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The Influence of Economics on Newspaper Election Coverage in 1870s Montana

Nathan Parmeter¹

As America wrapped up celebrations of its centennial in 1876, attention shifted to the presidential election between Democrat Samuel Tilden and Republican Rutherford Hayes for the White House.² Throughout the country, the election was heavily watched and followed, as a variety of national issues were at stake for American citizens regardless of their choice for president. The Helena, Montana Territory newspaper, *The Helena Weekly Herald* was no exception to the amount of coverage given prior to the election. Once it became clear that the 1876 election would be the closest and most controversial race ever, the *Weekly Herald* jumped on the issue, sometimes dedicating half of its weekly edition to the national election. At first glance, it seems surprising that a small town newspaper (Helena only had around 5,000 residents in 1876³) would dedicate a large amount of coverage to the election for several consecutive weeks because of the fact that Montana residents weren't voting in it due to Montana's then-status as a territory.⁴ The intense and heavily biased coverage of the 1876 election in Helena can be attributed to the platforms of the Republican Party and the fact that their platform of direct economic and infrastructural development would have helped Montana connect economically to the rest of the country, attract more settlers and eventually gain statehood. Other minor aspects of the *Weekly Herald's* coverage during the weeks before and after the election reveal insights into national political issues prevalent in Montana Territory and how local coverage of such issues furthered the agenda of the newspaper.

In order to understand why a newspaper in a small town in a thinly populated territory would cover the 1876 presidential election controversy with such depth, exposure and bias, an understanding of the national and regional context of the election needs to be explored. By this point in American history, the Civil War had been over for more than a decade, and the nation was industrializing in the north and economically advancing in the Midwest and West.⁵ Montana Territory was formed in 1864 out of the Idaho Territory, and much of the economy at this point was based on mining.⁶ The town of Helena was founded in 1863 by a group of pioneers and ex-

¹ The author, being also an editor, recused himself from the editing process regarding this article. It received no special treatment and was required to conform to all standard requirements.

2. Michael F. Holt, *By One Vote : the Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), i.

3. R.E. Fisk., "Notes from Montana", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Dec. 21, 1876.

4. Clark C. Spence., *Territorial Politics and Government in Montana, 1864-89* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 1.

5. Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A new History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 191.

California miners who were prospecting in the nearby gold seams, which remained active during the 1876 election.⁷ From then on, gold mining expanded throughout the region surrounding Helena and the Montana Territory. Between 1863 and 1876, the gold mines throughout Montana Territory had produced almost \$70 million worth of gold, making it an important part of the local and territorial economy.⁶ Politically, Montana was a very divided territory since its inception; during the 1860s, huge factions of Southern and Anti-War Democrats lived in the territory while factions of Republicans kept the local political debate competitive at the time.⁸ But while it may seem that Montana was cut off from the rest of the Union with its own political system and culture, it shared many of the same political characteristics found in the East and Midwest, such as mass corruption and political dominance by business interests.⁹ Despite being geographically, culturally and politically distinct from the American nation, near and far, the territory needed to connect to the East and Midwest if it wanted to turn into an economic power, expand, and attract additional settlers to the territory.⁸ How to finance infrastructure and promote economic growth in the region became a contentious political issue in the 1870s and can be attributed to the *Helena Weekly Herald's* coverage of the 1876 presidential election.

Even before the election began, the *Weekly Herald* showed signs of pro-Republican bias in its pre-election editions. For example, in the November 2, 1876 edition (Released days before the election) is an advertisement for the Hayes and Wheeler (Republican) tickets for the presidency.¹⁰ That edition of the *Weekly Herald* had no advertisements concerning the campaigns of any local, territorial or national Democratic candidates,¹¹ which indicates political bias on the part of the newspaper on behalf of the Republican Party, as a truly neutral newspaper would feature both parties' election tickets. Meanwhile, in their projections of the election, the newspaper highlights the extent of fraud on behalf of the Democratic Party, claiming that such fraud spoils the election results and tips the scales towards the Democrats:

We verily believe, if an honest vote could be had to-day, both South and North, in which each man could be left alone to vote his honest sentiments without any interference or influence from anyone else, Hayes and Wheeler would receive two-thirds of all votes cast.¹²

While Democrats are blasted throughout the November 2nd edition for their electoral fraud

6. Clark C. Spence., *Territorial Politics and Government in Montana, 1864-89* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 4-8.

7. R.E. Fisk., "Notes from Montana", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Dec. 21, 1876.

8. Clark C. Spence., *Territorial Politics and Government in Montana, 1864-89* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 20-22.

9. *Ibid*, 310.

10. R.E. Fisk., "Republican National Ticket", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Nov. 2, 1876.

11. *Ibid*, Nov. 2, 1876.

