catalyst for new and unexpected ideas if it is protected and sustained.

Despite the very real threats of the current moment, I want to conclude today on a note of hope and possibility. This is not the first time our university has weathered mighty storms. And it will not be the last. Higher education has endured wars, recessions, cultural upheaval, swings in public opinion, and political backlash before. And it has survived—not through complacency, but through principled resistance, the relentless belief that truth is a value worth defending, and the enduring commitment to imagine a more just and beautiful future.

We do well today to remember the words of poet Audre Lorde, who wrote: “Within each one of us there is some piece of humanness that knows we are not being served by the machine which orchestrates crisis after crisis and is grinding all our futures into dust.”[2] The university is not immune to change; it is the crucible through which we deepen our understanding of the world and one another so we might create together a future worth wanting.

As Audre Lorde reminds us: “What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strength of our individual identities. And in order to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness.”[3] And as long as there are students willing to question, to wonder, to speak truth even when it is hard or unpopular, the university will remain the beating heart of a free society and a catalyst for a more just future.

To our new Phi Beta Kappa inductees: you inherit this legacy and commitment. You carry forward the work of keeping inquiry free, of ensuring that knowledge serves not power, but that piece of humanness that makes a better world possible. You have distinguished yourselves not only through achievement, but through the questions you have dared to ask. Higher education, like democracy itself, is not static. It breathes through us. It survives when we defend it. And it thrives when we create and sustain it together.

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[1] National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act,” Pub. L. No. 89–209, 951 20 U.S.C. 845 (1965), sec. 3, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-79/pdf/STATUTE-79-Pg845.pdf.
[2] Lorde, Audre, and Cheryl Clarke. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Reprint edition. Berkeley, Calif: Crossing Press, 2007, 139.
[3] Ibid., 142.

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

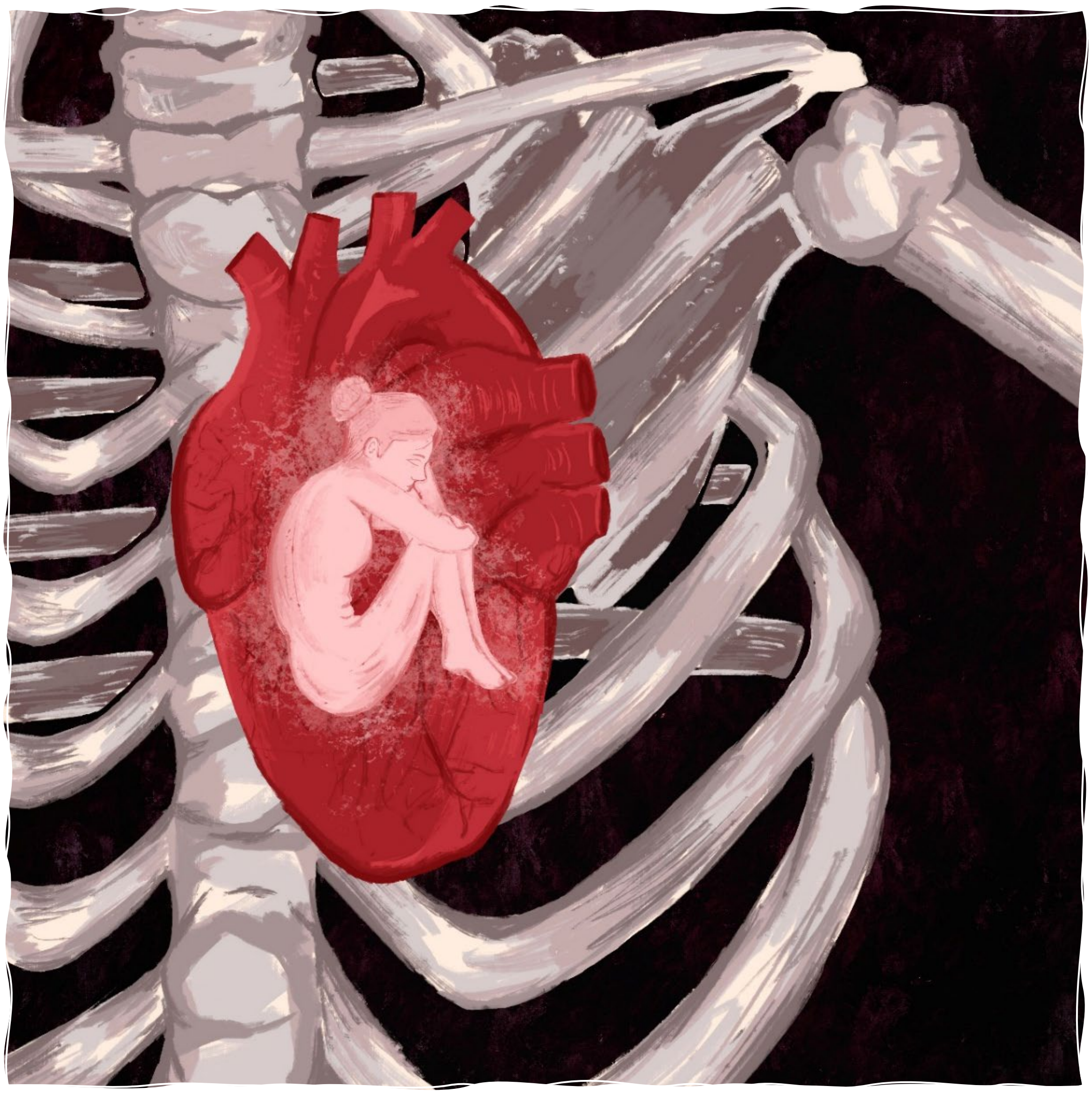
Art Feature: "Here Is Where I Lie"

Seberiana Lopez

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.4*

The body and mind often feel at war. They say our minds work to comprehend while our hearts are driven by temptation. However, our bodies are one and both influence our expressions and identity. By suppressing one or the other, we lose a part of ourselves. The starvation that we put our hearts and minds in influenced this work of art. It illustrates the despair it leaves our soul and the longing to fill that void. To understand our bodies, we further research our needs and mechanisms to develop a more fulfilled life that caters to the needs of ourselves as whole.

Medium: *Digital illustration, Adobe Photoshop, iPad Pro.*



Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Letter from the Editor

Kyla Schmitt

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.5*

Dear Reader,

As I write this letter—a freshly minted alumni of the University of Oregon, and an environmental scientist in search of work and higher education, during a time when it is particularly hard to find both of those things—I find myself reflecting on my time as an undergraduate researcher here at the UO.

Throughout my four years here, I was lucky to conduct ecological research under the guidance of eight different faculty members (Dr. Bitty Roy, Dr. Haley Burrill, Dr. Peg Boulay, Dr. Eleanor Wakefield, Dr. Addison Koneval, Dr. Jeff Diez, Dr. Dave Sutherland, and Dr. Ellen Fitzpatrick) and, for my term papers, to find incredible research support and assistance with so many more.

I was also fortunate enough to receive eight different funding packages in support or in honor of my research (the *First-Year Research Experience Award, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship, College of Arts and Sciences Hands-On Learning Scholarship, Owens Writing Award, Mentored Research Program Scholarship, O'Day Fellowship in Biological Sciences, Research Revealed Photo Contest* prize, and *Three-Minute Thesis Competition* prize), alongside numerous other scholarships to support my academic endeavors more broadly.

Significantly, it was also during my time here that UO Libraries decided to grant permanent funding to support the operations and publications of the Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal, which has allowed me to participate in disseminating other students' incredible research projects through *these* issues for three years and counting.

For those of you who are current undergraduates at the UO, I cannot understate to you the importance of taking advantage of the incredible resources offered to you as a member of an R1-university community. I remain stunned by the institutional support I have received since joining the University of Oregon community, and I strongly believe that this support is why I find myself continuing to pursue a future as a researcher today.

Simultaneously, I find myself increasingly worried that classes of students after me will not be afforded all the same opportunities I was. We now live in a time where fascism—and yes, alongside leading historians, [1] I think now is the time to invoke that term—underpins the decisions made by our federal government, not only in its undermining of scientific truth and dramatic slashing of funding for scholarly research, [2] but also in its tearing away of valued members of our academic communities. [3]

So, now is the time not only to take advantage of dwindling—but extant—opportunities and resources to advance important research, but to speak up and take action to protect the research, the education, and the very people that make the UO such an incredible place to be. Through these trying times, I hope that the UO will continue to value and prioritize truth, discovery, and community wellbeing. I hope that all of

[1] Elisabeth Zerofsky, "Is It Fascism? A Leading Historian Changes His Mind," *New York Times,* October 23, 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/23/magazine/robert-paxton-facism.html.
[2] Higher Ed Dive, *Tracker: Tracking the Trump Administration's Moves to Cap Indirect Research Funding,* published June 19, 2025, https://www.highereddive.com/news/tracking-the-trump-administrations-moves-to-cap-indirect-research-funding/751123/.
[3] Tarek Anthony, Ysabella Sosa, and Jasmine Saboorian, "Three Additional UO International Students Face Deportation," *Daily Emerald*, April 8, 2025, https://dailyemerald.com/163668/campus/three-additional-uo-international-students-face-deportation/.

you will do your part by advocating through contacting your leaders and representatives, donating to organizations (see, for instance, the New York University School of Law's *Institute for Policy Integrity*) that seek to defend these values, and asking the challenging questions and seeking their nuanced solutions—the process we as academics often refer to as research.

Going forward, I will remain committed to supporting inquiry and advocacy on the UO campus, even as I gather up my diploma and chart toward my own uncertain future. And OURJ, for its part, will remain committed to the accessible and free publication of this cutting-edge student research. Here, the pages that follow contain some of the best of our Oregon undergraduates' recent research.

Sincerely,

Kyla Schmitt, Editor-in-Chief

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Eternal Hunger: A Qualitative Analysis of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and its Role as a Driver of the New Nuclear Arms Race

Dominic Zupo*

DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.6*

Abstract

The emergence of a new Cold War and the arms race it brings has captured the attention of the globe. To understand the drivers of the new global tension, the current discourse has overwhelmingly looked to great power politics for explanations. A dominant narrative has emerged that frames the United States as a superpower in decline and facing increasingly aggressive challenges from China. This thesis directly challenges that narrative by investigating the role of nuclear weapons laboratories as the possible key driver of this new era of nuclear arms racing and proliferation. Specifically, this thesis uses process tracing and organization theory to explain how Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories developed an organizational ethos that sought to master its resource dependence by pursuing influence over the policy that controls the distribution of the resources it seeks. This thesis argues that, in doing so, Lawrence Livermore acts as a driver of arms racing and the new Cold War.

1. Introduction

Today, the United States and China continue to participate in growing economic competition, political tensions, and evermore divergent international goals. Though still deeply interconnected through the international system, the two nations are constantly jostling for power through industry, technology, and the cultivation of new strategic partnerships and influence. Harking back to the shifting competition between the Soviet Union and the United States, this deterioration of relations and divergence of interests has repeatedly been characterized as a New Cold War. Following in the footsteps of its predecessor, this New Cold War includes a new era of nuclear arms racing. Though the actions of both states are undeniable contributors, the root cause of this New Cold War is being hotly debated in international relations.[1, 2, 3] This study investigates the role of United States nuclear labs in causing current global tensions. More specifically, this thesis asks: How does Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory function as a driver of arms racing, and, in turn, does it act as a causal force in the New Cold War?

[1] Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The Return of Nuclear Escalation." Foreign Affairs, October 24, 2023. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/return-nuclear-escalation. 1.On changing International rules see Shivshankar Menon, "Nobody Wants the Current World Order," Foreign Affairs, July 13, 2023, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/world/nobody-wants-current-world-order.

[2] For the return of nuclear escalation and arms racing see, Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The Return of Nuclear Escalation." Foreign Affairs, October 24, 2023. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/return-nuclear-escalation

[3] Rose Gottemoeller, "How to Stop a New Nuclear Arms Race," Foreign Affairs, February 27, 2024, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2022-03-09/how-stop-new-nuclear-arms-race.

**Dominic Zupo (dzupo@uoregon.edu) graduated from the University of Oregon in 2024 with a degree in political science. With this research project, he was a 2024 winner of the UO Libraries' Awards for Research Excellence. His project, as he puts it, "was made possible through daily use of the library's online resources, the physical space, and resources it provides, and insights and direction from library faculty as well as outside resources and support."*

To explain the shifting global order, most scholars have focused on the actions of China and Russia, arguing that the United States is responding to the actions of these nations.[4] These scholars view China as a new superpower challenging the existing hegemonic system, while Russia is an unsatisfied former superpower. The actions of both China and Russia have largely been interpreted as zero-sum threats to the United States.[5] This analysis has strengthened the United States' internalized identity as a superpower being challenged while losing influence abroad, thereby leading to a widespread acceptance of the need to re-arm, including abandoning arms control in order to pursue nuclear stockpile expansion in a major reversal from long-term strategic stability. Instead of continuing to mutually disarm nuclear weapons since the end of the Cold War, a new arms race is emerging.[6]

This study specifically focuses on one key actor, the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. The basis for this thesis's focus on Livermore is threefold. The laboratory system has largely been stripped of agency and left out of the academic analysis of the military-industrial complex. Moreover, Livermore is often overshadowed by Los Alamos in popular media and academic analysis. Within the context of the present-day nuclear discourse, Livermore is unique as it was home to actors who influenced and continue to influence nuclear policy and nuclear myths. Lastly, in recognition of the nature and constraints of this thesis, focusing on a significant player in close proximity to where this research took place provided logistical benefits and relevancy.

This thesis will use organization theory, in particular resource dependency theory, and the framework of the Iron Triangle to explain the mission, identity, drive, and broader structures that developed the goals, power, and influence of Lawrence Livermore. This analysis will be done by first establishing a chronological history of the organization's mission development. This specific mission of manufacturing nuclear weapons is centered around resource dependency. The end of the Cold War threatened the organizational characteristics of Lawrence Livermore, forcing it to either change or to double down and strengthen its influence to continue gaining resources. Lawrence Livermore chose to become more aggressive in its collection of resources. Further, the broader theoretical framework is useful to analyze the case study of how the need for ratification of the last arms control treaty, the New START, forced a bargain that paradoxically continued to limit nuclear arms and began the process of rebuilding the full Cold War arsenal in a modernized way that has directly led to the New Cold War. New START offers one of the most clear and explicit demonstrations of how Livermore and the other laboratories politically maneuver and exude influence over policy. Process tracing New START will demonstrate how this bargain for full rearmament was spearheaded by Lawrence Livermore's resource dependency.

2. Methods and Theories

This thesis will utilize process tracing to analyze Lawrence Livermore and determine if its

[4] There are different approaches, theories and responsibilities; given and applied to the situation however these three nations have been framed as key actors. See, Hal Brands and John Lewis Gaddis, "The New Cold War." Foreign Affairs, October 19, 2021. 2024.https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/axis-upheaval-russia-iran-north-korea-taylor-fontaine. 1. Tong Zhao, "The Real Motives for China's Nuclear Expansion," Foreign Affairs, May 3, 2024, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/real-motives-chinas-nuclear-expansion.

[5] The majority of focus has been on the growth and relationships of Iran, North Korea, China and Russia. The autocratic nature of all these nations and conflict with the United States is a major driver of the high threat evaluation. See Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Richard Fontaine, "The Axis of Upheaval." Foreign Affairs, April 23, 2024. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/axis-upheaval-russia-iran-north-korea-taylor-fontaine. Thomas G. Mahnken, "Could America Win a New World War?." Foreign Affairs, October 27, 2022. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/could-america-win-new-world-war.

[6] Waltz, K. N. (Kenneth N. (1979). Theory of international politics (1st ed.). Random House.

organizational ethos and mission play a causal role in influencing arms racing and the New Cold War. Process tracing is a qualitative method of analysis used to explain and test theories and explanations of causality. This process will be done by establishing a timeline of events hypothesized to show a causal role of Livermore's influence on creating the current arms racing. Process tracing as a method offers a structure and multiple tests that can be done to determine causality. For the purpose of this thesis, an adaptation of process tracing will be used. By identifying the creation of an organization ethos and tracing the development of an organizational mission and its adaptation through the end of the Cold War and privatization, this thesis uses process tracing to demonstrate means, motive, and opportunity. The more rigorous examination for causality will culminate with a casual graph and case study of Livermore and the other laboratories' role in the ratification of the New START. This thesis will use a modified version of process tracing in the organization and structure of the thesis and the analysis of the New START ratification process. The importance of including this modified process tracing stems from its ability to better frame and analyze competing explanations of events and actions. Due to the constraints and scope of this thesis, traditional process tracing and the tests for causality that accompany the process were not a realistic addition. The theories detailed in this section will be used to explain how and why the selected events shape Livermore's organizational mission and act as drivers of the New Cold War.

2.1. Organization Theory: How to Demonstrate Influence

The literature on measuring the effect of political influence is a subject that contains substantial contributions.[7] This work will rely on the distinction of political power and the general understanding of influence provided by Arts and Verschuren.[8] Here, power is understood as the resources and political capital that an organization possesses. While power can be used to promote influence, the use or lack of use of influence is not a requisite for power. Although materially tangled with power, influence is commonly understood as "...the modification of one actor's behavior by that of another."[9] In order to answer the question that this project poses, a more case-specific understanding is needed. The restrictions applied have to do with goals and outcomes. The influencer must have a goal, intervene with another actor to achieve that goal, and be successful in doing so. There are many other ways and counterfactuals that can be understood as successful and unsuccessful influences. However, for the purpose of this thesis, these requirements are the most useful.

2.2. Creation of an Organizational Mission: A Brief History

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory officially opened on September 2, 1952, originally named the University of California Radiation Laboratory, Livermore branch. The creation of the lab and its history are well documented internally and externally; however, the available literature is overwhelmingly surface-level, focusing on a chronology of success and key moments of

[7] Parsons, Talcott. "On the Concept of Influence." The Public Opinion Quarterly 27, no. 1 (1963): 37–62. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2747290. Also Aplin, John C., and W. Harvey Hegarty. "Political Influence: Strategies Employed by Organizations to Impact Legislation in Business and Economic Matters." The Academy of Management Journal 23, no. 3 (1980): 438–50. https://doi.org/10.2307/255510.

[8] Arts, Bas, and Piet Verschuren. "Assessing Political Influence in Complex Decision-Making: An Instrument Based on Triangulation." International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale de Science Politique 20, no. 4 (1999): 411–24. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1601404.

[9] Ewing, A. F. "The Anatomy of Influence: Decision Making in International Organizations by Robert W. Cox, Harold K. Jacobson et al. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1973. Pp. Xiii+ 497. £6.50." The Journal of Modern African Studies 14, no. 2 (1976): 345–48. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X00053349.

discovery.[10] Understanding the founding is necessary to fill the gap in the literature surrounding the inception and the existence of an organizational mission and to determine if it has a lasting impact on the organization and if that mission drives nuclear escalation today. One of the most important gaps in the literature that this thesis seeks to address is the recognition of Livermore and, more generally, the laboratory system as organizations that possess agency.

A brief history of the laboratory's founding will demonstrate that an the initial organizational imprint shapedwas shaped through a dependency on successful weapons development and scientific estrangement. Political maneuvering and outside support were a requisite for the laboratory's creation and success , and will additionally be shown to shape the organization.

2.3. Organizational Imprinting

Organizational imprinting is a popular theoretical framework for explaining the differences in directions and outcomes that organizations experience. This framework asserts that organizations are shaped by the constraints of the time of their inception. These constraints are an amalgamation of the political, economic, and societal realities of the time.[11] This framework is a coalition of two actions: the initial imprint of the constraints and actions of the founding actors and the process of imprinting that creates the persistence of the values that shaped the organization.[12]

2.4. Organization Theory and Resource Dependence Tied to the Manufacture of New Nuclear Weapons

Organization Theory is a multifaced discipline that seeks to understand how organizations form, grow, and respond to the outside environment and why they make certain decisions. Out of Organization Theory comes the idea of resource dependency. The focus of resource dependency lies in analyzing the effect that the acquisition of resources has on the behavior of an organization. Resources are fundamental to the survival and success of an organization; however, organizations do not always have control over the resources they need. When this occurs, they must implement strategies to maintain access to the resources needed for the organization's survival.[13] Throughout Livermore's history, the laboratory needed resources and found it could acquire the most resources through the production and modernization of nuclear weapons. The laboratory sees resources and weapons as inextricably tied. Consequently, when the production or modernization of nuclear weapons is threatened, it represents an existential threat to the resources the laboratory needs. Following this logic, the laboratory sees weapons development as survival and must devise methods to ensure their continued production.

2.5. Iron Triangle Model

The Iron Triangle refers to the connection and influence web that ties government institutions, special interest groups, and Congress. The Iron Triangle framework has historically been most

[10] Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, "Our History," LLNL, accessed May 12, 2024, https://www.llnl.gov/purpose/history. Also, American Institute of Physics, "Physics History Network," Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, accessed May 12, 2024, https://history.aip.org/phn/21612012.html. Tarter, C. B. (2018). The American Lab An Insider's History of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (1st ed.). Johns Hopkins University Press.

[11] Simsek, Z., Fox, B. C., & Heavey, C. (2015). What's Past Is Prologue: A Framework, Review, and Future Directions for Organizational Research on Imprinting. Journal of Management, 41(1), 288–317. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314553276

[12] Johnson, V. (2007). What is organizational imprinting? Cultural entrepreneurship in the founding of the Paris Opera. The American Journal of Sociology, 113(1), 97–127. https://doi.org/10.1086/517899

[13] Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). The external control of organizations : a resource dependence perspective. Harper & Row.

effective as a form of analysis for the United States military-industrial complex.[14] Despite being deeply intertwined with the traditional private benefactors of the Iron Triangle, the U.S. nuclear industrial complex has largely escaped the scrutiny that the conventional military-industrial complex receives. The laboratories have historically existed in a gray area within the Iron Triangle, camouflaged by the academic image that terms such as “research” and “development” conjure. The new model under privatization of being government-owned but privately contracted further blurred the lines surrounding the laboratories’ position in the Iron Triangle. Sandia National Laboratories is a useful and possibly more familiar example of the problematic and abstruse nature of the nuclear weapons complex. The federally funded research and development center was operated by Sandia Corporation from 1993 to 2017; Sandia corporation was a wholly owned subsidiary of Lockheed Martin Corporation. In 2017, Sandia was taken over by National Technology and Engineering Solutions of Sandia, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Honeywell International. Livermore is currently operated by its own consortium of private interests and has a unique position in the Iron Triangle. The use of the Sandia example was an attempt to provide context to the scale and pervasiveness of competing private interests in the United States nuclear weapons complex.

In the Livermore case, it is important to recognize how the structural model of the Iron Triangle interacts and is reinforced by traditional resource dependency and privatization. The nuclear laboratory complex and the military-industrial complex both engage in monopolistic behaviors with the United States government as the only customer.[15] The structure of the U.S. government, with multiple ways to lobby for resources, allows many opportunities for laboratories like Lawrence Livermore to pursue and acquire resources.

3. Founding of Lawrence Livermore

Although founded in 1952, the groundwork laid for Livermore was years in the making. To properly identify and analyze the creation of an organizational mission and ethos, it is necessary to fully review and comprehend the organization’s earliest influences and the rationale for its creation. The organizational imprinting process begins with the constraints, motivations, and actions of the founders. The founders of Livermore were a part of the atomic community before it became an organization. Therefore, their disagreements, qualms, and individual ideologies within that community must be recognized as possible forces of organizational imprinting. Prior to the creation of Livermore, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, opened in 1943, designed all of the United States’ nuclear weapons. The end of World War II brought uncertainty and division to the atomic community. As relations cooled between the United States and the Soviet Union, those who had opposed the use of nuclear weapons in the war along, with many of those who saw the destruction they caused, began to aggressively lobby for arms control. After the detonation of the U.S.S.R’s first atomic bomb in 1949, the arms control camp had lost the lobbying war, and the Truman administration decided to pursue a hydrogen bomb.[16]

Edward Teller had been campaigning for a second laboratory and preaching the promise of

[14] Franklin C Spinney, “National Security Iron Triangle,” Tipping Point North South, March 17, 2014, https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/2014/03/17/national-security-iron-triangle/. Iron Triangle diagram.

[15] Tinoco, Janet K. "Organizational power and dependence: contradictions and implications for industry control." International Journal of Management and Innovation, vol. 2, no. 2, July 2010, pp. 54+. Gale Academic OneFile, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A270375485/AONE?u=oregon_oweb&sid=googleScholar&xid=120bd221. Accessed 19 May 2024.

[16] Notable names in the arms control camp were Oppenheimer and Einstein. 1. “Einstein and the Nuclear Arms Race: AMNH,” American Museum of Natural History, accessed May 13, 2024, https://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/einstein/peace-and-war/nuclear-arms-race.

the hydrogen bomb since his first days on the Manhattan Project: the United States' development of the first atomic bomb. A fervent anti-communist and scientific romantic, Teller was, and remains to this day, the subject of division in the atomic community and beyond.[17] As Teller's relationships within the atomic community deteriorated due to his hawkish anti-arms control positions as well as his desire to pursue a hydrogen bomb, these same positions and desires would create new similarly hawkish allies outside of the atomic community. Teller garnered the support of Air Force officers, members of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and David Griggs, one of the founders of the RAND Corporation, a research and development institute, policy think tank, and consulting firm. These parties had already turned their focus to the coming Cold War and saw a second laboratory focused on developing a hydrogen bomb as a necessity. With the support of those outside of the academic atomic community, the debate was already moving in Teller's favor for the creation of a second laboratory when Ernest Lawrence offered to run the new lab out of his existing radiation laboratory at UC Berkeley. Lawrence, a veteran of the first atomic bomb project, had already acquired the retired Livermore Air Force base as a site for a model accelerator project that could produce plutonium. Instead, Lawrence had gone to a subsidiary of Standard Oil to purchase and fund the site under the name Livermore Laboratories (Figure 1). Lawrence's support strengthened the bid for a new laboratory. After the first successful test of a hydrogen bomb that came out of Teller's work at the Livermore Labs, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and the regents of the University of California decided that the Livermore site would become the second laboratory. Although it was agreed that Lawrence would stay at Berkeley, his influence was memorialized through the new lab's name. Herbert York, a student and friend of Lawrence, was the first director of the lab. Although Teller and Lawrence shared many of the same ideals, they had competing ideas of what the new laboratory would look like. Teller wanted a large lab devoted to weapons production and the hydrogen bomb—one with all the resources available. Lawrence, on the other hand, envisioned a smaller, more diverse laboratory. At one point, seeing that the AEC charter did not include work on the hydrogen bomb, Teller threatened to pull his support. Although both were crucial in the creation of the laboratory and its success, Teller's media, political, and military clout would consistently prove to be one of the most effective ways to garner resources for the laboratory and a trump card in personal disputes.

