

PORTFOLIO

M.A. AMERICAN STUDIES

2009-2010



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December 2010

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Introduction

The field of American Studies is endlessly broad, combining a variety of disciplines to be able to research a complex country that has had – and still has – an unprecedented influence on the rest of the world. Americanists are not connected by a shared methodology, but rather by the questions they ask about the United States and its role in the global playing field. The essays in this portfolio, written for the M.A. programme American Studies at the University of Utrecht, reflect that variety.

The first generation of American Studies scholars were born around 1900, in the wake of “technologies that were transforming the physical, social, and cultural landscape of the United States and other societies”¹, and were affected by the “complex ideological and discursive legacies of the Progressive movement, World War I, and the immediate postwar era”², with all its myriad impulses. Roosevelt’s New Deal stimulated this research, both in offering funding to academic programs and by generating a new set of sources that came out of the New Deal cultural projects and “promoted not only attention to American literature and the arts but to local histories, folkways, and the celebration of ordinary Americans’ lives”³. The first formal American Studies programs were founded in the late 1930s, mostly offering courses from earlier established departments, though a small number of interdisciplinary courses did exist⁴.

By the early 1960s, the third generation of Americanists joined the earlier generations, and their academic efforts eventually resulted in the myth-and-symbol school, which is the closest American Studies has come to developing a formal

¹ Campbell, Neil and Alasdair Kean. *American Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 106

² Horwitz, Richard P. “American Studies,” in *Encyclopedia of American Studies*, ed. George Thomas Kurian (New York: Grolier Educational, 2001), 106.

³ *Ibid*, 106-107.

⁴ *Ibid*, 107.

method. This myth-and-symbol school mainly drew its sources from canonical literature and history. American myths and symbols that were seen as important to America were analyzed to “define the ‘national character’ and aspirations by suggesting that all people held these beliefs as common and shared”⁵. Landmark works of the myth-and-symbol school are Henry Nash Smith’s *Virgin Land, Brooklyn Bridge* by Alan Trachtenberg and works by Leo Marx, Daniel Aaron, Allen Guttman, R.W.B. Lewis and Roy Harvey Pearce.

By the late 1960s, the myth-and-symbol school became the subject of strong criticism. The school focused heavily on the concept of American exceptionalism: the idea that the American experience is unique, setting the country apart from all other countries. Scholars such as Richard P. Horwitz have denounced this emphasis on exceptionalism, arguing that: “myth-and-symbol classics in general slight diversity and dissent in the United States as well as international relations.”⁶ Other critics denounce not only the choice of source material, but the methodology itself: the “the projection of modern assessments of literary power onto prior periods and its conception of culture [as being] homogeneous”⁷. An important critique on the myth-and-symbol school is Bruce Kuklick’s “Myth and Symbol in American Studies,” published in 1971. In this essay, Kuklick delivers a devastating commentary on the “pioneering works of Henry Nash Smith, Leo Marx, John William Ward, and other giants in the field.”⁸ Since Bruce Kuklick’s critique on the myth-and-symbols school, the field of American Studies has changed considerably. In the 1970s, two new modes of research came out of the field of Renaissance studies: the new

⁵ Campbell, Neil and Alasdair Kean. *American Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 9.

⁶ Horwitz, Richard P. “American Studies,” in *Encyclopedia of American Studies*, ed. George Thomas Kurian (New York: Grolier Educational, 2001), 116.

⁷ *Ibid*, 117.

⁸ Segal, Howard. “Commentary”, in Lucy Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999, 87.

historicism and cultural materialism⁹. These critical modes both “reject both the autonomy and individual genius of the author and the autonomy of the literary work and see literary texts as absolutely inseparable from their historical context”¹⁰. This view of cultural texts has heavily influenced the methodology of American Studies scholars and forms a sharp contrast to the myth-and-symbol school, which regarded their myths and symbols as autonomous from factual reality¹¹. While scholars of the myth-and-symbols school and other earlier scholars of American Studies mainly focused on canonical literary and historical texts, these new critical modes also focus on “low” or popular culture.

Another significant influence on the field that has led to a myriad of new research questions has been the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. Since this movement, ideas regarding ethnicity and identity have changed immensely. Traditionally, immigrants were stimulated to assimilate into American society, giving up a large part of the national identity of their country of origin, in keeping with the theory as the “melting pot” as the ideal solution for American society. Although some cultural movements, such as scholars during the Harlem Renaissance, stimulated the African-American community to pride themselves in their own culture, this idea did not become widely accepted until after the 1960s. At this point, arguments about ethnicity “moved away from the pressures to one central, uniform idea of America as the only definition of nationhood and towards cultural pluralism”¹² under the influence of multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism, according to Campbell and Kean, is “the belief that a healthy culture is made up of many different people with diverse systems of belief and

⁹ Bertens, Hans. *Literary Theory: The Basics*. London: Routledge, 2001, 176.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Kuklick, Bruce. “Myth and Symbol in American Studies,” in Lucy Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999, 72.

¹² Ibid.

practice”¹³. This view has a different type of analysis of cultural texts, and keeping with Foucault’s poststructuralist theory about power structures, “has encouraged the analysis of relationships of domination and oppression, social stereotyping, and focused upon resistance to domination, the need for self-definition and the assertion of difference”¹⁴. By finding new discourses and giving a voice to minority groups that have been subjugated by the hegemonic culture, the idea has emerged that identity is formed “through contact, motion, diaspora and hybridity”¹⁵. In this new model, Americans can identify with several sub-cultures: they can be Hispanic, homosexual, feminist, and still be American. By studying cultural texts through the lens of multiculturalism, it is also possible to re-write history and reshape an entire canon.

In the tradition of American Studies, the papers in this portfolio were written from within several disciplines. Some papers use a classical historical approach, such as a historiography of the Jewish American identity. Others were written from the angle of political science, such as a paper about media bias in Dutch newspapers during the American elections. Some essays deal with a specific issue within the United States, such as a paper about a charter amendment in local Floridian politics. Other papers explore global issues like multiculturalism and globalization, zooming in on an American example as a point of reference.

Media Bias in Three Dutch Newspapers during the American 2008 Elections was written for the course “The Presidency,” taught by Richard Conley at the Political Science department of the University of Florida. This research seminar offers an overview of the major research topics pertaining to the United States Presidency. The research paper aims to provide an insight into the way the Dutch media responded to the American elections of 2008, wherein Democratic candidate Barack Obama and

¹³ Ibid, 11.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, 18.

Republican John McCain contested for the American presidency. The paper uses a dataset consisting of news articles published by three major Dutch newspapers, coded as being positive, negative or neutral toward the two presidential candidates. The political theories of Richard Hofstetter and Richard Allen Nelson were used as a theoretical backdrop to the issue of media bias. The actual research was modeled after the Pew Research Center's extensive research project into American media bias during these elections, entitled "Winning the Media Campaign". While the scope of the research is too small to lead to any substantive conclusions, it may serve as an example of the way the methodology of political science can be used in the field of American Studies.

The research seminar "Modern America", taught by Alan Petigny at the History department of the University of Florida, aims to provide a historical survey of the United States in the 20th century. The course places a particular emphasis on the 1960s, as this decade was crucial to the Civil Rights movement. Focusing on several aspects of this movement, such as the African American civil rights movement, the rise of feminism, and the counterculture movement, the seminar explored the roots of the modern American society. The course also dealt with the rise of popular culture, the upsurge of American suburbia and the subsequent changes to consumerism.

The requirements of this research seminar included writing two book reports and a historiography about a topic in the American 20th century. The first of these book reports discusses *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, a book authored by Mark Noll, who is the Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. In this book, Noll argues that modern evangelicals have forsaken the tradition of intellectualism that characterized early evangelicals such as Jonathan Edwards. In *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, Noll makes a plea to

modern evangelicals to again develop an evangelical mind. The book's content is highly relevant to modern American society, as the Religious Right, a right-wing Christian political and social movement affiliated with the Republican Party, seems more popular than ever. This movement is marked by its highly conservative social and political values. Noll argues that early evangelicals were far more progressive than their modern counterparts, and pleads with his fellow Christians to move beyond intuition, and to critically read the Bible in order to develop a more intellectual understanding of the world.

The second book report written for this research seminar discusses *Civilities and Civil Rights*, authored by William Chafe, who is the Alice Mary Baldwin Professor at Duke University. The book is a case study of Greensboro in North Carolina, a city known for its progressive image in the South and home to the country's first sit-in protest. The city would later play a crucial role in the Black Power movement of the 1960s. Chafe's book places the local occurrences of Greensboro in the national context of the Civil Rights Movement, providing its readers with an enhanced understanding of the struggle for racial equality in the United States.

The final assignment of this course was to write a historiography of a topic in the American 20th century. Furay and Salevouris have defined historiography as "the study of the way history has been and is written ... the changing interpretations of ... events in the works of individual historians."¹⁶ *Beyond Assimilation and Acculturation: a Historiography of the Jewish American Identity* gives an overview of six major works on the topic of the Jewish American identity. The Jewish American community is one of the most economically successful immigrant communities in the

¹⁶ Conal Furay and Michael J. Salevouris, *The Methods and Skills of History: A Practical Guide* (Arlington Heights: H. Davidson, 1988) 223.

country, and the American Jews are therefore often seen as a model minority. However, it was not until the end of the 19th century until the American Jewish community became aware of its exceptional position within American society at large.

It took another half century before the first comprehensive history of Jews in the United States was published, in the form of Irving Howe's canonical work *World of Our Fathers* (1976). This historiography discusses Howe's book, as well as five more contemporary books dealing with the Jewish American identity. The paper concludes that historians have used a varied set of methods to approach the topic, and differ vastly on the matter of the Jewish American identity. This paper is an example of the way a traditional historical approach can be used to conduct research in the field of American Studies. Writing the paper made me aware of the importance of periodization, and the methods that can be used to write a historical text.

Charter Amendment 1 in Gainesville, Florida, again takes us back to a more political approach. The paper was written for the course "State and Local Politics," taught by Richard Scher at the University of Florida. The research paper, like the book report on *Civilities and Civil Rights*, deals with the Civil Rights movement. It focuses on Charter Amendment 1, a proposed amendment to the Gainesville city charter that aimed to prohibit the City of Gainesville from offering nondiscrimination protections, based on sexual orientation and gender identity, beyond those provided in the Florida Civil Rights Act.

If accepted, this charter would pose a major drawback to the equality of LGBT citizens, as the amendment would rob them of a significant part of their civil rights. The paper discusses the history of the charter, and explores the arguments of both the proponents and opponents. The charter was eventually voted down in the local

elections, but the Charter Amendment case in Gainesville shows how much work remains to be done when it comes to the equality of LGBT citizens in the United States.

All the Colors of the Wind: A Tradition of Distortion, written for the course “Introduction to American Studies”, taught by Damian Pargas at Utrecht University, is an exercise in using Paul Lauter’s approach to what he has defined as a “cultural work” as a method of research. Lauter has defined this methodology as follows: “the ways in which a book or other kind of the ways in which a book or other kind of ‘text’ – a movie, a Supreme Court decision, an ad, an anthology, an international treaty, a material object – helps construct the frameworks, fashion the metaphors, create the very language by which people comprehend their experiences and think about their world.”¹⁷ Scholars such as Thomas Inge and Dennis Hall, and perhaps most importantly George Lipsitz, have argued that there should be no significant boundary between high and low culture in approaching these cultural texts. In the field of American Studies, the cultural texts that popular culture has produced have become crucial sources to research matters such as multiculturalism, hegemony, feminism and exceptionalism.

This essay deals with one such cultural text that brings all these issues together, namely Walt Disney’s classic movie *Pocahontas*. The paper places the movie in a historical context, and points out the use of stereotypes and language to promote the movie as a quintessentially American symbol. While the movie might give the impression of empowering women and minorities by giving a voice to the Native American Pocahontas, in reality it reinforces existing stereotypes and distorts

¹⁷ Paul Lauter, “Reconfiguring Academic Disciplines: The Emergence of American Studies,” in: *From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park: Activism, Culture, & American Studies* (Duke University Press: Durham, 2001), 11.

history as Disney distances itself from the genocide that was committed by British colonists through its use of language. Through this distortion, the movie can be used as a vehicle for nation building by showing American history and culture in a positive light.

The next research paper, *The Postethnic Hospital: An Analysis of the Depiction of Minorities in ABC's Grey's Anatomy* uses a similar approach. The paper was written for the course "Topics in American Diversity," taught by Derek Rubin at Utrecht University, and explores issues of ethnicity in American society by a close analysis of the TV-series *Grey's Anatomy*. In 2002, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded its Hollywood Bureau, an organization that aims to promote diversity in the entertainment industry. While the Hollywood Bureau has many times reported a lack of diversity in Hollywood, it has lauded the TV-series *Grey's Anatomy* for its attempts to break with this pattern by using so-called color-blind casting for all characters. Aside from featuring actors from all major minorities as main characters, the series is also known for giving only very slight attention to ethnicity in its storylines, almost giving the impression of portraying a postethnic society, such as David Hollinger describes in his *Postethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

However, the paper delves deeper into the series, finding that two of the leading minority characters, Cristina Yang and Calliope Torres, seem definitely influenced by existing stereotypes of their respective minorities. Analysis of the dialogues also reveals an implicit acknowledgment of ethnicity, even if the issue is only rarely voiced in the series. Therefore, it seems that even this fictional world is not postethnic, as the underlying ethnoracial tensions prevent the characters from moving freely between the different parts of their ethnically hybrid identities.

In *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman states:

The challenge in this era of globalization – for countries and individuals – is to find a healthy balance between preserving a sense of identity, home and community and doing what it takes to survive within the globalization system.¹⁸

The second paper that was written for the course “Topics in American Diversity” focuses on exactly this matter. *Modernity vs. Tradition in The Family Markowitz* takes a look at Allegra Goodman’s critically acclaimed novel *The Family Markowitz*, which tells the story of the family Markowitz. The family member all deal with their identities as both Americans and Jews in their own way.

Again using David Biale’s vision of a postethnic America as a theoretical backdrop, the paper argues that rather than only exploring the issue of ethnicity, the novel speaks to tensions between tradition and modernity in a broader sense, and tribalism in a global context. The paper uses the methodology of literary analysis, delving into the characters’ dialogue to deconstruct this cultural text. Hereby, I have tried to situate the paper in the larger debate about Americanization versus globalization: the issues that the family Markowitz deal with seem to echo works such as *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* by Thomas Friedman, and Benjamin Barber’s *Jihad vs. McWorld*.

The next paper in this portfolio, *University College Utrecht: A Typical Case of Americanization in the Netherlands?* also explores the tension between the definition of Americanization versus globalization, zooming in on a Dutch adaptation of an American concept to gauge the extent of American cultural influence on Dutch culture. University College Utrecht (UCU) is the first Dutch liberal arts college,

¹⁸ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (London: HarperCollins, 2000), 42.

modeled after American colleges such as Smith College and Amherst College. UCU distinguishes itself from regular Dutch universities by its small and residential character, selection at the gate, a broad undergraduate phase and a large emphasis on internationalization. The college was also the first in the Netherlands to implement the Bachelor/Master structure, and to offer a completely English-taught curriculum.

The paper explores to what extent the UCU experience differs from the regular Dutch university experience, and if these differences can be attributed to American influence. By placing the concept of the liberal arts college in its historical context – the liberal arts colleges, now a quintessentially American tradition, were originally based on its British counterparts – the paper situates itself in the academic debate about Europe influencing the United States, and vice versa. Most of the modern features that are meant to give UCU an international competitive edge can be attributed to an American influence, although it should also be considered that academe is simply taking steps to join the “global village.” Therefore, UCU’s existence exemplifies the complexities of the debate about Americanization versus globalization, as this Dutch liberal arts college may well be an example of “globalization wearing Mickey Mouse ears,”¹⁹ as Thomas Friedman has described his view on this global process.

The last paper in this portfolio was written for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ annual “America Day.” On this day, experts on several topics regarding the United States of America are invited to join in a debate with employees of the Ministry to assist in developing a policy for the Dutch government. In 2010, the Ministry organized the America Day around five topical workshops, and collaborated with seven students of Utrecht University to produce a set of position papers to

¹⁹ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (London: Harper Collins, 1999), 382.

instigate the workshop discussions. The paper “Nederland en de Verenigde Staten; Diplomatie 2.0 en Diversiteit” (“The Netherlands and the United States; Diplomacy 2.0 and Diversity”) was co-authored by Anjuly de Geus for the workshop “City Diplomacy and Diversity.”

The paper explores the changes that have taken place in recent years in field of diplomacy, specifically focusing on using diplomacy to promote diversity. In this rapidly globalizing world, diplomacy has changed in pretty dramatic ways. The traditional diplomacy of nation-states has made way for new forms of diplomacy, as non-state actors are increasingly gaining momentum. These forms include city diplomacy: the diplomacy of local governments; citizen diplomacy, which consists of grassroots projects formed within civil society; and digital diplomacy, which points to the ways in which the internet has made all forms of diplomacy more interactive.

The papers in portfolio are of a varied nature, mirroring the interdisciplinary field of American Studies itself. They are the product of an intensive immersion in the discipline, not only at the University of Utrecht itself, but also at the University of Florida in Gainesville and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hague. Some of the essays use a classical historical approach, while some use the method of literary analysis or a mixture of several methodologies. Ultimately, the one aspect that truly binds these papers is a lifelong interest in the United States of America, and the ways it has influenced, shaped and altered the world as we know it today.