12. R.E. Fisk., "The Doubt and The Reason for It", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Nov.2, 1876.

practices, the same edition does not condemn fraud committed by Republican voters and officials¹⁰, including issues such as Colorado's quick admission and the legislature's rush to appoint three Republican electoral voters without a popular vote.¹³ Regardless of the electoral bias present in the November 2nd edition, projections taken from an Eastern newspaper claimed that the presidential election would be a close race, with New York possibly being the crucial state either way.¹⁴ Unlike other pre-election coverage, this section is slightly more objective and neutral in its reporting. This may indicate that the newspaper wanted to wait and see how the actual election would turn out rather than speculate on the possible results. In addition to the election's various controversies, once Election Day arrived and ballots began to be counted, both coverage and amount of bias within such coverage would increase because of what the election meant to citizens and businessmen of Helena and Montana.

In the eight weeks between November 2 and December 21, 1876, almost every single weekly edition of the *Helena Weekly Herald* was dedicated to the national election, and more specifically the numerous controversies surrounding the election. However, two notable features of the election coverage are the sheer volume of coverage (sometimes up to four out of the eight pages present in each edition) and pro-Republican bias throughout. For instance, November 16th edition contains harsh condemnation of fraud on behalf of Democratic voters:

Really the only doubt that hangs over the result in South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, is whether the Democrats have succeeded in their schemes of force and fraud to rob the colored man of the right to vote as he pleases. Everyone knows that the blacks are in a majority in those States and that not one would voluntarily vote for Tilden.¹⁵

If the *Weekly Herald* was truly objective and unbiased, a significant fact that would also have to be reported is the fraud and corruption committed by Republican voters and politicians, which is significant because during this period in American history, both major parties and their voters committed widespread fraud and corruption in the electoral process.¹⁶ The unequal condemnation of voter fraud between the parties is reinforced by an article in the December 15th edition, in which the newspaper blasts the Democratic party for exposing Republican voting fraud in New York:

Weeding out the hordes and gangs imported from overwhelmingly Democratic States and given a domicile in the large cities for a time sufficient to entitle them to vote, and with an ordinarily fair election in other respects, it is estimated that Hayes' majority in the State would have reached the neighborhood of 50,000. Isn't it about time Democrats quit yelling

13. Michael F. Holt, *By One Vote : the Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 31-32.

14. R.E. Fisk, "Presidential Prospects", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Nov.2, 1876.

15. Ibid, "The Situation"

16. Michael F. Holt, *By One Vote : the Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), xii-xiii.

‘fraud’ as to the three Southern States still honestly held to Republican allegiance? It would seem so.¹⁷

The author the article was staging a political attack on the Democratic Party, to name and shame them regarding their abuse of the electoral system, while trying to cover up abuses of the party that the newspaper supports. This is significant because it clearly shows the pro-Republican bias of the *Weekly Herald* and thus, a significant political attitude in the Helena region that the newspaper was targeting. When combined with the excessive coverage that the *Weekly Herald* dedicated to covering the election controversies, clearly something was at stake which was economic and infrastructural development, something that would have benefited the people of Helena and Montana Territory should the Republican ticket win the election.

In the era of the 1860s and 1870s, the railroads of the United States expanded in a pattern not seen in the previous decades, stretching from coast-to-coast and connecting existing urban areas to the emerging regions of the West.¹⁸ Montana was not an exception to railroad expansion, and with the state’s booming mining economy, railroads were critical for economic growth, development and migration to the territory.¹⁹ The November 2, 1876 edition of the *Weekly Herald* discussed the contentious issue of whether or not a proposed local railroad should be paid with subsidies through increased taxes, with the controversy settling around whether or not subsidizing the railroad would be economically beneficial to the local population.²⁰ The opinion piece cites industrial and population growth in Colorado and Utah that resulted from the expansion and construction of railroads in those states, arguing that the same results or better would be replicated in Helena if the Benton-Helena Railroad was to be built with public money.¹⁹ Although the controversy surrounding construction of the railroad does not appear in the edition of the paper for the next seven weeks, the timing was critical as it was meant to inform readers about a relevant political issue. Because railroad subsidies were an important issue in the region during the 1870s, local voters would have wanted to hear information about the issue before selecting public office-holders the following week. But while meant to target the general population, the very same article seems to have political bias in that most of the mentioned benefits relate to industry and mining and those who would have been involved with those industries. Ironically, while the article’s title states “The Burdens and Benefits of the Benton Road Contrasted”,²¹ only one of the seven subsections within the article actually argues against subsidizing the railroad, the anti-railroad arguments are downplayed, and counterarguments to the cases of Utah and Colorado are absent.²⁰ As a result from the rhetoric of the newspaper article, it can be established that the article was politically bias and aimed towards

17. R.E. Fisk, “Result in New York”, *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Dec. 14, 1876.

18. Mark Wahlgran Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A new History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 188-189.

19. Clark C. Spence, *Territorial Politics and Government in Montana, 1864-89* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 3.