Figure 1. Map of Livermore and Site 300.

With a first-year budget of only $600,000, Livermore Laboratory was initially destined to play a secondary support role for Los Alamos. However, that would soon change. In the first years, Livermore Lab conducted a series of unsuccessful weapons tests. Despite these failures, a high-explosive testing center was opened in 1955, and that same year, Livermore garnered its first weapons design project. Site 300 was acquired in June of 1955 by the AEC for Livermore Laboratories.[18] The 11 square miles of

[17] Gusterson, H. (1996). Nuclear rites: a weapons laboratory at the end of the Cold War. University of California Press.

[18] Site 100 being Berkely and Site 200 Livermore itself. Livermore Laboratories being the name at that time

Site 300 would be key in Livermore's growth. It is home to the world's largest indoor testing facility, the Contained Firing Facility (CFF). Many of the half dozen annual CFF tests and 40 to 50 explosive detonations that are done at Site 300 are created and assembled there. [19]

One of the first large projects Livermore undertook was to design a warhead for the Regulus II missile. Although the Navy eventually pulled the plug on the Regulus II missile, the warhead designed for the Regulus II that came out of Livermore was successful. The warhead would eventually be used and built upon for other missiles. From 1958 to 1961, the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to a moratorium on nuclear testing. This came at a time when Livermore Labs was working on the Polaris warhead for the Navy, a nuclear-armed, submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).

Seemingly unaffected by the moratorium, the US Navy successfully deployed the first batch of Polaris warheads in 1960. The success and momentum of this project would give Livermore a near monopoly on all strategic Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) warheads from the 1960s until the mid-1970s. During this moratorium, Livermore branched out into supercomputer modeling. While the lab had been using computers since 1953 to design thermonuclear weapons, the moratorium forced Livermore to focus its efforts on modeling nuclear reactions with the use of supercomputers. This computer modeling would expand to Site 300 and become key in non-nuclear warhead research. In 1971, following community and university backlash, the university and the lab split. Although still under management by the University of California Regents, the lab was no longer a part of UC Berkeley.

3.1. Polaris

The events that led up to Polaris and its eventual success were definitive moments of organizational imprinting. The success of Polaris demonstrates how the resources reaped from Teller's off-the-cuff promises, the impact of policy connections, and isolation acted as the catalyst for the lab's approach to resource dependence as well as the lab's political influence today.

The process of imprinting involves the integration of the imprinting pressures into the organizational structure. The literature on the actual imprinting process is plagued with inconsistencies and mechanisms specific to each case. There is, however, consensus regarding the factors that create the proper environment for the imprinting process to take hold. Entry into new markets, as well as during or succeeding periods of poor performance or crisis, are known as sensitive periods. [20] During these times, organizations can internalize the environmental constraints and reflect them in the structure, norms, and mission.

Livermore began its history with three unsuccessful weapons tests, resulting in calls from across the government and the atomic community for the closure of the young lab. [21] In 1956, the Navy

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[19] Map of Livermore's sites- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, United States Department of Energy Office of the Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs, United States Department of Energy Office of Scientific and Technical Information, Woodward, R K, Lamarre, A L, Green-Horner, L, Madrid, V M, Oberderdorfer, J A, and Taffett, M J. Natural Attenuation of Tritium in Vadose Zone Moisture and Groundwater at a Lawrence Livermore Site in Northern California, USA. Washington, D.C, Oak Ridge, Tenn.: United States. Dept. of Energy. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs ; Distributed by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information, U.S. Dept. of Energy, 1999. http://www.osti.gov/servlets/purl/8839-KHgvjZ/.

[20] Simsek, Z., Fox, B. C., & Heavey, C. (2015). What's Past Is Prologue: A Framework, Review, and Future Directions for Organizational Research on Imprinting. Journal of Management, 41(1), 288–317. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314553276

[21] Jeff Garberson, "Study Recounts Early, Difficult Years of Lawrence Livermore National Lab," The Independent, August 23, 2013, https://www.independentnews.com/news/study-recounts-early-difficult-years-of-lawrence-livermore-national-lab/article_44e876e2-0aad-11e3-a35f-001a4bcf887a.html. Also Goodwin, Bruce T. "Spotlight on National Labs: Lawrence Livermore National Lab." American Nuclear Society Young Members Group Webinar. Lecture presented at the American Nuclear Society Young Members Group Webinar, July 16, 2020.

invited staff from Los Alamos and Livermore to discuss an anti-submarine warfare study called Nobska. The focus of the study was to put nuclear warheads on submarines. Teller promised he could make a 30-fold improvement in weight to yield of the nuclear warhead. More damage in a smaller delivery system was extremely enticing to the Navy. His proposition for a small one megaton warhead captured the attention of the Navy and Livermore received funding for the project. There was much skepticism that his project could be completed. In response to an Air Force request for a factual and unbiased opinion of Polaris, the RAND Corporation released a 1958 memorandum expressing its necessary role in the United States' deterrent force. [22] At this time, the Air Force was in an organizational battle for resources with the Navy and Army. Each wanted a deterrence strategy with their own organization at the center. This played a huge factor in the Navy's choice to pursue Polaris and the Air Force's opposition. [23]

Despite the fact that only one element of the system had been tested before the 1958 testing moratorium took effect, Livermore's budget and staff grew, and the first batch of Polaris warheads were successfully deployed in 1960. The success of this project would give Livermore a near monopoly on all strategic Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) warheads until the mid-1970s.

3.2. RAND Corporation: Livermore's Introduction to the Power of Policy

Due to the nature of how these organizations interact, it is impossible to quantify the effect that the RAND Corporation's 1958 memorandum had on the implementation of Polaris. However, the effect of the reciprocal influence between the RAND Corporation and Livermore is well documented. As previously noted, Teller's bid for a second laboratory was supported by David Griggs, one of the architects of RAND. Adding to the connection, Griggs had met Lawrence at the MIT radiation laboratory after the end of World War II.

RAND began as a Research and Development arm of the Douglas Aircraft Company, an aerospace and defense company based out of Southern California. In 1958, the Air Force approved a split between Douglas and Project RAND, leading to the creation of the RAND Corporation as a non-profit. RAND is often considered the first think tank and has played a major role in researching and promoting policy during the Cold War. RAND is responsible for much of early game theory, the growth of War Games, and different deterrence strategies, and it played a prominent role in the conflicts in both Vietnam and Korea.

Prior to Polaris and shortly after Livermore's founding, then Director of Physics for the RAND project David Griggs directed his political analysts to engross themselves in the work taking place at the new lab. Tom Ramos, author of *From Berkeley to Berlin: How the Rad Lab Helped Avert Nuclear War* and member of the Livermore team behind Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, wrote about the analysts who went to Livermore, many of whom would become major influencers in the field of nuclear policy. Included in the group were names like Bernard Boddie, William Kaufmann, Andy Marshall, Albert Wohlstetter, and Herman Kahn. Ramos hints at the intimacy of this relationship by describing how Kahn spent so much time at the laboratory that he had his own office. [24]

The analysts who immersed themselves at Livermore saw the weight and size of the current

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[22] E.P. Oliver, Polaris Weapon System, 28 October 1958, RAND Memorandum RM-2311, Secret, excised copy

[23] John T Correll, "The Ups and Downs of Counterforce," Air & Space Forces Magazine, May 15, 2024, https://www.airandspaceforces.com/article/1005counterforce/#:~:text=McNamara%2C%20was%20 likewise%20 repelled%20 by,targeting%20 doctrine%20in%20 February%201961

[24] Tom Ramos, "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis," Nipp, October 3, 2022, https://nipp.org/information_series/tom-ramos-the-importance-of-professional-nuclear-policy-analysis-no-535-october-3-2022/.

warheads as a vulnerability. Heavier warheads called for stronger delivery systems, limiting options available for a possible second strike. Ramos tracks how that information was conveyed to the staff at Livermore. Livermore's focus was directed at creating smaller weapons; after the initial failures, they had successfully designed and tested the smallest hydrogen bomb yet.[25] It was this allegiance between RAND and Livermore that enabled the lab to pursue Polaris and for RAND to endorse it. This partnership made the theory of counterforce and limited nuclear war that Herman Kahn and others at RAND had been pushing a possible reality.[26] When discussing the success of Polaris and the relationship between RAND and Livermore, Ramos writes, "This wasn't an accident, and it doesn't mean that Los Alamos was incapable of achieving a similar feat. It does show, however, how potent it is to have nuclear policy analysts as integral contributors to the design process."[27]

Coming from an employee of the laboratory for over 40 years, Ramos's thesis is unsurprising: key actors at Livermore like Lawrence and Teller, in tandem with RAND analysts, saved the United States from nuclear war by creating weapons that lead to an effective deterrence strategy. Although Ramos saw the fusion of policies and research and development as a great achievement and his writing reflects that bias, his work offers evidence of historical connections between Livermore and policy creation implementation. Before his book was published in 2022, he was tasked with the creation of an internal classified chronology of Livermore's early weapons development in order to give lectures to the directorate. Much of this history remains classified.[28] The publishing of his book that contains the non-classified history offers new information and sources that might be unavailable to a laboratory outsider.

Ramos's work shows the formation of a laboratory that is intimately connected with the creation and implementation of the policy concerning weapons they are creating. The chronicles of Livermore's organizational relationship with RAND and other political organizations illustrates a sensitive period where organizational imprinting could take place, as well as the formation of Livermore's position in the Iron Triangle of government institutions, special interest groups, and Congress.[29]

Ramos goes further than just framing this relationship in a favorable light. In a 2022 article, he uses his research to critique an article from the nonprofit journal Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. The article by Alan Kaptanoglu and Stewart Prager was itself a critique of the fact that most of the framing and discourse around deterrence and nuclear weapons is being done by actors who have vested interests in the proliferation of nuclear arms.[30] Once again, the heart of this issue is agency. Ramos wants to only ascribe positive agency to Livermore. Ramos openly stated that Livermore benefited from and shared influence with policy-making organizations. However, at the same time, he rejected the possibility that this unregulated interconnectivity could lead to self-interested decision making. Kaptanoglu and Prager's message was a call to democratize the discourse and honestly discuss the risks of

[25] Tom Ramos, From Berkeley to Berlin: How the Rad Lab Helped Avert Nuclear War (Naval Institute Press, 2022).

[26] William A Stewart, publication, Counterforce, Damage-Limiting, and Deterrence (The RAND Corporation, 1967).

[27] Tom Ramos, "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis," Nipp, October 3, 2022, https://nipp.org/information_series/tom-ramos-the-importance-of-professional-nuclear-policy-analysis-no-535-october-3-2022/.

[28] Jeff Garberson, "Study Recounts Early, Difficult Years of Lawrence Livermore National Lab," The Independent, August 23, 2013, https://www.independentnews.com/news/study-recounts-early-difficult-years-of-lawrence-livermore-national-lab/article_44e876e2-0aad-11e3-a35f-001a4bcf887a.html.

[29] Franklin C Spinney, "National Security Iron Triangle," Tipping Point North South, March 17, 2014, https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/2014/03/17/national-security-iron-triangle/.

[30] Susan D'Agostino, "US Defense to Its Workforce: Nuclear War Can Be Won," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, February 2, 2022, https://thebulletin.org/2022/02/us-defense-to-its-workforce-nuclear-war-can-be-won/.

escalation. In response, actors from the defense silos and inside the nuclear industrial complex that were the subject of the article replied with varying levels of combativeness. One political scientist at the Army Management Staff College, Adam Lowther, editor of the guide that the article critiqued, responded by calling the authors "arm-chair generals" and reminded them that the work they were critiquing was created by "real generals."[31] Ramos joined this conversation with an article titled "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis." Instead of addressing the thesis of the article that focused on the democratization of the discussion and recognition and connection of vested influence on policy, he focused on arguing that this monopoly on the discourse was necessary.

Ramos concluded his essay by asking,

> ....could "amateur" nuclear policy analysts have come out of their silos to provide Kennedy with a nuclear policy strategy as good as the RAND analysts' Counterforce Strategy turned out to be? I doubt it. That nuclear strategy took years of study to develop, and it needed intense collaboration with other members of the defense establishment, including the physicists of Livermore. Their achievement strikes one as being the product of professionals.[32]

Livermore identifies as a force of global peace and beneficial scientific development: an organization that can use federal funds to attract "talented staff," work with private contractors, and simultaneously remain independent.[33] What is Livermore independent from? Much of the lab's early history was not shaped by independence but rather by isolation.

3.3. Livermore versus Los Alamos

The rivalry between Livermore and Los Alamos that began even before Livermore's official opening has been well documented.[34] A major argument for the lab's inception was to spur creation through competition.[35] When Teller and Lawrence were traveling the country campaigning for its formation and collecting allies in the government, military, and private sector, the prospective lab was already attracting opposition. Alongside Oppenheimer and the Atomic Energy Council, they also faced resistance from Norris Bradbury, the director of Los Alamos at the time, who saw the creation of the laboratory as a potential threat to the resources under his control. When Livermore came into being, it had fewer resources and lacked connections with the Air Force, the chief recipient of nuclear weapons. Whoever had a good relationship with the Air Force would receive more and better contracts and support. The rivalry was contentious from the start.[36] Livermore's first test, Ruth, was so

[31] François Diaz-Maurin, "Rebuttal: Current Nuclear Weapons Policy Not Safe or Sane," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, May 24, 2022, https://thebulletin.org/2022/05/rebuttal-current-nuclear-weapons-policy-not-safe-or-sane/.

[32] Tom Ramos, "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis," Nipp, October 3, 2022, https://nipp.org/information_series/tom-ramos-the-importance-of-professional-nuclear-policy-analysis-no-535-october-3-2022/.

[33] "Our Mission Our Vision Our Commitments Our Values," Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory , accessed May 17, 2024, https://www.llnl.gov/sites/www/files/2022-09/Mission-Poster_V04.pdf. Also 1. "Management and Sponsors," LLNL, accessed May 16, 2024, https://www.llnl.gov/purpose/management-sponsors.

[34] Staff, "A Nuclear Family Rivalry," Slate Magazine, July 13, 2005, https://www.slate.com/articles/life/welltraveled/features/2005/a_nuclear_family_vacation/a_nuclear_family_rivalry.html. Also, Walter Pincus, "2 Labs Battle to Be No. 1 - The Washington Post," The Washington Post, December 11, 1978, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/12/12/2-labs-battle-to-be-no-1/20a1a894-4867-4f9d-97d0-183c6c6d844e/.

[35] JAKE BARTMAN, "Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory: Discover Los Alamos National Laboratory," Los Alamos National Laboratory, April 27, 2023, https://discover.lanl.gov/publications/national-security-science/2023-spring/lawrence-livermore-national-laboratory/#:~:text=%2C%20though%2C%20the%20arts%20race%20 between,physics%20and%20design%20 at%20 Livermore.

[36] Jeff Garberson, "Study Recounts Early, Difficult Years of Lawrence Livermore National Lab," The Independent, August

unsuccessful that it failed to even bring down the 300-foot tower that it was placed on. A picture of the still-standing tower (Figure 2) was framed and sent to Livermore with a note that asked the laboratory to leave the towers for subsequent tests fully intact so that Los Alamos could reuse them in the future.[37]

Figure 1. Photograph of the Ruth tower.

Without the market of the Air Force and influenced by RAND political analysis, the laboratory had no choice but to go small. The laboratories took sides in the battle between the Air Force and the Navy on who would shoulder the future of U.S. deterrence; the Polaris success crowned Livermore the victor and gave them a monopoly on ICBMs until the 1970s. Having gone through the humiliation of failures and playing second fiddle to Los Alamos, Livermore clung to the rewards of Polaris. Teller's method of promise first, develop later had paid off in a big way.

The rivalry between the two laboratories is best demonstrated through the words of those who experienced it: "Remember: The Soviets are the competition. Los Alamos is the enemy (Attributed to Livermore weapons designer)."[38]The relationship has consistently been characterized by heads of laboratories and members of defense communities as a healthy rivalry. However, even advocates of the competition model unintentionally touch on the negative elements that have been imprinted on the labs through this rivalry.

Sybil Francis, director of the policy research group Center for the Future of Arizona, wrote her dissertation at MIT on competition in weapons development and is now researching how the competition between Livermore and Los Alamos can be implemented elsewhere in the government to spur innovation. In discussing the results of the pressures that Livermore faced, she explained that the environment at Livermore "...led to a culture of entrepreneurialism at Livermore, a less conservative approach to weapons design and riskier endeavors."[39] Although she and others might see increased risk and entrepreneurship as positive characteristics of a Nuclear Weapons facility, scientists of the labs and outside observers have come to different conclusions regarding the value and success of the rivalry.

A 1978 Washington Post article focused on the growing intensity of the rivalry in the face of a possible test ban contained interviews with scientists from both labs and from those outside of the rivalry. One scientist who was familiar with both laboratories expressed concern that the rivalry was unhealthy and destructive to the needs of the country. The scientist explicitly stated that "the labs are trying to influence weapons decisions by 'overselling' the nuclear effects of their designs 'in the struggle to be No. 1.'"[40] A scientist from Los

23, 2013, https://www.independentnews.com/news/study-recounts-early-difficult-years-of-lawrence-livermore-national-lab/article_44e876e2-0aad-11e3-a35f-001a4bcf887a.html.

[37] Jeff Garberson, "Study Recounts Early, Difficult Years of Lawrence Livermore National Lab," The Independent, August 23, 2013, https://www.independentnews.com/news/study-recounts-early-difficult-years-of-lawrence-livermore-national-lab/article_44e876e2-0aad-11e3-a35f-001a4bcf887a.html.

Photograph of the Ruth tower taken by Los Alamos Observer. 1. LLNL, "Our History - 1950s," LLNL, accessed May 16, 2024, https://www.llnl.gov/purpose/history/1950s#event-the-ruth-event.

[38] Jeffery Lewis, "RRW: Los Alamos vs. Livermore," Arms Control Wonk, September 29, 2005, https://www.armscontrolwonk.com/archive/200807/rrw-los-alamos-v-livermore/.

[39] John Markoff, "Laid-Back in the Lab, Maybe, but They Spurred the Weapons Race," The New York Times, July 4, 2011, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/05/science/05bomb.html.

[40] Walter Pincus, "2 Labs Battle to Be No. 1 - The Washington Post," washingtonpost.com, December 11, 1978, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/12/12/2-labs-battle-to-be-no-1/20a1a894-4867-4f9d-97d0-183c6c6d844e/.

Alamos shared that the commonly accepted difference between the labs was that while Los Alamos built weapons at the direction of the nations security interest, Livermore "believes it's God's work to build bigger and better warheads."[41]

The rivalry that began with Livermore in a position of little resources and no connections has continued to this day, shaping the organization. Proponents of the competition recognize the organizational effect that it had on the laboratory and see the risk-taking and ambition that resulted from it as a benefit. However, the scarcity of resources and political influences from RAND cornered Livermore, so they became dependent on the creation of smaller counterforce weapons. At first, it was just to survive and escape the humiliation of early failures. However, by building off this established period of imprinting, it will be demonstrated that risk-taking and the resource dependency that formed in the early years of the lab continue to shape the lab today in its role as a driver of arms racing.

3.4. Teller: Solitaire Separation and Star Wars

Teller, along with early Livermore supporter and resident RAND analyst Herman Kahn, was the inspiration for the fictional scientist in Stanley Kubrick's political satire film Dr. Strangelove.[42] The Hungarian-born United States physicist is consistently characterized as an overly ambitious man whose back-of-the-envelope calculations needed extensive review and grounding by his peers.[43] The creation of Livermore, his testimony against Oppenheimer, and his pursuit of missile defense deeply imprinted on Lawrence Livermore's organizational ethos. As a founder, Teller sent the laboratory on a path of risk-taking, isolation from the larger scientific community, and political maneuvering. Teller responded to the scientific isolation by embracing military support and influence, leading the laboratory to become more integrated into the early military-industrial complex and internalizing the hawkish organizational ethos of military organizations into Livermore's own ethos.

Teller, who had been preaching and exploring the idea of a hydrogen bomb since his time at the Manhattan Project, would finally find success in what would be known as the Teller-Ulam design. The importance of Stanisław Ulam, a Polish Jewish physicist, in the development of the hydrogen bomb has been debated. The controversy stems from Teller's self-promotion and historical campaigning for the hydrogen bomb. Today, it is widely accepted that Teller, "the father of the hydrogen bomb," would not have been successful without Ulam. Teller constantly dismissed and denied Ulam's impact; this self-aggrandizing would be the first step down a road of isolation from the scientific community.[44] Despite the controversy, the hydrogen bomb skyrocketed Teller's political capital and made him a hero of the nuclear age.

His propensity to fully immerse himself in an idea and leave the hard calculations for later was key to landing Polaris and greatly influenced Livermore organizational ethos. In reviewing Livermore insider and author Bruce Tarter's history of Livermore, Benjamin Sims writes,

> Livermore continued to display greater willingness than Los Alamos to engage in political and technical maneuvering to push new and risky projects, even where

[41] Walter Pincus, "2 Labs Battle to Be No. 1 - The Washington Post," washingtonpost.com, December 11, 1978, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/12/12/2-labs-battle-to-be-no-1/20a1a894-4867-4f9d-97d0-183c6c6d844e/.

[42] Peter Goodchild , "Meet the Real Dr Strangelove," The Guardian, April 1, 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/science/2004/apr/01/science.research1.

[43] Broad, W. J. (1992). Teller's war : the top-secret story behind the Star Wars deception. Simon & Schuster.

[44] Schweber, S. S. (Silvan S.). (2000). In the shadow of the bomb : Oppenheimer, Bethe, and the moral responsibility of the scientist (Core Textbook). Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400849499

> technical feasibility had not quite been established. Although this strategy enabled the laboratory to grow, in some cases it led to technical and administrative difficulties. It also contributed to the laboratory's reputation for actively pushing a militaristic, 'hardline, anticommunist point of view' that led to public criticism—particularly in relation to missile defense.[45]

It is well-documented that much of the scientific community opposed the creation of Lawrence Livermore. The formation of the laboratory, the military, and the RAND Corporation may have further isolated Teller and Lawrence, reflected in their leadership and staff choices. The staff consisted of young scientists who had grown under Lawrence and Teller and shared their anti-communist fervor.

Already cut off from the larger community and embroiled in an intense rivalry with Los Alamos, Teller and Livermore were further segregated from the scientific community after his testimony at the 1954 AEC hearing. Teller was the only scientist to testify that Oppenheimer should not receive security clearance. Notably, Ernest Lawrence did not attend the hearing due to battling colitis. However, Teller's equally hawkish Livermore Lab partner later said that Oppenheimer should never again be in the position to influence policy.[46] Despite his hardline anticommunist views, Teller's main concern during the trial was Oppenheimer's opposition to the H-bomb. Isidor Isaac Rabi, a Nobel prize-winning physicist, had been a critic of the militarization of science since the Manhattan Project. When asked about the outcome of Teller's testimony, he plainly stated that "The scientific community was thoroughly behind Oppenheimer. Teller disgraced himself, and he was more or less ostracized. But there was no rift."[47]

When Teller segregated himself from the scientific community, he found the lucrative embrace of the military and sought their support and political maneuvering to continue to pursue his passions.

3.5. Plowshare

The possibility of a test ban and the creation of the Plowshare program demonstrates how Livermore learned to respond to threats to its ability to acquire resources. By framing nuclear weapons as the key to untapped civilian benefits, Livermore learned to disguise its pursuit of resources through weapons development as purely scientific projects.

The possibility of a test ban represented a threat to Livermore's ability to acquire new resources. Fears of a nuclear winter were one of the major motivations for a test ban. In response, Teller used his image as the Father of the Hydrogen bomb and his new political connections to argue that Livermore was on the brink of creating a clean bomb that could be used for civilian use. He lobbied Congress and appeared on TV to oppose the test ban treaty, arguing that tests were needed for the creation of a clean bomb. Teller proposed that clean bombs could be used for mining, extraction of oil, and projects such as the Panama Canal. Simultaneously, he worked to prove that the test ban treaty would be ineffective: "Under Teller's direction, his colleagues at Livermore devised ever wilder schemes to prove that nuclear testing could be hidden and, therefore, a test ban was not possible. These included exploding weapons in deep caves,

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[45] Sims, Benjamin. Review of *The American Lab: An Insider's History of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory,* by C. Bruce Tarter. *Technology and Culture* 61, no. 4 (2020): 1238-1240. https://doi.org/10.1353/tech.2020.0136.

[46] Staff, "Lawrence and the Cyclotron," Niels Bohr Library & Archives, accessed April 15, 2024, https://history.aip.org/exhibits/lawrence/lcw.htm#:~:text=A%20out%20of%20 colitis%20 prevented,convince%20the%20AEC%20to%20 withdraw.