Course: The Presidency (POS 6933)
Location: University of Florida
Instructor: Dr. Richard Conley
Date: 2 May 2009
Word count: 2829

Media Bias in Three Dutch Newspapers during the American 2008 Elections

Much has been written about a possible liberal media bias in the American media. Vice President Spiro Agnew stated in 1970 that: “In the United States today, we have more than our share of the nattering nabobs of negativism”²⁰, referencing to the press coverage of the Vietnam War. He was not the first person to accuse the media of a liberal bias in their coverage of events; as Richard Hofstetter writes in his research paper, *News Bias in the 1972 Campaign: A Cross-Media Comparison*, Spiro Agnew “only reinvigorated an old conflict with his charges of liberal bias in the news”²¹.

Hofstetter explains that the relationship between politicians and the media has always been strained. He argues that “news media and politicians coexist in an environment perhaps best characterized as unstable and dynamic: both news personnel and politicians are essential to each other in different ways, and yet both operate within a context in which the causes and consequences of the other’s behavior are frequently at odds”²².

In Hofstetter’s study, media bias is defined as “[the selection of] some information rather than other information to be included in news reporting about political events”²³. Although he acknowledges that all news coverage requires selection to a certain extent, he contends that unbiased news coverage “dictates that coverage of similar events be similar, and

²⁰ Agnew, Spiro T. “Address at San Diego 11 September 1970”. In: Simpson, James B. *Contemporary Quotations*. Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

²¹ Hofstetter, Richard. *News Bias in the 1972 Campaign: A Cross-Media Comparison*. Lexington: The Association for Education in Journalism, 1978, 1.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 3.

that selectivity be based on implicit theories about events and about newsworthiness that are generalized beyond simple partisan sides in an election or controversy about an issue”²⁴.

In a more recent study, Richard Alan Nelson gives a clearer definition of the phenomenon:

“Bias is the predisposition for or against a particular point of view. Whenever the positions or interests of a portion of the audience are overlooked, distorted, or censored the problem of bias is found. Bias may result from unintentional or deliberate decisions on the part of media gatekeepers, but nevertheless subjects audiences to a skewed reality potentially detrimental to their best interests”²⁵.

Although “most media industries, including journalism, ostensibly operate under codes of ethics designed to protect against unfairness and bias”²⁶, there are no official organizations that keep the media in check. Though some organizations exist specifically to oversee media performance, they do not have the power to enforce any rules, nor are there guidelines for organizations such as the Federal Communications Commission to judge beyond what is constitutionally lawful²⁷.

Many scholars have argued that the influence of the media on presidential elections can be immense. For example, newspapers and TV channels select which speeches will be selected for their articles and news items, and they can further narrow down this selection by only providing “sound-bites” or citing just a small part of the speech. As L. Brent Bozell III and Brent H. Baker argue in *And That’s the Way It Isn’t: A Reference Guide to Media Bias*,

“by exercising control over the nation's agenda—picking and choosing which issues are fit for public debate, which news is ‘fit to print’—the news media can greatly influence the political direction of [the United States]. They can ignore or ridicule some ideas and promote others. They can wreck a politician's career by taking a quote or two out of context or by spotlighting a weakness in his background. They can

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Nelson, Richard Allen. “Tracking Propaganda to the Source: Tools for Analyzing Media Bias”. *Global Media Journal*. Vol. 2.3. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2003, pp 6.

²⁶ Ibid, pp 8.

²⁷ Ibid.

make winners look like losers and vice versa, known that, in the political world, appearance easily supplants reality”²⁸.

Not surprisingly, there have been many studies that examine if a bias exists in the American mainstream media. One of the most recent studies that have been published was conducted by the Pew Research Center, as a part of their Project for Excellence in Journalism. The Research Center describes this project, which is a massive cross-media study into media bias, as the “largest effort ever to measure and analyze the American news media on a continuing basis”²⁹. The Research Center daily examines 48 news outlets from the five main sectors of the mainstream media (print, network TV, cable, online and radio) in an attempt to find out if the media, as has often been claimed, indeed has a liberal agenda.

For their study about the 2008 presidential elections, entitled “Winning the Media Campaign”, The Research Center used the dataset of their News Coverage Index to examine media reports from September 8 through October 16, 2008, from “the Monday following the conclusion of the Republican National Convention ... through the day after the final presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama”³⁰.

According to “Winning the Media Campaign”, the findings of the study does not suggest a conclusive bias toward Barack Obama. While overall, the media coverage for Obama was more favorable than was the coverage for McCain, this cannot be singularly attributed to a media bias. The overview of the findings points out that Obama’s coverage was “negative in tone when he was dropping in the polls, and became positive when he began to rise, and it was just so for McCain as well”³¹, and attributes this to the “relentless tendency of the press to frame its coverage of national elections as running narratives about the relative

²⁸ Bozell, L. Brent III, and Brent H. Baker. *And That's the Way It Isn't: A Reference Guide to Media Bias*. Alexandria, Va.: Media Research Center, 1990.

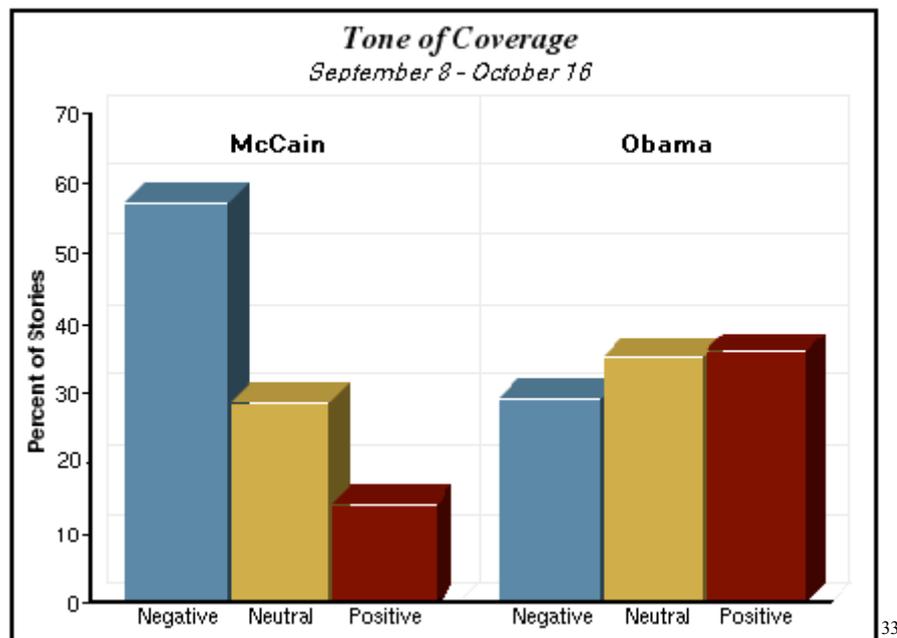
²⁹ Pew Research Center. “About the News Coverage Index”. Pew Research Center: 2008-2009.

³⁰ Pew Research Center: “Winning the Media Campaign - Methodology”. Pew Research Center: 2008-2009.

³¹ Pew Research Center. “Overview of the results”. Pew Research Center, 2008-2009.

position of the candidates in the polls and internal tactical maneuvering to alter those positions”³².

An interesting finding is that although Obama’s overall coverage was only slightly more positive than negative or neutral, McCain’s portrayal was far more negative than positive or neutral, as the below printed figure illustrates.



The study had some more interesting findings, in addition to the conclusion that Obama’s coverage became more positive when his position in the polls improved. McCain’s started out positively, but “turned sharply negative with McCain’s reaction to the crisis in the financial markets³⁴”. When McCain tried to avert the media’s attention to the economic crisis by attacking Obama’s character, Obama’s coverage was hurt, “but McCain’s was even more negative”³⁵. Furthermore, the study found that 53% of the reports focused on “political matters, particularly tactics strategy and polling”, whereas the “focus on tactics and horse race grew in the last three weeks as both campaigns became more negative in their rhetoric”³⁶.

While the research into the American media bias during the 2008 presidential elections has been substantial, this is not the case for international media bias in covering this

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

topic. Global attention for the 2008 elections was unprecedented; polls showed a “record-high fascination with the outcome of the U.S. elections”³⁷ amongst world citizens, and the global media responded in kind by closely following and reporting on the happenings in the elections.

According to Nelson, findings from studies about media bias have shown that a number of factors can attribute to the existence of media bias. These include employing framing devices by “featuring some angles and downplaying others”³⁸, “ideological and economic conditions under which the media operate”³⁹, a “heavy reliance on political officials and other government-related experts”⁴⁰, depending on sources for the “flow of information as a way of furthering [the sources’] own overt and hidden agendas”⁴¹ and the “failure to provide a follow-up assessment”⁴² of the news item. These are all factors that can also play a role in global media coverage on the American presidential elections.

However, Nelson also states a number of reasons for media bias that are only typical for national news media coverage. For instance, he argues that news media are “institutions that are controlled or heavily influenced by government or business interests”⁴³, and that “journalists widely accept the ‘faulty premise’ that the government’s collective intentions are benevolent, despite occasional mistakes”⁴⁴. Furthermore, Nelson names “the regular use of the word ‘we’ by journalists ... [implying] national complicity with [certain] policies” as a reason for media bias.

International news media can be biased in their reporting of American presidential elections for other reasons. For instance, American foreign policy is a sensitive issue that can influence a certain country’s stance toward American politicians, though this could be grouped under ideological circumstances.

³⁷ McGuire, Stryker. “The World Hopes for its First President”. *Newsweek*. 1 November, 2008.

³⁸ Nelson, Richard Allen. “Tracking Propaganda to the Source: Tools for Analyzing Media Bias”. *Global Media Journal*. Vol. 2.3. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2003, pp 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Relying on local politicians as a source for reactions can also influence the framing of an issue, as they will often have their own agenda when reacting to a certain event. This could especially be the case when the U.S. presidential elections coincide with local elections, as local politicians would have a greater incentive to respond to news events with fervor to promote their own agenda.

Other local ideological and economic circumstances will also play a role when reporting on the American presidential elections on a global level. If a country is ruled by a liberal government, its news media will most likely report less favorably on Republican candidates, than it will on Democratic candidates. Similarly, if a candidate has an ideological agenda that severely clashes with a local agenda, media will most probably report differently on this candidate's plans than when the agendas complement each other.

To test this hypothesis, a small research has been conducted into news coverage in the Dutch media during the American presidential elections in 2008. The Netherlands currently has a government coalition of three parties: CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal), PvdA (Labor Party) and CU (Christian Union); the majority party is CDA, a centrist Christian-Democratic party with conservative leanings. However, Dutch conservatism is far more liberal than American conservatism, which would make the current government – especially because it is partly a labor coalition – ideologically more compatible with an American Democratic candidate than an American Republican candidate.

For this study, articles from three major Dutch newspapers were compared. To be able to draw a comparison between Dutch news coverage and American coverage, certain characteristics from “Winning the Media Campaign” were copied. The same timeframe was used: September 8 through October 16, from the end of the Republican convention until the last debate between Obama and McCain. Because this is only a small study, a much smaller sample size was used: eight dates were selected, on which a major article on the candidates was examined and coded as being positive, negative or neutral toward both candidates.

The selection of the dates is a combination of events that might have generated the largest and most biased response – such as the end date of the Republican convention, the

presidential debates, and the vice presidential debate – and randomly selected dates within the timeframe.

An overview of the selected dates reads as follows:

September 8th: end of the Republican Convention;
 September 12th: reactions to the commemoration of September 11th;
 September 18th: random date;
 September 26th: reactions to first presidential debate;
 October 4th: reactions to vice presidential debate;
 October 7th: reactions to second presidential debate;
 October 12th: random date;
 October 17th: reactions to third presidential debate.

The vice presidential debate took place on the second of October, but reactions in the Dutch press did not show up until the fourth of October. For the other dates, sometimes articles from the next date were selected, as a result of the time difference.

Articles were coded by examining the tone of a news article. In order to do this, negative adverbs and adjectives were set against positive adverbs and adjectives. For instance, a news article describing McCain as “capricious” or “unbelievable” would be coded as biased negatively toward McCain. Similarly, an article quoting only positive sources on Obama would be coded as “positive”. If an article did not show a clear bias toward one of the candidates or just printed facts or figures, it was coded as neutral.

The Dutch newspapers selected each present one part of the political spectrum. *Volkskrant*, founded in 1919, was originally a Roman Catholic newspaper until it became a left wing paper in the 1960s. All newspapers are owned by PCM Uitgevers NV.. *NRC Handelsblad*, an evening newspaper, was founded in 1970, is an economically liberal newspaper with politically conservative tendencies. Finally, *Algemeen Dagblad*, founded in 1946, is a centrist newspaper, targeted at an audience that is as broad as is possible.

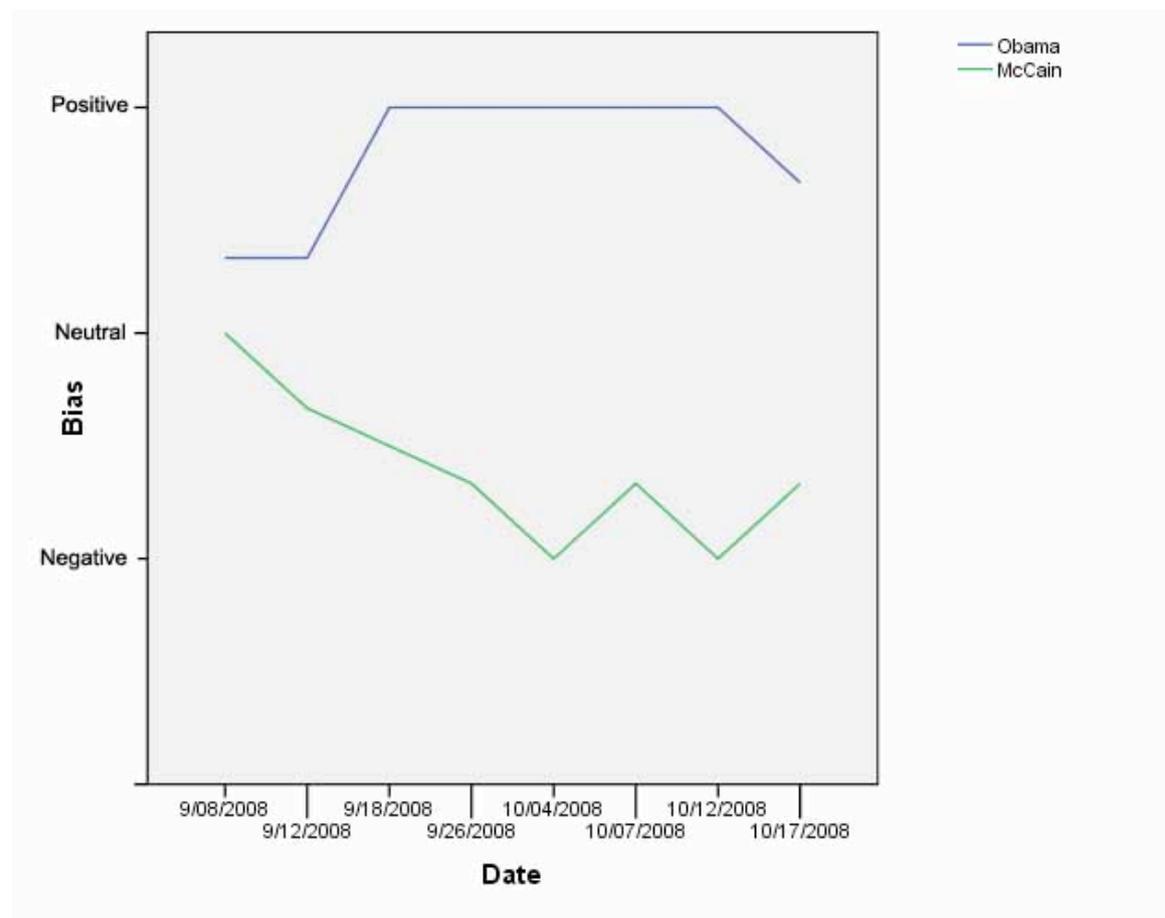
Overall, most of the findings in the Dutch news media coverage corresponded with the findings in “Winning the Media Campaign”, though there are significant differences. The

coverage of Obama became increasingly more positive as his chances of winning increased according to the polls, although the coverage was also more positive than in America to start out with. McCain's coverage started out as cautiously positive, but became increasingly more negative after the debates, and McCain's decreasing chances of winning the presidency.

McCain's reaction to the economic crisis also generated particularly negative responses, whereas Obama was praised for his perceived calm when dealing with the crisis. Most of the reports focused on campaign tactics, though there were also frequent updates on poll results.

McCain's campaign tactics were described as negative by almost every article, although Obama also received a significant amount of criticism whenever his campaign took a negative turn.