20. R.E. Fisk, “The Railroad Question Finished”, *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Nov. 2, 1876.

21. Ibid

pro-Republican supporters, as the Republican Party had previously supported public funding of infrastructure projects such as railroads in addition to supporting and helping big businesses grow and expand.²² It can be inferred from the one-sided coverage of the railroad funding debate that Republicanism was popular among the business and industrial communities in the Helena region, whose support for building local infrastructure would benefit local interests. From the analysis of railroad funding debate, the *Weekly Herald* published a one-sided view of the issue to promote the interests of Republican voters in the region. Ultimately, the purpose was to rally Republican support among local residents and businessmen to lead to the previously mentioned benefits that would come from a publically-funded railroad.

Despite being removed and distant from sectional tensions, Montana Territory was not completely isolated from national issues. One of the contemporary issues was race and race relations following the Civil War and during Reconstruction. Even though the Civil War had ended at least a decade prior and Reconstruction had been underway since, race, race relations and the status of African-Americans were still major issues in American society and more particularly, in the 1876 election.²³ One of the most prominent controversies in the presidential election was the intimidation of Southern Black voters and whether or not such fraud was depriving Republicans of a fair win in several Southern states.²⁴ In particular, voter intimidation against African-Americans was not just a Southern issue, as it existed in Montana Territory. The November 23rd, 1876 issue of the *Weekly Herald* details an African-American man in Montana who was intimidated by White men at the polls while trying to vote for the Republican ticket.²⁵ The mentioning of voter intimidation of African-Americans in Helena is significant because it shows that the problem of voter intimidation was not just a problem in the South, and was happening in other parts of the United States despite efforts to eliminate it. Like with coverage on the national election, the article regarding voter intimidation in Helena is biased towards the Republican Party and their platform as it only presents the side of the African-American voter and his experience at the polls.²⁴ Its purpose was to highlight a problem Republican voters would have heavily cared about, as the Republican Party were in support of Black voting rights and Hayes' platform for the 1876 presidential race included protection of Black voting and civil rights.²⁶ Ultimately, the mentioning of the Montanan African-American man who was intimidated for voting Republican was meant to gain pro-Republican support by highlighting the existence of issues in the local community that Republicans (Both at the national and local level) sought to fix, and by associating the Democrats with supporting it.

22. Mark Wahlgran Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A new History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 83.

23. Michael F. Holt, *By One Vote: the Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 46.

24. Ibid, 181.

25. R.E. Fisk, "That Election Riot", *The Helena Weekly Herald* (Helena, Montana), Nov. 23, 1876.

26. Michael F Holt, *By One Vote : the Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 84.

By 1876, the United States was in the process of transition as a variety of changes were occurring, ranging from Westward migration to European immigration to massive industrialization and the growth of major cities.²⁷ That year, Americans were to elect a new president, and with massive disillusionment with Reconstruction and the previous presidential administration, it seemed as if a power shift would take place.²⁸ When the election did occur, it would go down as the most controversial until the year 2000, with both parties accusing each other of fraud and other forms of cheating at the polls.²⁹ Out west in the newly emerging region called Montana Territory, the newspaper of Helena, Montana was covering it with great depth and exposure during the time that the various controversies unraveled. The heavy pro-Republican election coverage in the *Helena Weekly Herald* can be directly linked to the Republican Party's pro-business and pro-industry platform, as well as its commitment to fund infrastructure projects such as railroads that would help economic growth in the region. Ultimately, economic growth and infrastructural improvements would have been a boon to Montana residents as it would have allowed for increased economic investment, population growth and eventually statehood. By connecting to the existing United States through infrastructure and economic development, Montana was hoping to become part of the larger American nation while still maintaining its identity, which explains why both normal residents and businessmen would have cared deeply about the results of an election they weren't even participating in. Like with the Old West in general, mining and industry were important to the local and territorial economy, and the presence of economic links financed directly by pro-Republican politicians would inevitably lead to statehood while maintaining a unique identity.

27. Mark Wahlgran Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A new History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 191.

28. Ibid, 9-18.

29. Mark Wahlgran Summers, *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A new History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), xi.

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Politics and Newspapers: Race Relations and its Influence on Gold Rush San Francisco

Victor Toste

During and immediately after the American Gold Rush, the city of San Francisco became the largest city in the American West. This growth was fueled by the consistent migration of easterners travelling west in hopes of hitting it rich with gold, or gaining steady work that the new industry of gold mining had created. This idea of “going out west” created a distinct difference in what people considered to be the culture of the American North and South vs. that of the West. The term “Wild West” is used to describe the lack of structure and general unknown of the west compared to the rest of the United States. The rapid growth of the city of San Francisco and the surrounding area led to the first instances of consistent economy and infrastructure that near to the Pacific. One of these infrastructures was journalism, and in October of 1855, James King of William published the first issue of the “Daily Evening Bulletin.” By the New Year, it had become one of the more popular newspapers in the area. In the final issues of its inaugural year, sections and stories focused on the selling of meats and pastries for the holidays, but it is stories discussing the appointment of local officials that stands out amongst all other advertisements. Like The American West, California, and specifically large cities like San Francisco were still trying to form an identity in a country that was already being divided over issues of slavery and labor. In the early nineteenth century, most of the North had abolished slavery, but it was still strong in the South. With the Gold Rush making California economically viable for a large population to settle in, it became a point of contestation among pro and anti-abolitionists.¹ One of the men that opposed slavery in California was the former state senator and rising political figure, David C. Broderick. His rapid advance through the California political system, and his political views created friends, but also enemies and doubters. Soon, the California State Senator was being accused of using his power to influence elections in and around the city. King, the editor of the “Daily Evening Bulletin,” felt this was an abuse of his power and thus he began to run articles against Broderick; accusing him of stuffing ballots and other political offences. In a time where the city of San Francisco was growing, like an infant child, it absorbed what it learned from those around it. Thus, King and Broderick fell on two sides of the growth of California. Broderick wanted to use the lessons learned in his birthplace of Washington D.C. and eventually made the party system of San Francisco irrelevant. “It was Broderick and anti-Broderick.”²