[47] "War and Peace in the Nuclear Age; Weapon of Choice, The; Interview with Isidor Isaac Rabi, 1986," 03/13/1986, GBH Archives, accessed May 16, 2024, http://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V_7E62DED261394CEDBB3A79E9260DB791.

building a gargantuan shield to hide x-rays from earthbound observers, and planning nuclear tests on the far side of the moon." [48]

This effort to retain the resources collected from weapons testing eventually manifested itself as the Plowshare program, an exploration into safe civilian uses for nuclear bombs. President Eisenhower and his Atoms for Peace initiative were excited by the possibilities that the Plowshare program and a clean bomb advertised. With presidential support, Project Chariot was born: a project aimed at creating a deep seaport in Alaska with clean nukes. Following protests by the indigenous people of Alaska and many in the scientific community, Project Chariot was scrapped. Although the plowshare program survived the 1963 test moratorium and remained until 1977, boasting 27 nuclear tests during its life, no major breakthroughs in civilian use came from it.

Today, Livermore describes the creation of Plowshare as a response to Atoms for Peace, with the express goal of safe civilians; the reality is that Teller's promise of a clean bomb never existed and does not exist today. In his book *Edward Teller: The Real Dr. Strangelove*, long-time BBC television producer Peter Goodchild rejects that narrative, determining that Plowshare's goal in Alaska was not really civilian use. Goodchild writes, "Chariot was intended as a cover for military activities." [49]

Plowshare and Polaris demonstrate how Teller and Livermore have pursued resources through untested and nonexistent promises of technology. Nuclear weapons creation and testing were the goals of the laboratory; non-weapons projects were created as a means to ensure that the resources from testing and creation remained. The isolation of Livermore and the condemnation of Oppenheimer brought Teller and Livermore further into the arms of the military and political clout and maneuvering to acquire resources.

3.6. STAR WARS

When asked about the creation of the hydrogen bomb and Teller's tendency to pursue projects before having the science to support them, Isidor Isaac Rabi said, "…he pursued it very passionately, and at the time of this discussion, the General Advisory Committee, what he was advocating couldn't work…that reminds me very much of what we have now 36 years later with Edward Teller in the same position advocating something which would not work. Advocating it with enormous passion and eloquence. As I say, history doesn't repeat itself, but in this case, it does." 50

In this quote, Rabbi refers to Reagan's STAR WARS program. The failures of The Strategic Defense Initiative and President Bush's Brilliant Pebbles Rabbi refer to missile defense and, more specifically, Reagan's STAR WARS program. The failures of The Strategic Defense Initiative and President Bush's Brilliant Pebbles missile defense systems are well documented. The science to create an effective shield was never there. The idea threatened numerous treaties, and the idea of mutually assured destruction opened the door for limited nuclear war. Because of the numerous and well-documented critiques of the Strategic Defense Initiative, this thesis offers only brief documentation of its foundation in relation to Teller and Livermore to further demonstrate the effectiveness of the resource-collecting methods Teller and Livermore have historically engaged in.

After a short stint as the director of Livermore, Teller's imagination and anti-communism drove him to find a new passion. Teller's 1962 book *The Legacy of Hiroshima* unveiled his new mission: missile defense. In his book,

[48] Lawrence Wittner, "Edward Teller: The Real Dr. Strangelove-A Book Review," Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, July 1, 2013, https://www.wagingpeace.org/edward-teller-the-real-dr-strangelove-a-book-review/.

[49] Goodchild, P. (2004). Edward Teller : the real Dr. Strangelove. Harvard University Press

[50] "War and Peace in the Nuclear Age; Weapon of Choice, The; Interview with Isidor Isaac Rabi, 1986," 03/13/1986, GBH Archives, accessed May 16, 2024, http://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V_7E62DED261394CEDBB3A79E9260DB791.

Teller argues missile defense is a way to defend America and break free from mutually assured destruction. Following the thinking of RAND analysts, he critiqued mutual deterrence and argued that X-ray-backed missile defense would enable the United States to engage in localized limited nuclear war in response to Soviet aggression.[51] Teller's new passion was hampered by the 1963 test ban. However, throughout the Plowshare program and underground testing, he continued to work on testing warheads for missile defense. Livermore would test larger and larger warheads underground in the name of missile defense, but that too came under threat with the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty. With Nixon's resignation due to Watergate, Teller saw new President Ford and Vice President Rockefeller as a welcome opportunity to promote missile defense and lobby against test bans. Teller and Rockefeller had been friends since the 50s and the Vice President saw Teller as a one-of-a-kind genius. The scientific community at large found many issues in the feasibility of Teller's idea. Their skepticism and the Threshold Test Ban taking effect in 1976 caused the conversation around missile defense to die down.

The 1979 partial meltdown of a reactor that would come to be known as the disaster at Three Mile Island would invoke fear in the nation and continue to stifle support for Teller's ideas. Although missile defense was not on the public's mind, Teller continued to work and focus on his passion project. The election of Ronald Reagan gave Teller the opportunity he had been waiting for. Teller pitched the idea to Reagan at a tour of Livermore when he was first elected governor. Teller and Reagan were both staunch anti-communists and saw military might as the correct way to deal with the Soviet Union. Teller would become a frequent visitor to the White House, dazzling the president and his staff with his promises of missile defense and the progress in X-rays taking place. Teller would continue the tradition, stoking fears of a Soviet attack and making promises of soon-to-come breakthroughs, and Reagan bought all of it.

Reagan would sign NSDD 12, The Strategic Forces Modernization Program, funneling a massive number of resources into the weapons laboratories and specifically to Teller's work on missile defense. With Teller in attendance, Reagan would make the 1983 STAR WARs speech, calling on the scientists who brought the United States the hydrogen bomb to once again protect the nation. Much of Livermore's work in supercomputing and lasers was made possible by the resources given under President Reagan.

Teller would continue to lobby for missile defense, oppose treaties, and make new promises. He was the champion of Brilliant Pebbles under George H.W. Bush and was a champion of congressional Republicans under Clinton. In the last years of his life, his lifelong passion for missile defense would earn him a Presidential Medal of Freedom and help destroy the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. For 30 years, the ABM Treaty supported deterrence and prevented arms racing between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Teller is still a hugely influential and polarizing character, celebrated for his scientific achievement and condemned for his hawkish ideas. His imprint is still evident in the laboratory he founded and United States Nuclear policy. Most important is his imprint on Livermore in regard to acquiring resources. Out of isolation, he welcomed military-political support and saw that being deeply influential in the creation and dissemination of policy was a way to ensure continual resources.

4. End of The Cold War

The end of the Cold War offered the possibility of real change for the weapons laboratories. The Department of Energy and Congress had plans for

[51] Broad, W. J. (1992). Teller's war : the top-secret story behind the Star Wars deception. Simon & Schuster.

centers of innovation and drivers of growth. The possibility of cleanup and accountability was tangible. However, as demonstrated by today's modernization, those lofty goals failed to materialize. Understanding how the laboratory and its mission survived the end of the Cold War is crucial to understanding its influence today. In 1991, only 36% of Livermore's budget was dedicated to research and development of nuclear weapons, while their 2024 budget request devotes 84.3% to nuclear weapons activities.[52] This happened because the organizational mission never really changed. By examining the creation of the National Ignition Facility and the creation of both the Center for Global Security Research and the International Security Research Facility, it will be made clear that although threatened, the organizational mission and imprinted processes of resource capture continued to drive the laboratory.

4.1. Possibility for Change

The signing of the INF and the first two START treaties was the culmination of successful arms control negotiations to end the arms race, shifting the focus from fighting nuclear war to enshrining mutual deterrence. This meant the U.S. would no longer need new high-tech nuclear weapons. The fall of the Berlin Wall and, shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union signaled the end of the Cold War and a bipolar world. Institutions like Livermore, which were designed for coordinated weapons research, development, and supremacy during the Cold War, suddenly found themselves without a mission, network, or the national support they had grown accustomed to.

Starting in 1989, Livermore's X-ray and laser faced budget cuts, leading to the complete closure of the X-ray laser division in 1990. Under President Bush, the last weapons system that Livermore had been commissioned to design, the SRAM II, was canceled. Across the defense industry, budgets were slashed and discussions about closing one of the research and design laboratories spread throughout the government. Many believed that Livermore should be closed or repurposed.

In 1995, the Stockpile Stewardship Program came into full effect, Livermore's focus was now the extremely inexpensive Stewardship and Life Extension Programs. It takes a small number of people to safely store and maintain the existing weapons. Life Extension Programs work by replacing pieces of a weapon system with an exact copy when necessary, which is understood as maintaining the stockpile and not modernizing. During this time Livermore was forced to branch out with developments in the human genome project and climate modeling. Supercomputing continued to serve as a way to monitor and test the stockpile safely and offered other areas for research. Despite the possibility for change, Livermore's historic organizational mission and ethos were still evident during the early post-war years.

4.2. The NIF

Livermore's creation of the National Ignition Facility was advertised as a way to ensure the safety and stewardship of the stockpile and explore fusion ignition in the name of science. The $3.5 billion facility was explicitly stated not to be used for modernization. However, on page 703 of the *Energy and Water Development Appropriations for fiscal year 1994*, three purposes for contained ignition facilities and the National Ignition facility are given. The first purpose was to play a crucial role in exploring physics regimes related to nuclear weapon design and to provide relevant data, especially concerning the design of secondary weapons.[53] The second purpose was to

[52] Marshall, Eliot. "Weapons labs: after the Cold War." Science 254, no. 5035 (1991): 1100+. Gale OneFile: Health and Medicine (accessed May 19, 2024). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A11630748/HRCA?u=oregon_oweb&sid=googleScholar&xid=0d566925.

[53] Energy and Water Development Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1994: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, on H.R. 2445. United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993.

offer a simulation capability for nuclear weapon effects on strategic, tactical, and space assets, including sensors and command and control.[54] The third and final reason was to generate ignition for civilian power

The NIF was paid for by funds from defense programs earmarked for nuclear weapons. Continuing the tradition perfected by Teller with projects like Plowshare, the NIF was greenwashed by Livermore and sold as research for civilian benefit, as well as a critical element to keeping the labs successful in their mission of stockpile stewardship. Through the development of the NIF, the cost continuously rose while progress slowed. In addressing these issues, Livermore continued to come up with a new rationale for the necessity of such a facility. One argument put forward was that without weapons work, the best and brightest scientists would leave.[55]

4.3. The September 11th Attacks

The attacks on 9/11 shook the United States to its core. In response, defense spending skyrocketed, doubling in the decade after the attacks. Since 9/11, around half of the $14 trillion spent on defense has gone to private contractors, making Washington, D.C. the largest regional economy from 2001 to 2011.[56] The laboratory gained funding for chemical weapons research, contracts for truck armor creation, and short-lived research into new tactical nuclear Bunker Busters. The laboratory pursued the Reliable Replacement Warhead program from 2004 to 2009. The program was a return to modernization disguised to look like Life Extension as usual.

4.4. Center for Global Security Research

Livermore founded the Center for Global Security Research in 1996, followed by the construction of the International Security Research Facility in 2002. Its mission is to bridge the scientific and policy communities. It has grown tremendously in influence since its creation and opened new avenues for Livermore to exert power. The center now attracts former government employees, private interests, academics, and the military. Its creation set the stage for the laboratory's influence today and was an important step in creating a future where the laboratory would not face the resource shortages and organizational threats it faced in the years following the end of the Cold War. The end of the Cold War posed existential threats to Livermore's organizational mission and offered a real opportunity for restructuring and change. The lab continued to use its historical forms of resource acquisition through projects such as the NIF. However, this thesis sees 9/11 as the deciding factor that enabled the laboratory to hold on to its organizational ethos. It was only 10 years between the end of the Cold War and the September 11th attacks. Both shocked the country and its defense industry in different ways. Under the George W. Bush administration, the laboratory would continue to escape the post-Cold War decade and begin its transformation into the laboratory of today.

[54] Energy and Water Development Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1994: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, on H.R. 2445. United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993.

[55] National Ignition Facility: Management and Oversight Failures Caused Major Cost Overruns and Schedule Delays: Report to the Committee on Science, House of Representatives. United States: General Accounting Office, 2000.

[56] Knickmeyer, Ellen. "Study Says Nearly Half of Defense Spending for 9/11 Wars Went to Private Contractors." PBS, September 13, 2021. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/study-says-nearly-half-of-defense-spending-for-9-11-wars-went-to-private-contractors.
Knickmeyer, Ellen. "Study Says Nearly Half of Defense Spending for 9/11 Wars Went to Private Contractors." PBS, September 13, 2021. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/study-says-nearly-half-of-defense-spending-for-9-11-wars-went-to-private-contractors.
MorningBrew. "For the Defense Industry, 9/11 Changed Everything." Morning Brew, September 5, 2021. https://www.morningbrew.com/daily/stories/2021/09/05/defense-industry-911-changed-everything.

5. Privatization

In 2003, after frustration with lab management and concerns about security, then-Secretary of Energy Spencer Abrams decided not to renew the Department of Energy (DOE) contract with the University of California, which had run the laboratory since its inception. [57] Citing security concerns at both Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore, Abrams gave a public statement where he bluntly stated that the university "bears the responsibility for the systemic management failures that came to light in 2002." [58] The new path forward under the Bush administration would be one of privatization. The University of California's contract would run out in 2005, and the DOE began to accept bids for private contractors to run the laboratory. [59]

Privatization and the incentive structures it introduced marked another pivotal moment in Livermore's organizational history. Its traditional organizational mission was to acquire resources for the running of the laboratory. Former directors of the laboratory who were key drivers of arms racing and risk-taking, like Teller or York, sought out political influence and power to acquire resources for the laboratory and their passion projects. Privatization fundamentally changed Livermore's incentive structure, goals, and processes. The laboratory had attracted and developed its mission through ethos and ideological similarity. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, from its inception, Livermore developed a reputation as the younger, more hawkish, risk-taking laboratory in comparison to Los Alamos. This developed organizational selection processes and influenced how the laboratory was able to acquire resources. Historically, Livermore's largest successes in terms of resources came from periods when hawks were in power, and the laboratory was able to embed itself in the policy decisions of that time due to shared ideology. This was historically successful but also constrained by who was in office and their disposition towards the nuclear weapons complex. With privatization came a managing company driven by profit. This changed the historic structure of the laboratory but opened new doors for lobbying and political maneuvering that were not limited by prior constraints.

Only private companies were allowed to bid on managing the laboratory. The University of California joined Bechtel, BWXT, and Amentum to form Lawrence Livermore National Security LLC (LLNS). LLNS took control of the laboratory in October 2007. The year prior, the lab was operated by Los Alamos National Security LLC (LANS). LANS, which took over both Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore in 2006, is an LLC made up of the University of California, Bechtel, Babcock & Wilcox. [60]

This marriage of private contractors and governmental departments has become a hallmark of the United States entrepreneurial state-defense model. Examples include the operations of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) pilot program passed under President Jimmy Carter. Proponents of this model argue that the partnership between the state and the private sector leads to more rapid and successful growth in areas that the private sector might not otherwise invest in. The state acts as the catalyst for development, and the private sector can then work more effectively with less red tape and oversight. [61]

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[57] "The Wen Ho Lee Case," Science , December 22, 2000, https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.290.5500.2224b.

[58] Walter Walter Pincus, "Los Alamos Contract Open for Bids," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 2003.

[59] Notably the Non Profit TRI Valley-Cares submitted a bid for management of the Lawrence Livermore laboratories. The bid was submitted under GREEN LLC, in part with Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment and Nuclear Watch of New Mexico. TRI Valley Cares alleges that their bid was rejected prematurely and without substantial review or basis.

[60] Alaina G Levine and Michael Lucibella, "It's a Bumpy Ride to Private Management for Los Alamos, Livermore," American Physical Society, June 2010, https://aps.org/publications/apsnews/201006/losalamos.cfm.

[61] Mariana Mazzucato, "The US Entrepreneurial State ," essay, in THE ENTREPRENEURIAL STATE (Penguin , n.d.).

The first major material changes that came from the new private management of the lab appeared in staffing and budget; however, some soon questioned if there was a less tangible yet more consequential transformation.

Under the University of California's sole management, the highest management cost in the lab's history was capped at $6.75 million in 2005. Just three years later, in 2008, LLNS recorded management costs of $30.9 million, followed by $47 million in 2009.[62] During the same period that the management budget ballooned, the lab experienced massive layoffs and buyouts affecting scientists, engineers, and workers. According to multiple sources, spending on management was prioritized overspending on staff.[63] The 2008 layoffs that the privatization of management ushered in resulted in lawsuits filed by 130 laid-off employees. The plaintiffs alleged breach of contract, age discrimination, and retaliation, among other individual claims. LLNS did everything in its power to drag the case out, using considerable resources to separate the cases, bifurcating plaintiffs' claims, and move them in and out of federal courts. In 2013, the case came to a close with a $37.25 million settlement made with federal funds. During the case, it was found that 40 new managerial positions were created at LLNS, many of which were staffed by employees of the Bechtel corporation. The court found that these positions significantly increased overhead; simultaneously, LLNS located and targeted the most senior and experienced employees for layoffs.[64]

5.1. Bechtel

Bechtel is well practiced in lobbying, controversy, and profiteering from conflict. Founded in 1898, Bechtel has a storied history deserving of further reading.[65] In order to understand the new organization brought by the controlling interest in the laboratory's management, it is important to examine key aspects of their structure and operations.

Bechtel is an organization with involvement in everything from the Hoover Dam to CIA-directed foreign policy. The privatization of water and nuclear infrastructure are two major industries for the organization. In 1997, the World Bank placed a condition on any further aid to Bolivia; the country would need to privatize water services in some of its largest urban centers. In 1999, as the sole bidder in the classified process, Bechtel won the contract. Within weeks, they raised the water prices by 50%. What followed became known as the Cochabamba Water Revolt.[66] In the aftermath, Bechtel sued Bolivia—not for their initial investment but for the loss of their expected profit.

Bechtel has built or designed half of the nuclear power plants in the United States. They have been charged with or responsible for numerous safety violations, hazards, and disasters. After the disaster at Three Mile Island

[62] Alaina G Levine and Michael Lucibella, "It's a Bumpy Ride to Private Management for Los Alamos, Livermore," American Physical Society, June 2010, https://aps.org/publications/apsnews/201006/losalamos.cfm.

[63] Roger Logan and Jeff Colvin, "Privatizing National Lab Management Misguided," SFGate, September 25, 2013, https://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/Privatizing-national-lab-management-misguided-4843513.php. John Upton, "Employee Lawsuit Exacerbates Issues at Livermore Lab," The New York Times, September 11, 2011, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/11/us/11bclivermore.html?_r=1. "Lynda Seaver, a lab spokesperson, said spending on staff and operations had fallen because of a substantial increase in management fees." Robert Weissman, "Privatization Dogma Confronts Reality at Lawrence Livermore Lab," HuffPost, June 7, 2015, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/privatization-dogma-confr_b_7020702.

[64] "$37.25m Settlement in Lawsuit over 2008 Layoff at Lawrence Livermore Lab: Alameda-Contra Costa Trial Lawyers Association," Alameda-Contra Costa Trial Lawyers Association |, August 29, 2019, https://acctla.org/verdict/37-25m-settlement-in-lawsuit-over-2008-layoff-at-lawrence-livermore-lab/. - LLNS's Aim In All Of This Was Clear – Drag Things Out And Force The Plaintiffs To Settle Cheap. This Was A Particularly Cynical Strategy Given The Advanced Age Of The Plaintiffs.

[65] Denton, Sally. The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World. United Kingdom: Simon & Schuster, 2016.

[66] "Bechtel vs Bolivia," THE DEMOCRACY CENTER, accessed May 19, 2024, https://www.democracyctr.org/bechtel-vs-bolivia#:~:text=In%20 April%202000%2C%20following%20a,was%20force%20to%20leave%20 Bolivia.

(the 1979 partial meltdown of a reactor designed by another private interest that manages Livermore Babcock & Wilcox), Bechtel was contracted for cleanup. During the cleanup, investigators also confirmed that Bechtel employed various methods to bypass the necessary repair procedures and compromised safety checks to meet unrealistic deadlines.[67] Since 2000, Bechtel has paid $936,443,338 in penalties.[68] The company has perfected the revolving door, with historically deep ties to Republican Congress members, administrations, and the CIA. George Shultz served as the president of Bechtel, worked in the Nixon and Eisenhower administrations, and then returned to Bechtel to serve as its director until 2006. During this time, he helped President Bush develop the Bush Doctrine and helped Bechtel secure profits before and after the invasion of Iraq.[69] Along with Lockheed Martin and others, Bechtel receives millions of dollars to manage the Nevada Test Site. In 2023, eight out of nine Bechtel lobbyists had previously held positions in government.[70] That same year, their most lobbied bill was S.826: The International Energy Act of 2023.

5.2. Profiteers and Perils of Proliferation

In his article "The Perils of Proliferation," Scott Sagan uses organization theory to examine the contradiction between nuclear weapons and deterrence. He uses organization theory to critique the assumed rationality that those like Kenneth Waltz and others in the proliferation camp endorse. In his article, Sagan makes two key arguments. The first is that military organizations are drawn to systemic organizational behaviors that lead to deterrence failures and demonstrate a propensity for preventative strikes. This argument posits that military organizations, in their isolated dogma, will fail to place larger political and societal interests ahead of the rules and norms that govern military organizations. Secondly, he argues that strong civilian control and oversight can act as a counterbalance against the ingrained organizational features. Building off of this framework, this thesis has demonstrated that, like military organizations, Livermore has been shown to place its organizational dogma and norms ahead of societal interests in its pursuit of resources and mission success. The laboratory has shown norms that select and reward hawkish projects and ideologies that have been strengthened by the embrace of the military and segregation from the scientific community. To his second point, the laboratory's formative relationship with RAND, its early political maneuvering, and the creation of the CGSR all demonstrate efforts to control policy and curb oversight. The backlash in response to Kaptanoglu and Prager's call for the democratization of discourse in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists is evidence of the ethos of repudiation of laboratory outsiders' input.

The privatization of the laboratory had the inverse effect that Sagan's civilian oversight board would have. Although the initial transfer caused organizational confusion and mission stagnation, the means for acquiring resources remained the same and the methodologies to collect them expanded. The companies that now manage the laboratory system are well versed in the consolidation of power and profitably of weapons. The anti-communist zeal that drove the founders of the laboratory may not be relevant in a post-Cold War age, but today laboratories' motivations produce the same arms racing results, possibly more effectively.

[67] Philip, "Reactor Cleanup at 3 Mile Island in Found Improper," The New York Times, September 14, 1983, https://www.nytimes.com/1983/09/14/us/reactor-cleanup-at-3-mile-island-in-found-improper.html.

[68] "Bechtel: Violation Tracker," bechtel | Violation Tracker, accessed May 19, 2024, https://violationtracker.goodjobsfirst.org/parent/bechtel.

[69] CorpWatch, Global Exchange, and Public Citizen, "Bechtel: Profiting from Destruction," CorpWatch, June 5, 2003, https://www.corpwatch.org/article/bechtel-profiting-destruction.

[70] "Bechtel Group Profile: Summary." OpenSecrets. Accessed May 19, 2024. https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/bechtel-group/summary?id=D000000237.

6. New START and the Interagency Charter

It has been established that from 1989–2005, the labs made a concerted effort to resist downsizing in the post-Cold War peace. During this time, the Secretary of Energy's advisory board proposed closing parts of the nuclear weapons complex. In the same year, 1995, a presidential panel declared that the lab system was excessively large and costly for its intended purpose.[71] This repeated itself in 2005 when a second Secretary of the Energy Advisory Board suggested that one of the design labs could close. However, this shrinkage of the nuclear industrial complex and the system of labs never materialized, and by 2007, the labs were privatized. Privatization changed the playbook for the laboratories. It opened new opportunities for lobbying and pursuing profit and placed the labs in positions to politically capture the nuclear policy of the United States. Channeling the ethos of Teller and Lawrence, these newly private institutions worked to ensure that they would never face the uncertainty that the end of the Cold War brought.

In 2013, a reporter using the pseudonym Dienekes released a report featured on the Los Alamos Study Group's website titled "Broken Promises: The White House, Special Interests, and New Start." It traces the ratification of the New START and the formation of an interagency charter to fund Livermore and other nuclear laboratories. The paper's thesis was that President Obama's administration engaged in a quid pro quo with the nuclear laboratories, trading new funding sources and long-term projects for the laboratories' support in ratifying the New START. By following the timeline provided and confirming with primary and secondary documents, a case study of the ratification process will demonstrate a continuation of the laboratories' organizational quest for resources, the integration of assets of privatization, and their influence in the Iron Triangle. Most importantly, it will be shown how, ironically, the ratification of New START laid the foundation for today's modernization. Only 12 days into Obama's presidency, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. With no significant foreign policy experience or achievements, there was considerable confusion and backlash in the United States and across the globe. The nomination given by the Norwegian Nobel Committee specifically mentioned the president's work on strengthening international institutions and his push toward a nuclear zero.[72] As Obama worked quickly and publicly to find success in the nuclear realm—and justification for the prize—he was already running into a wall.

Initially, the Obama administration brought new challenges for the laboratories. Recently nominated for a Nobel prize with little to show for it, Obama began to wage a massive arms control campaign. The labs now faced the possibility of losing billions in defense contracts, a halt on all new projects, and an administration pushing to downsize the existing arsenal.

In a brilliant political maneuver, the labs weaponized Obama's need for a major foreign policy win. Seeing the Republican wall in Congress that opposed the administration at every move and the possibility of arms control impacting their bottom line, the labs traded their endorsement of New START for a massive increase in funding and guaranteed long-term non-nuclear projects. After the labs secured Obama his victory, the administration's loudly proclaimed goal of nuclear zero disappeared. Finally, in a maneuver that would put David Blaine to shame, the labs transformed disarmament into modernization. By analyzing the events that precluded the New

[71] DIENEKES , "LASG," Los Alamos Study Group , February 5, 2013, http://www.lasg.org/Broken_Promises_Dienekes_5Feb2013.pdf.

[72] "Obama Wins 2009 Nobel Peace Prize," BBC News, October 9, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8298580.stm.

START, it's exceptionally difficult to ignore a clear quid pro quo.