The overall coverage reads as follows:

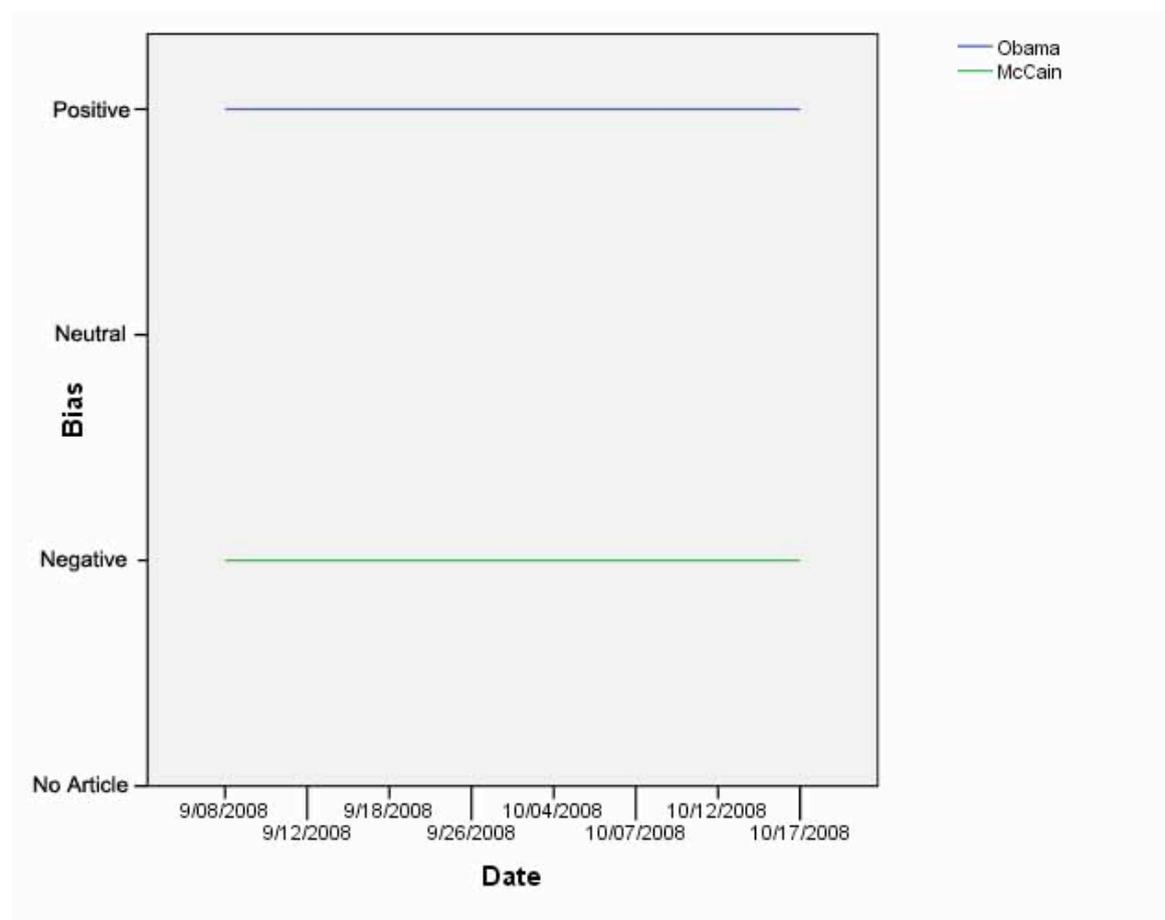


News coverage on a national level; the average of all three newspapers' bias

McCain briefly received positive coverage after the second presidential debate, though all newspapers named Obama as the winner of the debate. The vice presidential debate resulted in negative coverage. September 12th formed an exception: newspapers praised both candidates for staying away from partisan politics on the commemoration of this national trauma.

Though all newspapers show a more positive bias toward Obama than toward McCain, there are some differences between coverage in the individual newspapers.

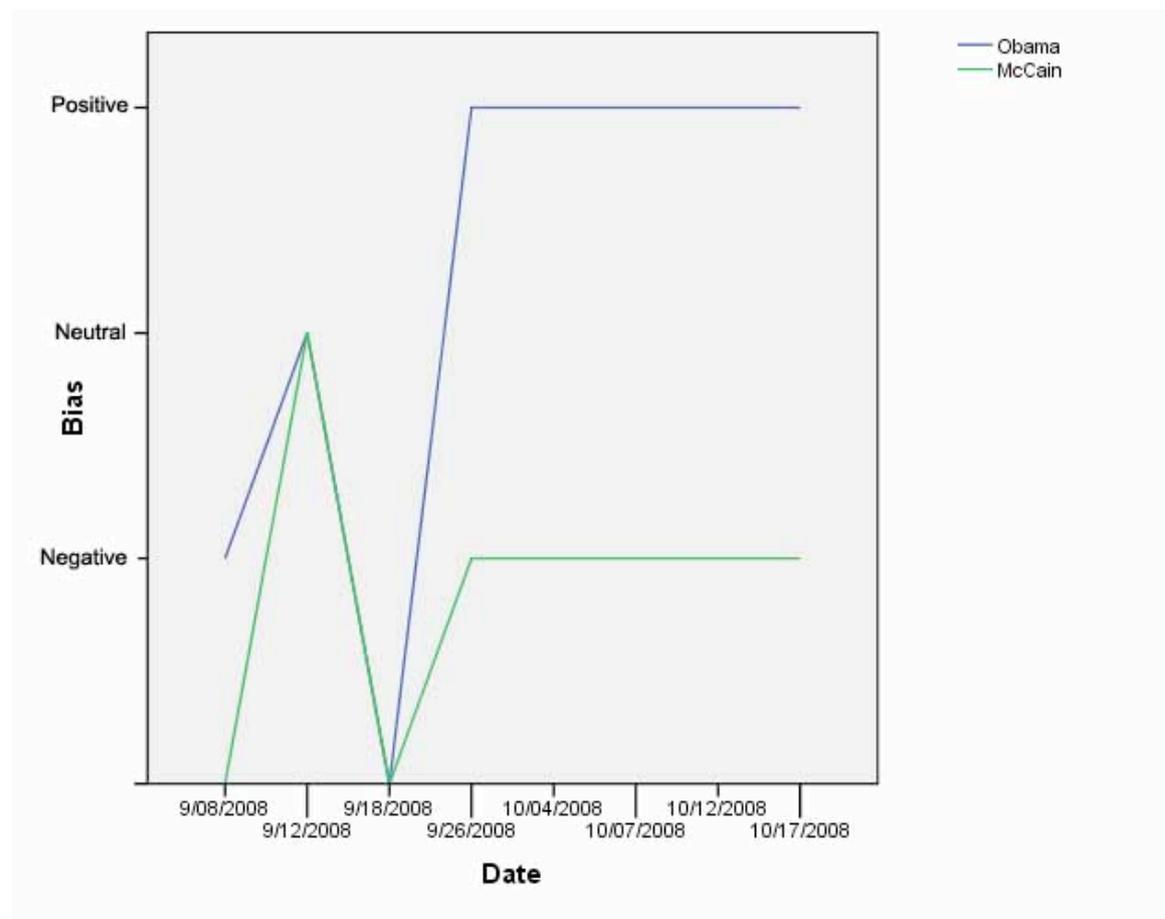
The below figure shows bias of De Volkskrant:



The bias of this newspaper is very clear. Because of its liberal sympathies, the newspaper is naturally biased toward Obama. This paper was also most vehement in the wording of its articles, showing a clear preference from the beginning of the timeframe of this study. It used terms such as “whimsical” to describe McCain’s reactions, and described his campaign commercials as “manipulative”.

Obama was unequivocally described positively, although McCain's coverage was more negative in tone than Obama's coverage was positive in tone. Though the sympathy for Obama was clear, the adjectives in McCain's coverage were vehemently negative, whereas Obama's coverage often was neutral to positive in tone.

The below figure shows the bias of NRC Handelsblad:

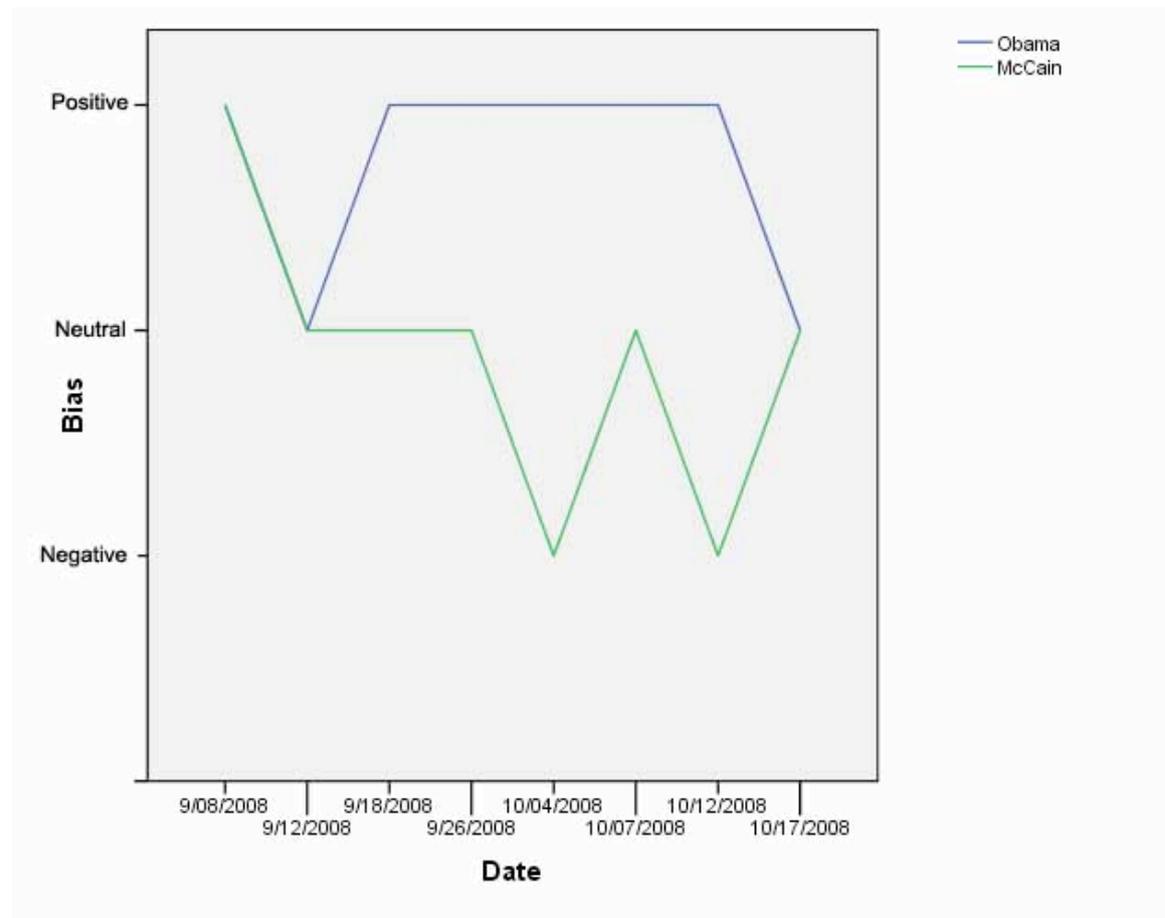


NRC Handelsblad started out neutrally in its coverage of both candidates. It kept this stance up until the first presidential debate, after which the coverage turned positive for Obama, and negative for McCain. The newspaper took a clear stance on the candidates' political agendas, showing more sympathy for Obama's political ideology.

Overall, NRC Handelsblad is known as a "quality newspaper", and as such its articles were often difficult to code, because they were more or less neutral in tone, showing only a slight bias toward one of the candidates. The articles reported a lot on the actual horse-racing,

showing poll figures and describing Obama's progress without showing explicit support for Obama.

The below figure shows the bias of Algemeen Dagblad:



Algemeen Dagblad is generally seen as a newspaper that caters to a broad audience, and is sometimes seen as populist. This shows in its coverage of the presidential elections: its articles often focused on the most enervating events of the day, sometimes forgoing political commentary on a debate in favor of citing, for instance, Obama's hairdresser or neighbors.

When commenting on a political level, the newspaper showed a clear bias toward Obama, but after Obama's chances of winning increased according to the polls. McCain's coverage was more neutral than in the other two newspapers, with exceptions after the major presidential debates.

Overall, in this study, the Dutch news media showed more of a bias toward Obama than did the American news media. There may be several reasons for this finding; for one, the

political climate in the Netherlands is more liberal than the American political climate, which logically would result in a bias toward the more liberal candidate.

Furthermore, Dutch citizens were vehemently opposed to the war in Iraq, demonstrating frequently about the Dutch government's participation in this war. This, combined with an overall negative stance toward the Bush administration, naturally leads to an opposition toward a new Republican candidate.

Finally, Obama's "celebrity" appeal has to be taken into account: as the first African American candidate, Obama was hugely popular in countries all around the world, including the Netherlands. One poll showed that out of 22 nations polled, all these nations would prefer Obama as the new president of the United States rather than John McCain⁴⁵, including the Netherlands. As such, the Dutch media would logically cater to its audience, which was not biased positively toward McCain.

Because of the small scope of this study, it is difficult to draw any significant conclusions. It would be interested to see a comparative study using more newspapers and more dates, and possibly a larger timeframe, up until Election Day. However, within the constraints of this paper, it can be concluded that the selected Dutch newspapers showed a significant bias toward Obama on the selected dates.

⁴⁵ BBC. "All Countries in BBC Poll Prefer Obama to McCain". BBC, 2008. <
http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/sep08/BBCPresidential_Sep08_pr.pdf>

Course: Modern America (AMH 6290)
Location: University of Florida
Instructor: Dr. Alan Petigny
Date: 4 February 2009
Word count: 1674

Book Report: *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*. By Mark Noll. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994.

Mark Noll (1946-) is the Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. A Reformed Protestant evangelical scholar, he is the author of several works on evangelicalism. Noll is a co-founder of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, promoting serious scholarship from an evangelical Christian point of view. He transferred to Notre Dame after 27 years at Wheaton College to be able to “concentrate on fewer subjects”, and is currently working on a book on “Race, Religion, and American Politics from Nat Turner to George W. Bush”. One of his most acclaimed books, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, was published in 1994, and was named “Book of the Year” by *Christianity Today*.

The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind opens with a bold claim: Noll states that “the scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind” (3). Offering an overview of the history of evangelicalism from the Great Awakening to the present, Noll argues that modern evangelicals have forsaken the tradition of intellectualism of early evangelicals like Jonathan Edwards. In the preface, Noll describes the book as “an epistle from a wounded lover” (ix), and throughout the book, this mixture of frustration with evangelical Christians and love for his background, is apparent. Noll’s background as a Christian professor enables him to write with a love for the subject that shines through on every page, but it is also a

weakness. At times, he jumps to conclusions that may be logical to the evangelical Christians reading the book – often directly addressed by Noll – but are not as apparent to an outsider to this particular faith. Noll operates under the presumption that some truth can be found in the Bible, that there is a God, and that Christians should use a combination of science and the Bible in order to understand the world that was created by this God. As such, the book is not a merely intellectual endeavor. Noll recognizes this in his preface: “[this book] is rather a historical meditation in which sermonizing and the making of hypotheses vie with more ordinary exposition. It is meant to incite more than it is meant to inform”. When seen in such a light, Noll’s book is an admirable effort at holding up a mirror to evangelical Christians today. The overview he provides is enticing, and gives the reader a unique insight into the way the evangelical community, as we know it today, came to be.

The book is divided into four parts that are each divided into several chapters. The first part, “The Scandal”, is divided into two chapters; the first chapter is a setup of the terminology that Noll uses in the book. He defines “The Life of the Mind” or “The evangelical mind” as the effort of Christians to think about the workings of the world at large in a specifically Christian framework (7). Noll does not define evangelicalism as a singular Protestant denomination, but rather a set of impulses that some denominations within Protestantism adhere to. These impulses include an emphasis on the supernatural new birth, a professing of “faith in the Bible as a revelation from God” (9), emphasis on the “saving character of Jesus’ death” (9), activism, and spreading the gospel through this activism and personal evangelism. Even though the majority of frequent churchgoers in the USA now hold evangelical beliefs, these evangelicals do not play a significant part in the nation’s intellectual life (10).

Noll describes the three main aspects of the “Scandal”, which he has defined as not pursuing a Christian intellectualism. There’s a cultural aspect, in that the problem has grown “out of the historical development of America’s distinctly evangelical culture” (15). Secondly, there’s an institutional aspect; now that there is hardly a place in evangelical press for intellectualism, and Christian seminaries and schools cannot compare to secular colleges and universities, there does not seem to be a place to pursue a life of the mind that is specifically Christian.

In chapter two of part one, Noll explains why the “scandal” – and therefore, this book – matters. The Scriptures make several references to knowledge that can only be acquired by people who do not pursue wisdom. Intellectualism has often undermined faith, when science provides a contrast to the Scriptures. However, Noll points out the utilitarian advantages of a shared Christian mind. For example, evangelical Christians could come to grip with ethical and racial issues that plague American society, and pursue a greater understanding of daily existence.

Noll then looks to the history of Protestantism to point out that evangelical Christians were not always anti-intellectuals. For instance, the Puritans saw “religious significance in public acts and public significance in religious acts” (41). They believed that the Bible provided a guideline for their personal lives, but were concerned with a comprehensive intellectual effort, thereby forming opinions on every aspect of life with the help of the Bible. Noll points to Thomas Aquinas, Luther and Calvin as influential intellectual thinkers within Protestantism, that helped shape the secular world we live in today.

Part two, “How the Scandal Came To Pass”, gives an overview of evangelical Christian history, starting with Calvin and Luther, and the English Puritans. Noll argues in chapter three that the Evangelical Mind was formed by four major

influences: revivalism, the separation of Church and State, the adaptation of Christian convictions to American ideals, and the influence of Fundamentalism at the start of the twentieth century. Noll also singles out Jonathan Edwards as a major influence on the early history of evangelicalism. Most thinkers of the Enlightenment had concluded that the pursuit of happiness was a human's greatest goal, and that understanding of the world could only be reached through the workings of the human mind. Edwards, however, believed that the glory of God was the highest achievable goal, and that God was "the source of reality" (78). In this chapter, Noll's background particularly shows, when he concludes that Edwards' achievements show that "it is not simply advantageous to love the Lord with the mind; it is also good, sweet, holy, beautiful, and honoring to God".

In the generations after Jonathan Edwards, evangelicals were increasingly influenced by the didactic Scottish Enlightenment, which presumed that all humans possess a set of capacities that allow them to understand nature and morality. These ideas helped Americans to deal with the Revolutionary era, and to justify the break with Great Britain and to establish new principles for the young nation. In this time of Enlightenment rationality, the Scriptures became scientific texts that held the truth on all worldly issues. After the Civil War, three divisions of evangelicalism emerged: theological modernists, the more liberal evangelicals; populist evangelicals, the later fundamentalists, that adopted populist technologies but resisted science; and the majority of evangelicals that stayed in the middle.