The relationship between David C. Broderick and James King of William is a representation of the questions being asked of slavery not only in the North and South, but also in the West, as well as the struggle for identity of the people within California and the state as a whole during the Gold Rush and prior to the American Civil War.

¹ Junius P. Rodriguez, *Encyclopedia of Emancipation and Abolition in the Transatlantic World*, (Armoek: Sharpe Reference, 2007), XLVIII.

² Jeremiah Lynch, *A Senator of the Fifties: David C. Broderick, of California*, (San Francisco: A.M. Robertson, 2011), 73.

Broderick vs. James

David C. Broderick originally from New York, began his political career by running for the House of Representatives. After that failed attempt, he decided to move to San Francisco and was a player in the smelting of gold. Using the profits, he was able to return to politics and eventually became a state senator and Lieutenant Governor. His autobiographer describes his political style:

In San Francisco he became the dictator of the municipality. His political lessons and observations in New York were priceless. He introduced a modification of the same organization in San Francisco with which Tammany has controlled New York for lo! these many years. It was briefly this. At a forthcoming election a number of offices were to be filled; those of sheriff, district attorney, alderman, and places in the legislature. Several of these positions were very lucrative, notably that of the sheriff, tax-collector, and assessor...Possibly this candidate dissented, but then someone else consented, and as the town was hugely Democratic, his selections were usually victorious...When he came there was chaos, and he created order. There was no party system in the town, and he created one.³

This rapid rise to power led to the creation of enemies. When James King of William began publishing his newspaper in 1855, he immediately began criticizing and attacking Broderick's actions. While Broderick was not directly running for any position in offices in San Francisco at the time, King felt that Broderick and his associates were using their power to influence elections in and around the city. In between his time as between State Senator and Lieutenant Governor, and his eventual election as a US Congressman, Broderick decided to focus on his actions on influencing his new home of San Francisco. Here are other examples where King felt Broderick abused his power.

He also accused Broderick of arranging the deal whereby the city purchased the old Jenny Lind Theatre at an exorbitant price, and of complicity in many other raids upon the public funds. "If we can only escape David C. Broderick's hiring bullies a little longer," wrote King, "we will turn this city inside out, but what we will expose the corruption and malfeasance of her officary."⁴

King used the Daily Evening Bulletin as his platform to attack Broderick. This was very evident at the end of the newspapers inaugural year when positions were being filled within the infrastructure of the city. King encouraged people of the city to vote, but at the same time was sure to tell the people to doubt anyone he considered to be "Broderickian." Even if they felt that they may not be corrupt, and had a clear record, King felt any connection with Broderick showed a clear bias to Broderick's ideals:

In the Seventh Ward, the candidates are Mr. Henry B. Janes, *Know Nothing*, and Peter Campbell, *Democrat*. Both, as far as we know can we learn, are honest men, and either, according to all accounts, would serve faithfully...Since writing the above we learn that

³ Herbert Asbury, *The Barbary Coast; an Informal History of the San Francisco Underworld*, (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1933), 78.

⁴ Herbert Asbury, 79.

the whole Broderick force, including the County Recorder and County Treasurer, are in the field as in favor of Mr. Campbell, and opposed to Mr. Janes. Whether Mr. Campbell is a Broderick man, we do not know. We hope he is not. The cause of the Broderick opposition to Mr. Janes is the school question, and this is the issue they make of it. If we thought Mr. Campbell could be influenced after his election by Mr. Broderick, we should obviously oppose him. As it is, we leave the matter with the voters of that Ward, who will judge for themselves.⁵

Like the Red Scare in the United States during the Cold War, those even possibly connected to Broderick could be seen as corrupt. King used this fear many times in his papers. He indirectly made those who were indifferent doubt their vote and could have moved the needle in the other way towards Henry Janes in this election. This is represented by the eventual results by which Henry Jane won the election. “*Seventh Ward*—Henry B. Janes, (K. N.,) 564; Peter Campbell, (Dem.,) 551. Majority for James, 13.”⁶ It is clear that there was some worry behind Broderick and his goals in the world of politics. Broderick was known for having many friends in many different subjects and areas around the city. In this excerpt from “The Barbary Coast,” Broderick’s expansive crew is named.