In 2009, the Stimson Center, a foreign policy think tank, wrote a report titled "Leveraging Science for Security: A Strategy for the Nuclear Weapons Laboratories in the 21st Century." [73] This proposal suggested that other agencies, such as the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense, should take responsibility for funding the labs outside of the Department of Energy. Only three months after the Stimson Center's report, the Department of Defense released a memo from John Fisher, the Pentagon's Director of Defense Laboratory Programs, that outlined the formation of an interagency group just like the one suggested by the Stimson Center.

In the same year that the formation of this interagency charter was being established, the heads of the nuclear labs visited the White House to lobby for more funding. In December 2009, the three heads of the national labs were asked by Republican representative Michael Turner, the senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, to comment on the JASON Study that had been released that year. [74] JASON is an independent advisory group of scientists who advise the United States government on important and sensitive areas of science. They were created as a response to the launch of Sputnik 1 in 1957. The JASON study, ordered by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), focused on the Lifetime Extension Program with the goal of better understanding its risks and complications. Released in 2009, the study found that the lifespan of current nuclear warheads could be prolonged for decades without any expected loss of reliability by using methods similar to those already applied in LEPs." [75] This showed that the inexpensive practice of stockpile stewardship and the LEP were working.

In response to Representative Turner's request, the heads of the three laboratories (Michael Anastasio of Los Alamos, George Miller of Lawrence Livermore, and Thomas Hunter of Sandia) all wrote letters containing their thoughts on the non-classified JASON report. The letters expressed concerns that the unclassified data used in the report did not allow the JASON team to fully understand the risks and complications that went into the LEP process. In response to JASON's confidence in the long-term viability of the stockpile, as outlined in the unclassified summary, Miller argued that without the more detailed analysis provided in the classified report, he believed the JASON findings underestimated the challenges and risks involved in maintaining a safe and reliable nuclear force. [76]

All three letters, though agreeing with some of JASON's findings, called into question the certainty of others. The uncertainty of what the future would hold and whether new problems would arise underpinned each letter. The New York Times called these letters a warning. [77] A warning about reliability and, more deeply, a warning to the Obama administration about its direction of nuclear policy. Specifically, the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and SALT II, which would begin to be drafted in April of 2010, both of which faced opposition from Republicans. These letters added fuel to the debate that the JASON study could have helped put out.

When speaking about a meeting with the lab directors in December 2009 at the National

[73] Frances Fragos Townsend, Donald Kerrick, and Elizabeth Turpen, "Leveraging Science for Security," Stimson Center, March 2009, https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/files/file-attachments/Leveraging_Science_for_Security_FINAL_1.pdf.
[74] Meri Lugo , "Arms Control Today," Lab Chiefs Question JASON Study Summary | Arms Control Association, 2010, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2010-05/lab-chiefs-question-jason-study-summary.
[75] JASON program office, "Lifetime Extension Program Executive Summary ," irp.fas.org, September 9, 2009, https://irp.fas.org/agency/dod/jason/lep.pdf.
[76] Meri Lugo, "Arms Control Today," Lab Chiefs Question JASON Study Summary | Arms Control Association, 2010, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2010-05/lab-chiefs-question-jason-study-summary.
[77] William J. Broad, "Nuclear Labs Raise Doubts over Viability of Arsenals," The New York Times, March 26, 2010, https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/27/us/27nuke.html.

Defense University, then-Vice President Biden spoke about the threat that underfunding these labs would have on the United States' security and growth. Biden went on to announce a massive budget increase, allocating $7 billion to maintaining the nuclear stockpile and modernizing nuclear infrastructure. He emphasized that this amount was $624 million more than Congress approved in the previous year, with an additional $5 billion planned over the next five years. Despite the challenging fiscal environment, he assured that the necessary resources for national security would still be committed.[78]

Biden argued that this budget increase is an essential part of Obama's new non-proliferation agenda and the then-president's publicly stated goal of a nuclear zero. During the same 2010 remarks, Biden argued that it was the neglect and underfunding that led to the massive layoffs at both Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore. The tight budgets led to the loss of jobs for more than 2,000 employees at Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore between 2006 and 2008, including skilled scientists and engineers.[79] However, this was not true since funding for the laboratories grew after their transition to being run privately. The capital went into management salaries and positions, and it was the laboratory workers who were neglected, not the budgets themselves.

Only two months after Biden's speech, the NEW START treaty was signed on April 8, 2010. In the same month, a Memorandum of Agreement was issued between the DOD and the DOE. In the memorandum, the Department of Defense agreed to work with the Office of Budget Management to transfer $5.7 billion of budget authority for the 2011-15 fiscal year to the NNSA.[80] In the introduction of the memorandum are the justifications. Aside from this transfer being within the recommendations of the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, the stated goals were to ensure security, safety, continued research, and support the ratification of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.[81] It is difficult to read this as anything other than a quid pro quo between the administration and the labs; help us with this foreign policy victory and we will make sure you are taken care of.

On July 6, 2010, the interagency charter that originated from the 2009 Stimson Center report was signed. The charter was signed by the heads of the DOD, DOE, ODNI, and the deputy secretary of DHS.[82] On July 15, at a hearing before the Senate's Committee on Armed Services, all three heads of the labs testified their support for the New START. The Senate ratified the treaty in December.

Republicans in Congress were opposed to Obama every step of the way; the formation of the TEA party and the wave of successful Republican nominations in 2010 seemed to have stopped Obama's nuclear agenda in its tracks. Nevertheless, Obama got the New START. The labs and the defense corporations that run them locked down long-term contracts that would keep the money coming in even if nuclear projects slowed. They garnered a whole new funding system from the federal government that brought them closer to policy decisions and new projects.

The administration needed support from the CEO lab directors of Los Alamos, Lawrence Livermore, and Sandia to win ratification of New START. The public record shows the labs got $357 million in stimulus dollars. In addition, the White House hiked investment to a level, in constant

[78] https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-vice-president-biden-national-defense-university

[79] https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-vice-president-biden-national-defense-university

[80] Signed by then Defense secretary Robert Gates and then Energy secretary Steven Chu.

[81] Robert M Gates and Steven Chu, "FAS," Federation of American Scientists, April 2010, https://irp.fas.org/congress/2011_hr/nw-moa.pdf.

[82] "Read 'Managing for High-Quality Science and Engineering at the NNSA National Security Laboratories' at Nap.Edu," A, July 6, 2010, https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/13367/chapter/8.

dollars, nearly 70% more than the Cold War average, and DoD agreed to kick in nearly $6 billion over a five-year period to modernize nuclear weapons infrastructure. The corporations (Bechtel, Babcock & Wilcox, URS, Battelle, and Lockheed Martin) that run the nuclear labs coveted *non-nuclear missions with binding long-term financial commitments from multiple federal agencies.* This was because they foresaw a smaller nuclear stockpile as a result of the administration's arms control initiatives, and without new projects to replace old warheads, this meant less workload, greater excess capacity, and higher overhead cost. [83]

Nuclear zero never came, and the labs walked home with what they came with and more. The laboratories had scored a seminal victory and demonstrated the breadth of their influence. They had reignited modernization and secured long-term, non-nuclear projects as a fail-safe. They also developed a deeper connection to the policy apparatus that controls their access to resources. Continuing their mission to exert more control over policy while maintaining their organizational image of independence is a key feature of the laboratory today.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Today's Profiteers of Proliferation

Possibly learning from their private managers or drawing from the lab's early success with the RAND Corporation, the Center for Global Security Research at Livermore is perfecting the method of the revolving door. Members of the defense industry and former cabinet members aid the center with policy briefs, publications, and lectures. The military academies and other institutions that share a similar ethos work together, pushing collective narratives of America as a superpower in decline and the urgent need for stockpile modernization to stave off the existential Chinese threat. The same talking points and supporters that enabled the creation of Lawrence Livermore and sold the government on Polaris and missile defense are once again being used by the laboratory to sell modernization. The spending on nuclear weapons continues to skyrocket at alarming rates. Today, the laboratory and the private contractors that operate it have honed the organization and its ability to acquire resources into its most effective form. With lobbying power, networks of private interests, and a rotating door of support for past and present government officials, controlling the narrative and shaping policy has emerged as the next step to bolster influence.

On June 2, 2023, in response to the heightened calls for modernization and expansion, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan attempted to quiet the chorus of escalation. He emphasized that the United States does not need to surpass the combined nuclear forces of its adversaries to maintain effective deterrence. [84] The calls for modernization that Sullivan attempts to silence come from the very laboratories and managing interests that stand to benefit from expansion. Livermore, in collaboration with contributing experts with government experience, has been bombarding the informational commons and saturating the current literature with cases for expansion. In one of the many papers released in partnership with Livermore and the CGSR, Franklin Miller, former Special Assistant to President George W. Bush, argues for the expansion of the number of deployed warheads from around 1,500 today to around 3,000. [85]

[83] DIENEKES , "LASG," Los Alamos Study Group , February 5, 2013, http://www.lasg.org/Broken_Promises_Dienekes_5Feb2013.pdf.

[84] Jake Sullivan, "Remarks by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan for the Arms Control Association (ACA) Annual Forum," The White House, June 2, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/06/02/remarks-by-national-security-advisor-jake-sullivan-for-the-arms-control-association-aca-annual-forum/.

[85] Charles L. Glaser, James M. Acton and Steve Fetter, "The U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Can Deter Both China and Russia." Foreign

In October 2023, the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore, in partnership with the Office of National Security and International Studies at Los Alamos laboratories, published a series of papers titled “The Inflection Point and the US Nuclear Security Enterprise.” Colin Kahl's opening paper’s thesis laid out the current challenge faced by the United States: despite efforts to reduce the prominence of nuclear arsenals worldwide, rival nations continue to prioritize nuclear weapons in their military strategies, and the threat of nuclear proliferation persists as a global concern.[86] The threats to the United States focused on the People’s Republic of China’s increase in ICBMs, silo-based, solid-fueled delivery systems, and the overarching expansion and modernization of its nuclear force.[87] Kahl’s paper also outlined the risks that Russia and North Korea pose to the United States. The claims surrounding China’s expansion, Russia’s massive stockpile, implicit nuclear threats in Ukraine, and the rogue state of North Korea’s continued work on ICBMs are all facts—facts that heighten proliferation and global tensions. However, the solutions and framing of this paper do not point towards a practice of de-escalation. Kahl summarizes what he sees as the National Defense Strategy and the Nuclear Posture Review’s outlook on the future of nuclear weapons. Overall, the NDS and NPR closely examined how America’s adversaries and competitors incorporate nuclear weapons into their strategies for success. Their key takeaway was that nuclear deterrence is essential and should be a central component of the United States’ own strategic approach to victory.[88]

Victory is difficult to measure when a nation is not actively engaged in conflict with its adversaries, even more so when one of those adversaries is also its largest trading partner. The prescription offered for these threats is one of complete modernization. The NPR advocates for complete funding to modernize and update the nuclear triad. This effort goes beyond refurbishing existing systems; it aims to fully update all three components of the triad with new capabilities and technologies.[89] Kahl discusses how the modernization of the triad will be a complete overhaul. It involves not only new submarines, the end of LEP for the Minuteman III, and the development of the new Sentinel ICBM but also major investments in the maintenance of the B-2s and B-52s and the creation of the new B-2 raider from the Northrop Grumman group. There are also plans in place for major investment in LSROs, mapping a path of total modernization across all three legs of the United States nuclear triad.

This paper, published jointly by Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos, argues that the United States’ safety and position in the world must be supported by full Triad modernization and a modern deterrence strategy. This is framed not as a choice but a necessity for the United States. Along with modernization, Kahl sees a deeply integrated defense system throughout the Indo-China Sea with Australia and Japan as necessary for effective deterrence. The W87-1 and W87-0 warheads that will go on the Sentinel missile both come from Lawrence Livermore, the designated design agency lab.

Ironically, these modernization efforts are regressive in much of their strategy. A key feature of modernizing the Triad is the $100 billion modernization of 450 silos across five states. These silos were built prior to the Polaris project and rendered obsolete by the change in second strike

Affairs, October 5, 2023. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/us-nuclear-arsenal-can-deter-both-china-and-russia.

[86] Colin Kahl, “Nuclear Deterrence and National Security in a Decisive Decade,” Lawrence Livermore Center for Global Security , October 2023, https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/CGSR-Inflection-OP-FullBook-10-04-2023-v4-Web.pdf.

[87] Claims of China's expansion are backed up by many including the Federation of American Scientists. 1. HANS KRISTENSEN et al., “Chinese Nuclear Forces, 2024: A ‘Significant Expansion," Federation of American Scientists, February 20, 2024, https://fas.org/publication/chinese-nuclear-forces-2024-a-significant-expansion/.

[88] See footnote 1

[89] See footnote 1

capacity by undetectable, constantly moving submarines provided. The Minuteman III, which is to be replaced by the Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile system, is not the only relic of the Cold War. The land-based leg of the Triad is essentially a $100 billion nuclear sponge that puts millions at risk by providing a stationary and easy target in the event of an attack. [90]

The Pentagon has identified the streamlining and integration of all mechanisms and organizations that are deemed part of the deterrence mission as a top priority. In a memorandum issued in August 2023 by the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and the Executive Chair of the Nuclear Weapons Council, William LaPlante emphasized the Council's central role in coordinating and unifying efforts related to nuclear deterrence. He described it as the primary body responsible for integrating activities to ensure a cohesive approach to the nuclear defense strategy. [91]

The Nuclear Weapons Council is exclusively made up of military elites and government defense experts and advised by the nuclear laboratories. The organization in charge of the formation and implementation of modernization contains all the organizational pitfalls that Sagan warns can lead to deterrence failures. Livermore and the other laboratories are making substantial progress in controlling the disbursement of the resources they have pursued since their inception. The organizational identity has evolved and responded to new environmental factors like the end of the Cold War and privatization. Yet, the ethos of a hawkish, politically savvy, ideological hardline organization that Teller and Lawrence created is alive and well. When the conflicts of interest or influence of the laboratories are rarely brought to attention, the explanation of these actions never changes. Articles such as "Deterrence is Not Rocket Science: It is More Difficult" and "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis" frame nuclear policy decisions as problems that only well-connected professionals in their field can have opinions on, excluding citizens whose lives are affected. [92] The laboratories and Livermore's Center for Global Security Research are dominating the pool of literature. The monopolization of discourse is the final destination for an organization bent on resource collection and propelled by private interests; it represents the enduring success of a hawkish organizational ethos that acts as a driving force for arms racing, feeding a never-ending hunger at the heart of the beast that is the nuclear weapons complex.

7.2. Moving Forward

This thesis clearly demonstrates the creation and evolution of an organizational ethos and mission at Lawrence Livermore, an identity shaped and driven by resource dependency, which has responded to that need by doing everything in its power to control the resources in question. This has resulted in the modernization and expansion of the arsenal, promoting arms racing and proliferation, and driving the new Cold War. One of the most unexpected and concerning findings of this study was made during the research phase. Modern literature is overwhelmingly dominated by laboratory-aligned media. All of the evidence used during this analysis to show that Livermore's organizational mission acts as a driver of arms racing is presented as positive laboratory system synergy. The response by vested interests to the

[90] The Editors, "The U.S.'s Plans to Modernize Nuclear Weapons Are Dangerous and Unnecessary," Scientific American, March 4, 2024, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-u-s-s-plans-to-modernize-nuclear-weapons-are-dangerous-and-unnecessary/.

[91] Joseph Clark, "Pentagon Tackling Nuclear Modernization with Proactive, Integrated Approach," U.S. Department of Defense, August 25, 2023, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3505989/pentagon-tackling-nuclear-modernization-with-proactive-integrated-approach/.

[92] Tom Ramos, "The Importance of Professional Nuclear Policy Analysis," Nipp, October 3, 2022, https://nipp.org/information_series/tom-ramos-the-importance-of-professional-nuclear-policy-analysis-no-535-october-3-2022/.

article in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists calling to democratize the decision was an unexpected, crucial moment of understanding. Nuclear weapons are extremely dangerous by themselves, but their potential for damage grows exponentially when efforts to restrict discussion around them succeed. The goal of this thesis was not to offer a solution or inspire hope for a post-nuclear utopia. Regarding next steps, organizations like Tri-Valley Cares are doing incredibly important work and offer many opportunities to get involved and stay informed. They have fought important legal battles and lobbied tirelessly for the communities in and around the Livermore Laboratory. Their mission is stated in five interlocking goals: [93]

1. Convert Livermore Lab from nuclear weapons development and testing to socially beneficial, environmentally sound research.
2. End all nuclear weapons development and testing in the United States.
3. Abolish nuclear weapons worldwide and achieve an equitable, successful non-proliferation regime.
4. Promote forthright communication and democratic decision-making in public policy on nuclear weapons and related environmental issues locally, nationally, and globally.
5. Clean up the radioactive and toxic pollution emanating from the Livermore Lab and reduce the Lab's environmental and health hazards.

7.3. Important Note

A variety of factors led this thesis to exclude many important aspects, actors, and consequences of the laboratory system. Communities across the United States and the world have been decimated by the effects of the Nuclear Weapons Complex. Indigenous communities in New Mexico, Nevada, the Great Plains, and Alaska have been disproportionately affected by the theft of land, environmental degradation, and illness as a result of weapons testing and laboratory sites. Employees of these laboratories have faced unsafe working conditions and adverse health effects that are often denied or covered up. This thesis also overlooked the degradation of flora and fauna across the globe as a result of these weapons and their architects.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank Dr. Cramer. Her classes were some of the most challenging, engaging and fun that I experienced during my time in the University of Oregon. Her knowledge and passion for the subject inspired me to change majors and sent me on the path that led to the creation of this project. I would also like to give my deepest thanks to Dr. de Onís. She has been nothing but supportive and encouraging throughout our time together in the Robert D. Clark Honors College. I will be forever grateful for your work in challenging and developing my thinking and writing. I would like to thank Scott Yundt for taking time to talk and educate me. Most importantly I would like to thank Scott for his daily and imperative work at Tri-Valley Cares. Lastly, I would like to thank my family for the invaluable support and opportunities that they have provided for me throughout my life.

[93] "Home," Tri Valley CAREs, February 26, 2024, https://trivalleycares.org/.

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

The Femme Fatale's Power: Constructed Transgression

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DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.7*

Abstract

The *femme fatale,* stemming from a French term meaning "fatal woman," is one of the most common female archetypes in popular culture. First emerging in classic film noir stories, the femme fatale is most well-remembered for her proclivity to manipulate and seduce the male lead. However, in classic noir tales, she frequently meets an unhappy end in her narrative—either imprisoned or dead by the end of the story. By comparing the femme fatales of both the film and short story versions of *Gun Crazy,* the film *Too Late for Tears,* and the novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice,* this research seeks to understand the ways in which the femme fatale gains and loses power over the course of her narrative. To address the reasons behind this loss of power, I contextualize the narratives of film noir within the cultural expectations of the time period—in particular, the expectations of the Hayes Production Code. I also address the sensational advertising that explains why we still think of the femme fatale as a powerful woman who gets what she wants rather than as a victim of the patriarchy in her own way. This media's portrayal of the femme fatale reflects women's treatment in the post-war era, reinforcing the patriarchy and possibly even leading to the delay of the second wave of feminism.

In popular culture, there may be no female archetype more well known than that of the femme fatale. She appears in every iteration of noir, from the classic black-and-white films of post-WWII America to futuristic neo-noir imaginings of today. Elizabeth Menon, in her book *Evil by Design,* even argues that the biblical Eve could be considered the first femme fatale for tempting Adam towards his fall (4). In this essay, I compare femme fatales from classic noir films and written stories. I discuss their experiences gaining and losing power within their narratives and discuss the influence of outside forces on their power—specifically, I explore how the Production Code clashed with the advertising of these films. These influences will demonstrate that while the femme fatale may have had her day holding power, she was really at the mercy of the patriarchy, and she wound up punished for her daring.

Used to describe the powerful woman from the classic era of film noir, the French term "femme fatale" means "fatal woman," and was coined around the same time the term "film noir" (another French term meaning *dark movie* in reference to the visual and thematic style of post-World War Two American film) came into use. The femme fatale seduces the leading man of the story, manipulating him to assist in her grab for money, power, sex, or violence. Often, she aims for more than one of these targets. She is a seductress, a temptress, a lethal woman in an era where women were expected to be good, sexually submissive, and out of the way. She frequently causes trouble for the characters around her and, at least at first, she gets away with it.

In many classic noir narratives, the femme fatale appears to succeed in her plans, but by the end she is punished for her willingness to disrupt the patriarchal status quo. Thanks to the pressures of the general social atmosphere and the Hayes Production Code placed on writers and directors, she was forced to lay down in the end of her story. Often she would die at the hands of the law or

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herself, or be being imprisoned in marriage. However, we generally do not remember her for her misfortune. Studios specifically crafted the image of the femme fatale to attract customers, luring them in with the promise of sex and violence and getting away with as much as they could before they ran into issues.

First, we must define the femme fatale. Jack Boozer, film studies professor at Georgia State University, defines her as a woman who takes sexual initiative to grasp for financial independence, addressing both of the ways women were controlled in the post-war era (21). Julie Grossman, English professor and film program director at Le Moyne University, however, defines the true femme fatale as a woman who aims to murder and deceive just because she can. She then goes on to claim that the women that we think of as traditional femme fatales are not the real fatal women (19). This paper combines the two definitions to define the femme fatale as a woman who uses violence and sexuality to gain financial and sexual freedom. Violence, deception, and sexuality are her tools for her gaining independence—though that does not mean she dislikes using them.

Now that we have defined our subject, we need to discuss the Hayes Production Code: a set of industry guidelines regarding Hollywood movies between 1934 and 1968 designed to enforce certain moral standards. Specifically, the Be-Careful segment where the code prohibited "Sympathy for Criminals" (MDPPA 8). As previously defined, the femme fatale acted as a criminal. Murder, theft, assault, deceiving law enforcement—the femme fatale did it all. Since films at that time were required to uphold the "highest possible moral and artistic standards" of the day, the femme fatale—the architype of immorality—obviously had to be punished for her violent actions (MPPDA 2). These punishments were typically enacted by law enforcement, although sometimes the femme fatale brought the punishment upon herself in other ways.

One of the most potent examples of the lethal femme fatal who is punished for her actions is in the film *Too Late for Tears* from 1949. In the film, Jane is willing to do near anything to keep control over a suitcase of money tossed into the back of her car. She seduces, lies, schemes, and commits at least two murders, which is why she is a great example of one of the more lethal femme fatales of the era. However, her luck runs out at the end of the film when she falls over a balcony in Mexico as the police arrive to arrest or kill her. One of the most interesting parts about this ending is the concept of her fate. In a world where a woman's fate is controlled almost entirely by her husband and children, the femme fatale desperately wants the control over her own destiny. She desires the autonomy to make her own choices instead of having them made for her. As Elizabeth Bronfen says, the femme fatale knows that she is fated and attempts to control her own fate to her benefit (106). While the fall over the balcony looks accidental, Jane has actually made the decision that she would rather control her own death than die at the hands of the Mexican policemen. It is her final act of independence. Even though her death is punishment for her transgressions against the patriarchy, her choice to fall is transgressive in and of itself. In her punishment for defying the patriarchy, she defies it one final time.

Even femme fatales in written works reflected male anxieties about women's independence; notably, the tale of Cora in James M. Cain's novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice* shows a classic femme fatale. In the novel, she conspires with Frank in order to murder her husband and have an affair. Despite not being under the purview of the Hayes production code, the femme fatale and the leading man are both punished in the end for their transgressions. This reflects another crucial aspect of the femme fatale narrative—the fatal woman is a personification of male anxieties at the time.

The femme fatale, as Yvonne Tasker, chair of media and communication at the University of Leeds, puts it, is merely a projection of the anxieties men face around women's sexuality and independence (367). It is no secret that in the post-WW2 era, the patriarchy struggled to reestablish itself. Women had a taste of independence that came from holding traditionally male jobs, such as those in factories building the instruments of war and Cain's work demonstrates the anxieties men faced due to this newfound independence. In his story, Cora went to California to pursue her dream as an actress but wound up married to a gas station owner. Through the course of the novel, she is visibly upset about the direction her life has taken as a housewife, which leads her to murder her husband. This is a projection of how men feared that women would retaliate violently towards coming back into the home. Cora's desire to return to her dreams, and the lengths she will go to in order to get there, is an exaggerated mirror of the anxieties men felt about the women in their life desiring to return to a life where they were financially independent. At the end of the story, Cora is killed in a final car crash similar to how she murdered her husband. She is punished in the same way she gained her freedom to prove a point about how the patriarchy punishes women who try to escape traditional values.

One interesting point of comparison between femme fatales in different storytelling mediums (e.g. film, novels, radio dramas) comes from the two versions of *Gun Crazy,* which began as a short story before being adapted into film. In the different version of *Gun Crazy*, the femme fatale can be seen as both a minorly transgressive, and majorly transgressive character; the version of the character who is freer and more transgressive is punished more harshly. In the short story, Antoinette is mentioned in passing as the woman who seduced the leading male into a life of crime, relying on his obsession with firearms to carry him to the side of crime with her. She has no dialogue, she is not the one to originally challenge the leading man to prove his gunmanship, and when he outshoots her, it is mentioned briefly that she kisses him—but there is no overt seduction. Antoinette is sentenced to prison offscreen about a third of the way through the story and then never mentioned again; her punishment is first to face the law and then to descend into obscurity. Compare this to the film version of the story, where not only does the female lead Laurie, the adapted version of Antoinette, play a much more active role in tempting the leading man towards the dark side, but she is the lethal and beautiful face of the advertising as well. On the main poster (Figure 1), she is posed with her guns smoking. She is turned half-way to display both her breasts and her behind, and with a slit in her skirt, showing off both her seductive and violent prowess—two of the most transgressive properties for a femme fatale to have. Her dark clothes contrast with the red background, drawing the eye towards her body. Of course, thanks to the Production Code, she was advertised as far more of a scandalous figure than she actually was (Biesen 3).