The new University was built on the presumption that religious faith could not be integrated with science, which led to the disappearance of evangelical thinking in academia. At the same time, fundamentalism was on the rise, contributing to anti-intellectualism by its commitment to the Didactic Enlightenment, and its major

emphasis on the Scriptures, denying “a human element in the inspired text” (133). Furthermore, the fundamentalist focus on end of the world theories has led evangelicals to view global events merely in such a context, thereby removing the need to study said events in relationship to the world. Noll points out that while fundamentalism had its merits in passing on essential parts of the Christian faith, it was disastrous for the intellectual mind.

Part three is entitled “What the Scandal Has Meant” and explores how fundamentalist habits continue to influence evangelical political thinking today. Noll starts out chapter six by discussing the life and career of William Jennings Bryan. His speeches were populist, intuitive, activist, and promoted Biblicism, creating an evangelical framework that would influence the fundamentalist movement for years to come. After Bryan died in 1925, there was an age of fundamentalism, where political activism was largely replaced by a focus on personal evangelism. *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 led to an Era of the New Right, wherein evangelicals became very active in political life.

Evangelical reflection on science largely followed the same path as the response to politics. While evangelicals are still active in the scientific field, Noll believes they are not exercising a Christian mind when doing so. The rise of creationism has contributed to the segregation of science, as creation science denies all scientific evidence that would deny the literary meaning of the Scriptures. Noll views the expanding influence of creationism after World War II as an important indication that “damaging intellectual habits of fundamentalism maintain a powerful grip in the evangelical world” (208).

Part four is titled “Hope?”, and explores the future of the evangelical mind. By the 1930s, the evangelical mind was dead. In the following decade, however, a

distinct improvement took place: against the heritage of intuition appeared somewhat more self-criticism, against simple Biblicism a growing awareness of the complexities of Scripture, against populism an increased longing for advanced higher education, and alongside activism the beginnings of respect for study” (213). This trend continued, although political and scientific thinking are still heavily influenced by fundamentalism. Philosophy, by contrast, is not populist or activist, and therefore has had more freedom to develop, insulated from fundamentalism.

While it does not seem likely that a Christian mind will develop out of evangelicalism, Noll concludes the book on an optimistic note. He explores the options for developing an evangelical mind, pointing out that “only patient, purposeful intention to use the mind for Christ will move toward the balance that is needed” (243). Evangelicals need to move beyond intuition, while preserving the evangelistic zeal that is required for a truly Christian mind. Furthermore, evangelicals need to move from a broad reading to the Bible, to a deep reading in order to understand the world that God created.

Course: Modern America (AMH 6290)
Location: University of Florida
Instructor: Dr. Alan Petigny
Date: 2 March 2009
Word count: 1529

Book Report: *Civilities and Civil Rights*. By William H. Chafe. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980

William Chafe is the Alice Mary Baldwin Professor at Duke University. His main interest is in race and gender equality. He has written several books on race and gender discrimination, as well as books about modern America. Chafe has received a variety of distinctions, such as the Sidney Hillman Book Award and the Lillian Smith Award. *Civilities and Civil Rights*, published in 1980, deals with the student sit-ins in Greensboro, and their significance to the civil rights movement in America. Lauded by New York Times as “social history at its best”, *Civilities and Civil Rights* has been recognized with the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award in 1981.

In his Introduction, Chafe outlines the questions he wants to answer in writing the book, and explains why he chose the city of Greensboro for his case study. Greensboro is exceptional because after World War II, it had a progressive image in the South, even though North Carolina was a poor state with a high level of illiteracy amongst its citizens. Greensboro was the first city in the South to announce that it would comply with the Brown v. Board ruling, and six years later, the city was home to the country’s first sit-in protest. The city became a center for the Black Power movement in the 1960s, and eventually, Greensboro was one of the last cities in the South to desegregate public schools. Chafe tells the story of the city of Greensboro, taking 1945-1975 as his time span. He used a combination of oral sources – speaking to about a hundred people – and written sources to conduct his research.

The book has a chronological setup and is divided into two parts that are each divided into a number of chapters. Part one is named “Protest”, and starts out with a chapter on the history of Greensboro. Although Greensboro was never as dependent on slaves as the rest of the region, by the 1900s, there was a rigid system of discrimination, both by race and class. Blacks in Greensboro generally had a higher education level than in surrounding cities, which attracted blacks from outside the city, but also led to anger and discrimination by the white population. Black public schools were performing well, just like black colleges. Within black resistance, there were two divisions: one was “willing to challenge directly the oppressiveness of white power; the other sought to work within the structures of white power for black advancement” (27). In 1951, Dr. William Hampton, a well-respected physician, contended for the office of the city counsel, and won the general elections by a large majority. Still, segregation was very much an issue, as Greensboro blacks were severely limited in their economic opportunities.

Chapter two deals with the politics in Greensboro, focusing on the desegregation of the public schools and organizations within the city. Although the city had agreed to comply with the *Brown v. Board* ruling, in practice, the school board did not agree on the level of desegregation, and a year and a half after the city had declared its compliance, schools were still segregated. Chafe places this reaction of the city in context of the state of North Carolina as a whole; leaders had accepted the *Brown* ruling initially, but desegregation was not implemented right away. The tension between black and white became clear in the Pearsall Plan, which would allow parents who opposed desegregation to request reassignment of their children to a different public school. In this proposal, integration would only be possible in communities where whites had given their permission for desegregation. Chafe

describes this as the politics of moderation, and points out that this politics of consensus had “cast a chill over hopes for racial progress” (96).

Chapter three tells the story of the sit-ins, starting on February 1, 1960. Four students had “entered the local Woolworth’s ... and then sat at the lunch counter and demanded equal service with white persons” (99). While they were told that they would not be served, they remained seated. They returned the day after, and “within two months, the sit-in movement had spread to fifty-four cities in nine states” (99). The sit-ins were not the only form of protest in the Greensboro community; the minimal school desegregation led to individual protests by black students who fought for their right to education. The trend for activism was enforced by the NAACP, which had been revitalized in 1955. In North Carolina, reactions to the sit-ins were mixed. The Governor of the state opposed the actions, but white liberals showed support for the students, as well as several ministers. By July, it was finally negotiated that “a few Negroes at a time would be served at the local lunch counters” (136).

The Greensboro sit-ins were a part of the continued protest against racism. The lunch counters were (partly) desegregated, but the rest of the city was nowhere near integration. In chapter four, Chafe outlines the aftermath of the sit-ins. Acquiring a job was still difficult for blacks, and public schools were still largely segregated. The demonstrations continued, and the black community’s patience started to wear thin. Greensboro blacks demanded action toward desegregation, and as a result, “the largest civil rights protests ever to occur in North Carolina took place in Greensboro during May and June of 1963” (165). Chapter five tells the story of these protests; from massive marches to an occupation of the Greensboro jails.

Despite the continuing protests, many whites still believed that blacks were content with the pace of desegregation. To “prove once and for all how Greensboro’s

Negroes felt” (187), hundreds of adults joined students in a downtown march when it became clear that whites “believed the demonstrations to be solely the product of outside agitators” (187). After all these protests, Mayor Schenk conceded and supported the desegregation of public accommodations, releasing a statement that declared that “the government has the responsibility not only to lead but to reflect the best examples set by others” (207).

Part two, “Years of Polarization”, describes the years after the 1963 protests. After desegregating the public accommodations, the white leaders of Greensboro were not willing to concede any further. However, there was still work to be done, as there was still the question of school desegregation, among other things. Blacks were still discriminated when it came to moving out of the ghetto, as housing areas were still separated by race. Violence against blacks was still rampant, with the Ku Klux Klan gaining strength in the city, and blacks had no political representation. The black community responded in kind; the 1960s were the decade of black power, which was fuelled by the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968. Another set of student protests followed, turning Greensboro into a battle zone. The protests were seen as a violent conspiracy by the whites, and polarization reached its peak when a student got shot.

In the time period of 1969-1972, Greensboro’s story came to a full circle. Racial tensions were still prevalent, but new characters had come into play. Hal Siebert, who was the new public relations director of the Greensboro chamber, places emphasis on social progress (290). Working with cell groups – both black and white – allowed him to work on the racial issues. The Chamber formed the CUD (Community Unity Division), which would play a major role in Greensboro’s race politics. In the same period, the *Carolina Peacemaker* was founded, which promoted integration and

black power. Finally, the campaign for political recognition scored some successes, and so did the campaign for school desegregation: the Greensboro school board was ordered to “produce a plan providing for complete desegregation” (314), which it consequently did. White leaders implemented the “radical change in policy” (332) as black activist parties worked together on the continued campaign for representation.

Chafe concludes the book by pointing out the continuity in Greensboro’s struggle for equality, as one generation passed the torch to another generation in protesting against discrimination. He discusses the significance of the several protest movements, and places the happenings in Greensboro in a national context. Chafe ends the book stating that “the struggle will go on, even if in ambiguity and uncertainty” (355). This echoes Chafe’s words in the preface: “inequality and discrimination still suffuse our social and economic system ... although the means of keeping blacks in their place may now be implicit rather than explicit, they too often are just as effective as in the past” (vii-viii).

Much has changed since Chafe wrote this book. While discrimination is still a factor in the United States, it would be interesting to see an update to the 1980 preface, especially in the light of the recent inauguration of President Barack Obama. Otherwise, Chafe’s *Civilities and Civil Rights* provides an excellent overview of the Greensboro happenings. The book is well-written and well-organized, which makes reading a pleasure. While the Greensboro sit-in are a narrow subject, Chafe places the occurrences in a much larger context, and thereby provides the reader with a better understanding of the struggle for racial equality in the United States at large.

Course: Modern America (AMH 6290)
 Location: University of Florida
 Instructor: Dr. Alan Petigny
 Date: 22 April 2009
 Word count: 4275

Beyond Assimilation and Acculturation: a Historiography of the Jewish American Identity

Antler, Joyce. *The Journey Home: Jewish Women and the American Century*. New York: The Free Press, 1997.

Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn. *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Howe, Irving. *World of Our Fathers*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976

Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.

Whitfield, Stephen J. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1999.

In 1955, Joshua Bloch wrote in his essay, “American Jewish Historiography”:
 “it was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that the Jews in America
 became aware of the importance of their history in this country”⁴⁶. Some attempts at
 writing Jewish American history had been made, although they mostly been accounts
 of personal experiences of individuals⁴⁷. The first general history about the Jewish
 American experience, *The Settlement of the Jews in North America*, was written by a
 Christian, Charles P. Daly, and was published in 1872. In 1892, the American Jewish
 Historical society was founded, helping the Jewish community to become conscious
 of their own history. The first attempts written by Jews followed soon thereafter: *The
 Hebrew in America*, by Isaac Markens, was published in 1988, and Henry Samuel

⁴⁶ Bloch, Joshua. “American Jewish Historiography (A Survey of Some of the Literature on the History of the Jews in America)”. *The Jewish Quarterly Review*. Vol. 45, No. 4. 434-450, 435.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 436.

Morais published *The Jews of Philadelphia*, ten accounts of people in the Philadelphia Jewish community, in 1894. It was the first of many written accounts about local communities, brim-full of anecdotes, published to celebrate anniversaries or important holidays⁴⁸.

When Bloch assessed the field, he lamented that “no comprehensive and well documented history of the Jews in America ha[d] thus far been undertaken”⁴⁹. In the latter half of the 20th century, several historians have attempted to fill this void. In 1976, Irving Howe published his canonical work, *World of Our Fathers*. In 646 pages and eighteen chapters, Howe made an impressive attempt at describing the history of the Jews in America, from their departure from the *shtetls* of Eastern Europe, to the forming of Jewish ghettos in the major cities, to Jewish Socialism and the involvement of Jewish Americans in the politics of their new homeland. He dedicated one-fourth of his book to the newly formed Jewish American culture; describing the influence of the Yiddish word on literature, theatre, the media and academia, he tried to pin-point the Jewish voice in American culture.

In the epilogue of *World of Our Fathers*, Howe discussed a recurring motif in the works of Eastern European Jewish philosophers at the end of the 19th century: “that the Jews, by some act of heroic transformation, must achieve for themselves ‘a normal life’”⁵⁰. He argued that the combination of this dream of a “normal life” and America’s seemingly endless options, which allowed for exactly such a life, has led to the gradual assimilation of Jews into American culture.⁵¹ However, it was and is not a complete assimilation by far: Howe states that “Jews in America would remain

⁴⁸ Ibid., 436.

⁴⁹ Bloch, Joshua. “American Jewish Historiography (A Survey of Some of the Literature on the History of the Jews in America)”. *The Jewish Quarterly Review*. Vol. 45, No. 4. 434-450, 437.

⁵⁰ Howe, Irving. *World of Our Fathers*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976, 639.

⁵¹ Ibid., 641.

Jews”⁵², as illustrated in his panoramic history. Though several scholars have argued that with the disappearance of Yiddish as a native tongue among Jewish Americans, and the readiness of many Jews to give up observing Jewish customs in order to fit into American society, Jewish culture is bound to dissolve.

Howe offers a different view, which has since been largely embraced by Jewish American historians. He argues that “for all its impressive qualities and achievements, the culture of Yiddish necessarily had to drift toward a self-dissolution, that it could not, by itself, sustain Jewish life for very long”⁵³, and that Jewish identity is not solely shaped by its *yiddishkeit*. The story of the immigrant Jews may be “all but done”⁵⁴, but what remains is a Jewish American identity that has been sharply defined by the *menschlichkeit* of the immigrant generations, according to Howe.

Despite all its merits, *World of Our Fathers* offers a view of Jewish American history that is far from complete, and often flawed. The timing of the book was perfect: since the Civil Rights movement, there had been a heightened sense of identity amongst all ethnic groups.⁵⁵ However, Howe hardly mentioned the Jewish’ participation in the Civil Rights movement or the relations between Jewish Americans and other minority groups in America, nor did he acknowledge Jewish women such as Betty Friedan who helped to shape the feminist movement in the 1960s. It would also have been interesting to see a comparison of Jewish immigration with other immigration groups, such as the Italians, or the Irish. Another problem lies with Howe’s reliance on literature for facts: for instance, he uses one of Anzia Yeziarska’s novels to illustrate the patriarchal role of the father in Jewish American families, taking it as a factual account rather than a work of fiction. Though *World of Our*

⁵² Ibid., 641.

⁵³ Howe, Irving. *World of Our Fathers*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976, 644.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 646.

⁵⁵ Schappes, Morris U. *Irving Howe’s ‘The World of Our Fathers’: A Critical Analyses*. New York: Jewish Currents, 1977, 3.

Fathers is an excellent starting point for anyone interested in the history of the Jews in America, Howe's view is too narrow to offer a complete overview of the Jewish American experience.

In the years after Howe's sweeping history was published, several historians have made attempts at writing histories that are more inclusive. Gerald Sorin's *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America* was published in 1997 and takes a different view on the interaction of Jewish and American culture. In his preface, Sorin, who is the Distinguished University Professor of History and Jewish Studies at the State University of New York, lays out the framework of his use of terminology.

In keeping with Milton Gordon⁵⁶, Sorin, like most contemporary scholars in Jewish studies, argues that the Jewish experience in America is an example of acculturation rather than assimilation. Sorin defines as assimilation as "complete or nearly complete disappearance of traditional cultural traits"⁵⁷, whereas acculturation is the "accommodation to the larger society without total loss of ethnic distinctiveness"⁵⁸. Interestingly, Howe consistently used the term "assimilation" when writing about the Jewish American experience, whereas his definition suggests that he was actually describing the process of acculturation. This begs the question if Howe was familiar with Gordon's work, which would be remarkable, as the terminology had been in use for decades, even before Gordon published his signature work.

Sorin used the principle of acculturation as a framework for his book, which he organized chronologically. He argued that: "the American Jewish community was the first truly voluntary Jewish community in the modern world in the sense that Jews

⁵⁶ See *Assimilation in American Life* for Gordon's classic theories on acculturation, assimilation and cultural pluralism. Milton, Gordon. *Assimilation in American Life*. Oxford University Press, 1964.

⁵⁷ Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, Preface, xiii.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

could choose to live [in the United States] as Jews, and as equals to gentiles”⁵⁹, due to America’s variety of options that allowed Jews to keep their identity while integrating into American mainstream culture. Echoing the title of his book, he stated that “[Jewish] tradition was challenged by American mobility, individualism, and secularism ... [b]ut tradition would be transformed rather than destroyed”. While scholars of Howe’s time were often pessimistic about the fate of Jewish culture in the United States, Sorin is part of a newer generation of Jewish scholars that have recognized that Jewish culture has not disappeared or dissolved due to assimilation within the 350 years it has been exposed to American mainstream culture⁶⁰.

Sorin started his survey of the Jewish American experience with a short overview of the history before 1880. In making this decision, he kept with the traditional periodization of historians in the field, who have argued that the foremost defining period of Jewish American history starts after the Eastern-European wave of immigration. After the Enlightenment and the French revolution transformed societies in Central and Western Europe to become more religiously-neutral⁶¹, anti-Semitism increased, especially in countries like Germany where legislation was passed to restrict Jews in the range of occupations they could choose from. Jews started to immigrate to America at a rapid pace, founding Jewish institutions like hospitals, schools, and synagogues in their new homeland. Sorin argued that by 1880, “German Jews had become significantly acculturated. This was reflected in their rapid

⁵⁹ Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, Preface, xiii.

⁶⁰ See, for example, “The Melting Pot and Beyond: Jews and the Politics of American Identity” by David Biale, which is part of a highly acclaimed collection of essays about American Jews and multiculturalism. Biale, David. “The Melting Pot and Beyond: Jews and the Politics of American Identity”. *Insider/Outsider*. Edited by Biale, David; Galchinsky, Michael; and Heschel, Susan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

⁶¹ Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, 21.

economic and social mobility, the growth of Reform Judaism, and their pride in identifying as Americans and Jews”⁶².