One of Broderick’s principal lieutenants was Charles P. Duene, better known as Dutch Charley, who for a brief period was Chief Engineer of the San Francisco Fire Department... Scarcely less prominent in Broderick’s political ménage were such worthies as Bill Carr, Reuben Maloney, Mart Gallagher, Bill Lewis, Yankee Sullivan, a prize-fighter...; Woolley Kearney, equally notorious as a bar-room brawler and as the ugliest man in California; and Bill Mulligan, whom Warden Sutton of the Tombs called “a professional blackleg” and “as desperate a character as could be found among the rowdy element of New York.”⁷

This does not include banks and other allies that King accused him of befriending in issues of his newspaper. The crew contains a variety of characters from different backgrounds and different skills. Some have power within the city and some could be considered to be enforcers. It is clear that Broderick was thought of as some kind of military commander as his right-hand man is named as his “lieutenant.” Broderick seemed to react to politics and the world around it as war and did what he needed to win. This gives some credence to how King believed that Broderick was trying to control the city in and out of politics.

Slavery in California

The Civil War was and is still looked at as a war between the Union and The Confederacy over the institution of slavery. The West is often seen as a separate organism independent of the rest of the United States, yet the West and specifically California were still using slaves and indentured labor. This meant people in California knew of and saw the lifestyle as either positive or negative based on where they migrated from originally. This created a divide even between different racial groups and even Democrats. The difference in the slavery between

⁵ James King of William. *Daily Evening Bulletin*, (San Francisco: Whitton, Towne & Co., December 27, 1855), 2.

⁶ James King of William, 3.

⁷ Herbert Asbury, *The Barbary Coast; an Informal History of the San Francisco Underworld*, (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1933), 80

the American south and states like California was in who was being enslaved, and the work they did. Slavery in the south consisted of white Americans enslaving African-Americans who had been brought to the US for that purpose, but slavery in California was far murkier. Stacey L. Smith shines a light on the multiple layers of slavery and indentured servitude throughout her book, *Freedom's Frontier California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction*. White and Californios or Rancheros enslaved Native Americans, Mexicans, and various other peoples.⁸ These dynamics did not allow for slavery in California to be debated like slavery in the South. One relationship that was common at the time was the capture of Native American children and their inclusion into the families of Ranchero's and Californio's. This was allowed as long as the kids were set free when they had reached adulthood. Although this was part of the law, often these kids were forced to marry within the family, thus making them a permanent part of the family. This system was left from the remnants of the Franciscan model of Catholic Conversion that occurred in California in the 19th Century as explained here: "Californio's also bound Indians into the rancho system through captivity and slavery... Californios justified these transactions by claiming that they had adopted the poor waifs into their families and educated them in the Catholic faith."⁹ As seen here, Ranchero's may not have specifically seen these Native American children as their property, but saw them as students that they were teaching. Not only were Native-Americans taken advantage of, but also people from East Asia and Pacific Islanders. The ticket to travel across the Pacific cost in the range of 30-40 dollars. When arriving on American soil, they were expected to pay off their ticket through labor. After expenses like food, shelter and clothing, these workers were left with cents to pay off their debt and thus were forced to work for many years in hope of one day paying off their debt.¹⁰ David Broderick and James King of William were on both sides of this debate. Broderick was very openly against slavery. He was very adamant about this, often arguing with some of his best friends over the matter, and eventually leading to a duel between him and his friend and fellow politician David S. Terry. This duel ended in Broderick's death but shows how significant the debate was even before the beginning of the Civil War. Questions about slavery and this type of work are not considered to be a problem facing the people of California at the time, but as with Broderick, people were continuing to see slavery in the state and felt the need to question it. Edward Dickinson Baker, a former Illinois Congressman and friend of Senator Abraham Lincoln spoke at Broderick's funeral and stated that his opposition of slavery clearly led to his death.¹¹

Struggle for Identity

Even prior to California gaining its statehood, the native people of the territory and migrants tried to find an identity as people of the state. Both Broderick and King were trying to exploit this confusion in order to create the foundation for what they believed the state of California needed to become. Broderick and his ideals represented those of the north east, where he grew up and learned the game of politics. King, although also from the same area prior to moving to San Francisco, saw California as a unique entity. The eastern United States was the

⁸ Stacey L. Smith, *Freedom's Frontier California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 1-22.

⁹ Stacey L. Smith, 22.

¹⁰ Stacey L. Smith, 95.