Figure 1. Poster for the film *Gun Crazy.*

Still, for this blatant display of sexuality and violence, she meets a much more gruesome fate than her literary counterpart, being shot by her lover after a police chase through a swamp; the more transgressive the femme fatale, the harsher her punishment. Antoinette is merely a common criminal, and if she were a male (and therefore did not kiss the lead), she would have likely had an identical fate of mere off-screen imprisonment, since the short story does not focus on her at all. Laurie, however, uses her sexuality, her cunning, and her violent tendencies, and thus her lover explicitly kills her.

The femme fatale poses an interesting cognitive dissonance to the American audience of her film. According to the traditional American Dream, a major goal in one's life is pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps, becoming financially successful, and consistently striving to achieve a higher social status. This dream, in full force after the national victory in World War Two, would dictate that she should have the power to do whatever she wants, doing whatever it takes to climb in status. However, the patriarchy demands that she be subservient to men, content with her slot in life as a daughter, then as a wife and mother. These two competing ideologies come to a head in these films as the femme fatale attempts to take power for herself. Not only that, but the American Dream requires a selfishness to constantly fight for your own betterment. When these women choose to fight for their own independence, they are acting against the prevailing social idea that women are selfless. The femme fatale is willing to do anything to be an independent figure and achieve her goals—embodying this spirit of the American Dream. Concerning this cognitive dissonance, the men are at the forefront of creating these films choose to prioritize the patriarchy and stifle the ambition of the femme fatale rather than uphold the ideals of the American Dream. While it is not explicitly addressed in the text of the Hayes Production Code, upholding the patriarchy winds up being an important part of the imperative to uphold the strict moral standard. To do this, the femme fatale is used to teach the audience a heavy-handed lesson by killing or otherwise incapacitating the transgressive woman.

Despite the femme fatale consistently finishing her story with her power stripped from her, our collective consciousness still remembers her as deadly and seductive. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that the femme fatale is a powerful woman for the majority of the work. Cora enjoys most of her story scheming to murder her husband and have an affair with the leading man, and she is not punished until the last few pages of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. In the film version of *Gun Crazy,* Laurie gets multiple months committing theft and murder with her husband and is not killed until the last few moments of the film. Since the characters only get their punishment at the very end, the majority of the film, the part with the exciting seduction, violence, and scheming, is what sticks in an audience's mind. The character that does all the exciting things is the deadly, seductive femme fatale, not the dead femme fatale, and exciting characters stick in audience's minds more than dead ones do.

It is not just the timing of the femme fatale's life and death in films that played with the audience's perception of the femme fatale. Studios specifically advertised their leading women as deadly and seductive in order to draw in audiences who desired sex appeal and violence in film, but the Production Code meant that studios had to strike a delicate balance. They had to produce films that had enough sexual and violent content to draw in an audience that sought out sex and violence, while being careful not to alienate those who were more offended by that type of content (Smith 104).

One of the ways studios promoted their sexual and violent content in their movies was through the use of provocative, eye-catching posters. For example, the poster for *Too Late for Tears* (Figure 2) shows a man raising his hand to hit a cowering woman, holding her still with the other. This pose is also sexually charged, as the woman's red blouse and the yellow text box draws the eyes towards her chest. However, in the film, Jane (the femme fatale of the film) is the opposite of a coward, and Danny, the insurance investigator who gets caught up in the scheme, does not strike at Jane in this way during the film. One might call this poster false advertising, as it does not truly represent how Jane and Danny interact during the film; however, it reinforces the patriarchy with the woman submitting to the man, appealing to the conservative crowd. It also draws in the more ambitious audience with its sexual and violent aspects, providing a perfect example of the balancing act movie studios used in their marketing for films, and how they toed the line on how they portrayed their films to draw in the largest crowd.

Figure 2. Poster for the film *Too Late for Tears.*

After the French defined film noir as a style, its classic elements became used so frequently that they became passe. The classic femme fatale finally faded into the past. In order to make them more interesting, studios had to deconstruct, subvert, and play with her in other ways to give the audience new experiences. Thanks to that, it is impossible to see a true straight-forwards 1940's style film noir as anything but a pastiche or homage to the real greats of the era. Noir plots are connected deeply to the social views of the time and are disconnected from those of today. The femme fatale is one of the biggest characters this change affects, as it is no longer a transgression for women to be sexually and financially independent. Nowadays, modern deadly women like Catwoman from the Batman franchise, and Catherine from *Basic Instinct,* take their roots in murder and seduction but survive their stories. They no longer need to be punished to prove a patriarchal point. More, like Jessica from *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, act like femme fatales initially but later reveal themselves to be on the side of the protagonist, allowing women to be both independent and good.

The second big reason the classic femme fatale fell out of fashion is because of the gains of the feminist movement. As women gained more rights in the 1960's second wave of feminism, stories about women doing desperate things to gain freedoms became less of a fuel for fantasy. Women no longer had to gain financial independence through crime when they could join the workforce normally so there was no need for escapism in the form of a femme fatale. They no longer had to consider murder as an option for disposing of a bad husband when divorce was becoming increasingly socially acceptable. As Shiela Johnston writes in her article for *The Independent*, women had increasing social and economic power now—even if it was more mundane than the power they had in film noir. Disempowered women no longer needed the fantasy of the femme fatale as a coping mechanism. The more relaxed attitudes of the 1960's around censorship also helped bring down the femme fatale with the fall of the Hayes Production Code. It was no longer necessary to punish every criminal for daring to break the law, nor was it necessary to hold up perfect moral standards and punish those who did not comply. Since the femme fatale was no longer alone in committing crimes, she lost her luster and faded away. Now, any woman can commit a murder or two without being an over-the-top villain who must be punished. They can even be redeemed, like Black Widow in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

The femme fatale of the classic noir film has persisted in the public consciousness for years as a powerful and deceitful woman who seduces the leading man into a life of crime for her own benefit. However, as we have explored in this essay, she was never actually the unpunished sexy angel of death and destruction that we think of when we hear the term. More often than not she was killed, as we see in the films *Gun Crazy* and *Too Late for Tears*, as well as the novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. The classic femme fatale reflected the women in post-World War Two America—caught between the American Dream and conforming to social expectations of how women behave before finally submitting to the patriarchy. She had a taste of freedom, but the patriarchy quickly stripped it from her, and she longed to return to the autonomy she had. This image of the femme fatale was carefully crafted to bring in the biggest audience while keeping the overseeing patriarchal structures intact. Her reinforcement of these structures could have contributed towards the dissuasion of women from taking agency over their lives, delaying the second wave of feminism to the sixties.

Acknowledgments

I would like to specially thank Dr. Ulrick Casimir for his guidance and feedback on writing this paper. A huge thank you also goes to my friends who encouraged me to submit to the journal, as well as supporting me in an endless variety of ways in and out of the classroom. I would also like to thank my parents for pushing me to achieve my fullest potential and my Cascades family for reminding me that I can do hard things.

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Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Questioning the Ethics of Art Acquisition: The Case of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Holy Tabots

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DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.8*

Abstract

This paper explores the changing ideas around the legal acquisition of cultural artifacts, focusing on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tabots taken during the 1868 Battle of Maqdala, now held in the British Museum. Taking art as wartime loot was widely accepted in the past, but today's evolving sense of morality calls these practices into question. By examining the British Museum's legal claims alongside the Ethiopian Church's requests to return these sacred tabots, this study demonstrates that the tabots are unique artifacts that can circumvent existing legal barriers to restitution. Their repatriation would help amend historical injustices, promote cross-cultural and religious sensitivity, and set a precedent for more artifacts to be returned in the future. It challenges the rigid legal frameworks, like the British Museum Act, that still prevent restitution and considers shifting attitudes toward repatriation, inspired by groups such as the Scheherazade Foundation. Ultimately, this paper argues that as our understanding of legal acquisition changes, so should our readiness to address past injustices, emphasizing that returning them is not just a matter of law but a step toward restoring justice and respect for cultural heritage. Furthermore, the return of the tabots could serve as a global precedent, encouraging institutions to re-evaluate their collections and fostering a new era of ethical stewardship of cultural heritage.

1. From Maqdala to Today: Background on the Tabots

Since its establishment in 1753, the British Museum has acquired artifacts from numerous countries, such as the Benin Bronzes from Nigeria and the Parthenon Marbles from Greece. In recent decades, many countries have called for artifacts to be returned to their countries of origin. The British Museum argues the artifacts in question were legally acquired as military spoils and should remain in the Museum's possession. The way such artifacts are acquired can vary, raising the question of what legal acquisition means. In the past, war was widely considered a customary way to gain legitimate possession of a defeated country's art and resources. It was expected that whoever won the war would loot the area. Against the backdrop of 19th-century British imperial aggression, looted art was transported worldwide and eventually arrived at museums like the British Museum. In the case of the Battle of Maqdala between Great Britain and Ethiopia in 1868, a plethora of artifacts from an Abyssinian church treasury were looted by the British military. Most notably, some of the sacred tabots from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church were brought back to Britain.

The tabot is a sacred and holy plaque that is painted or carved and made of wood or stone. They symbolize the Ark of the Covenant and the Ten Commandments, representing God's earthly presence. A tabot is hidden from public view by a veil and is only to be seen by priests. The tabots hold immense religious significance and are integral to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Every

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church has a minimum of one tabot, but some will have several. For most of the year, they are kept in the inner circle of the church called the Holy of Holies.[1, 2] While not able to be viewed unveiled, they are ornately covered a few times a year and then paraded during religious festivals. In the past, they were also brought into battle for protection. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has repeatedly and formally requested the British Museum to oversee the restitution of the tabots back to the Church and the Ethiopian communities of which the tabot is a living part. Returning the tabots would not only be the right response but would also honor the ethical imperative to respect the spiritual and cultural integrity of the Ethiopian Orthodox community.

This research paper will support the rightful restitution of Ethiopian Orthodox Church tabots housed in the British Museum from the Battle of Maqdala in 1868. This paper will demonstrate that the tabots are unique artifacts that can work around existing laws to be restituted, helping to amend historical injustices, promote cross-cultural and religious sensitivity, and apply pressure for more artifacts to be restituted in the future. It will question the concept of rightful ownership and the current precedent set by the British Museum. It will explore the shift surrounding the meaning of legal acquisition in art and how that shift created conversations supporting the tabots' return. By examining the British Museum's practices and highlighting the broader ethical questions surrounding colonial acquisitions, the paper will demonstrate that restituting the tabots is not only just but also essential for amending historical injustices and promoting cross-cultural and religious sensitivity.

2. Introduction to Questioning the Ethics of Art Acquisition: Why Was the Original Acquisition of the Tabots at the Battle of Maqdala in 1868 Considered Legal?

To understand the original acquisition of the tabots, one must first understand the historical context behind the Battle of Maqdala. In the context of global British imperial expansion in 1862, relations between Ethiopia and Britain slowly became strained. At that time, Emperor Tewodros requested that Queen Victoria provide some military assistance to help with the encroaching Egyptians, but the Queen refused. This was the start of ongoing tension between the two sovereigns that grew until its breaking point in 1868. Emperor Tewdros, wanting Queen Victoria's attention, took a group of British citizens captive in Ethiopia. In Britain, there was a public outcry for releasing these captives. In response, the British launched an expedition to free the captives and punish Emperor Tewdoros. With over 13,000 troops, a military campaign was launched in 1868, which led to the destruction of the Maqdala fortress. This attack caused the death of hundreds of Emperor Tewodros' troops, and thousands more were wounded. The British, however, had minimal losses.[3] The British forces looted the local church, library, and imperial treasury to celebrate its victory. Emperor Tewdros committed suicide to avoid capture, but his son was taken captive. Over 400 artifacts were stolen during the battle, and around 80 now sit in the Maqdala collection in the British Museum.

The British Museum's Maqdala collection consists of the tabots along with ceremonial crosses, chalices, processional umbrella tops, weapons, textiles, jewelry, and other

[1] Lewis McNaught, Ethiopian Tabot returned by Edinburgh Church, August 28, 2021, https://www.returningheritage.com/ethiopian-tabot-returned-by-edinburgh-church#:~:text=A%20tabot%20is%20a%20consecrated,sight%2C%20only%20seen%20by%20priests.

[2] Known as the Qeddest Qeddusan.

[3] "Maqdala Collection," The British Museum, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/about-us/british-museum-story/contested-objects-collection/maqdala-collection.

archaeological material.[4] Some pieces are still on display and demonstrate how ornate the artifacts looted after the Battle of Maqdala were. Below is a gold diptych in a silver case, often used as an altarpiece. It has inscriptions in Ge'ez, the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. There are images of Jesus and his mother, Mary, on the right and Saint Abun Gabra Manfus Qeddus on the left (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Diptych contained in a silver gilt case—this object combines a 16th-century French enamel (left side) and a gilded engraving of the Ethiopian Saint Abun Gabra Manfus Qeddus (right side), c.19th century. Maqdala Collection, The British Museum.

Also, there is a censer made of silver engraved with images of angels. The censers are used as part of the church service as incense is placed inside, then the censer is swung from side to side to spread the smell of incense around the church (Figure 2). In their description of the artifacts, the British Museum recognizes that some are sacred while others represent artistic traditions and that there is a non-display agreement specifically for the tabots. However, the description does not go on much past that. Since the local church was looted, pieces that held immense cultural significance and spiritual sacredness now sit in the British Museum. The tabots, however, are the most sacred and significant artifacts. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has requested the restitution of the tabots in the Maqdala collection. The Church's request has continued to raise the question of to whom the tabots belong. It must be understood that the 1868 loot following a war victory was considered a legal way to acquire art by European colonial powers. In that period, the British had every legal right after winning the war to do what they wanted with the city. One could argue it was customary to loot the defeated area to display Britain's strong imperial powers, especially in response to the British hostage situation.

Figure 2. Ethiopian church silver censer, engraved with angels, c. 18th century. Maqdala Collection, The British Museum.

For centuries, imperialists considered war a legal way to acquire not just art but a variety of personal belongings and property. As times have changed, looting following a victory in a war is seen through a different lens. The looting of the local church reflects ethical violations and cultural harm, which stripped communities of their heritage and spiritual identity. British ransacked Maqdala, bringing destruction and death to the site. The mindset of looting is full of problematic imperial values. In 2024, the British actions would no longer be considered appropriate and legitimate. As

[4] Ibid.

times and social norms have changed, our ideas of legal ownership of art and the time parameters of legal acquisition have been challenged. Since the British legally and legitimately acquired the tabots according to 1868 customs, this raises questions about whether ownership has truly transferred to the present day. As societal ideals surrounding war and looting evolve, the meaning of "legal acquisition" has also shifted. This prompts reflection on whether the tabots should be returned to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, their rightful owners before 1868. Moreover, as critical reflection on colonialism and imperialism deepens, these evolving perspectives increasingly influence practices and policies surrounding museums and art.

The current situation, as defined by the British Museum, is that the tabots belong to the Museum and will stay there. Zoe Cormack, a curator for the British Museum, states, "The Museum fully acknowledges this collection history and is committed to working closely with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London to ensure respectful care of the tabots." [5] In this context, respectful care is shown by preserving the tabots in a way that aligns with their sacredness and cultural significance, including limiting their display to specific Church members and maintaining their integrity as holy objects. While acknowledging the history behind how the tabots were acquired, it is still clear the British Museum does not plan to return the tabots. By retaining the tabots, the British Museum also implies an unspoken statement that is less respectful. The Museum upholds the ancient and problematic values of colonialism and imperialism. It does not allow for the questioning of what legally acquired means. As one of the world's largest imperialists, the Museum defines legal acquisition within the frame of 19th-century values rooted in imperial conquest and cultural dominance. It will continue implicitly to uphold that precedent until the tabots are restituted. The tabots were considered legally acquired at the time because these values justified their looting as a demonstration of power.

3. Sacredness and Setting: How Does the Narrative Surrounding the Tabots Change When They Are in the British Museum Instead of a Church?

Although the British Museum has taken steps to reconcile itself with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, there is still a huge power imbalance. The British Museum has complete ownership over the tabots and continues rejecting the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's pleas for restitution. There is a non-display agreement between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the British Museum. It says, "In line with earlier agreements with the church, and in light of their sacred nature, the tabots from Maqdala are not on public display. They are housed in a location specially set aside, created and maintained in close consultation with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church." [6] The British Museum allows specific church members to see the tabots inside the boundaries of the British Museum. However, the narrative of the tabots remains completely shifted as the tabots are still out of their natural social and historical environment. In Ethiopia, Orthodox churches are not recognized as a church until they are given a tabot or Ark from a local bishop. The tabots are kept on the altar with a decorative covering, and only priests are allowed to touch them. On the feast day of the church's patron, there is an elaborate and festive procession around the church with joyful singing. [7] This is not the case for

[5] Sarah Shewaye to Zoe Cormack, Inquiry Regarding Ethiopian Tabots for Research Project, January 29, 2024.

[6] "Maqdala Collection," The British Museum, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/about-us/british-museum-story/contested-objects-collection/maqdala-collection.

[7] Habtamu Teshome, "Liturgical Worship: Unique Features of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church," Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church Sunday School Department Mahibere Kidusan, January 16, 2023, https://eotcmk.org/e/unique-features-of-ethiopian-orthodox-tewahedo-church/.

the tabots in the British Museum. The tabots are hidden in an undisclosed room. Typically, the tabots are housed in the church's Holy of Holies. It signifies the presence of God within that place. Though a lay church member cannot go into the Holy of Holies, the presence of the tabots is known and revered. While this agreement addresses some ethical concerns, it is insufficient, and the Museum's approach still has issues.

The British Museum's non-display approach attempts to be sufficiently culturally and religiously sensitive. The non-display agreement is essential as the tabots cannot be displayed uncovered. However, the Museum's approach is lacking as church members are still meant to engage with the tabot at some level and be personally impacted by its sacredness. The sacredness surrounding it brings heightened importance to the celebrations where the tabots are paraded. There is a deep respect and spiritual reverence, which fosters a space for a deeper connection with God.

It can be challenging to understand the religious importance of an artifact if you are not a part of the community to which it is considered sacred. The non-display agreement is an important indication that the British Museum gives a partial recognition of the tabots sacredness. However, in an interview, Mekonen Shewaye, the son of the head priest of his local Ethiopian Orthodox Church, said: "To be out of its environment robs the meaning behind it."[8] Shewaye signifies that the tabots lose not only their spiritual importance but also their functional and communal role when they are removed from their religious context. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, tabots are not just physical objects but embody sacred traditions, rituals, and connections between God and the congregation. Robbed from their environment, these artifacts become static relics rather than living symbols of worship, reducing their sacredness. This cultural dislocation underscores the need for restitution, as only within their proper setting can tabots fulfill their intended purpose. A recount of a church festival illustrates this connection: "the tabot or ark was brought out, wrapped in coloured cloths, carried on the head of a priest. As it appeared in the doorway the women raised the ilil, a prolonged and piercing cry of joy. When the tabot exits the Bete Mekdes, everyone goes down to the floor and says a prayer."[9] This vivid description highlights the integral role tabots play in Ethiopian Orthodox traditions, where they serve as focal points of worship and community unity. The joy and reverence surrounding their presence reveal how vital the tabots are to the Church. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church's profound sacredness for the tabots heavily enhances its need for restitution. They are sacred objects created for a specific purpose in a particular setting. This setting is impossible to substitute in a museum.

Not restituting the tabots means not fully recognizing their sacredness and importance. It again reflects the lack of cultural and religious sensitivity continually demonstrated by the British Museum. Since the British Museum holds power, it gets to set the narrative surrounding the tabots. However, the true narrative and meaning behind the tabots are upheld in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church worldwide. There is a deep need for complete restitution, and regardless of the steps the British Museum takes, it will not be enough until the tabots once again sit in the Holy of Holies of an Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

4. Impossible or Unwilling: What Legal Barriers Exist for the Actual Restitution of the Tabots?

Amongst the many barriers to restitution, there are two significant ones currently at issue: the British Museum Act and the National Heritage Act. The British Museum Act of 1963 prohibits

[8] Mekonen Shewaye in discussion with the author, The Sacred Tabots, personal conversation, February 10, 2024.

[9] David Buxton, *The Abyssinians* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), p. 65.

permanently returning any artifacts from the British Museum to their place of origin. The act says, "It shall be the duty of the Trustees of the British Museum to keep the objects comprised in the collections of the Museum within the authorised repositories of the Museum." [10] The artifacts can be lent for short periods, but unless under particular circumstances, the British Museum will not return artifacts to their home countries. In summary, what is inside the Museum is to stay inside the Museum or leave on an approved loan. The National Heritage Act of 1983 established select museums as independent public institutions overseen by a board of trustees. It outlines the boards of trustees' general functions and restricts them from the removal of objects from their collections. [11] This act has a very similar implementation in that objects from collections cannot permanently leave that collection, and a board should oversee the Museum.

In 2020, while defending retaining artifacts with contested heritage, Oliver Dowden, a spokesperson for Boris Johnson's government, supported a "retain and explain" policy, emphasizing the educational value of keeping such objects in British institutions. Dowden stated that "removing difficult and contentious parts of it risks harming our understanding of our collective past. Rather than erasing these objects, we should seek to contextualise or reinterpret them to enable the public to learn about them, however challenging this may be. We should use them to educate people about all aspects of Britain's complex past, both good and bad." [12]

Recently, arguments have even been made that the tabots could be restituted with the British Museum Act still in place because they are an exception. The tabots unique position creates an interesting argument for restitution. Returning Heritage is a London-based not-for-profit group that advocates for cultural restoration of historical or cultural value objects. They seek to provide information about different ongoing restitution debates. Through the Freedom of Information Act, they requested information about the British Museum's Board of Trustees and the various conversations that have been going on surrounding the tabots. Some information also included the number of restitution requests and why the Trustees agreed to retain the tabots. In this, they found the British Museum unwilling to provide specific information about the current discussions of the restitution of the tabots. Returning Heritage has similar questions on why the British Museum keeps the tabots even though they cannot be displayed. It compares the tabots to two highly contested objects: the Benin bronzes and the Parthenon marbles. Returning Heritage brings in a new opinion that argues that since the tabots cannot be displayed, they're unfit to be retained and, therefore, are an exception to the British Museum Act.

Returning Heritage highlights that the tabots cannot be displayed, photographed, or studied, making them unfit to be retained under Section 5(1)(c) of the Act, which allows for the legal deaccessioning of objects that no longer serve the Museum's purpose. Unlike highly visible and contested artifacts such as the Parthenon marbles or Benin bronzes, which the Museum argues provide significant educational value, the tabots do not offer these benefits. They remain locked away, unseen and inaccessible to scholars, the public, or even Museum staff. The legal opinion prepared by Samantha Knights KC further proves this claim, showing that the tabots meet the criteria to be restituted without a change in the law. [13]

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[10] Expert Participation, "British Museum Act 1963," Legislation.gov.uk, January 31, 1979, https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1963/24.

[11] Eren Waitzman, "Reviewing the National Heritage Act 1983," House of Lords Library, accessed February 13, 2024, https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/reviewing-the-national-heritage-act-1983/.

[12] Ibid.

[13] "The British Museum: Where Else Are We Not Getting the Full Story?," Returning Heritage, September 8, 2023, https://www.returningheritage.com/the-british-museum-where-else-are-we-not-getting-the-full-and-complete-story.

The unwillingness to return the tabots also sheds light on the tenacity of the Museum. The British Museum and the British government use the British Museum Act and the National Heritage Act as the end of the conversation surrounding the repatriation of the tabots, not considering ways around it. They issue apologies and statement after statement. Both institutions behave as if changing the act or finding an exception is impossible. By retaining the tabots, the British Museum continues to contradict its mission of advancing knowledge and education, as the tabots cannot fulfill these roles. The exact history they seek to "contextualize" and "explain" allows them to excuse their lack of effort to find a solution and retain the tabots. Apologizing for the contended history behind the tabots but continuing to uphold the precedent set by their acquisition contradicts the goals of public and cultural education. The British Museum and the British government could consider that returning the tabots may serve as an opportunity for public education. By doing so, they could highlight how the understanding of legal art acquisition has evolved since the Battle of Maqdala in 1868. A statement could also be issued to acknowledge the deep history and spiritual significance of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tabots, while outlining the steps the British government and the Museum take to address colonialist and imperialist legacies within their institutions. The attention an action like this would bring would be the ultimate example of dedication to public education. Demonstrating not only the commitment to the education of the public but also within their institutions. In search of a more equitable future, the British Museum and government should look introspectively and consider if the return of the tabots is impossible or if they are just unwilling.

5. The Case of the Privately Owned Tabot Purchased and Restituted by the Scheherazade Foundation: What Precedent Does This Set for the Restitution of Other Tabots?

The Scheherazade Foundation purchased a privately owned tabot with intentions of returning it to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, creating a new precedent that challenges the British Museum. The Scheherazade Foundation is a non-profit focused on changing society through empowering women, bridging cultures, and harnessing the teaching power of stories.[14] The restitution is a prime example of its mission to bridge cultures. Very little is known about who owned the tabot before, but it went for sale at some point, and the Scheherazade Foundation decided to purchase the tabot. It subsequently gave the tabot to the Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Great Britain, and Northern Ireland, with various representatives present. The Foundation's return of the tabot sets an exciting precedent because it suggests that the Scheherazade Foundation has a different idea of legal versus rightful ownership than the British Museum. Legal ownership refers to the possession of an object as determined by law, often through purchase or acquisition, like military spoils. However, rightful ownership goes beyond legality and considers who is ethically, historically, and culturally entitled to an object. After the Scheherazade Foundation purchased the tabot per law, they could have done what they wanted with the tabot. The Foundation donated it, which speaks volumes about who they thought the rightful owners were. Also, it demonstrates to the British Museum that it is possible to change mindsets surrounding art ownership. Because of its sacred and cultural significance, the tabot can never rightfully belong to anyone other than the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Tabots are not merely artifacts but consecrated objects central to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Their purpose is

[14] "About," Scheherazade Foundation, August 10, 2022, https://scheherazadefoundation.org/about/.

inherently tied to the Church; no price or policy can change that. As emphasized earlier, the rightful owners of the tabots are the Ethiopian Orthodox Church because they are the only ones who can preserve the tabots' spiritual and cultural significance.