The largest wave of Jewish immigrants to come to the United States, took place between 1880 and 1920. Sorin spends the predominant part of his book - seven out of ten chapters - on describing this time period. He mainly focuses on the experiences of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, stating that: “it is at least arguable that without the East Europeans a viable, visible, distinctively Jewish culture would have become increasingly unlikely and might have disappeared”⁶³.

This is a vision shared by many historians in the field, as most of what is known as typically Jewish culture in America today, stems from Eastern European origins. Sorin devoted chapters to traditional topics such as the urban experience and Jewish American politics, but as Beth Wenger, Associate Professor of Jewish American History at the University Pennsylvania, points out in her review of *Tradition Transformed*, he made an “effort to balance the usual concentration on New York and other urban centers”⁶⁴ by including a chapter on smaller cities and towns.

In his conclusion, “The Ever-Disappearing People”, Sorin was cautiously optimistic about the fate of Jewish culture in America. Though he acknowledges the concerns of the “survivalists” – “those still fearful of assimilation⁶⁵” – he believes that there is yet a future for Jewish American culture, as “Jews [still] distinguish themselves significantly from the American norm ... [and] Jewish identity and affiliation have continued to help satisfy the need for ... meaning and continuity”⁶⁶.

⁶² Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, 33.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶⁴ Wenger, Beth. “Review of *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*”. *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Winter, 1998), pp. 453-454, 453-454.

⁶⁵ Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, 235.

⁶⁶ Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, 254.

While Sorin's faith in a continuing of Jewish American secular culture as it currently stands does not seem ungrounded, there is more concern about the survival of Judaism in America. Jonathan Sarna, the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University, recently published *American Judaism: A History*, on the brink of the 350th commemoration of Jewish life in America.

In his panoramic overview of Jewish history in America, Sarna uses the four guidelines of Sydney Ahlstrom, as outlined in *A Religious History of the American People*. In this analysis, Jewish secularism falls under the umbrella denominator of Judaism: "Jewish secularism, communism, and what came to be known as 'Jewishness', or 'Yiddishkeit', are, from the historian's perspective, religions ... they fall within the purview of American Judaism"⁶⁷. Ahlstrom's other guidelines include placing Jewish religion into the context of Jewish history, accepting diversity within the faith as a fact and analyzing it as such, and the understanding of religion within its social, economic, political, cultural and psychological context⁶⁸.

Sarna does not follow the classical periodization approach as used by Sorin and many other scholars; dividing his attention equally over all time spans of Jewish American history, he believes that "[a]lready in the late colonial period ... American Judaism had begun to diverge from religious patterns that existed in Europe and the Caribbean"⁶⁹. He views not 1881 as the turning point of Jewish American history, but pinpoints this moment of change somewhere during the 1820s, when the "unified 'synagogue-community' ... [was replaced] by a more pluralistic and diverse

⁶⁷ Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004, xvii.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Sarna, Jonathan D. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004, xvii.

‘community of synagogues’⁷⁰, where there was room for a more individualistic way of practicing Jewish faith.

Another stark difference with Sorin, is that Sarna does not participate in the assimilation versus acculturation debate, feeling that the term “assimilation” has become too laden with negative connotations⁷¹. While he never uses the term, Sarna seems to believe that the Jewish American experience is more fitting to the term of acculturation. Sarna argues that Judaism has suffered from the freedom of America; less and less Jews adhere to a particular Jewish denomination, and because of intermarriage, the number of Jews is progressively declining. Still, he contends that: “Jewish culture in all of its manifold forms continues to boom ... project[ing] the image of a vibrant and creative community, not one languishing in the throes of decline⁷²”. Thus, while Sarna is a self-stated member of an “anxious sub-culture”⁷³, he sides with Sorin and Howe in a guarded optimism.

As Sarna states in his introduction, “Jews as a people can not be disentangled from Judaism as a faith. Traditionally, Judaism constitutes what is known as an ethnic church: its members distinguish themselves as much by the common ‘tribal’ ancestry (real or imagined) as by their doctrines and practices”⁷⁴. American Judaism “embraces many individuals who affiliate with no religious institutions whatsoever, but nevertheless carry a strong sense of Jewish identity based upon their Jewish descent and their commitment to secular, cultural, philanthropic, or nationalist Jewish causes”⁷⁵, and therefore Sarna finds it impossible to separate the religion of Judaism from Jewish American culture in general.

⁷⁰ Ibid., xviii.

⁷¹ Ibid., xix.

⁷² Ibid., 365.

⁷³ Ibid., 208.

⁷⁴ Ibid., xvi.

⁷⁵ Ibid., xvii.

This approach, while it makes for an interesting read, has its difficulties. Because Sarna focuses mainly on religious institutions, vastly important parts of Jewish history are glossed over or left out. As Henry L. Feingold, Emeritus of Baruch College and author of several highly acclaimed works on Jewish American history, notes in his review of *American Judaism: A History*, “institutions as the Jewish labor movement, its once powerful Zionist movement, ... [that] shaped the lives of millions of Jews, perhaps more than the religious congregation ... receive only passing attention”⁷⁶, because they are events that are not directly tied to Judaism.

By largely ignoring these events, Sarna does not keep to his goals as outlined in his introduction; although he set out to treat secular events in Jewish history as inseparable from Judaism, institutions and events that are more directly tied to the religious congregation are unquestionably given more attention. Though *American Judaism: A History* is well-researched and very readable, it is far from a complete overview of Jewish American history.

A book that takes a completely different approach is *In Search of American Jewish Culture* by Stephen J. Whitfield, which was published in 1999. Whitfield is the Max Richter Professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University, and has written extensively on political and cultural history in the American twentieth century. In *In Search of American Jewish Culture*, Whitfield takes a thematic approach to analyzing American Jewish culture, focusing on the first six decades of the twentieth century.

Though at times a difficult read, the book is carefully researched and provides a thorough overview of the Jewish musical theater, music and theater in the United States. The first two chapters are dedicated to defining the phrase “Jewish culture”.

⁷⁶ Feingold, Henry. “Book Review of *American Judaism: A History*”. *The Journal of American History* Vol. 91, Issue 4.

Like Sorin, Whitfield focuses solely on Eastern European culture, even stating in his introduction that: “[t]he culture of American Jewry was born in Eastern Europe and was then transplanted and refashioned in cities such as New York”⁷⁷. Taking such a narrow approach and focusing singularly on Eastern European Jewish culture in an urban setting, can never lead to a complete overview of Jewish culture. However, Whitfield makes an impressive attempt at describing the Jewish influence on American culture, which in his view bloomed in the first six decades of the 20th century.

Whitfield, contrary to Sarna, defines Judaism as “‘whatever Jews did or do together to preserve their collective identity,’ even practices that may not be rituals or invested with theological meaning. Judaism in this sense may be a culture”⁷⁸. In this definition, it is crucial to define who is Jewish. Whitfield makes an attempt at doing so by citing Jewish thinkers like Max Lerner and Isaiah Berlin, which leads him to the conclusion that “[t]he story of American Jews in the twentieth century can be told in terms of the erosion of a stable identity, so that eventually all of them would be described as Jews by choice”⁷⁹.

Where Sarna, Sorin and Howe did not spend time defining what exactly makes Jewish culture Jewish, Whitfield takes a great deal of time to construe the concept of Jewish culture. He poses an interesting question: “is this artifact so authentic and distinctive that no Gentile could have produced it?”⁸⁰. In addition, when defining a Jewish American canon, another question is critical: “[s]hould American Jewish culture be allowed to include works that do not bear directly on the beliefs and

⁷⁷ Whitfield, Stephen J. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1999, I.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁹ Whitfield, Stephen J. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1999, 9.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

experiences of the Jews as a people?⁸¹”. In other words, is a work still Jewish if it does not have any obvious links to Judaism or Jewish secular culture, although it was created by a Jew? Whitfield contends that they are: “Jewish culture ... is whatever individuals of Jewish birth (who did not sincerely convert to another faith) have contributed to art and thought”⁸².

Contrary to Sorin and Howe, but in particular Sarna, Whitfield takes a clear stance on Jewish American history before the 1850s: he believes it did not exist. He argues that Jewish culture in America in the early 19th century was just that – Jewish *Kultur*, going back to the Eastern European countries that the Jews immigrated from. Forgoing the Jewish institutions that Sorin described and that could only exist due to America’s freedom of religion, Whitfield claims that Jewish culture was more German than anything else.

While Whitfield’s stance is clear, he does not always seem to be fully familiar with the terminology and history of what Jewish culture entails. For instance, he neglects to recognize the importance of Yiddish as the common language of Jews that had emigrated from Eastern Europe. In fact, Whitfield claims that “‘Yiddish’ was a term that did not itself become widespread until the end of the nineteenth century; ‘Jewish’ was simply the language spoken by Ashkenazic Jews”⁸³. This is a glaring mistake; although it is correct that the golden age of Yiddish literature did not begin until the late 19th century, and Yiddish newspapers like *The Forward* (or *Forverts*, in Yiddish) did not appear until the turn of the 20th century, Yiddish had been a fully

⁸¹ Ibid., 19.

⁸² Ibid., 20.

⁸³ Whitfield, Stephen J. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1999, 35.

functional language for centuries, with the first written account going back to 1272⁸⁴. The distinction is important in defining what makes Jewish culture quintessentially Jewish: if Yiddish is simply seen as a bastardized version of German, the part it played in the lives of the Jews who immigrated from Eastern Europe to the United States is denied.

For all its flaws, *In Search of Jewish American Culture* makes an interesting addition to Jewish American historiography, if only for its insightful comments about often neglected topics, such as American reactions to the Holocaust in his chapter “Shoah”, and the Jewish interaction with African American artists. In his chapter on race, Whitfield suggests a relation between Jews and African Americans on a cultural level: “Jews have ... felt most intensely the magnetic pull of black culture ... If identity is indeed constructed and contingent, then the Jewish artist and intellectual could, more easily than anyone else, empathize with the Other who is black”⁸⁵. Though he constructs his argument mainly around anecdotal evidence, the anecdotes do seem to suggest a reciprocal artistic empathy between blacks and Jews in the first six decades of the twentieth century.

Cheryl Lynn Greenberg confirms Whitfield’s suggestions in her carefully researched book, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*. Greenberg is an associate professor of history at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and published her book in 2006. Utilizing a top-down approach, she used archival sources from national black and Jewish civil rights agencies to research the relations between Blacks and Jews in the twentieth century. Greenberg decided on this approach because although she does not believe that idiosyncratic figures can truly

⁸⁴ The first written account in Yiddish can be found in the Mahzor Worms, a festival prayerbook according to the Ashkenazi rite. See the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem online, <http://www.jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/mss/worms/about_eng.html>.

⁸⁵ Whitfield, Stephen J. *In Search of American Jewish Culture*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1999, 142.

represent a whole community, she does believe that it is, for example, significant that there were a large number of Jewish activists in the Civil Rights movement⁸⁶.

Moreover, the represented organizations relied on a broad membership to continue its existence, which implies support of the advocated ideas by the membership.

While some historians have claimed that Black-Jewish collaboration was mainly an issue of the elite, and the broader African American and Jewish communities had no interest in the advancement of each other's communities, Greenberg attempts to prove that this was not the case, and that blacks and Jews did have overlapping goals and interests that came together in the Civil Rights movement. These goals were "marked by a shared recognition of bigotry and discrimination, and a shared liberal vision of the post-civil-rights-struggle world"⁸⁷.

The book follows a chronological format, starting out with the forming of the coalition, following the organizations during the collaboration between blacks and Jews, and finally focusing on the supposed demise of the collaboration. In her book, Greenberg makes the point that the self-interests of both groups often clashed with each other, which ultimately led to the end of the collaboration between the organizations.

In *Troubling the Waters*, Greenberg argues that a large part of the tensions between the black and Jewish communities arose from the fact that Jewish had a better economic standing, partly due to their ability to pass as white. Though some of Greenberg's sources echo Whitfield's idea that Jews felt certain empathy for African Americans, blacks were often offended by the view of many Americans of the Jewish

⁸⁶ Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn. *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006, 7.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

community as a “‘model minority’, one that overcame hardship and discrimination to flourish in America”⁸⁸.

Greenberg’s approach – using archival sources of national organizations to describe the agreements and tensions between the Jewish and black communities – has a lot of merits, but it does not leave much room for discussion outside of the historic events. For instance, Greenberg’s take on the assimilation versus acculturation debate would have been interesting, especially when applying both terms to the African American community in comparison. Her choice of sources suggests that Greenberg was not looking to enter the debate, simply assuming that Jewish Americans have assimilated – or are in the process of assimilating – into American mainstream culture. She cites from a 1944 debate at the Anti-Defamation League between “those who insisted that the ‘Jew ... is not a member of any ethnic group’ ... [and] those who considered that view a goal but not yet a reality”⁸⁹, stating that: “both sides agreed that the ‘ultimate solution’ was full assimilation”⁹⁰.

Greenberg gives quite some attention to the women of both the Jewish and black communities, and has devoted a fair part of her research to women’s organizations. However, because of the top-down approach, which more often included men than women in the history of black-Jewish relations, the book – as most works about Jewish American history – does not give a complete overview of the role women played in Jewish American history. Joyce Antler has attempted to fill this gap in Jewish American historiography with *The Journey Home: Jewish Women and the American Century*, published in 1997.

⁸⁸ Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn. *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006, 43.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Antler is the Samuel Lane Professor of American Jewish History and Culture at Brandeis University, where she teaches in the American Studies Department and Women's and Gender Studies Program. She wrote *The Journey Home* as a “response to the triple marginalization of American Jewish women—first as females in a patriarchal Jewish society, second as Jews in a reform milieu dominated by Christian women, and last as Jewish women in a modern feminism that often demanded that they choose between religious convictions and political beliefs”, as pointed out by Sydney Stahl Weinberg in her review of the book⁹¹.

Contrary to most contemporary scholars, Antler prefers using the term “Americanization” rather than either “assimilation” or “acculturation” when describing the changes Jewish American culture underwent since coming into contact with American society.

Starting her survey – in keeping with the earlier mentioned classic periodization approach – in 1890, Antler has taken an interesting approach by singling out themes in Jewish American history, and using case studies of two women fitting of that particular theme to illustrate the way these women dealt with the hardships and opportunities they were presented with. Her book is carefully researched and uses examples of women that may not be the most apparent choices sometimes, but nonetheless provide a good representation of the time period they lived in.

The historiography of Jewish American history is a varied one, as was the attempt to illustrate in this paper. Though the selection offered is relatively small, the six works show that historians have utilized several completely different methods in approaching the field, and have vastly differing opinions about Jewish identity, and how it came to be. As seen in the different setups used by the selected historians, the

⁹¹ Stahl Weinberg, Sydney. “Review of *The Journey Home*”. *The Journal of American History* Vol. 88, Issue 1.

debate about periodization in Jewish American history is far from over. More scholars are leaning toward a thematic framework rather than a strictly chronological one when approaching particular issues in the field, such as Jewish American culture or black-Jewish relations. Most general histories, such as the one written by Sorin, take 1880 as a major turning point in Jewish American history, though focusing on earlier periods to find the roots of Jewish American identity also certainly has its merits.

An important issue when defining Jewish American identity is defining in how far Jewish culture has adapted to American mainstream culture. As seen in the cited works, historians do not agree on this topic; though most scholars these days argue that the right term to apply to this matter is “acculturation”, although some historians still use the – by many believed to be unfoundedly pessimistic – term “assimilation”.

It may not be possible to write the ultimate work on Jewish American history that includes all aspects of the field and includes both a secular and religious inclusive history. However, as illustrated by the reviewed works, Joshua Bloch can yet be proud of the progress that has been made.

Course: State and Local Politics (POS 6127)
Location: University of Florida
Instructor: Dr. Richard Scher
Co-authored with: Iris Kranenburg
Date: 14 April 2009
Word count: 2517

Charter Amendment 1 in Gainesville, Florida

1. Introduction

Civil rights have always played an important role in America. While the Civil Rights movement historically is associated with African American and other ethnic groups, the fight for equal rights has also always included women, homosexuals and transgendered people. On March 24th, the latter two groups were the main focus of the day in Gainesville, Florida, during the City of Gainesville Election. The election included two city commission seats and two proposed amendments to the city charter. This paper will discuss one of the proposed amendments: Charter Amendment 1.

On voting day, 58 percent of the voters said ‘no’ to Gainesville Charter Amendment 1. If the majority of voters had decided to say ‘yes’, this charter would have prohibited the City of Gainesville from offering nondiscrimination protections, based on sexual orientation and gender identity, beyond those provided in the Florida Civil Rights Act.

The State of Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 prohibits discrimination only on the basis of “race, colour, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status”.⁹² Because state and federal law do not yet include sexual orientation or gender identity, this could mean, for example, that it would become legal to fire someone from their job because they are gay.

The proposed amendment caused a lot of chaos in Gainesville. Opponents to

⁹² Florida Civil Rights Act.

the charter organized demonstrations and debates to show their discontent. Students played a key role in this city election. An unusually high number of students at the University of Florida cast their votes in this election. "It does speak to the high level of importance that young voters place on equality,"⁹³ city commissioner Craig Lowe said in the *Gainesville Sun*. Although the results are already known, the case of the Charter Amendment is an exemplary case on the topic of GLBT rights, and thus it is important to place this case in a larger context.

This paper will provide a chapter on the history of Charter Amendment 1 and on how an issue makes it to an election ballot. We then will discuss the opponents and supporters of this charter, and look at the proposition in the context of the fight for homosexual rights in the United State at large.