¹¹ Leonard Richards, *The California Gold Rush and the Coming of the Civil War*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 4.

hub of white male society, and states like California created questions for the white men who travelled there looking for work. This meant these men needed to find new ways to see themselves as white men in this new environment. Susan Lee Johnson describes this in her book, *Roaring Camp*. “In California ‘whiteness’ was defined in opposition to a variety of ‘nonwhite’ peoples, but for a southern man like Dart, black slaves were the first point of reference.”¹² Identifying and finding ones whiteness was hard as things like the slavery of African-Americans was not as common, and groups like Mexicans and Native Americans were able to find work in places like the mines as well. Men who travelled west looking for work left their family and the world they knew behind. This meant that they often participated in things like gambling, binge drinking, having sex with prostitutes and women of other races, and at times even homosexuality.¹³ This was not the extent of the new lives of men though. Because when these men did eventually wander home from the bars, casinos and fandangos, they arrived to barracks and tents where they took on the roles of women in the care of their clothes, food and other necessities. Susan Lee Johnson describes this lifestyle in her book, *Roaring Camp*.

What most found in the diggings was no shortcut to middle-class manliness but rather a bewildering array of humanity that confounded whatever sense of a natural order of things they could find in mid nineteenth-century western Europe or eastern North America...the woman whose love California lacked was white. For men such as these, the more things changed, the more things stayed the same.¹⁴

Like Broderick and King, a struggle of the old vs. the new and the black vs the white is being fought. San Francisco was the first instance of a city that was large growing in the west coast. The mass introduction of women and family life was jarring to the men who had left so much of that behind. In the matter of years, the lifestyle of the mines and barracks became the nature of many of these men and the political growth of men like Broderick meant the introduction of many of the ideals many men like King left behind. Broderick saw a future of California like that of the states of the north east, but used political practices he saw performed in Washington and New York. Some often thought of him as the “Dictator of San Francisco”¹⁵ The city was looking internally at things like the School Question,¹⁶ and whether or not schools should be built as the population continued to rise. These were fight fought daily that saw men like Broderick and King on opposite sides.

Conclusion

The mid-19th century marked the rapid growth for the biggest city in the West at the time, San Francisco. This made it the center of many issues that were occurring not only in the Union, but also amongst the new territories. Amongst these issues was how the west should grow, as well as how people migrating to California saw themselves as men and specifically as white men. Territories like California were trying to find a balance between the local ideas and the

¹² Susan Lee Johnson. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 71

¹³ Susan Lee Johnson. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 127-138.

¹⁴ Susan Lee Johnson, 137-138.

¹⁵ Jeremiah Lynch. *A Senator of the Fifties: David C. Broderick, of California*. (San Francisco: A. M. Robertson, 1911), 68-69.

¹⁶ James King of William. *Daily Evening Bulletin*, (San Francisco: Whitton, Towne & Co., December 29, 1855), 3.

ideas of the nation as a whole. The state of California was in its infancy and able to be morphed into the vision of those with power within the state. The rivalry between David C. Broderick and James King of William is representative of these problems that people in California faced. Both men faced similar fates. Broderick's life ended in a duel with a friend over political issues over slavery, while King saw his life end to a gunshot as well. Kings death led to the reformation of the Vigilance Committee that would eventually lynch multiple people in response to the corruption they felt was occurring in the city. Their formation eventually led to Broderick leaving the city and travelling across California creating more footholds.¹⁷ The lives these two men lived led to many changes during and even after their deaths. The political scene, as well as general life and race within California lives with the finger prints of these two men and those around them.

¹⁷ Herbert Ashbury. *The Barbary Coast; an Informal History of the San Francisco Underworld*, (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1933), 89

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Writing Defines an Empire's People

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Abstract

Writing plays a crucial role in the development of nation-states across time. This paper argues that written language largely determines productivity and the creation of order in empires, providing examples of how writings provided a means of effective communication, leads to the creation of political and social order, and stimulates overall expansion of civilizations over time.

Cuneiform: The Origin of Writing

Dating back to its earliest forms, writing allowed growing civilizations a means to advance, grow, and establish many powers. Written language has helped to organized societies past and present, both socially and politically. Cuneiform usage developed and enforced social hierarchies, which became more complex as time passed. For instance, the relatively simple Mesopotamian legal systems eventually gave way to the more complex systems and hierarchies of Rome and Han China. This form of organization called for civilizations to dominate and conquer territories because those within the empire understood their roles and places in a singular society dictated by writing, enhancing empires' abilities to send messages, keep records, collect taxes and provision armies.¹

Growing civilizations, such as those found in early Mesopotamia around 3000 BCE, required methods of tracking and accounting for food. The agricultural era gave rise to cuneiform, an early form of a singular writing system, which began to appear on various tablets from the ancient Uruk civilizations.² Cuneiform helped ancient societies manage food production and consumption, making it easier to create a unified class system. Scribes of the time kept track of the distribution of goods which allowed an accurate depiction of their numbers and the resources need to sustain it. Mesopotamian society flourished and the chaos of expanding populations necessitated a greater use of cuneiform.

Simultaneously, writing also provided means of promotion and propaganda for their conquering empires and their hierarchy. Writers used their skills to enable effective communication between neighboring civilizations, spreading propaganda to promote their ideals. The development of written language was a major turning point in history for early human civilizations because it allowed them to communicate their ideologies and religions. Writing in forms of legal texts and narrative stories became vital tools in an empire's ability to sustain itself leading to the creation of legal standards creating order and establishment of social classes as well as the overall spread of religions.