There was an official restitution ceremony, and members of the Church and Embassy were present. The Ethiopian Embassy released a statement after the restitution, saying the actions of the Scheherazade Foundation "underlined the importance and implications of the returned artifacts and Holy Tabot to the Orthodox Church, history, and cultural development of the Ethiopian people."[15] The Scheherazade Foundation demonstrated monumental cultural and religious sensitivity by returning the tabots. The Ethiopian people and church members benefit from the presence and parading of the tabots. Whether sitting in an unknown private collection or a hidden room in the British Museum, there is no option for developing and educating the Ethiopian Orthodox Church congregants. The Scheherazade Foundation describes its mission as bridging cultures in unusual ways. It acknowledges that historical injustices, even those dating back centuries, continue to shape the modern world. They create obstacles that should no longer exist. These "bumps in the road" stem from past events like the looting of Ethiopian treasures by British forces in 1868. Amid movements like Black Lives Matter and shifting global perspectives on justice, the Foundation is working to repatriate looted artifacts. This includes the 11 sacred altar tablets, or tabots, in collaboration with British barrister Samantha Knights QC. Their efforts have garnered international attention and grown goodwill between Ethiopia and the UK.[16]

In describing its commitment to addressing historical injustices, the Foundation discusses bumps in the roads. This phrase refers to the lingering consequences of colonialism and imperialism that remain unresolved. These bumps represent the cultural and religious disruptions caused by exploitation and looting. For example, the removal of the tabots during British colonial expeditions brought harm upon the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and its community. By returning looted objects, the Foundation works to repair these fractures, fostering reconciliation. The collection was purchased in 2021 through crowdfunding by the Scheherazade Foundation. However, the tabots were officially repatriated in September 2023 for various reasons. The Scheherazade Foundation's actions have put immense pressure on the British Museum and government to reconsider why they have yet to return the tabots.

The donation of the tabot demonstrates that the thought processes and attitudes surrounding art repatriation and its ethics have considerably changed. It addresses how the meaning of legal acquisition evolved as societal ideals surrounding war and looting progressed over time. Yes, the Foundation legally acquired the tabots, but it chose not to uphold the past standards surrounding art acquisition. We are no longer in 1868 and do not have to continue to follow the art acquisition precedents set then. The restitution of the tabots is such a significant statement on how the art world is changing. The British Museum and government should feel pressured because the Foundation is dismantling the barriers to the restitution of the tabots that the British Museum and government set. This event garnered much attention in art, reigniting efforts to return the tabots. It proved that the tabots could be returned, and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was more than happy to receive them. It connects back to whether the British Museum is unwilling to return

[15] "The Looted Artefacts during the Meqdala War in 1868 Were Handed over to Ethiopian Embassy in London," Embassy of Ethiopia, London, September 26, 2023, https://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/the-looted-artefacts-during-the-meqdala-war-in-1868-were-handed-over-to-ethiopian-embassy-in-london/.

[16] "Projects," Scheherazade Foundation, May 4, 2023, https://scheherazadefoundation.org/projects/#toggle-id-15.

the tabots or if it is simply impossible. Despite the increasing calls for restitution, the British Museum has shown little initiative to examine its own practices. The Museum has consistently claimed legal barriers that prevent restitution, but the Foundation has proved the tabots can be returned when there are no legal barriers. Their complacency indicates a reluctance to disrupt the status quo and an unwillingness to address the larger implications of its colonial acquisitions. The actions of the Scheherazade Foundation challenge the British Museum to not use the Acts as an excuse to hide behind and reevaluate the evolving mindset around art ownership and ethics.

Other groups follow the Scheherazade Foundation's lead by restituting their tabots. Most recently, in February 2024, Westminster Abbey announced that it would return a tabot sealed inside an altar. This decision reflects the influence of the Scheherazade Foundation, whose actions have set a precedent and encouraged other institutions to address and right historical wrongs through restitution. The Westminster Abbey tabot is in the back of the altar of the Henry VII Lady Chapel, an ornately decorated chapel referred to as a wonder of the world that amazes visitors daily. The chapel represents late medieval architecture and features a spectacular fan-vaulted ceiling. Different queens and kings are buried in vaults within the chapel. Westminster Abbey could have argued that the tabot has a meaningful home in the chapel. However, Westminster Abbey chooses to return the tabot to its rightful owners.

While they are still working out the details, Westminster Abbey has said that in discussion with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, they have concluded that the tabot will be returned. Initially, the tabot was acquired by Captain George Arbuthnot during the Battle of Maqdala. He donated the tabot to the abbey upon his return to Britain. In 1870, Dean Arthur Stanley asked architect George Gilbert Scott to design a new altar in the Henry VII Lady Chapel. He placed the tabot and two other sacred objects on the high altar of the Canterbury Cathedral and the prominent Greek Orthodox church in Damascus.[17] Placing the tabot at the back of the altar suggests an attempt to recognize its sacredness, but such recognition is incomplete when the tabot's return is still refused. The tabot is in the back of the altar, so at no point was it overtly displayed, but it was partially visible. After 2010, a covering was hung so the tabot was not visible from all angles. The actions of Westminster Abbey undoubtedly "will put pressure on the British Museum, which holds 11 tabots, to reconsider its position."[18] These actions demonstrate how institutions like Westminster Abbey are starting to confront the historical and ethical issues of retaining sacred objects. Beyond just acknowledging the tabot's importance, Westminster Abbey is actively addressing their rightful ownership.

After ongoing discussions with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Westminster Abbey changed its stance and decided to start the repatriation process. These actions demonstrate that one of England's highest and holiest organizations can begin to shift its perspective surrounding art restitution and rightful ownership. It shows a growing acknowledgment of the ethical responsibility to return looted artifacts to their rightful owners. Westminster Abbey's decision reflects a broader shift in how institutions approach restitution, setting an important example for others. The Scheherazade Foundation set a new precedent that other groups, such as Westminster Abbey, followed. The British Museum may begin to feel pressure from both groups and reconsider the restitution of the tabots. The decision highlights that precedents have evolved and demonstrates the potential for institutions like the Scheherazade Foundation and

[17] Gareth Harris, "Westminster Abbey Decides 'in Principle' to Return Ethiopian Tabot," The Art Newspaper - International art news and events, February 13, 2024, https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/02/13/westminster-abbey-decides-in-principle-to-return-ethiopian-tabot.

[18] Ibid.

Westminster Abbey to change with them, further advancing the global movement toward justice and accountability in art restitution.

6. Possible Repatriation: Why Does the Restitution of Tabots Vary from Other Looted Items? To Which Church Should They Be Returned?

The repatriation of the tabots is a unique situation compared to other contested artifacts, such as returning ancient Egyptian relics to modern Egypt. Unlike artifacts disconnected from their original context, tabots have a direct home within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, emphasizing adherence to Old Testament law and unchanging traditions. The Church has remained essentially the same in practice and significant membership since. Ethiopia is home to the largest Orthodox Christian population outside Europe, and Orthodox Christians there tend to be more deeply religious than Orthodox Christians in Central and Eastern Europe.[19] The Church to which the tabots would be restituted would be very similar, if not the same, in nature to the one it was looted from. Restitution would allow the tabots to fulfill their sacred purpose in religious ceremonies and provide congregants with the spiritual connection and communal worship offered in 1868. The tabots are not foreign items disconnected from current people. The tabots remain profoundly relevant to the people of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

By returning the tabots, the British Museum would not lose monetary benefit because the tabots are not shown to the public and generate no revenue or public interest. They remain hidden in an undisclosed room, unseen and unused. In contrast, the tabots return to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church would restore their sacred purpose. Often, museums retain artifacts with the justification that they are the best equipped to care for them. However, in this situation, no one other than the original owner is best equipped to care for the tabots. The tabots returning to their home means culturally sensitive care and reinstated purpose. The congregation would know the tabots were resting in the Holy of Holies and be enriched by their presence in the Church and during parades. The tabots would be used instead of hidden away in an undisclosed room in the British Museum.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church contains a vast number of individual churches, introducing the question of which specific church should receive the tabots. One possible solution is to restore the tabots to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London.[20] In 2019, the British Museum stated its long-term goal was to lend the tabots to an Ethiopian Orthodox Church located in London. This is an option because the tabots already benefit church members in London. As previously mentioned, there is a non-display agreement of the tabots between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the British Museum. This agreement also allows certain church members to see the tabots within the British Museum. Since the priests engaging with them currently are from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London, restituting the tabots to the London church would allow the same priests to continue to engage with the tabots. In 2019, an Ethiopian delegation led by Culture Minister Hirut Kassaw met with British Museum Director Hartwig Fischer to discuss the return of the 11 tabots and other artifacts taken from Maqdala. The delegation informally requested restitution, and the director planned to present the matter to the museum's trustees. A long-term loan was considered as a possible solution to the Ethiopian delegation's request. If facilitated by the Ethiopian government, the tabots would likely be

[19] Jeff Diamant, "Ethiopia Is an Outlier in the Orthodox Christian World," Pew Research Center, November 28, 2017, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/11/28/ethiopia-is-an-outlier-in-the-orthodox-christian-world/.

[20] I contacted the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London for a statement on the possible restitution to their Church and I have yet to receive a response.

entrusted to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which would decide their final location. [21]

The restitution of the tabots to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London could allow the British public to be educated by the tabots remaining in London. It offers a unique opportunity for free public education, as one could attend a parade and be culturally enriched by the tabots' presence within their community. By restituting the tabots to the Church in London, the British Museum and Britain's government could demonstrate their dedication to public education and cultural enhancement. Furthermore, it eliminates more significant safety concerns, such as damaging the tabots when transporting the tabots thousands of miles away to Ethiopia. While there are a few discussions on returning the tabots to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London, the discussions do not seem to be a priority of the British Museum. With no recent serious progress towards restitution to Ethiopia, perhaps the British Museum could explore returning the tabots to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in London as a middle-ground solution and continue the conversations from 2019.

7. Imperialism and Art: How Do the Tabots Reflect on the Effects of British Colonialism and Imperialism?

The tabots are not the only contested artifacts in the British Museum. Many countries are asking for different cultural artifacts to be restored. For example, Nigeria requested the restitution of the Benin Bronzes. The Benin Bronzes are a collection of plaques and sculptures from bronze and brass looted from the Kingdom of Benin. This looting resulted from a lost war against the British invasion in 1897, and like the battle at Maqdala, the city was ransacked. The destruction of Benin City paved the way for British colonial rule, and the bronzes were distributed worldwide. While some museums have returned the bronzes to Nigeria, the British Museum has yet to do so. The British Museum retaining the Bronzes is "not just a record of colonial oppression and historic crimes but, to many, the thing itself perpetuated." [22] The Benin Bronzes sit as a reminder of the massacre that happened in Benin City and how colonizers like the British undermined and destroyed thriving African communities.

Furthermore, another highly contested object is the Parthenon Marbles, a collection of marble sculptures and reliefs taken by Lord Elgin from Athens, Greece. The British Museum says that the marbles were obtained legally with permission from the Ottoman authorities. Greece contradicts this, saying that the marbles were stolen and requested restitution. The marbles are important cultural artifacts that were part of the Parthenon but are now separated between Athens and London. The Parthenon's narrative and the critical Greek history behind it are only fully realized when the collection is displayed as a whole. By comparing the tabots to the bronzes and marbles, it becomes clear that the contest surrounding these artifacts is not just about legal ownership. It is about the legacy of imperialism on a larger scale and how we reckon with it. A Guardian opinion article captures this idea, arguing that Britain's approach to the marbles reflects post-imperial arrogance. While former colonies have regained independence, they are still denied ownership of their cultural heritage. The article suggests that Greece is essentially being told it was too weak to prevent the Ottomans from giving away its artifacts and should now accept Britain's authority

[21] Martin Bailey, "British Museum Considers Loan of 'invisible' Objects Back to Ethiopia," The Art Newspaper - International art news and events, September 28, 2021, https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2019/05/20/british-museum-considers-loan-of-invisible-objects-back-to-ethiopia.

[22] Martha Gill, "Being a Victim of Theft Might Help the British Museum Reflect on Returning Its Own Swag ," The Guardian, September 2, 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/sep/02/british-museum-should-give-back-loot-benin-bronzes.

over them. The British Museum upholds this dynamic by insisting that Greece should be grateful to see its own artifacts displayed alongside treasures from Africa and Asia, reinforcing Britain's lingering imperial influence. [23]

The Guardian's article simplifies the British Museum's rhetoric into clear and direct terms. Retaining highly contested cultural artifacts is a precise example of how Britain's history as a leading colonial and imperial power still benefits it today. Since the British Museum is in a position of power, no matter how many requests and cases for return are made, they can still refuse. Britain and the British Museum need to work to remove the barriers to equity and equality that they have set up. Though the past cannot be changed, new and more equitable precedents surrounding art history and acquisition can be set. The museum justifies its retention of the bronzes and marbles by citing economic benefits and public education. However, these justifications fall apart in the case of the tabots. The tabots provide no monetary value or public educational purpose in the museum's collection, leaving the British Museum without any legitimate reason to keep these sacred objects.

The British Museum argues that it can best care for the artifacts. This argument is insensitive, as it implies that the very people from whom the artifacts were looted are not equipped to care for them. The focus should not be on who can provide the best care but rather on making sure that the artifacts are returned to where they ethically belong. There are spaces for the contested objects in their home countries. The tabots, marbles, and bronzes may have been legally acquired in their historical contexts in the past. However, the British Museum should begin to challenge its ideas of how legally acquired is currently defined and how deeply imperialist values are instilled in its definition.

Returning the tabots would set a significant new precedent that could pave the way for other artifacts, such as the Benin Bronzes and Parthenon Marbles, to be eventually returned. In a practical sense, the tabots are much easier to transport as they are smaller and lighter than the Bronzes and Marbles. Additionally, the tabots could possibly be restituted without modifying the British Museum Act. It is a first step towards one of the largest museums in the world, full of looted items, recognizing the imperialism that runs through its core. This is just the beginning that could serve as a symbolic first step in a large movement for the restitution of cultural artifacts.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church tabots are just one example of artifacts that were legally acquired but did not rightfully belong to the British Museum. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has continually requested the restitution of the tabots, and it is time to honor their request. The only just and culturally correct solution for the situation is for the tabots to sit in the Holy of Holies once again. This paper demonstrated that restituting the tabots is a step towards working around and potentially changing the laws that prevent the restitution of artifacts while also amending historical injustices and promoting cross-cultural and religious sensitivity.

Acknowledgments

There are many people I would like to thank for their support and guidance on this paper. First, I want to express my sincere gratitude to my professor and advisor, Dr. Roxann Prazniak. Her dedication to helping me improve my work and her encouragement to pursue publication have been invaluable. I also want to thank my family, especially my parents, Mekonen and Svetlana Shewaye, who have always been a source of strength for me. They pushed me to break past

[23] Simon Jenkins, "Return the Parthenon Marbles. The British Museum Has Too Much Stuff Anyway," The Guardian, November 29, 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/nov/29/parthenon-marbles-british-museum-european-culture.

cultural norms and pursue an education, sacrificing everything they knew to give me better opportunities. I will always be deeply grateful for them. To my sisters, Anna and Abby Shewaye, thank you for being my closest friends and always having my back. Your support means the world to me, and I couldn't do this without you. I would also like to thank my Goodfight community, a strong Christian ministry that has surrounded me with friends who are like family. They have made my university feel like a home away from home. I am grateful to Pastor Sean for his guidance and to the entire Goodfight community for their unwavering support. Above all, I give thanks to God. It is only by His grace that I have come this far. As it says in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I have experienced that truth time and time again. I am continually sustained by the presence, provision, and peace of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gave His life so that I could live, and for that, I will always be immeasurably grateful.

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Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

The Bolivian Estimate: The CIA, Juan José Torres, and the Origins of Covert Action

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DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.9*

Abstract

This study analyzes why the US approved a CIA plan to covertly support a coup against Bolivian President Juan José Torres in 1971 while at the same time they approved an overt military and economic aid package to Bolivia. Two conventional explanations of US intervention are analyzed: the desire to make the world safe for US business interests, and the desire to prevent a hostile military force from establishing a presence near the US. The first is analyzed by generating and testing propositions, and the second through process tracing. This study finds that both of those explanations do not fully explain the covert action and examines a potential third explanation based in organization theory and how future research could investigate the theory.

On August 21, 1971, Bolivian president Juan José Torres was overthrown in a coup led by Colonel Hugo Banzer. Leading up to this moment, Torres had drawn an increasing amount of political support from leftist elements in Bolivia, leading to an intense debate among Americans over what to do about his presidency. Torres, a general in the Bolivian military, had taken power in another coup October 1970, less than a year prior, and was the fourth leader Bolivia had seen in just three years. The US was used to dealing with Bolivian leaders who flouted Uncle Sam. Torres's immediate predecessor Alfredo Ovando provoked outrage in Washington because of his nationalization of holdings of the American Gulf Oil Company in October 1969. [1] National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger initially believed Torres would be just as bad, predicting an "ultra-nationalistic, leftist and anti-US" regime. [2]

Just a week later, Kissinger's tone had shifted—he now viewed Torres as a "Latin *caudillo* in the classic mold ... not an ideologue, but a pragmatic, ambitious leader." [3] In other words, Kissinger believed Torres could be bargained with and the situation in Bolivia contained. Torres's regime would irritate the US in several ways—he nationalized other American business interests, expelled the peace corps, and to some extent, hecourted the Soviet Union. [4] Despite the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Directorate of Analysis maintaining that the threat Bolivia posed to US national security was minimal, [5] a small group within other directorates of the CIA believed, as early as March of 1971, that Torres had to be deposed [6]. This camp was able to swing the pendulum of policy away from engagement and appeasement and towards more drastic action. Although the civilian side of government favored

[1] Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume E-10, Documents on American Republics, 1969-1972: Bolivia, Document 80. (Hereafter, FRUS)
[2] Ibid, Document 93.
[3] Caudillo is a Spanish term for a military dictator. Here Kissinger means Torres was not ideologically left wing and would only drift left because of political factors. The CIA and members of the NSC shared similar views. Ibid, Document 95.
[4] A full explanation of each of these moves is provided in the later sections.
[5] Central Intelligence Agency, *"Bolivia Under Torres"*, June 16, 1971, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001100100064-5.pdf.
[6] FRUS, *1969-1972,* Vol. E-10, Document 97.

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military and economic aid to stall Torres's shift to the left, the CIA put together a plan to covertly aid opposition elements within Bolivia aiming to overthrow Torres. A full timeline of events can be found in Appendix I.

Why was Washington so concerned about Torres, and why was Langley so concerned with acting covertly? Examining the Bolivian experience gives us a window into how the US decides to use covert action. This paper will explore what makes American leaders want to intervene covertly; why they pursue covert action as opposed to, or in addition to, overt action; and which parts of government are most likely to support or oppose such interventions, and under what conditions.

This paper proceeds in three parts. The first part examines the theory that the US intervened in Bolivia to benefit US business interests. The second part examines the theory that the US intervened because of Torres's shift towards communism, with the ultimate concern of a Soviet military presence being established in Bolivia. The third part offers concluding thoughts and proposes a third theory that could be the subject of future research: that the CIA orchestrated the intervention to benefit itself as an organization.

1. A Case of Economic Imperialism?

A common explanation of US intervention in developing countries is that the US is interested in making the world safe for US business interests. Other cases well evidence this theory, and at first glance, there are compelling reasons to believe that business interests were at play in Bolivia. Before Torres took presidential power, Bolivia nationalized holdings of the American Gulf Oil Company.[7] A CIA assessment regarded Torres as a major figure in shaping that decision as a cabinet official.[8] During his term in office, Torres also nationalized holdings of the US-owned International Metals Processing Company[9] and a zinc mine owned by the Matilde Mining Group.[10] Concern over these nationalizations shows up several times in the discussions between US officials about what course of action to take.

It is important to recognize the different ways that this argument can be rendered. One way is to say that US leaders intervened because they themselves had direct financial ties to a business facing nationalization. A second way is to say that US leaders were influenced by a pressure campaign led by business interests. A third way is to say that US leaders believed that it was in the national interest of the US to ensure the interests of American businesses abroad. There is not much evidence to support the first two options in this case, so this section will be focusing primarily on the third. To examine this argument, three propositions are generated that would be true if the US did intervene in Bolivia because of nationalizations.[11] First, nationalization would be a concern for the decision-makers in the US. Second, nationalization would be treated as a greater concern than other issues at the forefront of the minds of decision-makers. Third, the US would take measures to quickly address nationalization specifically if possible.[12]

Overall, the nationalization of American-owned businesses consistently aggravated US policymakers, and further nationalization was considered something that should be prevented. However, nationalization was not seen as a

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[7] H. J. Maidenberg, "A Tough Bolivia Shakes Oil Industry," *New York Times,* October 26, 1969.

[8] Nicole Rae Day-Lucore, "Pandora's Box: The Nixon Administration and Bolivia, 1969-1972." Whitman College, 2018, p. 84

[9] Ibid, p. 97

[10] Juan de Onis, "Bolivia Seizes American-Owned Mine," *New York Times,* May 2, 1971

[11] I considered adding a fourth proposition, that the government that replaced Torres would give the US a better policy vis-a-vis nationalization. I decided against this because it's very easy to imagine that the new government ends up facing similar political pressures to Torres and keeps the policy the same. Thus, the proposition is too outcome oriented to tell us much about the decision-making process.

[12] The third proposition should be regarded as a "straw in the wind" test, that is the US may take immediate action, but even if it does not the overall theory is not disproven.

significantly greater concern than other moves to the left taken by the Torres government and does not on its own explain why the US intervened in Bolivia, nor why it took the covert action route.

The first, and by far largest, [13] business interest at issue in Bolivia was the nationalization of the Gulf Oil Company holdings in 1969. The nationalization took place on October 17th, about a year before Torres took power. Kissinger, who would end up playing a major role in the decision to intervene, initially said that "Gulf's expropriation means that control over the direction of the government has ... fallen into the hands of the young radical civilian nationalists." [14] Notably, Kissinger was concerned about the nationalization as a sign of a general deterioration of relations between the US and Bolivia, not just the nationalization. The extent to which nationalization prompted specific concern can largely be explained by the political problem posed by the Hickenlooper amendment, which required the US to terminate aid to any state that expropriated US citizens' property without compensation. One of the first things Kissinger wrote about the Gulf nationalization was that it was "a potential Hickenlooper problem," [15] relegating the issue to one of compliance and not of a *sua sponte* desire to resolve the nationalization issue.

Concern over the nationalization immediately became part of the US diplomatic approach to Bolivia, with Kissinger instructing the Ambassador to Bolivia on October 22nd to pursue a compensation deal. [16] After negotiations with the US, a deal was reached on September 5, 1970 which required Bolivia to pay Gulf Oil $78.5 Million over twenty years, which was accepted by the Gulf company. [17]

When he took power, Torres initially agreed to uphold his end of the deal. [18] However, complications quickly arose that renewed concern among US decision-makers. Ambassador Ernest V. Siracusa noted in a telegram that members of the Bolivian cabinet argued against holding up the deal, and that Torres may be attempting to end the deal entirely. [19] However, as relations with Bolivia deteriorated, the Gulf deal became less and less of an issue, with Siracusa saying after the fact in 1972 that progress on the Gulf deal was "the only bright spot in this grim picture." [20] Notably, after Banzer took power, he agreed not only to keep the deal but to increase compensation to $100 Million. [21] This outcome seems to support the idea that the US intervened to benefit Gulf Oil, but the outcome does not speak to US motives without supporting evidence.

Regarding Gulf Oil, the first and third propositions, albeit the first weakly, are passed but the second one is failed. The nationalization of Gulf Oil's properties was an issue, and it did concern US decision-makers. However, much of this anger can be attributed to the Hickenlooper Amendment and the legal requirements it imposed, making it hard to say that nationalization was an intrinsic concern. Additionally, concern over the Gulf nationalization faded over time and was not mentioned in any of the documents that detail the decision to give military or economic aid to Bolivia, nor the decision to covertly back Torres's opposition. If anything, the Gulf nationalization was seen as a part of a general move to the left that was concerning to US decision-makers, but not a specific concern that justified intervention on its own.

The second major nationalization that concerned US decision-makers was that of the

[13] The value of Gulf's holdings was about $95 Million, compared to $2 Million for the IMPC and $13 Million for the Matilde zinc mine. See Day-Lucore, "Pandora's Box" p. 97 and p. 110
[14] FRUS, 1969-1972, Vol. E-10, Document 80.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid, Document 81
[17] Day-Lucore, *"Pandora's Box,"* p. 73.
[18] FRUS, *1969-1972,* Vol. E-10, Document 94
[19] Telegram, Siracusa to Secretary of State, "Gulf Negotiations," December 23, 1970, NSC Files, CF—LA, Box 770, Richard Nixon Presidential Library (hereafter RNPL). Cited in Day-Lucore, *"Pandora's Box,"* p. 93
[20] FRUS, *1969-1972,* Vol. E-10, Document 109
[21] James Dunkerly, *Rebellion in the Veins,* (Thetford: The Thetford Press, 1984), 204

International Metals Processing Company (IMPC) holdings. This nationalization occurred on January 11, the day after Torres survived a coup attempt, thanks to the help of far-left elements in Bolivia, most notably the organized labor sector and student demonstrators.[22] Some in the US government viewed this as the first step in a broader program of nationalization of foreign investments.[23] In truth, only one more nationalization would follow. US officials quickly came to recognize the IMPC nationalization as a political move to the left as a kind of repayment for their help in subduing the coup attempt.[24] The IMPC received very little attention among US policymakers as time went on and was not an issue during the conversations about covert action. To the extent it was an issue, it was talked about alongside other issues such as the expulsion of the peace corps, the Gulf nationalization, or the potential expulsion of US military advisors. There was also no immediate policy move to do something about the IMPC nationalization, although it could be argued that this was unnecessary as Torres quickly agreed to pay compensation. Therefore, in the case of the IMPC, it weakly passes the first proposition but fails the second and third.