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2. The Gainesville Ordinance

<p><u>CITY OF GAINESVILLE CHARTER AMENDMENT 1</u></p> <p>Amendment to City Charter Prohibiting the City from Providing Certain Civil Rights.</p> <p>SHALL THE CITY CHARTER BE AMENDED TO PROHIBIT THE ADOPTION OR ENFORCEMENT OF ORDINANCES, REGULATIONS, RULES OR POLICIES THAT PROVIDE PROTECTED STATUS, PREFERENCES OR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS BASED ON CLASSIFICATIONS, CHARACTERISTICS OR ORIENTATIONS NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS ACT? THE ACT RECOGNIZES RACE, COLOR, CREED, RELIGION, GENDER, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, HANDICAP, MARITAL AND FAMILIAL STATUS. ADDITIONALLY, THIS AMENDMENT VOIDS EXISTING ORDINANCES CONCERNING SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, AND OTHER ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT WITH THIS AMENDMENT.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES - for adoption of the amendment</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO - against adoption of the amendment</p>
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It is not surprising that many people opposed this charter and organized several protests. But how did it all start? The City Commission added sexual orientation as a protected class effective in June 1998. Chapter 8 of The City of Gainesville Non-discrimination Ordinance (Human Rights Ordinance) therefore prohibited discrimination in housing, employment, credit, and public accommodation, based on sexual orientation, race, colour, gender, age, religion, national origin, marital status, disability or gender identity. These rules protected also gays and lesbians from being unfairly fired or evicted. Moreover, chapter 8 creates the process and procedures for addressing claims of discrimination. Since this addition, opponents of this have been looking for an excuse to repeal the law.

Gainesville's Ordinance & Gender Identity

Ten years later, the Commission amended portions of Chapter 8 of the Gainesville code of Ordinances to add gender identity as a class that is protected by the ordinance. The law defines gender identity as “an inner sense of being a specific gender or the expression of a gender identity by verbal statement, appearance, or mannerisms, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual with or without regard to the individual’s designated sex at birth.”⁹⁴ In other words, those who are born one sex but identify with the other. According to AP’s article ‘Gainesville, Fla. puts non-bias laws to a vote’, Gainesville has approximately 100 transgender residents.⁹⁵

This change in the Gainesville code of Ordinances means that a person’s gender would be determined by that person’s “inner feeling” as to being a male or female. It requires that transgendered people be given access to public facilities that are consistent with their gender identity even if it is different from their biological sex. With this change, the City of Gainesville extended its civil rights coverage from gays and lesbians to trans-gendered as well.

There are eight cities and counties in Florida, 108 cities and counties nationwide and thirteen states and the District of Columbia that have non-discrimination laws protections for sexual orientation and gender identity.

Chapter 8 of the Gainesville Ordinance caused a lot of chaos in Gainesville. As the newspaper *The Sun Activist* stated in its article “Gender War comes to Gainesville”, the “same-sex” electoral battles have now come to the ‘liberal’ city of Gainesville.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Gainesville Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8.

⁹⁵ Word, Ron, *Associated Press* ‘Gainesville, Fla. puts non-bias laws to a vote’ (March 24th 2009)

⁹⁶ Rose, Jerry, *The Sun State Activist*, “Gender War comes to Gainesville” (March 8th 2009).

Charter Amendment 1 on the Election Ballot

Shortly after the above described amendment, Charter Amendment 1 was added to the March's election ballot after a local political activist organization, Citizens for Good Public Policy (CGPP) submitted after a petition.

Charter Amendment 1 is a proposed amendment to the Gainesville City Charter. The right wing organization that added the charter, seeks to take away the City Commission's ability to enact and enforce Gainesville local non-discrimination laws. The amendment required that civil rights categories specified in the City of Gainesville's code of ordinances match those of the State of Florida and not extend beyond those categories.

Charter Amendment Petition Form

I, the undersigned, a registered voter of the City of Gainesville, hereby petition pursuant to Section 5.01 of the Charter of the City of Gainesville and Chapter 9 of the City of Gainesville Code of Ordinances, to have the following proposed amendment to the Charter of the City of Gainesville submitted to a vote of the electors at a regular city election, a state-wide general election, or at a special election called by the City Commission for the City of Gainesville for that purpose.

5.08 Civil Rights.

The City shall not enact, adopt, enforce or administer any ordinance, regulation, rule or policy which provides or entitles any person to claim protected status, quota preferences or have a claim of discrimination based upon a classification, characteristic or orientation not recognized by the Florida Civil Rights Act (Fla. Stat. ss. 760.01-760.11 and 509.092). Any ordinance or regulation enacted before this amendment or after shall be construed in conformance with the Florida Civil Rights Act. Any ordinance that violates this provision shall be void.

Name _____

Resident street address _____

City _____ Precinct Number _____

Date Signed _____ Signature _____

Paid Political Advertisement Paid For By
Citizens for Good Public Policy
P.O. Box 13675
Gainesville, FL 32604

Return Petition Form to:
Citizens for Good Public Policy
P.O. Box 13675
Gainesville, FL 32604

Source: Citizens for Good Public Policy, Website.

3. Initiative Petitions - Process and Procedures

Charter Amendment 1 was a citizen initiative. In order to get an issue on an election ballot, lobby groups have to follow a certain procedure. In general, the requirements - number of signatures, fund raising, exact wording of the issue on the ballot - depend on the type of issue; is the proposed amendment meant for state constitution, a city or county? The Supervisor of Elections will not be able to help an organization with the wording of a petition; he or she is only there to approve the form.

The organization that proposed Charter Amendment 1 was able to do this because they collected signatures of ten percent of registered voters. Only city residents are able to vote. This is the necessary amount of signatures needed to approve an amendment on the ballot. In total, the group collected 8600 signatures, 3000 more than required in order to get a citywide vote on the issue. Exactly 5,581 signatures are required to place a charter amendment on a city election ballot. In addition, the signatures have to be collected during a ninety-day-period.

Some cities provide a process by which ordinances may be enacted, amended or repealed by petition, but Gainesville does not. So in this case, the city commission had to place the proposed amendment to a vote of the electors at the next general election.

The next step is to receive the approval of the signatures by the supervisor's office within the next 45 days. This is to ensure that the signatures were authentically signed by registered voters living within the Gainesville city limits. The City Commission opposes this Charter Amendment, but the Commission is required by law to place the amendment on the ballot once signatures have been obtained and verified by the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections.

The Supervisor of Elections is a Constitutional Officer. This person is elected countywide every four years, in the same year that presidential elections are held. The responsibilities are set forth in the Constitution and Laws of the State of Florida and salary is set by statute based on the population of the county. Florida Elections Laws are covered in Chapters 97 through 107 of the Florida Statutes.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ <http://elections.alachua.fl.us/index.html>

4. Opponents of Charter Amendment 1

This chapter will discuss Equality is Gainesville's Business (EQGB), a political committee made up of University of Florida students and members of the Gainesville community, and created to defeat Gainesville's proposed Charter Amendment 1. This committee opposes the Charter for several reasons.

First, the League believes that if this Charter were passed, persons or groups would suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination. EQGB believes that there should be secure equal rights and opportunity for all, and with the approval of this amendment, this security would be threatened, as anti-discrimination protections for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people would be removed.

Secondly, passing of Charter Amendment 1 would restrict the City of Gainesville from enacting additional future provisions to its own anti-discrimination laws. "Should Amendment 1 pass, future changes to Gainesville's anti-discrimination laws would need to be enacted by the state legislature. The League believes that local governments should have all powers not expressly prohibited by the Constitution or by general law."⁹⁸

Finally, the committee thinks that Amentment 1 addresses a public safety issue: "The existing ordinance does not legalize criminal behavior or illegal acts. The proposed charter amendment provides no additional protection from illegal acts. This charter amendment, which restricts home rule, adds unnecessary language to our charter and condones discrimination, is bad public policy."⁹⁹

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⁹⁹ <http://equalitygainesville.com/content/news/the-league-of-women-voters-of-alachua-countygainesville-opposes-amendment-1/>.

5. Proponents of the Proposition

The main lobby group that is in favor of the proposition, is “Citizens for Good Public Policy”, or CGPP. On their home page, the group cites the original clause which, among other things, “allows persons to use public restrooms, changing rooms, locker rooms, etc., according to their “gender identity,” which the ordinance defines as ‘an inner sense of being a specific gender, or the expression of a gender identity by verbal statement, appearance, or mannerisms, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual with or without regard to the individual’s designated sex at birth’.” According to the group, “this clause opens a dangerous legal loophole. Because of the ordinance’s vague wording, any man can legally gain access to facilities normally reserved for women and girls simply by indicating, verbally or non-verbally, that he inwardly feels female at the moment.” CGPP calls this the “unfortunate, unintended consequence of this poorly drafted ordinance”.

The group, which was founded specifically to oppose the Gender Identity Ordinance, claims that it supports equal rights for all citizens, and thus its target is not the nullification of the “sexual orientation” provision of the local civil rights law, which would have been a consequence had the Charter Amendment been approved. Instead, it focuses on the provision about public facilities, because according to the current Gender Identity Ordinance, sexual predators would be able to enter restrooms for women and girls, as they could later claim that they felt female inwardly at that moment. The group underlines its concerns by printing a set of articles about sexual offenses in public restrooms (none of which happened in Gainesville, ironically). It states that such assaults are commonplace, and would increase if men would be allowed legal entrance to women’s restrooms. The group is not so much concerned about transgender people turning into sexual offenders: “the [printed] articles have

nothing to do with transgender persons, because such persons are not known to commit restroom crimes”¹⁰⁰

In its campaign, CGPP focused solely on the issue of restroom crimes. The group could be seen holding boards with texts such as “Keep men out of women’s restrooms” to urge people to vote “yes” on the proposition. By focusing on this singular issue, voters were misinformed about the Charter Amendment, as nowhere did the group acknowledge that by overthrowing the Gender Identity Ordinance, discrimination of homosexual people would also become legal. Though the group is right about the vague wording of the proposition – an inner feeling is hard to define, and could be abused as an excuse in a courtroom – the group’s campaign tactics were misleading. It used commercials that can be defined as fear mongering: the group repeated its singular issue in order to scare people into voting “yes” on a petition that would severely influence a large group of the population’s civil rights.

¹⁰⁰ Citizens For Good Public Policy, CGPP.com, Frequently Asked Questions



What?

A **YES** vote on **Charter Amendment 1** will stop men from legally using women's facilities in restaurants, department store dressing rooms, women-only fitness centers, etc., within Gainesville's city limits.

Why?

The Gainesville City Commission passed a law on 1/28/2008 that allows these types of public facilities to be used according to an "inner sense" of being male or female. A **YES** vote on **Charter Amendment 1** will help put a stop to local **Government Gone Wild**.

When?

Early voting in the City of Gainesville begins March 16, 2009 at the Supervisor of Elections Office located at 12 SE 1st Street, Downtown Gainesville and the final voting day is Tuesday, March 24, 2009 at city precincts. Absentee ballot requests may be printed online at <http://elections.alachua.fl.us/>

Please vote early and remind others to vote!

What you can do to help:

- VOTE!
- Contribute Financially
- Volunteer

What if you live in the county?

You need not live in the city limits to be victimized by this law. If you and your family use restrooms and similar facilities in Gainesville, persons of the opposite sex have the legal right to share them with you. Please actively support the Charter Amendment as a volunteer and contributor. You may contribute on our website or mail your check to the address below. Thank you!

Paid Political Announcement, Paid for by:



P.O. Box 13675, Gainesville, Florida 32604
www.citizensforgoodpublicpolicy.org

This flyer, downloaded from the CGPP website, shows that the group focused singularly on the issue of keeping men out of restrooms, thereby misinforming the general public about the proposition.

6. Civil Rights of LGBT People on a Federal Level and in the States

The case of the Charter Amendment in Gainesville shows just how fragile civil rights still are in the United States of America. With one proposition to the law, homosexuals' rights could have been nullified; people could have lost their jobs, houses, in sum: their lives, just because of their sexual preference. This ordeal occurred to the background of a few major victories for Civil Rights activists. On the 19th of March 2009, it was announced that President Barack Obama will sign a United Nations statement declaring that homosexuality should not be a crime in any nation. Former President George W. Bush had refused to sign this exact statement, making Obama's willingness to sign the statement major news. The Bush administration had "offered the rationale that although the US also oppose sexual orientation discrimination, the federal government could not sign a statement which may have bound the US on matters pertaining to state jurisdiction".¹⁰¹ By refusing, the United States was in an expected company: China, Russia, members of the Islamic Conference and the Roman Catholic Church also refused to sign the statement. When signing the statement, the Obama administration declared that it "intends to continue to be vocal in its stance toward defending human rights"¹⁰².

The year of 2009 has already seen more progress in the field of civil rights for homosexuals. The state of Vermont legalized same sex marriages on April 7 by overriding Governor Jim Douglas' veto of a bill that allows gays and lesbians to marry, starting September 1, 2009.¹⁰³ By doing so, Vermont became the fourth state in America to legalize same sex marriages. The state of Iowa was the third; the state will allow same sex marriages starting on April 27th, 2009. This is a consequence of the

¹⁰¹ Marinero, Ximena. "Obama Administration to Sign UN Gay Rights Declaration: Official". Jurist. March 18, 2009.

¹⁰² Idem.

¹⁰³ Associated Press. "Vermont Legalizes Gay Marriage With Veto Override". April 7, 2009.

Iowa Supreme Court's unanimous decision to reject a state law that banned same-sex marriage¹⁰⁴. Connecticut was the second state to allow same sex couples to marry, in late 2008, while same sex marriages have been legal in Massachusetts since 2004. With same sex marriage bills pending in Maine and New Hampshire, and the state of New York declaring it is working on a similar bill¹⁰⁵, it seems that civil rights for homosexuals are on the rise. However, when the – usually liberal – state of California passed Proposition 8 in November 2008, which effectively banned same sex marriages within the state, the fragility of the civil rights of homosexuals in the United States was again confirmed. The case of Proposition 8 also showed just how sensitive the issue of same sex marriages is; demonstrations and protests from both opponents and proponents of the proposition were galore, and several death threats and other hate crimes were reported by both parties.

Of course, same sex marriages do not form the only LGBT issue in the United States, but it is the most visible one at present. The Charter Amendment case in Gainesville showed just how much work remains to be done. Of all fifty states, only twenty states outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation, and thirteen states outlaw discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Because there are no federal laws that outlaw discrimination against homosexuals, bisexuals and transgender people, it is up to the states to define its stance toward discrimination on sexual preference and gender identity.

¹⁰⁴ CNN. "Iowa Court Backs Gay Marriage". April 3, 2009.

¹⁰⁵ Marks, Alexandra. "New York to Introduce Same-Sex Marriage Bill". The Christian Science Monitor. April 16, 2009.

Course: Introduction to American Studies
Location: Utrecht University
Instructor: Dr. Damian Pargas
Date: 23 October 2009
Word count: 1461

All the Colors of the Wind: A Tradition of Distortion

In “From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park”, Paul Lauter outlines the importance of analyzing what he refers to as “cultural texts” within the field of American Studies. He describes this process as “cultural work”, which he defines as follows: “By ‘cultural work’ I refer to the ways in which a book or other kind of ‘text’ – a movie, a Supreme Court decision, an ad, an anthology, an international treaty, a material object – helps construct the frameworks, fashion the metaphors, create the very language by which people comprehend their experiences and think about their world” (Lauter 11). In his introduction, he sides with scholars such as Thomas Inge and Dennis Hall, who have argued that the boundaries between high and low culture have blurred in academia, creating a landscape where “we should drop the adjectives ‘high’ and ‘popular’ and address ourselves to the total culture of twenty-first-century-American society without maintaining false distinctions that have no reality in the modern world (Inge xxiv).

Lipsitz takes this even further, stating that: “issues that critics discuss abstractly and idealistically seem to flow effortlessly and relentlessly from the texts of popular literature and popular culture” (Lipsitz 322). One such cultural text where issues about multiculturalism, hegemony, feminism and exceptionalism come together is Walt Disney’s animated movie *Pocahontas*. Elements of the centuries-old legend of Pocahontas are combined with recent views about multiculturalism and American identity to recreate the founding story of the American colonies. This essay will

explore these issues by placing Disney's *Pocahontas* in a historical framework, pointing out the use of stereotypes and language to shape the movie into a quintessentially American symbol.

In perhaps the most famous scene of the movie, young colonist John Smith is about to be brutally executed by the Indian Chief Powhatan when suddenly his daughter Pocahontas leaps forward, saving Smith from a certain death. The legend of Pocahontas has been used for the same purposes as the stories about the Mayflower Pilgrims setting foot on Plymouth Rock: to build a nation by remembering a shared national history. In "Who Are We?", Samuel Huffington describes the difficulties of retaining an American identity while still allowing for a multi-cultural debate:

The ideologies of multiculturalism and diversity eroded the legitimacy of the remaining central elements of American identity, the cultural core and the American Creed. President Clinton explicitly set forth this challenge when he said that America needed a third 'great revolution' (in addition to *the* American Revolution and the civil rights revolution) to 'prove that we literally can live without having a dominant European culture' (Huffington 18)

The story of Pocahontas, like the Pilgrim myth, provides a shared background for all Americans to build on. In the Disney version, Native Americans and British colonists work together by the end of the movie, respectful of each other's skills. Pocahontas was willing to sacrifice herself to bring unity to the two battling groups, just like John Smith saves Pocahontas' father from the arrow that Governor Radcliffe shoots at him. The movie promotes an ideal of acculturation rather than assimilation: both groups keep their own culture while both subscribing to the American Creed.