¹ Ikeda, Jun, and Shigeo Yamada. "The World's Oldest Writing in Mesopotamia and the Japanese Writing System." In *Ancient West Asian Civilization*, pp. 157-163. Springer Singapore, 2017.

² Montgomery, David. "Rivers of Life." In *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Writing on Stone Tablets: A Rendition of Ancient Politics

Some of the next generation of civilizations that rose to power around 1000 BCE effectively used their writing systems to establish a more centralized society by engraving legal text on stone or clay tablets which would be displayed for citizens to see. These legal manuscripts allowed everyday citizens a sense of order as they are presented by their rulers a set of rules they must obey. For example, The Code of Hammurabi, an early Mesopotamian legal code, provided an effective means of order as the laws imprinted on stones influenced their citizens by outlining sets of rules. The Code presented laws regarding diverse subjects, such as labor division, slavery, food distribution, and even adultery.³ Laws like Law #196 of the Code dictated retribution for any for any wrongdoing, giving a sense of justice to the Mesopotamia society:

If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye. If one break a man's bone, they shall break his bone. If one destroy the eye of a freeman or break the bone of a freeman he shall pay one gold mina. If one destroy the eye of a man's slave or break a bone of a man's slave he shall pay one-half his price.⁴

It also gives us a clear example of types of punishment that were expected for particular crimes. The Code served as a general guideline to deal with disputes, promoting the idea of fairness.

Many Laws in Hammurabi's Code, such as the Law #265, take on the pursuit of justice and order within their society:

If a herdsman, to whose care cattle or sheep have been entrusted, be guilty of fraud and make false returns of the natural increase, or sell them for money, then shall he be convicted and pay the owner ten times the loss.⁵

Hammurabi's Code implemented a set of regulations that pertained to a variety of different matters. The reference to herdsman is indicative of developed labor divisions as a result of this legal code, as it specially mandates the consequences that would occur if someone considered a herdsman did not follow his obligations to the owner of the cattle. It becomes evident that society becomes dependent on the the rules defined in the code, ensuring previously implied social divisions created prior.

In addition to establishing laws, writing also maintained social order through everyday bureaucratic tasks like record keeping. Allowing for easier management of goods, record keeping established additional social classes and increased the distinctions between the preexisting classes. Ancient Mycenaean scribes took on the responsibility of defining the social classes of their society, and detailing how resources would be divided among them. The scribes recorded their work on stone tablets written in the Linear B script providing specific details of the social roles

³ Ruth Mostern, "Trade, Debt, And Law," (Presentation, History 10: Introduction to World History to 1450, University of California, Merced, Merced, CA, [September 23, 2015]).

⁴ King, L. W. "The Avalon Project : Code of Hammurabi." The Avalon Project : Code of Hammurabi. Accessed December 16, 2016.

⁵ King, L. W. "The Avalon Project : Code of Hammurabi." The Avalon Project : Code of Hammurabi. Accessed December 16, 2016.

of priests, slaves, landlords, bureaucrats, and the gods.⁶ Record keeping reinforced the social order of the law, allotting more resources to those higher up in the social hierarchy.

Narratives as Promotion for Growing City-States

Narratives and propaganda allowed polities to spread depictions of themselves and gain supporters abroad. As Evident with the Sumerian epic Gilgamesh, the line between history, folklore, religion, and propaganda was often blurred. The Sumerians used the Epic of Gilgamesh to stir up support, displaying Gilgamesh as a proud man and fierce warrior. His story inspired others to join and expand Sumeria, the land of Gilgamesh, portraying those outside the glamorous greatness of Sumer as wild men.⁷ The character of Enkidu in the epic serves as the best example of how citizens of ancient civilizations may have come to understand Sumer's glorified depiction from 2100 BC at the time of its creation, onward.

Enkidu in the tale was portrayed as barbarous and it was not until he was exposed to the Sumerian city life that he was able to become great and fulfill his purpose of besting Gilgamesh. Told in form of a story, the Epic was able to reach across the known world through the use of inscribed tablets, showcasing Enkidu's accomplishments and drawing more people into the Sumerian way of life. Writing was key in effective communication across families and city states, allowing many to express either personal or public messages to their neighboring citizens in the form of stories like Gilgamesh.⁸ It was this communication that caused civilizations to become popular and expand in size and population.