The last nationalization that took place under Torres was that of a zinc mine owned by the Matilde Mining Group, a US-owned company. The nationalization occurred on April 30, 1971, and was celebrated the day after at the May Day parade in La Paz.[25] The timing cemented the idea that Torres was increasingly capitulating to leftist factions in Bolivia; concern was certainly present. President Nixon was told by an aid that he should discuss the possibility of compensation at a meeting with Siracusa.[26] Notably, it was mentioned third in a list of four issues that came up. Special concern over nationalization is not found elsewhere. By the time US policymakers began discussing covert action, the issue had faded into the background. It is not clear from the record whether there was a diplomatic effort to secure compensation, but it appears likely given that the issue was on Nixon's docket. Thus, the Matilde nationalization passes the first proposition, fails the second, but likely passes the third.

Examining all three of these potential motivators, there is not strong evidence that the US was motivated by a desire specifically to protect its business interests abroad. The US weas concerned about the nationalization of US companies' property, but this concern does not on its own explain the adoption of the covert action plan.

2. Communists at the Gates?

The factor that ultimately tipped the scales in favor of more direct action in Bolivia, at least for many policymakers, was military assistance. On June 7, 1971, Ambassador Siracusa sent a telegram to Washington warning that, if action was not taken soon, "the Russians [would] have another communist foothold in Latin America."[27] This came after a meeting on June 2nd with President Torres in which Torres told Siracusa that the usefulness of the US MIL-GROUP, a group of military advisors, would decline if he did not receive US materiel.[28] At this point, other policymakers started to turn in favor of more direct action. An overt plan of military and

[22] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 109

[23] Memo, State Department to Kissinger, June 7, 1971, NSC Files, CF—LA, Box 770, RNPL. Cited in Day-Lucore, *"Pandora's Box,"* p. 97.

[24] In a March 1971 memo, Ashley Hewitt of the NSC mentions the foreclosure of the January coup attempt as a sign that Torres is cementing his power. Despite initial alarm at the prospect of future nationalization, this shows that the US had calmed down and now viewed the IMPC nationalization as a political maneuver that was working. See FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 97.

[25] Juan de Onis, "Bolivia Seizes American-Owned Mine," New York Times, May 2, 1971

[26] FRUS, 1969-1972, Vol. E-10, Document 100.

[27] Ibid, Document 102. The actual telegram itself is not declassified, but another memo makes reference to it.

[28] Day-Lucore, *"Pandora's Box,"* p. 119.

economic assistance was approved which many believed would forestall a further shift to the left by Torres. However, at the same time, a proposal for covert action to aid the opposition to Torres was formulated, discussed, and eventually implemented. This plan was created by the CIA at the order of the chairman of the "40 Committee"[29] who at the time was Attorney General John Mitchell.[30] However, it's likely that Henry Kissinger and Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms played a major role in shaping the policy as well given their positions in government. Helms himself had been in favor of supporting Bolivian opposition as early as March 1971.[31] Siracusa was not involved in the creation of this plan, nor was anyone from the State Department or the embassy staff.

Bolivia's shift to the left, with a possible endpoint of military cooperation with the Soviet Union,[32] does explain why Siracusa and others turned in favor of intervention, but it does not fully explain why the CIA's plan for covert action was also implemented. To assess this theory, process tracing is used to determine where the relevant decision-makers' positions originated, and how they were able to generate support for them.

Immediately after Torres took power the CIA's position, based on their assessment of the facts, was that Torres was "not unredeemable" and an offer of US support could moderate him.[33] This view was opposed to the initial assumption of Kissinger, who said Torres would be "ultra-nationalistic, leftist and anti-US."[34] Kissinger came to adopt the CIA's view a week later.[35] Siracusa and the rest of the embassy staff held this view as well.[36] The US adopted a policy of support for Torres, making friendly diplomatic overtures and suspending the sale of tin from US stockpiles in an effort to keep the price high.

The first official to begin shifting positions on record was Richard Helms. In January 1971, he told Kissinger that "The continuing trend in Bolivia favors the left which, in turn, looks more and more toward the Soviet Union for support."[37] By March, the National Security Council (NSC) was actively discussing the differing perspectives of the CIA and Siracusa, who remained skeptical that any viable alternative to Torres existed. The CIA's position was not at full-on intervention, but the "identification and support of an alternative to General Torres."[38] However, the NSC favored Siracusa's position at the time and recommended increasing support for Torres. In April 1971, President Nixon authorized an indefinite halt to tin sales from US stockpiles, a move which Torres responded positively to.[39]

[29] Named for the National Security Decision Memo that established it, the 40 committee was publicly an oversight board for the CIA, but in practice was often a rubber stamp or was excluded from the decision-making process. The Director, or deputy director, of the CIA was on the committee. Also included were the deputy secretaries of State and Defense, as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, who was often the chair. While discussing the Bolivia proposal, Attorney General John Mitchell was on the committee as well and was serving as acting chair. See John Prados, *"Safe for Democracy,"* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007), pp. 382-385.

[30] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 104.

[31] Ibid, Document 97.

[32] Emphasis should be placed on "possible endpoint." The CIA's directorate of Intelligence produced a report in mid-June of 1971 which concluded that "there is little evidence that Moscow has broader objectives in its relations with La Paz" and that even if the Soviets were presented with an opportunity to fill a gap in military aid to fill in Bolivia, it was "highly doubtful ... that the USSR desires to become deeply committed in so inherently unstable a political situation." This report was seen by Henry Kissinger. Thus, it should be noted that while a fear of a Soviet military presence in Bolivia motivated the US decision to intervene, such a fear was not justified. In fact, as will be discussed later, the lack of justification of this fear sheds doubt on the whole theory and leaves the door open for an alternate explanation. See Central Intelligence Agency, *"Bolivia Under Torres"*, June 16, 1971, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001100100064-5.pdf.

[33] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 94.

[34] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 93.

[35] Ibid, Document 95.

[36] Ibid, Document 97.

[37] Helms also noted that "Bolivia is not of strategic geographical importance to the U.S." and that the damage caused by a leftist takeover of Bolivia would be mainly psychological. See Memo, CIA to Kissinger, January 14, 1971, NSC Files, CF—LA, Box 770, RNPL. Cited in Day-Lucore, *"Pandora's Box,"* p. 99.

[38] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 97.

[39] Bolivia's economy was highly dependent on tin exports. Suspending sales from US stockpiles kept global tin prices high, leading to increased revenues for Boliva. Ibid, Document 98.

As discussed above, Siracusa's position had changed by June 7, 1971. Siracusa was not in favor of covert action then, nor anywhere in the record. His position changed from a passive acceptance of Torres, rooted in the belief that US support could moderate him, to a belief that some kind of "positive means" be used to turn the situation around quickly.[40] In a June 11 conversation with President Nixon, Kissinger cited Siracusa, who he said had "been a softy," as a justification to change policy. In this conversation, Nixon explicitly floated the idea of a coup to Kissinger, who replied by saying that before considering that "we have to find out what the lay of the land is there."[41]

Following this, US policy changed. On June 22,[42] Mitchell directed the CIA to create the covert action program to "supplement overt U.S. actions now under consideration" with both covert and overt actions being intended to "stem the leftward swing of the Torres Government."[43] This plan consisted of $410,00 to cover the costs of running an anti-Torres propaganda campaign and organizing the anti-Torres factions of the military and other armed groups. The following day, Nixon approved the overt actions: $1 million in military aid and $6 million more over the next three to four years as well as the promise of future bilateral loans, with both being contingent on "continuing promise of an improvement in the political situation."[44]

The 40 Committee discussed the covert action program on July 6.[45] The strongest supporters of the plan were the CIA men, specifically those from the directorate of plans:[46] Deputy Director Thomas Karamessines and Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division James Broe. Deputy Director of Central Intelligence General Robert Cushman was a strong supporter as well. There was also a camp of skeptics, mostly composed of those from the State Department: Under Secretary of State Alexis Johnson and Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Charles Meyer. This camp wanted to wait for the opinion of Ambassador Siracusa before submitting an official position. The others at the meeting generally supported the CIA's proposal.

Siracusa was opposed to the proposal calling it "coup money" and arguing that the plan was too risky.[47] Specifically, he argued that there was a high chance the payments would be detected and the CIA blamed, there was no guarantee that whatever government came after Torres would be any better than him, and the overt aid packages that had already been approved would likely bring Torres in the right direction anyway. Not much is known about the debates that followed because the documents are still classified, but money was eventually delivered to people that were plotting a coup by August 19.[48] A coup finally removed Torres from power on August 21.[49]

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[40] Ibid, Document 102.
[41] Ibid, Document 101.
[42] Given the timing of this decision, we can rule out another theory of intervention that has been suggested. William Blum points out that the coup that ended up ousting Torres took place on August 21, 1971, a few days after a deal was announced for a Soviet investment in Bolivia's iron industry. Knowing that the US support for the coup plotters was being planned before then, this investment specifically could not have been a motivating factor. See William Blum, "Killing Hope," (London: Zed Books, 2004), p. 288.
[43] FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 104.
[44] The quote used is in reference to the military aid package. The conditions of the loans were worded slightly differently. Nixon wanted "satisfactory progress" on compensation and other economic issues. This would seem to support the economic imperialism argument from Part 1, but compensation here appears alongside other issues, and only in connection to the loans and not the military aid, which was seen as the more pressing issue. Additionally, the decision had already been made to authorize the creation of the covert action program. To be fair to this side of the argument, it is conceivable that Nixon and Kissinger did not know about the covert action program. The 40 Committee was not sent details about the program until June 29th. For the decision to authorize the overt actions, see FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 103.
[45] Ibid, Document 105.
[46] The directorate of plans is now known as the directorate of operations.
[47] It took three days for Siracusa's response to reach Washington. FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 106.
[48] The specific groups or individuals that received funding have been redacted from the documents, but it is clear that the US knew they were involved in coup plotting. See FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 107.
[49] The Washington Post reported that during the coup, the rebels' communications broke down and they were provided

This timeline demonstrates that all the key decision-makers were concerned about a potential Soviet military move into Bolivia. Although different decision-makers came to different conclusions at different times about the need for a shift in policy, the policy ultimately did shift after Ambassador Siracusa came to believe that a shift was necessary to forestall the removal of American military advisors, which would create a vacuum. Regardless of whether this fear was justified, it does explain the shift in policy. However, it does not explain the actual policy outcome. If Siracusa was the pivotal figure in increasing overt aid, why were his objections to the covert action program overlooked? It is possible there is a still-classified document that shows that Siracusa and the State Department officials changed their minds after learning new information or learning more details about how the CIA planned to tailor the program; if they do exist, they are not public. There are also no public documents in which the CIA, or anyone else in government, explain why the overt action would not achieve its goals. Therefore, concerns over a potential Soviet military presence in Bolivia do not explain why the CIA's covert action plan was authorized.

3. Conclusion

Neither business interests nor communist expansionism explain the adoption of the CIA's covert action plan in Bolivia. US decision-makers did take umbrage with Torres's nationalizations, but this issue was simply one of many for the US. It did not necessitate covert action in the minds of the Americans. The Soviet military threat did cause many American officials to change their minds about the Torres regime—but this threat was never very large, and the CIA was aware of that fact. Additionally, overt diplomacy remained on the table while the covert action plan was being developed. The question thus remains—why did the CIA intervene?

Perhaps the call was coming from inside the house. An alternative theory is that the CIA, especially the directorate of plans or operations, will tend to support covert actions as opposed to, or in combination with, overt actions because they increase the prestige, budget, or autonomy of the organization. This is similar to the theory developed by Barry Posen that militaries tend to prefer offensive military doctrines as opposed to defensive doctrines.[50] As discussed above, in the case of Bolivia, the CIA advocated for intervention before the covert action plan was created, created the plan themselves, and advocated for it while it was under consideration. The plan was finally approved by the 40 Committee, which included representatives from the CIA. The state department, including the embassy on the ground in Bolivia, was against the plan.

There is not a lot of empirical evidence for this theory in the case of Bolivia. Specifically, it is impossible to tell how the CIA benefitted from a covert action plan, especially given its relatively small scale. The total amount of the approved program was only $410,00. There is nothing in the records that shows CIA officials using the Bolivian operation as a part of an argument for an increased budget or an increase in CIA autonomy. The operation was also done in secret, which means it couldn't have increased the prestige in the eyes of the public. It is also impossible to tell how much the Bolivia operation increased the prestige of the CIA among those with the required security clearances, especially given its small scale.

access to American communications equipment by Major Rober Lundin. This claim was denied by the State Department. Earlier, Arnold Nachmonoff of the NSC said in a memo to Kissinger that "If this incident does blow up publicly, we will, of course, deny it." although the memo is about the transfer of funds and does not make reference to communications equipment. See "US Denies Bolivia Role," *New York Times,* August 29, 1971, and FRUS, *1969-1972*, Vol. E-10, Document 107.

[50] Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (New York: Cornell University press, 1984).

Future research is needed on US interventions where this kind of evidence is available to examine this theory. Researchers should examine cases where there is a large divergence between the positions of CIA and non-CIA policymakers, as there was in Bolivia. Although the divergence is very stark in the Bolivian case, the CIA did also have support from other members of the 40 Committee including Attorney General Mitchell and the Department of Defense. Ideal cases to test this theory would also include a viable overt option, such as the military and economic aid plan in the case of Bolivia.

There are two major policy implications of this theory, if it is true. First, if the decision-making body in charge of interventions includes representatives of organizations with an organizational interest in intervening, the decisions of that body will be more likely to result in intervention even when it is unnecessary. Second, viable non-covert alternatives to covert action will be unlikely to quash unnecessary covert action plans. This is illustrated perfectly by the Bolivian case.

4. Appendix: Timeline of Events

- October 17, 1969: Bolivia, under President Alfredo Ovando Candía, nationalizes holding of Gulf Oil, an American company.
- September 5, 1970: Ovando agrees to pay Gulf Oil almost $80 Million over 20 years as indemnity for the nationalization.
- September 17, 1970: The US halts sales of tin from its stockpile to keep the global price of tin high, in hopes that it will moderate the Bolivian leadership. Bolivia's economy is highly dependent on tin exports. The halt on sales expires after 90 days.
- October 7, 1970: Juan José Torres assumes the office of President in Bolivia following a political crisis initiated by a coup attempt led by right-wing general Rogelio Miranda. Henry Kissinger initially writes that "A Torres' regime will most probably be ultra-nationalistic, leftist and anti-US," however after a CIA assessment he changed his tune, instead arguing that Torres would be "a Latin caudillo in the classic mold."[51]
- November 16, 1970: Torres announces the expropriation of Bolivian Institute of Social Study and Action, a private institution run by American priests.
- December 9, 1970: There is a small, unsuccessful coup attempt against Torres led by Colonel Hugo Banzer.
- January 10, 1971: There is another, larger, coup attempt led by Banzer, but it ultimately fails, and Banzer is exiled to Argentina. This coup leads Torres to go further left, and one action he takes very quickly is to nationalize holdings of the US-owned International Metals Processing Company on January 11th.
- January 14, 1971: CIA Director Richard Helms warns Henry Kissinger that Bolivia is drifting further left.
- January 25, 1971: President Nixon authorizes another 90-day halt in tin sales, hoping it will moderate the Bolivian leadership.
- March 15, 1971: A memo by Ashley Hewitt of the National Security Council says that the CIA now favors looking for an alternative to Torres, although the position of US Ambassador to Bolivia Ernest Siracusa remains that the US should continue to offer support to Torres.
- April 9, 1971: The US suspends tin sales from its stockpiles indefinitely.
- April 30, 1971: Torres announces the nationalization of the Matilde Mining Company, which was owned by two US companies. Notably this was on the eve of May

[51] *Caudillo* is a Spanish term for a military dictator. Here Kissinger means Torres was not ideologically left wing and only would be because of political factors. The CIA and members of the NSC shared similar views. See Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–10, Documents on American Republics, 1969–1972: Bolivia, Documents 93-95.

Day, which was celebrated by many Bolivians, especially those on the left.

- May 21, 1971: Torres expels the Peace Corps from Bolivia.
- June 2, 1971: Torres meets with Ambassador Siracusa. Torres says that if Bolivia does not receive military materiel from the US, it will have no need for the US Military Assistance Advisory Group there.
- June 7, 1971: Siracusa sends a cable to Washington warning that the situation in Bolivia is "deteriorating."
- June 11, 1971: Bolivia comes up in a conversation between Nixon and Kissinger. They openly discuss the possibility of supporting a coup in Bolivia.
- June 17, 1971: Arnold Nachmanoff issues a memo to Kissinger laying out options for military and economic assistance to Bolivia.
- June 23, 1971: President Nixon approves military and economic aid to Bolivia.
- June 29, 1971: The "40 Committee" is sent a memo asking it to create a program for covertly aiding the opposition to Torres.
- July 6th, 1971: The 40 Committee debates the plan for covert action. Most of them agree that the plan should go forward.
- July 9, 1971: Ambassador Siracusa sends a cable arguing against the plan.
- August 19, 1971: Nachmanoff sends a memo to Kissinger saying that at least part of the plan has been carried out. Most of the details are redacted.
- August 21, 1971: Torres is overthrown in a coup led by Colonel Banzer.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Jane Cramer for her guidance and teaching. This paper was originally written in her class "PS 479: US Interventions in Developing Countries."

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Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

Sol Plaatje's *Mafeking Diary*: Analyzing a Black Man's View of a Seemingly White Man's War

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DOI: *10.5399/UO/OURJ/23.2.10*

Abstract

This work analyses *The Mafeking Diary* by Sol Plaatje. Plaatje was a key figure in the history of Black South African nationalism and one of the core founders of the African National Congress. In 1899, when Plaatje was twenty-three, he was working as a court clerk in Mafeking in the outer edge of the Cape Colony when war broke out in South Africa. The war began as an all-out assault by Boer forces against the British Cape Colony; Boer forces besieged notable towns such as Kimberley and Ladysmith. Mafeking became subject to siege under this wave of attack, from October 1899 to May 1900. Plaatje was in Mafeking during the siege and remained in the town until the very end. While under siege, Plaatje kept a diary with daily entries, recounting his struggles, experiences, and insights during the siege; this diary is significant because it is one of the few existing primary-source accounts from the perspective of a Black South African in the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902). The role of the present research is to categorize and qualify the insights provided by Plaatje's *Mafeking Diary*. Here, I find that the *Mafeking Diary* uniquely sheds light on (1.) the immense contributions of Black South Africans to the British war effort, (2.) daily life during the siege, and (3.) the human realities of war—which I argue other accounts of the siege have not covered as effectively. In sum, this work will give careful examination to all those aspects of the diary while also providing analysis of the historical narrative and context around Plaatje himself.

1. Introduction

In November 1899, as shells and mass bombardment cascaded upon the Cape Colony's northeastern border town of Mafeking (Figure 1), a young court clerk was writing about the phenomena taking shape around him. This individual was a certain Sol Plaatje, and the works he was writing at the time eventually became known as *The Mafeking Diary: A Black Man's View of a White Man's War*. Despite Plaatje's seemingly insignificant social standing at the time, he would eventually become one of the central figures in South African history. In 1912, Plaatje was a founding member of an organization called the South African Native National Congress—which advocated for the rights of Black South Africans—becoming its secretary.[1] The group changed its name in 1923 to its more famous iteration: The African National Congress.[2] Plaatje's roles—as a key member of the Congress, novelist, and historian—arguably shaped him into a founding father of the modern South African identity. Simultaneously, Plaatje's account of the Siege of Mafeking, a pivotal event in the Boer War, sheds light on the historically neglected Black voices of the war. Although modern scholarship has done much to correct this stain on the historiography of the Boer War, the lack of contemporary primary sources from the Black perspective thus makes *The Mafeking Diary* a truly valuable and precious document in the broader historical narrative. In

[1] Nigel Worden. The Making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy. 5th ed. Hoboken, N.J: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2012, 90.

[2] Ibid.

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the context of the Siege of Mafeking itself, the diary proves an even more monumentally significant source. In summation, Plaatje's *Mafeking Diary* helps shed light on the immense contributions of Black South Africans to the British war effort, daily life during the siege, and the human realities of war, which other accounts of the siege have not covered as effectively.

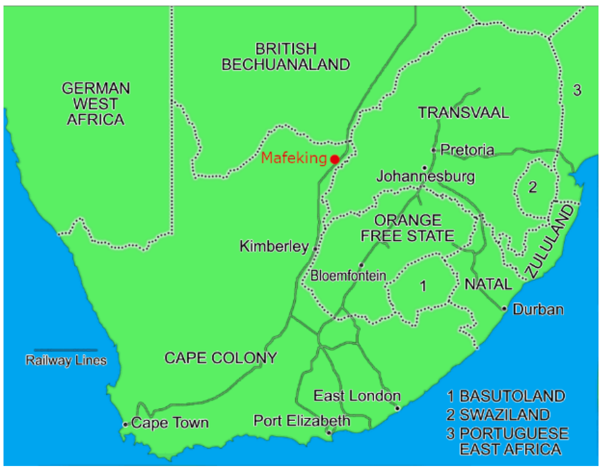

Figure 1. Map of South Africa in 1899 (modified from https://www.historyofwar.org/Maps/maps_south_africa1899.html).

2. Mafeking, Its Narratives, and the General Context of the Anglo-Boer War

The main two geopolitical actors in the Second Anglo War (also known as the South African War) were the Boers and the United Kingdom (the British). The Boers were descendants of Dutch colonists who had arrived in South Africa as early 1652. Over the course of hundreds of years, the Boers had spread deep into the South African interior and had established two semi-independent republics: the Orange Free State to the west and the South African Republic (also known as the Transvaal) to the east by the latter part of the 19th century.[3] Meanwhile, British presence in South Africa traced back to the early 1800s, and by the 1880–90s, their holdings included the Cape Colony in the west and Natal and Zululand in the east.[4]

In the years preceding the war, there was a series of disputes between the British and the Boers; such disputes were profoundly shaped by the following foundational factors. First was competition between the Boers and the British over minerals. The Boer South African Republic controlled the Witwatersrand region, which was home to numerous gold mines that were enormously coveted by British interests.[5] Second, the population working those gold mines was comprised of *Uitlanders*—foreign workers who had come to find opportunity in the mines. The Uitlanders were denied voting rights by the Boer government, and this proved to be a point of contention for the British.[6] Finally, the question of sovereignty profoundly shaped the clash between the Boers and the British. The Boers sought to assert their independence, while the British saw the Boer republics as British territory.[7] Such factors led to the ultimate outbreak of war in October of 1899.

The Siege of Mafeking represented one of several different sieges and battles in the early phase of the South African war. Inclined to form a strong offensive before a mass British response, Boer combined the forces of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State and strategically attacked several vital Cape towns and ports. It also laid siege to the geopolitical centers of Kimberley and Ladysmith. Mafeking, located directly on the border of the South African Republic, became subject itself to siege as part of this broader wave. The siege would last from October 1899 to May 1900, stretching over a grueling two-hundred days. The British garrison was led by Lord Robert Baden-Powell (Figure 2), and the narrative set there by Baden-Powell

[3] Worden, Chapter 2 "The Conquest of Land." This chapter goes into depth about the history of European expansion into South Africa.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Worden, 25-31
[6] Worden, 30-38
[7] Ibid.

himself would arguably symbolize the colonial myth that would encapsulate the siege itself.

Figure 2. Portrait of Lord Baden-Powell, the commander of the British garrison during the siege (image sourced from Wikimedia commons).

During the siege, Baden-Powell made illustrations of the events that took place; these illustrations would later be used as symbology for the Boy Scout Movement—which Baden-Powell helped initiate—to validate art in a masculine, tough, militaristic context.[8] The characterization of Mafeking as an event of macho-triumphalism demonstrates how the event became incorporated into a broader colonial myth of glorious war: rather than emphasizing the toll of war, the importance of the civilians, or even the complicated dynamics of white colonizers interacting with a Black population, the focus is instead on pure chauvinistic and machoistic glory-seeking.

Historian John Bottomley from the South African North-West University makes a compelling argument for how events such as the Siege of Mafeking served to shape the broad colonial worldview or narrative. Images of the siege—such as civilians playing cricket in the face of Boer bombardment—underline a colonial-imperial narrative about the nobility of war:[9] such images depict brave people gallantly maintaining their resolve, even when facing adversity. This narrative appeals to broader sense of heroism and stoicism, which becomes engrained in the imperial mythos.

Bottomley further notes how Mafeking itself slots into a broader chain of events in the historical narrative of glorious British military might and accomplishments in the face of the enemy, stretching from King Arthur to Lord Nelson at Trafalgar.[10] Mafeking, in the traditional colonial narrative, serves Baden-Powell's desire to showcase the triumph and glory of the empire. Such a "history," by its ontology, is truly a hagiography of the empire. It is a tool of indoctrination. The colonial ideology emphasizes certain members of history who matter and conveniently leaves out supposedly unimportant elements—such as the military contributions of black South Africans to the British war effort—or the true realities of war—such as the suffering of civilians.

Importantly, the colonial narrativization of the siege arguably began before the siege had even concluded. One of the most illustrative examples of this comes from Mafeking's official newspaper, the *Mafeking Mail and Protectorate Guardian.* This newspaper was most certainly written by British journalists, for a British audience. Essentially, its role was to write pro-British propaganda. During its November 1 issue, the *Mafeking Mail* boldly

[8] Graeme Chalmers and Andrea A. Dancer, "Art, Boys, and the Boy Scout Movement in S*tudies in Art Education*," National Art Education Association Spring 2007, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Spring, 2007), 271.

[9] John Bottomley, "'Garrisoning the Moon Against an Attack from Mars'; The Siege of Mafeking and the Imperial Mindset in *New Contree*," New Contree, Vol. 41 (1997), 8.