In a move that led to much criticism from Native American tribes, Disney freely changed the character of Pocahontas for its own purposes. While John Smith's own account speaks of a "a child of twelve or thirteen years of age" (Smith 392) who does not visit with the colonists, the Disney movie tells the story of a romantic relationship between John Smith and Pocahontas, who is portrayed as a young attractive woman in her early twenties. By making Pocahontas an independent actor, the Disney corporation breaks with its tradition of portraying its female protagonists as "damsels in distress", and for the first time gives a voice to a "non-white subject to speak on her own side of American history" (Kutsuzawa 3).

Unfortunately, the movie also reinforces a set of stereotypes about Native Americans, and severely distorts the historical account of the story. The Powhatan Nation, the Native American tribe that Pocahontas belonged to, stated that: "the film distorts history beyond recognition" (Crazy Horse pp 2) and accused the Disney corporation of re-establishing existing stereotypes of Native Americans by giving new life to the theme of "good Indian" versus "bad Indian". It is not only the stereotype of "good Indian" that is reinforced in Disney's *Pocahontas*: Portman and Herring voice their concerns about the stereotypical portrayal of Native American women in the movie in their essay "Debunking the Pocahontas Paradox": "Native American Indian women [are traditionally portrayed] in a dual-faceted manner: either as a strong, powerful, dangerous woman or as a beautiful, exotic, lustful woman. Both facets were merged ... through the stereotype of Pocahontas, who was viewed as having been motivated by lust in the saving of John Smith's life" (Portman 190). The continued use of stereotypes shows that while the Disney Corporation felt the need to give a voice to minorities after several decades of showing only the Anglo-Saxon hegemonic culture, these minorities are still oppressed by the standing power forces. John Smith

only hears Pocahontas because of her attractive appearance, and Pocahontas' main reason for intervening in his pending execution is her attraction to the young colonist.

A final element of the movie that indicates Disney's stance on American history is the use of language in the movie. As Lauter writes in his introduction, "language and form often reveal what an argument tends, indeed wishes, to veil, or how imagery and details reinforce or contradict a writer's ideas" (Lauter 16). While all Native Americans Disney's *Pocahontas* speak with a flawless American English accent, all but one of the British characters speak with British accents. The only British colonist sporting an American English accent is John Smith, supposedly to portray him as the first Anglo-Saxon American. Hereby, Disney also seems to distance itself from the British colonists that do not think twice about murdering any Native Americans they encounter, and invading the Native Americans' land to enrich themselves. This portrayal suggests a transition of the English colonizers, who are marked by greed and xenophobia, to Americans who believe in a melting pot of cultures and mutual cooperation. Disney glosses over the mass-murder that ensued after the few years of peace between Smith's colonists and the Powhatan tribe, choosing to tell a story of unity and optimism that characterize American exceptionalism (Lipset 19).

At first sight, the Disney movie *Pocahontas* seems a vehicle for feminism and minority culture, giving a voice to a strong-willed Native American woman and re-shaping American history in favor of Native Americans. However, a close reading of this cultural text reveals that the movie in fact reinforces existing stereotypes and shows a distorted view of American history to its public. The movie illustrates the difficulties of answering questions about American identity in this time of multiculturalism, and makes use of the many stereotypes that are still accepted as

credible representations of Native Americans. Furthermore, Disney distances itself from the mass-murder committed by colonists by its use of language, portraying only the “good guy” in the movie as typically American, while the “villains” of the movie are foreigners. Through this distortion, the movie can be utilized as a vehicle for nation building, whereas a more truthful depiction of the story might lead to a less favorable perception of American history and culture. Hence, while Pocahontas may claim to sing “with all the voices of the mountain”, in the end it’s mainly the hegemonic voice of Disney which resounds throughout the movie.

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Course: American Cultural Influence
 Location: Utrecht University
 Instructor: Dr. Jaap Verheul
 Date: 23 June 2010
 Word count: 9564

University College Utrecht: A Typical Case of Americanization in the Netherlands?



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Introduction

In September 1999, University College Utrecht opened its doors to its first class of students. This selective liberal arts college, shaped after American liberal arts colleges such as Smith College and Amherst College, promotes itself as “an international community of students from all over the world that resides on a beautiful campus ... [offering an] education [that] extends well beyond its academic content.”¹⁰⁶ The admission procedure of UCU caused immediate controversy in the Netherlands: while the Dutch educational tradition had been to admit any student with a VWO-diploma to their university of choice, UCU used an admission procedure to select its students “at the gate.”¹⁰⁷ This selective character was not the only controversial feature of the college. UCU was also the first Dutch institution to implement the bachelor-master structure.¹⁰⁸ After completing an undergraduate education, UCU graduates received a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree instead of the traditional Dutch *doctoraal* diploma. UCU became a tremendous success, and soon similar colleges were founded throughout the Netherlands, from Maastricht to Amsterdam and Middelburg.¹⁰⁹

Two months prior to the first day of class at UCU, another event had taken place that would be extremely influential in shaping the Dutch higher education landscape. In June 1999, the ministers of education of 29 European countries accepted the Bologna Declaration. By accepting this declaration, these countries “committed themselves to achieving the creation of the ‘European Area of Higher Education’ as a

¹⁰⁶ Rob van der Vaart, “Message from the Dean,” *University College Utrecht*, web, 28 October 2009. <<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/whyUCU/Pages/MessagefromtheDean.aspx>>

¹⁰⁷ “Requirements,” *University College Utrecht*, web, 28 October 2009. <<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/admissionsfinance/Pages/Requirements.aspx>>

¹⁰⁸ “Leidse professor wordt leider University College,” *U-blad*, 19 December 2002 (34:17). <<http://www.ublad.uu.nl/WebObjects/UOL.woa/3/wa/Ublad/archief?id=1019001>>

¹⁰⁹ The Roosevelt Academy, like University College Utrecht, falls under the wing of Utrecht University.

key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the continent's overall development."¹¹⁰ In order to create this area of higher education in which citizens could freely move, the participating countries would adopt a "system of easily readable and comparable degrees,"¹¹¹ which would be "based on two cycles (undergraduate and graduate)." Furthermore, they would establish a system of internationally recognized credits (such as ECTS) and promote "the attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area to other parts of the world."¹¹²

In *The Bologna Process – Harmonizing Europe's Higher Education*, Bob Reinalda and Ewa Kulesza offer an overview of the changes in the European higher education landscape that, according to the authors, led to the creation of the Bologna Declaration. In 1994, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was issued by the World Trade Organization. This agreement was formed to extend WTO's mission – regulating and liberalizing international trade – to include public services such as healthcare and education. The Bologna Declaration is a direct result of this agreement. The call for a liberalization of the international education market, as well as other public services, followed logically on what the WTO Council for Trade had identified as an important growth in the international trade in higher education services.¹¹³ According to Reinalda and Kulesza, manifestations of this growth include:

increasing numbers of students going abroad for study; exchanges and linkages between faculties and researchers; increased international marketing of curricula and academic programs; establishment of

¹¹⁰ Bob Reinalda and Ewa Kulesza, *The Bologna Process: Harmonizing Europe's Higher Education* (Opladen and Bloomfield Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2006), 8.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

‘branch campuses’ abroad; and development of international mechanisms for educational cooperation between academic institutions.¹¹⁴

The Netherlands was not a stranger to the prospect of internationalization; as a small country with a long trade tradition, looking beyond its borders had been the practice for centuries. In a survey of the use of English as an academic language, Ulrich Ammon and Grant McConnell argue that this dependence on cross-border trade for the economic survival of the Netherlands has led to a “a strong need for internationalization, which results in attracting human and manufacturing resources from abroad and exporting expertise and finished products.”¹¹⁵ This focus on internationalization was already visible in the Dutch higher education system long before the Bologna Declaration. As early as the 17th century, Dutch universities had strong ties with international sister universities. This resulted in an exchange of scholars, usually with Germany, which held a leading position in the field of science until the First World War.¹¹⁶ After the First World War, the Dutch universities shifted their attention from Germany to the United States.¹¹⁷ This process was accelerated by the Second World War, after which the United States emerged as the great victor, turning the U.S. into a reference society. In “Uncle Sam: An Example for All?”, Marja Roholl argues that after the war, “circumstances had ... changed in the

¹¹⁴ Bob Reinalda and Ewa Kulesza, *The Bologna Process: Harmonizing Europe’s Higher Education* (Opladen and Bloomfield Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2006), 11-13.

¹¹⁵ Ulrich Ammon and Grant McConnell, *English as an Academic Language in Europe. A Survey of its Use in Teaching* (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 2002). 98

¹¹⁶ J.C.C. Rupp, *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten. De Verdringing van Duitse door Amerikaanse Invloeden op de Wetenschapsbeoefening en het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland, 1945-1995* (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997), 12.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

scientific sector. America took over the role of model country from Germany, France and to a lesser degree England.”¹¹⁸

Before the Netherlands turned to the United States for inspiration, the Dutch higher education system had been modeled after the German *Bildungsideal*. Shaped by the emergence of the natural sciences and the study of literature and history, this philosophy held that “protagonists of the newly emerging sciences need to obtain a broader and more general education to be fully able to understand the place of these sciences in the academic world.”¹¹⁹ This German model was adopted by a wide variety of countries, including Japan, China, and Thailand.¹²⁰ Interestingly, it also formed the inspiration for the American research university, which in its Americanized form would later become the international reference model.¹²¹

However, the German-inspired research university was not the first model of higher education in the United States. The first colleges founded in the New World, Harvard in 1636 and William and Mary in 1693, were modeled after the Anglo-Saxon residential liberal arts colleges.¹²² In the foreword to *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges*, Steven Koblik explains that these institutions, “designed to serve religious, intellectual, personal, local and practical needs” of privileged white males were the “pioneers of American higher education.”¹²³ In an essay in this same volume, Eugene M. Lang summarizes the philosophy of the early liberal arts colleges: “[w]hile imparting knowledge, their academic regimen was also

¹¹⁸ Marja Roholl, “Uncle Sam: An Example for All?” in *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1969*, ed. Hans Loeber (Assen & Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992), 105.

¹¹⁹ J.C.C. Rupp, *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten. De Verdringing van Duitse door Amerikaanse Invloeden op de Wetenschapsbeoefening en het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland, 1945-1995* (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997), 7.

¹²⁰ Hans de Wit, *Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: a Historical, Comparative and Conceptual Analysis* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 7.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²² Steven Koblik and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xv.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

intended to develop personal character and intellect—to turnout . . . ‘the whole person, prepared to function knowledgeably within a framework of civic responsibility.’”¹²⁴

The curriculum of the liberal arts college was interdisciplinary, intended to train its students in the seven traditional liberal arts during the four-year undergraduate degree. The colleges were typically small and residential, encouraging students to live and learn within one community.

In the centuries that followed, the model of the liberal arts college would be challenged by competing education systems (such as the research university and vocational schools) and by an increasingly competitive job market that called for a more practical and specialized preparatory education. However, perhaps against all odds, the model is still very much alive in the 800 liberal arts colleges in the United States. The liberal arts philosophy has also had a profound impact on the American research universities, as most large universities still offer a liberal arts component as a part of their undergraduate degrees.¹²⁵ Furthermore, they are defined by some scholars as a typical American tradition. Steven Koblik contends that liberal arts colleges are “distinctively American; no other country has schools committed so clearly to the highest quality of undergraduate education.”¹²⁶

In recent years however, the liberal arts tradition has found its way back to the Old World. University College Utrecht was the first liberal arts college on the European continent, soon to be followed by the founding of university colleges in other major cities in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. The upsurge of these colleges raises several questions. If the liberal arts tradition is quintessentially

¹²⁴ Eugene Lang, “Distinctively American: The Liberal Arts College” in *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges*, ed. Koblik, Steven and Stephen R. Graubard (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000) 134.

¹²⁵ Steven Koblik and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xvi.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

American, then why do the university colleges flourish in the Netherlands? Does this imply a certain degree of Americanization in the Dutch higher education system? Or has the American model been adapted to account for cultural differences? Can the founding of University College Utrecht even be explained by a process of Americanization, or is it simply a symptom of internationalization?

Two years before University College Utrecht was founded, Rupp concluded in *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten* that the Dutch higher education system “has not adopted the American ... way of thinking, nor its practices”.¹²⁷ Richard Pells echoes this view in *Not Like Us*, who found upon coming to the Netherlands as a visiting scholar that “almost everything about the European university turned out to be different”,¹²⁸ going on to describe the differences in landscape, curricula and other cultural differences. However, as may have become clear in the previous paragraphs, much has changed since Rupp and Pells published their books, and many of these changes have an American flavor. Since Rupp’s and Pells’ writing, the Bachelor/Master system was implemented, and with it the major/minor construction; the use of ECTS replaced the former Dutch system of credits; and the standardized system of the Grade Point Average is increasingly used to judge a student’s academic record.

Another change that may be less obvious as an American influence but is definitely a result of the use of English as a “lingua franca” in academia is the large number of English-taught Bachelor’s and Master’s programs that were introduced to increase Dutch competitiveness on a global scale.¹²⁹ This has not only changed the

¹²⁷ J.C.C. Rupp, *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten. De Verdringing van Duitse door Amerikaanse Invloeden op de Wetenschapsbeoefening en het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland, 1945-1995*. (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997).

¹²⁸ Richard Pells, *Not Like Us*. New York: Basic Books, 1997.

¹²⁹ Howard Davies, *Survey of Master Degrees in Europe*. Brussels: European University Association, 2009.

language of instruction, but also the curricula of Dutch universities, as most books on the reading list of an average Dutch university course are now American textbooks.¹³⁰ Finally, the American concept of a campus as the space where students can study, live and interact with each other, is finding ground in the Netherlands, resulting in, for example, the building of student housing on and near the campuses of Utrecht University. All these changes might imply a certain degree of Americanization of the Dutch higher education system.

A comprehensive research into American influences on the Dutch higher education system is beyond the scope of this paper. However, in order to add to the academic debate regarding this issue, this paper will attempt to determine to what extent the UCU experience differs from the regular Dutch university experience, and explore if these differences can be attributable to an American influence. The research question of this paper is: To what extent can the founding of University College Utrecht be considered an American cultural influence on the Dutch higher education system? To answer this question, I will first place the American liberal arts tradition in a historical context to illustrate its European antecedents, as well as provide a model of a typical liberal arts college as it exists in America today. In chapter two, I will relate the founding story of University College Utrecht, explore to what extent it was consciously shaped after an American model, and compare UCU's educational philosophy to that of the American liberal arts tradition. In the next chapter, I will focus on UCU's international character: do American liberal arts colleges share this focus on internationalization, or is this a typically Dutch feature? In chapter four, I will juxtapose the requirements of UCU's curriculum with the curriculum requirements of both a selection of American liberal arts colleges, and the

¹³⁰ Marc Brysbaert and François Dumoulin, "Do We All Have to Study American Textbooks?" *The Netherlands Journal of Psychology* 63, 58-67.

requirements of a liberal arts program in a regular Dutch university. In the final chapter, I will explore UCU's campus life, and compare it with the campus of a typical American liberal arts college.

Chapter one

The Liberal Arts College: a Typically American Institution?

After God had carried us safe to New England and we had builded [sic] our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, reared convenient places for God's worship, and settled the civil government: one of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity.¹³¹ -- New England's First Fruits (1643)

The first colleges of the New World were established *pro modo Academiarum in Anglia*: according to the manner of universities in England.¹³² In *Higher Education in Transition: a History of American Colleges and Universities*, John Brubacher and Willis Rudy contend that Harvard College, the first American colonial college, was shaped after Emmanuel College at Cambridge University. Harvard's founders did not only take its earliest statutes directly from this English college, but also copied "the names of the four college classes – freshmen, sophomore, junior sophister, and senior sophister."¹³³ Requiring only the knowledge of Latin and Greek as entrance requirements, Harvard's curriculum followed "a fixed and known body of knowledge - the 'liberal arts' as they had come down from antiquity via the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation."¹³⁴

According to Plato's educational tradition, the liberal arts included arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. In the fifth century B.C., the Sophists added three

¹³¹ Quoted in Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 103-104.

¹³² Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 103.

¹³³ J.S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

more, resulting in the Seven Liberal Arts: grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. These studies would together form the curriculum that would dominate the higher education in Europe for many centuries to come.¹³⁵ It was this curriculum that was typical for the 17th century English colleges that stood model for Harvard College. The fixed set of courses was non-negotiable - completing this liberal arts track was the only way to obtain a baccalaureate degree.

The first American liberal arts colleges, like their counterparts in England, were designed to educate white privileged males, served both intellectual and religious needs and were the “pioneers of American higher education”¹³⁶. The educational philosophy of the liberal arts college, in keeping with the liberal arts tradition, “emphasized character as much as it did learning, piety as well as erudition, and civic virtue over private advantage.”¹³⁷ Eugene Lang explains in “Distinctively American: The Liberal Arts College” that in the American democratic society of the 17th century, “citizenship, social responsibility, and community [were] inseparable”.¹³⁸

Soon, colleges emulating Harvard’s example were springing up throughout the English American colonies.¹³⁹ Throughout the 17th century, the liberal arts colleges remained much unchanged. In the 18th century, the curricula of American colleges were modified under the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment to include a larger emphasis on mathematics, English language and culture, natural science and modern

¹³⁵ Philip L. Harriman, “Antecedents of the Liberal Arts College,” *The Journal of Higher Education* 6:2 (1935), 64-66.

¹³⁶ Steven Koblik and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xv.

¹³⁷ Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 112.

¹³⁸ Eugene Eugene, “Distinctively American: The Liberal Arts College” in *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges*, ed. Koblik, Steven and Stephen R. Graubard (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 140.

¹³⁹ Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 112.

foreign languages.¹⁴⁰ In the course of this century, science became ever more important, and several American professors started doing their own scientific research. Brubacher and Rudy contend in *Higher Education in Transition* that this was possible because most American clergy regarded science as complimentary to theology, rather than antagonistic.¹⁴¹ This combination of the liberal arts tradition and a new emphasis on science shaped the liberal arts and science curricula of today's American liberal arts colleges.