An Increase of Social Complexity

As civilizations continued to grow in size and complexity they began to rely more on inscribed legal codes. Dating back to 300 BCE and as late 1000 CE, great empires used legal codes to regulate and maintain their expanded societies by allowing their citizens a clear picture of moral right and wrongs and who held power. The Roman Municipal Charter is a prime example of the regulations later societies imposed. Much like the Code of Hammurabi, these Roman legal codes established a sense of political order within the Roman town, as they heavily emphasized the roles of each class within Roman Society.⁹ Roman law differed from Sumerian law, however, as the Romans were able to move on from the simplistic "eye for an eye" mentality and create an early form of human rights. The Charter dictates many rights and obligations certain individuals had in society, leaving little to inference. Under the Charter, the Roman office known as the Aedile had the right of everything from grain supply to marketplaces, to baths, and even the meeting of the night watch.¹⁰

⁶ Tignor, Robert L. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York, New York: W.W. Norton &, 2011. 98, 118, 247, 268, 271.

⁷ Jamieson, Andrew. "Empires of Ancient Mesopotamia." *Agora* 51, no. 3 (2016): 45.

⁸ Jamieson, Andrew. "Empires of Ancient Mesopotamia." *Agora* 51, no. 3 (2016): 45.

⁹ Tignor, Robert L. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York, New York: W.W. Norton &, 2011. 98, 118, 247, 268, 271.

¹⁰ Tignor, Robert L. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York, New York: W.W. Norton &, 2011. 98, 118, 247, 268, 271.

Roman quaestors, which were high ranking officials appointed by the Roman Republic council, were granted the right to collect and manage the town's funds and usage of public slaves.¹¹ These types of mandates were unseen in the Code of Hammurabi and demonstrate the growing complexity of political ideology. Rights were needed to sustain order across the numerous towns and vast distances of the Roman Empire. Writing addressed the problem of sustainability with an increasing population, allowing the Roman Empire to record and regulate their consumption of resources like food and land on a daily bases.¹² The Romans were able to restrict resource combustion, though ultimately such measures proved ineffective. Written legal codes remain a crucial part of Imperial society, and their complexity and volume indicate that empires have grown steadily more complex over time.

Written language also stimulated social interactions between Roman citizens. The Birthday Invitation of Claudia Severa, serves as an example of how Latin had become a necessity in the everyday activities of upper class Romans. Written around 100 AD, the letter is written partly by several herself, inviting a fellow roman woman Sulpicia Lepidina to a birthday celebration.¹³ The letter profoundly demonstrated the civilians' mastery of the Latin language allowing for many social and institutional ideals of higher education, a concept that is absent from previous civilizations. With writing being necessary to complete daily activities, the need for more educated individuals to help contribute to the empire rose.

The Spread of Religious Writings

Writings advocated singularity in order to strengthen an empire's image against other civilizations. An example of this is the exchange, not only of goods, but also of religion that took place along the Silk Road.¹⁴ This spread of empires' needs and beliefs spread across the Silk Road, allowing for travelers to hear and adapt stores from trading civilizations. Many travelers used writings to allow a more decorative representation of their travels and homelands, spreading religious doctrines to speak unification of citizens between different empires.

Religions as a unifying force outside of state power often times did not appeal to governing forces of larger entities. For example, The Memorial on Burning of Books in the Han Empire was an event that sought to unify a singular political ideology of the Han Empire by destroying any books showcasing a different ideology or religion.¹⁵ Targets of this unified ideology propaganda included the Five Confucius Classics, which were seen as an affront to and burden to the growing imperial power of the expansive Han empire. This further indicated writing's use as propaganda within large Empires, like the Han Dynasty. It has changed over time as propaganda has moved away from narrative sorties depicting society to philosophical texts provoking others to do away with their aged ideologies.

¹¹ Pearson, Elizabeth Hazel. "The development of army administration in the Roman Republic." PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2016.

¹² Tainter, Joseph A. "Energy, Complexity, and Sustainability: A Historical Perspective." *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*. December 13, 2010.

¹³ Tignor, Robert L. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York, New York: W.W. Norton &, 2011. 98, 118, 247, 268, 271.

¹⁴ Richard Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Premodern Patterns of Globalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), Chapter 2, "Religion and Trade in Ancient Eurasia"

¹⁵ Tignor, Robert L. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York, New York: W.W. Norton &, 2011. 98, 118, 247, 268, 271.

Writing as A Catalyst: An Interpretation

The use of writing is the key to understanding how quickly and efficiently humans were able to increase the size and maintain the complexity of their empires. Written legal texts and narratives proved to be quite useful in establishing a regulated society; one that advocated for the growth of their culture. These expanding civilizations necessitated an equivalent expansion of written language, fostering more complexity. The usage of writing escalated overtime allowing for many different uses of writing to unify a society. Writing came to play a major role in an empire's ability to sustain itself, advocating political and structural power and allowing for the expansion of social groups.

Without writing, advances in economics, government, and literature simply would not have been possible, as it is the largest reason as to why advanced systems have continued to expand and grow over time. Ancient writings like those from the River Valley Civilizations were drastically different from those of the Roman and Han empires, but the empires retained similar idealisms on how one should govern and regulate a population. These ideals continue today in our modern society and have influenced vast implications of law. Writing and its effective way to communicate ideas to one another is the most valuable of discoveries in the ancient world. Both ancient and modern nation-states were and are able to dominate their territories using their developed written language.

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