[10] Bottomley, 11.

proclaimed: "We have only to remain steadfast as the matter of a little time will see decided the first great step towards the settlement of the future of South Africa"[11] (Figure 3).

THE MAFEKING MAIL
SPECIAL SEIGE SLIP.

ISSUED DAILY, SHELLS PERMITTING. ONLY TERMS: ONE SHILLING PER WEEK, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

No. 1 Mafeking, November 1st. 1899.

Technical difficulties prevented the issue of the "Mafeking Mail" for Saturday last. Those difficulties we hope speedily to surmount. In the meantime we purpose keeping our friends informed of, happenings from day to day; "Oud Kraker" or "Black Maria" *et hoc genus omne* permitting

The Mafeking Mail.

MAFEKING, 1st NOVEMBER, 1899.

HOW WE ARE TO-DAY.

We have borne the much-feared bombardment for a fortnight and still Mafeking stands. From what we have experienced we do not consider ourselves too optimistic in anticipating a successful ending to the contest. For the first time in the history of Boer warfare have the Boers been defeated at every turn, by a force far inferior in point of numbers. Since the first attack on Saturday, October 14th, they fly directly our guns are heard. Safely out of range they fire into the town but they do not appear to be pining for another attempt at storming Mafeking. In the "general orders" issued last Sunday the following occurs: "The Colonel Commanding having made a careful inspection of the defences of the town and the Native stadt, is now of opinion that no force that the Boers are likely to bring against us could possible effect an entrance at any point." Now, this is like the advertisements say a certain cocoa is: grateful and comforting, and we feel that having got so far through the ordeal we have only to remain steadfast as the matter of a little time will see decided the first great step towards the settlement of the future of South Africa. There is no doubt that the attention of Great Britain, the Colonies, in fact the whole world is now riveted upon this little spot which is now playing a prominent part in the most important epoch of the history of this wonderful continent. We know there is no need to urge the claims of our country and kindred upon our gallant garrison. Being in such close touch with each other that nothing but the exceptional circumstances thrust upon us could have made possible, we are in a position to judge and recognise the steady determination that British blood and British pluck exhibit when such a crisis as the present arises, and we know that the memory of Bronkhurst Spruit, Majuba and Potchefstrom will make that determination, supported by the knowledge of our grand successes of the past fortnight more firm, more strong and more united than has been before, and this, with the grand soldier, who is in command here, will render certain the first stages towards the complete crushing of the enemy.

AND WILL BE NEXT WEEK.

There is no doubt that there was landed in South Africa by Sunday last a body of fifty-seven thousand men, including probably Twelve or Fourteen Regiments of Cavalry, Twenty or Twenty-two Batteries of Artillery, and Forty Regiments of Infantry, besides, most likely, a body of Mounted Infantry. Of this force there will be not less than Fifteen Thousand disembarked at Capetown and dispatched on road here. They may now be settling accounts with the Boers outside Kimberley, in which case Vryburg might be reached by Sunday, allowing for some delay at Fourteen Streams. When our troops reach Vryburg the air of Mafeking will not suit Cronje's sprinters, so by this day week we may begin to wish them a pleasant journey back to the Transvaal. It will then be merely an interchange of courtesy if we return the visit.

CRONJE'S WOMEN'S LAAGER GUN.

When the big gun, with which the enemy hoped to pulverise us, and which has sent more shells in the neighbourhood of the Hospital and Women's Laager than in any other parts of the town, is taken by our troops we think it only fair to Mafeking that it should be brought here. It will make a good memorial and be an object lesson to succeeding generations who, reading the history of our bombardment, and seeing the weapon employed against our women and children, will be able to judge of the nineteenth century Boer's fitness to dominate such a territory as the Transvaal. Let it be placed, say, in the space opposite the entrance to the Railway Station, raised on end, with the unexploded shells piled at its base, with a description of Colonel Baden-Powell's clever defence of the place. We hope the Colonel will bear the town in mind when the disposal of the gun is under discussion.

Major Lord E. Cecil, C.S.O., last evening issued the following under the heading of General Orders:—

The detachment of B.S.A. Police forming the garrison of Cannon Kopje, under command of Colonel Walford, have this day performed a brilliant service by the gallant and determined stand made by them on their post in the face of a very hot shell fire from the enemy.

The intention of the Boers had been, after getting their guns and attacking force, in position during the night, to storm Cannon Kopie at daybreak, and thence to bombard the S.E. portion of the town and to carry it with the large force they had collected in the Molopo Valley.

Their whole scheme has been defeated by the gallant resistance made by the garrison of Cannon Kopje, who not only refused to budge from their position under a cross fire of artillery, but succeeded in inflicting such severe losses on the enemy as compelled him to retreat. In this they were ably assisted by the timely and well-directed fire of a 7-pounder under Lieut Murchison from Ellis's corner

The Colonel Commanding deplores the loss of the gallant officers and men who fell this day. By the death of Captain the Hon. Douglas Henry Marsham and Captain Charles Alexander Kerr Pechell, Her Majesty loses two officers of exceptional promise and soldierly qualifications.

The Colonel Commanding believes that he is giving voice to the feelings of the whole of the Mafeking garrison in expressing the deepest sympathy with the B. S. A. Police in their loss, and at the same time in congratulating Colonel Walford and his men on their brilliant achievement.

Printed and published by Townshend & Son, Market Square, Mafeking. Editor and Manager: G. N. H. Whales.

Figure 3. Scan of the November 1, 1899, issue of the Mafeking Mail (courtesy of the Readex African Newspapers, Series 1 database).

The assumption made by the newspaper was that the siege presented a mighty and great battle within a larger war to decide the fate of South Africa. Rather than focusing on the civilians and those directly impacted by the war itself, this account directly concerns itself with the fate and implication of the British Empire. Such a narrative, that prioritizes machinations of imperial machinery, further emphasises the narrativization that Bottomley describes: The Siege of Mafeking is understood merely as a chronology of empire, its narrative incorporated into the indoctrinating colonial ethos.

The traditional, colonial narrative surrounding the siege thus makes the diary of Sol Plaatje an even more important artifact. In the diary, Plaatje undeniably expresses his sympathies with the British defenders of the town. However, Plaatje also gives an account rich with numerous details that buck the traditional imperial narrative. His emphasis on the contributions of Black South Africans provides a counterbalancing, notable perspective. Plaatje himself notes how *The Mafeking Mail* "regards the Native [Indigenous, Black South Africans] as a mere creature."[12] Overall, Plaatje's account provides an important juxtaposition to the colonial narratives of the Siege of Mafeking, allowing for an actual history—rather than a hagiography—to develop. To understand *The Mafeking Diary* better, the author himself must also be understood.

3. Understanding Sol Plaatje

Sol Plaatje's journey is that of a complicated and nuanced formation of identity—from a court clerk to a champion and voice of Black South Africans. Plaatje writes *The Mafeking Diary* from a fundamentally pro-British perspective. This is largely a product of his early sociocultural molding: Plaatje's early upbringing was around mission-educated Xhosa and Mfengu people.[13] The values of this community were staunchly Christian, but also pro-Cape-Colony and pro-British, because the non-racialized aspect of the Cape Franchise allowed Black South Africans to have a say in the affairs of the Cape Colony, which was ruled by the United Kingdom.[14] Such early identity formation around this community made

[11] The Mafeking Mail, "How We Are To-Day. In *The Mafeking Mail Special Siege Slip*." Issue No. 1, November 1, 1899, 1.

[12] Sol. T. Plaatje (Solomon Tshekisho), John L Comaroff, Brian Willan, and Andrew Reed. *Mafeking Diary: A Black Man's View of a White Man's War*. Cambridge England: Meridor Books, in association with J. Currey, 1990, 60.

[13] Plaatje, 6.

[14] Plaatje, 7.

Plaatje himself a fervent British loyalist early on.[15] This early Plaatje (Figure 4) is the one whose voice is most channeled in the diary itself.

Figure 4. Sol Plaatje in 1900 (image sourced from Native Life in South Africa (1915) P. S. King and Son Ltd., London).

Plaatje's political evolution continued after the onset of the Boer War. For Plaatje, a crucial turning point was arguably the creation of the Union of South Africa (Figure 5) in 1910 and the Natives' Land Act of 1913. The Union of South Africa created a governing system in which the British Cape Colony and the former Boer Republics were united into a single political entity under the white-supremacist rule of the Boers. Although the Union was a holding of the British, in practice, it was the Boers who took charge in decision-making.[16] The Natives' Land Act, meanwhile, segregated land ownership and restricted African land ownership to so-called "reserves."[17] The nature of both events galvanized Plaatje to begin his passionate activism on behalf of Black South Africans.[18] Plaatje was a founding member of the Native National Congress in 1912 and made visits to London to lobby the British government, with one particularly notable visit in 1919 impressing Prime Minister David Lloyd George.[19] Plaatje's achievements extended beyond activism: his written works *Native Life In South Africa* in 1916 and *Mhudi* in 1930 both eloquently laid out his perspective of Black South Africans and Boer white supremacist rule. *Native Life* was notably written as a response to the impact of the Natives' Land Act on Africans.[20] *Mhudi* itself attained notoriety because it became the first Black South African novel written in English.[21]

Figure 5. Map of the Union of South Africa in 1910 (image sourced from Wikimedia Commons).

Plaatje's vision and writings have, up until recently, been deeply discounted in the South African historical canon. Peter Limb of Michigan State University notes: "Few writers have considered Plaatje a de facto historian."[22] Furthermore, Plaatje's fundamentally radical and forward-thinking vision, which took hold most apparently in the second decade of the 20th century, has also gone overlooked. For example,

[15] Ibid.
[16] Worden, 36-37.
[17] Worden, xiii.
[18] Plaatje, 10.
[19] Plaatje, 11.
[20] Peter Limb, "Sol Plaatje Reconsidered: Rethinking Plaatje's Attitudes to Class, Nation, Gender, and Empire in *African Studies*," African Studies, Vol. 62 (2003), 34.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Limb, 35.

Native Life can be viewed as "the first attempt to situate rising African nationalism in an historical context."[23] Additionally, a fundamentally underrated aspect of Plaatje's radicalism was his pro-worker rhetoric. Plaatje spoke about the impact of the Land Act on Black miners in 1913; wrote on behalf of Lichtenburg miners, who suffered under poor conditions in the 1920s; and in 1931, lobbied the Minister of Native Affairs regarding the suffering of unemployed workers.[24] Moments like these speak to Plaatje's fundamentally forward-thinking outlook and radicalism that molded him in the decades following the writing of the diary.

The story of *The Mafeking Diary* is ultimately emblematic of the story of Plaatje himself. Like Plaatje's contributions, the diary itself has undergone much work to find its place in the South African historical pantheon. The diary was saved from obscurity when Plaatje's grandsons gave it to anthropologist John Comaroff in the 1970s[25] (Figure 6).

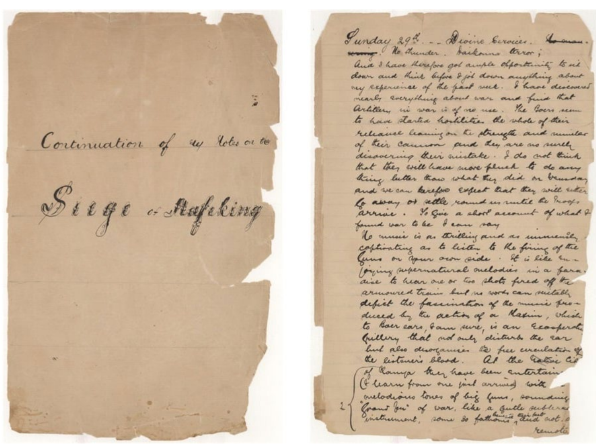

Figure 6. Fragment of the original *Mafeking Diary* (image courtesy of Wits Historical Papers).

The work of Comaroff and other scholars in South Africa has done much to elevate the diary into the historical limelight and draw newfound attention to it.[26] Comaroff notes the transformation of 1994, in which Plaatje became intertwined with the story of Mafeking as a local hero—presumably in the context of his presence during the siege—and founding father—most likely due to his role in the African National Congress, a core institution of Black opposition to white-supremacist rule.[27] 1994 itself was significant because South Africa had just undergone a massive sociocultural transformation, with the fall of Apartheid, and in that same year had held its first free and fair election, in which Nelson Mandela was elected president.[28] In the spirit of this sweeping change, Plaatje became recontextualized in the South African historical canon. The transformation of the historical narrative around Plaatje as the diary was being published reveals not only the gradual convergence of the narrative with the elevation of the importance of Plaatje, but also the relevance of Plaatje's diary to the historical narrative.

Although the Plaatje of 1899–1900 was not yet the radical visionary he would later become, Plaatje's diary serves to construct a foundation for his development in the decades to come. The historiography surrounding the diary elevated not only the story of a single document, but also an entire narrative almost lost to time. The recovery of the diary allowed Plaatje's analyses of Black South African contributions, daily life under the siege, and the toll of war to be recognized in the historical limelight.

3. Black Contributions to the British War Effort

One of the most important aspects of *The Mafeking Diary* is Plaatje's recognition of Black South Africans' contributions during the Siege of Mafeking. The diary is populated with various actions taken by Black South Africans, descriptions of Plaatje's interactions with Black

[23] Ibid.
[24] Limb, 43–44.
[25] Jane Starfield, "Review: Re-thinking Sol Plaatje's Mafeking Diary in *Journal of Southern African Studies*," Taylor and Francis, Dec. 2001, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Dec. 2001), 856.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Starfield, 857.
[28] Worden, Chapter 7, "The New South Africa." This chapter goes gives context into the transformation South Africa has undergone since the end of Apartheid.

South African people, and different perspectives and voices from Black South Africans directly. In one passage from November 12, Plaatje writes: "We have a black Sherlock Holmes in the person of Manomphe's son, Freddy. "[29] Plaatje then notes that Freddy has gathered information from outside the besieged town, risking capture by the Boers in the process of doing so.[30] The direct praise that Plaatje gives to Freddy—highlighting his contribution to the defense of Mafeking as a runner passing through enemy lines—speaks volumes to Plaatje's inside perspective. The traditional narrative paints the siege as a struggle amongst white men in the framework of imperialist might; Black South Africans, people who were considered mere colonial subjects and unworthy of even a mention in the historical record, were typically ignored and set aside. Countering this, Plaatje not only names specific instances, but even specific people. This passage is far from Plaatje's only mention of Black contributions, but its early appearance highlights their consistent significance.

In one part of the December 11 entry of the diary, Plaatje discusses how two more runners—a Black man named Samuel Lefenya and his wife—were shot and severely wounded while attempting to pass through enemy lines.[31] On March 18, Plaatje notes the work of some runners in delivering messages from Mafeking to the outside world, describing their work as being done in a "'Sherlock Holmeish' sort of fashion."[32] These narratives support the idea that there were enough cracks in the Boer encirclement during the siege that runners could pass through to disseminate information and supplies. These runners, more broadly, were part of the system of labor and support roles that Black South Africans took on during the Boer War. Bill Nasson of the University of Cape Town writes: "Dozens of black hauliers also contracted to the military as independent civil carriers."[33] Although different from directly fighting on the front line, such contributions provided valuable logistics necessary to sustain the war effort. In the context of the Siege of Mafeking, without the existence of Black support and aid, Mafeking would not have held out as well as it did against the Boer siege. Despite such necessary and crucial contributions, however, the Boer War's framing remains as a "White Man's War." Plaatje leaves one of the few surviving historical accounts from the period that openly highlights Black South Africans' contributions, as further described by Nasson. The white narrative is written, but it excludes a necessary piece of the puzzle, leaving the oxymoronic story of a white man's war deeply imbued with the involvement of Black participants.

Beyond labor logistics, there was also an active military effort by Black South Africans during the siege. Lord Baden-Powell relied on the direct support of the Tshidi to defend Mafeking during the siege.[34] Furthermore, a militia unit of 67 "colored" soldiers, known as the "Black Watch," also helped garrison the town.[35] Plaatje himself wrote about the Black Watch, noting: "There is a regiment composed of a mixture of Zulu, Shangaan, and other Transkeian breeds under one McKenzie, styled the Black Watch."[36] Here, Plaatje refers to the service of Black militiamen from various ethnic groups and various parts of the country, such as the Zulus from the eastern part of the country in Zululand. This direct highlighting of not only Black logistical, but also military, contributions elevates Plaatje's diary as a remarkably insightful work of history. A simple colonial narrative of glorious white imperialism ultimately has no place for the reality of Black

[29] Plaatje, 31..
[30] Ibid.
[31] Plaatje, 56.
[32] Plaatje, 120.
[33] Bill Nasson, *Abraham Esau's War: A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899-1902*. Cambridge, England; Cambridge University Press, 1991, 73.
[34] Peter Warwick, *Black People and the South African War, 1899-1902*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1983, 31.
[35] Warwick, 32.
[36] Plaatje, 53.

defensive organizing. If Black contributions are included, then that easy and convenient myth of the glorious "white man's war" quickly implodes. Thus, it is left to Plaatje to highlight these basic realities of the siege. Through his detailed description of logistics and military assistance, Plaatje gives an important account of Black involvement during the Siege of Mafeking.

4. Daily Life

Another major aspect of the strength of Plaatje's account relative to others'—such as the *Mafeking Mail's*—is his detailing of daily life under the siege. Rather than focusing on strictly military matters, Plaatje spends a good deal of his account detailing the day-to-day experience of the civilian. On November 18, Plaatje writes: "The prices of foodstuffs ran up to a very high degree." [37] Plaatje then notes significant increases in cost for specific goods, such as bread and meat. [38] This detail helps shed light on what life under the siege must have been like. What kind of choices did one have to make because of the increased cost of living? What kind of toil did people live under? Furthermore, Plaatje's descriptions help make the siege more human than a cold account in a history book. The myth of the glorious noble imperial struggle is also further undone, as Plaatje's depiction of life reveals the truly human consequences and daily realities of siege.

Here, Plaatje's account can be contrasted with an alternate one from British journalist Angus Hamilton (Figure 7), who was also physically present at the siege. Hamilton's account would be published as a book, quite simply titled *The Siege of Mafeking*. In one chapter, Hamilton describes the conditions of the day in the brickfields, a series of fortifications and barricades located outside the town. Hamilton notes: "Nothing is quite so pleasant, so invigorating, nor quite so dangerous as life in these brickfield posts." [39]

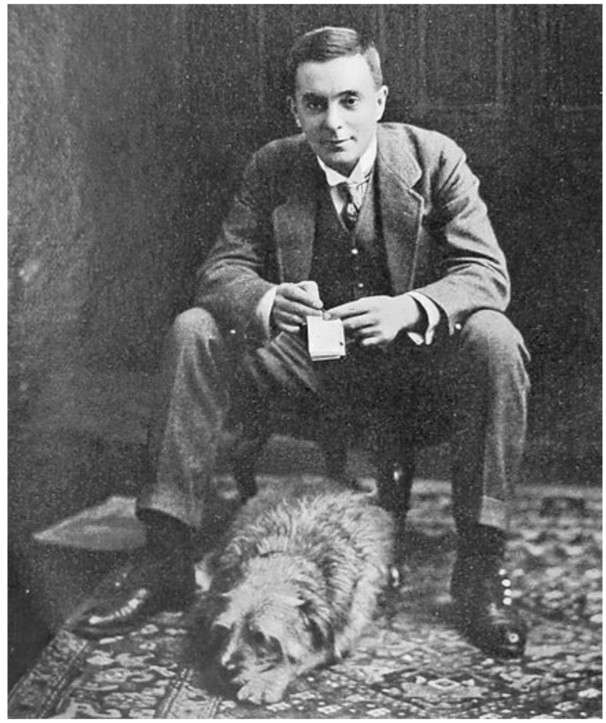

Figure 7. Angus Hamilton, a British journalist present at the Siege of Mafeking in 1911 (image sourced from the book "Somaliland" by Angus Hamilton, Hutchinson and Co. London 1911).

This quotation speaks not only to the real danger of living in a military fortification, constantly surrounded by the threat of death at the hands of the enemy, but also about the simultaneous, enjoyably thrilling aspects of being constantly on the front line. Then, Hamilton further describes the daily ritual between the Boers and Black Cape soldiers of mutually throwing insults back and forth. [40] Hamilton's narrative creates an arguably humanizing picture, helping to create a sense of connection between the audience and those on the ground. The account's core weakness is in the fact that it is clearly centered around the military angle of the siege, rather than on civilian life. Furthermore, Hamilton's language demonstrates the machismo born of the imperialistic attitude towards war, as Hamilton exalts the pleasantness and invigoration of living in the brickfields. In this sense, Plaatje's diary proves to be a more

[37] Plaatje, 34.
[38] Ibid.
[39] J. Angus Hamilton, *The Siege of Mafeking,* Methuen and co., 1900, 222.
[40] Ibid.

compelling account, as the focus is quite literally shifted to the kitchen counter matters, such as the rising price of food.

Arguably, the biggest culprit behind many contemporary accounts' ignorance to the realities of daily life is *The Mafeking Mail* itself. In the November 15 issue, *The Mail* writes: "The advance was made with great dash and in spite of resistance made by the enemy, our men carried it at the point of the bayonet, capturing guns, wagons, stores and camp equipment." [41] The focus here is purely on the glory of war and imperial success. Nowhere within this same article is there any mention of the daily lives of Mafeking residents, perspectives of non-combatant aides to the town, or anyone who is not a soldier on the front line. The imperialist notion of the violence inflicted on the enemy being of primary importance—rather than, for example, violence inflicted on the civilians—is prominent in *The Mail*'s reporting. For a paper meant to report on the activities and life of the town it is based in, it merely recycles military propaganda for the sake of painting an imperial hagiography. Plaatje's diary does take a pro-British stance, but it fundamentally presents itself as a work documenting life and history. Its angles on daily life, such as the rising price of food, make it more historically representative than *The Mail*'s accounts of the siege.

5. The Toll of War

In his *Mafeking Diary,* Plaatje writes a narrative that compellingly tells a story that fundamentally speaks to the human condition, in how people process tremendous suffering as it occurs around them. In this, Plaatje also becomes an effective chronicler of the true toil and cost of war. In one passage from a particularly long account on December 8, Plaatje writes: "I have never before realized so keenly that I am walking on the brink of the grave. It is really shocking, while still meditating how one of your fellow creatures met his fate at the shell of the Dutch cannon." [42] The passage is blunt, yet simultaneously truly rich. Plaatje gives a rather cold, yet also deeply humanizing, account of the ugly nature of war—to know how a fellow person must have met their fate at the hands of the shelling. An event that can be given an armchair descriptor is poetically captured in the perspective of another human being. The passage is not rife with glory. It is a stare straight into the reflection of reality around oneself. A life that Plaatje may have spoken to, or known deeply, was snuffed out.

Angus Hamilton provides a similarly grim account of the impact of siege upon the psyche. Hamilton writes: "The siege drags on, however, the days seeming to be an endless monotony in which there is absolutely nothing to sustain one's interest. Week by week we make a united and laborious attempt to whip our flagging energies into some activity." [43] As time during the siege drags on, the boredom caused by siege itself begins to drain the soul of those under it. The human spirit and psyche decline, reducing many of its victims to a state of longing and desperation. Hamilton effectively captures the toll of war through the aspect of boredom, characterizing failed attempts to foster "energies into some activity," as he puts it. This deeply human element of the toll of war can be placed alongside Plaatje's account. Plaatje's account can be seen as more directly visceral, as he speaks to the direct death caused by war; however, both Plaatje and Hamilton offer deeply humanizing and moving perspectives of war's impacts on civilians.

Meanwhile, as a propaganda mouthpiece for imperialism, *The Mafeking Mail* wholly avoids discussing the true toll of war. The outlet is ready and eager to report on the glorious successes of British imperialism on the front, but accounts

[41] The Mafeking Mail, "Telegrams from Capetown in *The Mafeking Mail Special Siege Edition,*" Issue No. 11, November 15 1899, 1.

[42] Plaatje, 50.

[43] Hamilton, 208.

such as Plaatje's—regarding the true reality of shelling and death—do not conveniently fit the imperial line of war's glory and nobility. Broadly, the conditions endured by the people of Mafeking during the siege amounted to a mixture of boredom and claustrophobia, with shells crashing at random.[44] Under such dangerous and uncertain circumstances, demoralization set in among those in the town.[45] This is emblematic of both Plaatje and Hamilton's accounts of the separate tolls of shelling and boredom. As a resident of Mafeking during the entirety of the siege, Plaatje bore witness to such suffering, and his diary reflects the deeply personal experience of one who has undergone the toil and misery of war. In the January 2 entry of the diary, Plaatje writes about the aftermath of an artillery shell hitting an individual, describes how it "amputated [him] in a most piteous manner – both arms and legs. He died after this."[46] This scene of mutilation would most certainly have left a strong impression on Plaatje, as this suffering was something he had experienced firsthand. Such emotions are reflected in Plaatje's writing, making for a truly compelling and moving account of the toil of war during the siege, as not seen by other accounts.

6. Conclusion

Sol Plaatje's *Mafeking Diary* is a truly remarkable document. A writing almost lost to time, it highlights the contributions of Black South Africans, daily life during the siege, and toll of war better than other contemporary accounts of the siege, such as the *Mafeking Mail*'s. Plaatje was a visionary for South Africa and a voice of his people. Though his development, in this regard, only emerged after the war, there is no doubt that Plaatje's experiences during the Boer War and the siege of Mafeking served as a key foundation for his developing worldview. Seeing the immense role that Black South Africans played and the toil and suffering of war itself, followed by the utter disappointment of the lack of change for the better, and even worsening conditions for Black South Africans, must have felt like a crushing weight of absolute futility on Plaatje. Ultimately, the diary speaks not only to Plaatje as a monumental figure in his own right, but also to the complex and ongoing process of the development of the modern South African identity.

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[44] Fransjohan Pretorius, *The A to Z of the Anglo-Boer War*, Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2010, 256.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Plaatje, 76.

Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal
23.2 (2025) ISSN: 2160-617X (online)
ourj.uoregon.edu

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