Much has changed in the American higher education landscape since the 18th century. In the 19th century, the first research universities were founded, modeled after the German *Bildungsideal*. This educational philosophy was propagated by Wilhelm von Humboldt and held research should be free from economic and political influences. This research should take place at the state university, where teaching and research would form a unity that together would enlighten its students without any specific purpose aside from learning itself.¹⁴² The new German university was influential in reshaping the higher education system in European countries – such as the Netherlands – but also was crucial in the forming of the American research universities. While the undergraduate phase was still a period of liberal education, the newly established graduate schools became “centers for advanced training and research”¹⁴³ that allowed students to specialize in a specific field of interest.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ J.S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 14

¹⁴¹ J.S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 16-17.

¹⁴² J.C.C. Rupp, *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten. De Verdringing van Duitse door Amerikaanse Invloeden op de Wetenschapsbeoefening en het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland, 1945-1995* (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997), 52-54.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 63-65.

¹⁴⁴ Sheldon Rothblatt, “The Limbs of Osiris: Liberal Education in the English-Speaking World,” in *The European and American University since 1800*, edited by Sheldon Rothblatt and Björn Wittrock (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 52.

The introduction of the research university in the United States did not only lead to the establishment of universities such as Johns Hopkins University and Cornell University; some colleges, like Harvard, Yale and Princeton, “reorganized themselves thoroughly so as to assume definite university functions.”¹⁴⁵ However, the liberal arts tradition did not disappear from the American higher education landscape. Most liberal arts colleges did not opt to become universities, and the ones that did retained the liberal arts curriculum as the core of their undergraduate programs.¹⁴⁶ Eugene Lang has stated that: “generic versions of [the liberal arts] mission are now regularly included in even the most specialized undergraduate curricula.”¹⁴⁷ Therefore, it can be concluded that the liberal arts tradition has been extremely significant in the shaping of the American higher education system.

As the years progressed, liberal arts colleges were deviating from the English colleges they were modeled after. The curriculum changed as a result of the Scottish Enlightenment and also drew on the research done in the German-inspired research universities. Simultaneously, the English colleges were changing. Traditional institutions like Oxford expanded to become research universities that housed a number of smaller colleges offering both undergraduate and graduate education. Moreover, their curricula were adapted to cater to the increasing demand from students for a more vocational and practical approach. This same development occurred among the American research universities; in the twentieth century, students increasingly “thought the conventional curriculum irrelevant because they saw its academic demands merely as stepping stones to a career or simply as hurdles that the

¹⁴⁵ J. S Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 143.

¹⁴⁶ Steven Koblík and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xv.

¹⁴⁷ Eugene Lang, “Distinctively American: The Liberal Arts College” in *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges*, ed. Koblík, Steven and Stephen R. Graubard (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 133.

‘establishment’ put in their way to test their obedience, endurance, and conformity.”¹⁴⁸ As a result, universities offered more practical courses, and increasingly allowed their students to assemble their own individual curricula, starting in the undergraduate phase. Liberal arts colleges followed suit, although their curricula remained marked more by breadth than depth.

Throughout the past four centuries, the concept of the liberal arts college has proved to be quite resilient. Ever since the research university made its entrance in the United States, scholars have wondered if the liberal arts college would disappear. For a while, it seemed like this would be the case – in the early twentieth century, the colleges had difficulty convincing students that there was merit to an approach that would not result in a direct and transparent advantage in finding a job. However, at the time of writing, there are still 125 colleges that classify as Liberal Arts colleges according to the Carnegie Foundation’s definition: “primarily undergraduate colleges with a major emphasis on baccalaureate (liberal arts) degree programs.”¹⁴⁹ While these colleges have been modernized by adopting a more individualized curriculum and a slightly more practical approach, they remain dedicated to the original mission of the early liberal arts colleges. Still, Steven Koblik concludes in the foreword to *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts College* that “even the strongest of [the colleges] face an uncertain future.”¹⁵⁰

Today’s American liberal arts colleges have many differences – some are private, some are public; some still strongly emphasize their religious affiliation, while some are strictly secular; some are coeducational while some are single-sex;

¹⁴⁸ J.S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 279.

¹⁴⁹ Eugene Lang, “Distinctively American: The Liberal Arts College” in *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges*, ed. Koblik, Steven and Stephen R. Graubard (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000).

¹⁵⁰ Steven Koblik and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xiv.

some are highly selective, while others are not; and some curricula are more open to the individual students' wishes than others. However, there are a few aspects that they all share. Koblik defines the modern liberal arts college as follows: “[they are] residential, small (five hundred to three thousand students), educationally comprehensive, close interaction between student and teacher, and totally dedicated to undergraduate education.”¹⁵¹ The liberal arts college campuses usually offer a wide variety of extracurricular events of a cultural, political and intellectual nature to make sure students receive an education that not only has a well-rounded curriculum, but also prepares them to be citizens in a democratic society. Finally, students do not declare a major until the third year; the first two years are spent exploring the liberal arts and sciences. Most courses have an interdisciplinary character.

While it may have become clear in this chapter that the concept of the liberal arts college finds its roots in seventeenth-century England, the liberal arts college as it exists today has become a typically American tradition. Koblik has stated that these colleges are “distinctively American; no other country has schools committed so clearly to the highest quality of undergraduate education.”¹⁵² It is therefore very interesting to note that exactly this concept made it overseas in the recent past, and has become a popular educational system in many countries. The question is: how much of this model would have to be adapted to result in a good fit with the host culture? The rest of this paper will explore to what extent the model of an American liberal arts college was adapted to Dutch standards in the case of University College Utrecht, and analyze to what extent the founding of UCU can be considered an instance of American cultural influence. The next chapter will take a look at the founding history of University College Utrecht.

¹⁵¹ Steven Koblik and Stephen R. Graubard, *Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), xiv.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

Chapter two

UCU: An American Liberal Arts College in a Dutch Context

In the summer before University College Utrecht opened its doors, the college made the headlines of all major Dutch newspapers. The articles, bearing titles such as “A School For the Elite?”, “Study Until It Hurts,” “Hard-working Students” and “The New Academic Elite,” mainly concerned themselves with the selective character of the new institution. UCU’s other unique features – the implementation of the bachelor-master system, the residential character of the school, the focus on internationalization and the fact that the program would be fully English-taught – were sometimes mentioned in passing. However, the public reaction focused predominantly on the shift in educational philosophy this selective character implied. Traditionally, the Dutch higher education system had not known a process of selection. With the founding of UCU, this egalitarian system was – if only on a small scale – replaced by a model based on individual merit.

By the time UCU was founded, the Dutch government still frowned upon selection at the gate. If a program attracted more students than it could harbor, the university in question had to distribute the available spots by means of a lottery. This resulted in an unfortunate situation for students who graduated from their high schools with an excellent grade average, but nevertheless could not enroll in their programs of choice if they did not draw the “lucky ticket.”¹⁵³ University College Utrecht aimed to provide a workaround for these students by offering them an undergraduate phase that would prepare for admission to medical schools abroad. In the meantime, Dutch Parliament had started to debate the possibility of allowing universities to assign ten

¹⁵³ Sander van Walsum, “Loten is uit, excellente studenten zijn weer in,” *De Volkskrant*, 4 June 1998.

percent of their available spots in programs that were in high demand to students of their own choice.

It was probably not a coincidence that in 1999, the founding year of University College Utrecht, the Dutch parliament approved this proposal. As it turned out, the process of selection would only be the first aspect of UCU's educational philosophy to be – partly – adopted by Dutch mainstream higher education. The dean of UCU, Hans Adriaansens, had founded his college with exactly this goal in mind: to reform the higher education system from within.¹⁵⁴ Some years before, he had co-chaired a commission that researched options for bettering the Netherlands' international position with regard to higher education. While reports had shown that Dutch higher education was generally of high quality, these reports also concluded that “the lack of international visibility and the difficulty in comparing results to those of other countries”¹⁵⁵ formed a significant problem. As a solution, Adriaansens and his colleagues proposed adopting the Danish approach. Denmark had recently adopted the Anglo-Saxon bachelor-master system and had applied it to the existing Danish educational model. This way, the content of the curricula remained the same, while the Anglo-Saxon model allowed for a better measuring of the Danish' international position with regard to higher education. Moreover, it allowed for an easier exchange of international students and employees.¹⁵⁶

The reform of the Dutch higher education system, like in the United States, was instigated partly by tension that existed between the need for vocational preparation and the wish to shape students academically. Since the *Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs* (Higher Education Act) of 1963, there had been two forms of higher

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

¹⁵⁵ Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, "Hoger onderwijs in fasen," *Rapporten aan de Regering*, 47 (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgeverij Plantijnstraat, 1995), 95.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

education: HBO and WO. The first category of schools prepared students for specific professions, whereas the second category, the traditional university, prepared students for professions that required an academic level of thinking. The line between these two forms of education had been obscure from the start, even for the people responsible for the reform. Educational reformer Hans Freudenthal responded to a 1970 report on the second phase of higher education by saying that any distinction between higher education on an academic level and other professional preparatory education would be “artificial.”¹⁵⁷

As early as 1946, government commissions proposed the adoption of the Anglo-Saxon bachelor-master model. The proposal was accepted in 1960, but was never implemented. Dr. Posthumus, an advisor to the government, argued that the baccalaureate exam – which would be obtained after a three-year undergraduate program – would carry no meaning in the Netherlands. It was decided that the *doctoraal*, a four-year program leading up to the equivalent of a master’s degree, was still the better fit for the Netherlands. Posthumus acknowledged that there was no comparable system abroad, but believed this was not an issue at the time.¹⁵⁸

However, while the debate about a possible implementation of the two-phased Anglo-Saxon model had continued for half a century, the government was hesitant to act on the proposal laid out in *Hoger Onderwijs in Fasen* (Higher Education in Phases), the report Adriaansens and his colleagues had written. The report proposed that the HBO-institutions would offer a four-year program leading to a bachelor’s degree, while the universities would offer a three-year bachelor’s program, after which students could either enroll in a professional traineeship or continue their

¹⁵⁷ Freudenthal cited in Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, "Hoger onderwijs in fasen," *Rapporten aan de Regering*, 47 (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgeverij Plantijnstraat, 1995), 32.

¹⁵⁸ Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, "Hoger onderwijs in fasen," *Rapporten aan de Regering*, 47 (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgeverij Plantijnstraat, 1995), 33.

academic education by enrolling in a graduate program that would lead to a master's degree. The master's programs would then be divided into "vocational" programs that prepared students for professions requiring academic skills, and research programs that prepared students for an academic career. In other words: the report urged the government to adopt the American system of higher education. The authors of the report contend that "because of this model, the American higher education is able to provide mass education without neglecting its academic responsibility."¹⁵⁹

When it became clear that both the Dutch government and the universities resisted the adoption of such a model, Adriaansens decided on a workaround: the founding of a selective college under the wing of Utrecht University. At this college, students would be offered a comprehensive undergraduate education, modeled after the American liberal arts colleges.¹⁶⁰ This college would take the aforementioned Danish approach: the framework of the Anglo-Saxon model would be adopted, while the curriculum would still adhere to the requirements of the Dutch government. All the suggestions of the *Hoger Onderwijs in Fasen* report would be implemented: students would follow a three-year undergraduate program that would lead to the internationally recognized bachelor's degree. After completing this program, they would be able to apply to graduate programs abroad, or transfer to the senior year of a Dutch *doctoraal* program.

Adriaansens had spent extensive periods of time in the United States, studying and teaching at Smith College and Amherst College, two prominent liberal arts colleges. These colleges would serve as the initial inspiration for the curriculum of the first Dutch liberal arts college, as Adriaansens invited his American colleagues to work on a set of courses that would be offered to the prospective students of

¹⁵⁹ Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, "Hoger onderwijs in fasen," *Rapporten aan de Regering*, 47 (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgeverij Plantijnstraat, 1995), 31.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

University College Utrecht, as the college had been named. The courses were all clearly modeled after the courses that were taught at Smith and Amherst: they had an interdisciplinary character, were set up as small-scale seminars to guarantee interaction, and included at least three testing moments that were spread out over the duration of the course. To ensure small classes, the college would select its students via an application process.

This selective character was also required for another important aspect of the college: its residential character. Adriaansens argued that students should be able to fully concentrate on their studies without the distractions of running housekeeping. Furthermore, the interaction between students and students and teachers would be enhanced by a residential character, as it allowed for easy access to extracurricular clubs and events. Adriaansens envisioned a campus modeled after American university campuses, where students would live, learn and interact within the same space. To realize this vision, he acquired a piece of land near to the city center of Utrecht that was formerly used by the Dutch Ministry of Defense. This military base housed several buildings that could be used as lecture halls, dormitories, and a dining hall. The buildings were refurbished in the course of 1998 and 1999. In the meantime, Adriaansens assembled a board of directors and a team of teachers, and started the selection process of students.¹⁶¹ By September 1999, University College Utrecht was ready to open its doors to its first class of students.

The next chapters will explore the similarities and differences between University College Utrecht and the concept of an American liberal arts college.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

Chapter three

Zooming in on UCU's Curriculum

In many ways, University College Utrecht was modeled after the American liberal arts colleges. However, a full adoption of the American approach would not be possible, because as a public institution of higher education, UCU needs to fit the requirements of the Dutch government and the European Union. Furthermore, UCU does not dispose of the financial means of the average American liberal arts college, which limits the options with regard to courses, majors and amenities. This chapter will look into the extent in which UCU's program structure and curriculum were influenced by the American liberal arts tradition, keeping in mind the aforementioned limitations. As the scope of this paper does not allow for an extensive comparison between a large sample of American liberal arts colleges and UCU, the two prominent liberal arts colleges that served as an example for UCU have been used as a point of reference: Amherst College and Smith University.

1. Structure

The UCU undergraduate phase is designed as a three-year program. This three-year undergraduate phase would later be adopted by all Dutch universities when the bachelor-master structure was implemented nation-wide. This duration of the undergraduate phase differs from American colleges, as they usually offer undergraduate programs that take four years to complete. Hans Adriaansens attributes this difference to the high quality of the Dutch secondary education system: students who previously completed a VWO education are usually better prepared for college

than their American colleagues.¹⁶² This difference in quality is confirmed by research conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Their Program for International Student Assessment ranked high school education in the Netherlands as the ninth best in the world in 2008, while the American high school education placed significantly lower, at 29th place.¹⁶³

2. Majors

Like their American colleagues at Amherst College and other Liberal Arts colleges, students of University College Utrecht enjoy an education marked by breadth. In the first year, students can freely choose courses from any department. The system works like a figural funnel: students start out choosing from a broad range of topics, but as they grow academically, they are able to narrow down their choice of courses toward their major topic of interest. They declare this major in the second year, choosing from UCU's three majors: Science, Social Science and Humanities. It is also possible to opt for an interdepartmental major or double major, such as is the case at Amherst College. In the case of an interdepartmental major, a student combines related courses from the two or three majors to create his or her own specific major.¹⁶⁴ If a student opts for a double major, he or she completes two full majors in two of the departments. American Liberal Arts colleges usually have a significantly larger amount of majors that students can choose from. Amherst College, for example, offers 34 fields of study in the arts, sciences, social sciences and

¹⁶² Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

¹⁶³ The Program for International Student Assessment, "Range of Rank on the PISA 2006 Science Scale." <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/8/39700724.pdf>>

¹⁶⁴ "Interdepartmental and Double Majors," University College Utrecht, 10 November 2009. <<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/studying/Pages/interdepartmentaldoublemajors.aspx>>

humanities. However, this is mostly attributable to the larger funds that these colleges dispose of, compared to University College Utrecht.

3. Curriculum

University College Utrecht claims that “the curriculum does not have a fixed structure,” as it allows each student to “combine different courses to assemble a personal study program.”¹⁶⁵ Amherst College has a similar approach: “Amherst’s open curriculum has no core or general education requirements. Beyond courses for the major and the First-Year Seminar, students are free to design their own curriculum.”¹⁶⁶ While both colleges try to keep their curricula as open as possible, there is an important difference. Because UCU falls under the wing of Utrecht University, a public institution, the college’s curriculum is tied to government requirements. To receive accreditation and to be able to award bachelor’s diplomas to students, Dutch public institutions need to satisfy “the requirements of the academic discipline, the requirements of the international exercise of scholarly activity, and if applicable, the requirements of the future field of profession.” Furthermore, the bachelor’s diploma should give students access to at least one academic master program, or to enter the workforce.¹⁶⁷

A close look at the UCU curriculum reveals that while the setup is different, it is mainly a chronological shuffle of the curriculum of the regular undergraduate phase at Utrecht University. A typical UU bachelor program in the Arts faculty consists of two main components. First, the major (135 ECTS) is a combination of specific

¹⁶⁵ “Designing your Curriculum,” University College Utrecht, 10 November 2009.

<<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/studying/Pages/designingyourcurriculum.aspx>>

¹⁶⁶ “Academics,” Amherst College, 10 November 2009. <<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife>>

¹⁶⁷ “Accreditiekader bestaande opleidingen hoger onderwijs,” Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (Den Haag: NVAO, 2003).

courses devoted to the field of study (79.5 ECTS), general courses that provide a student with academic skills (30 ECTS) and the bachelor's thesis (7.5 ECTS). Second, a student has a space of 45 ECTS which he or she can fill with elective courses from any department.

The UCU curriculum follows a similar pattern. A major at UCU consists of 75 ECTS (10 courses) and a thesis (7.5) ECTS. The rest of the program consists of elective courses, although there are some requirements. Students need to “complete tracks in at least two different fields of study within the ... department,” whereby a track is defined as “a 300-level course and the prerequisite ... courses that lead up to it.”¹⁶⁸ In addition to this requirement, students also need to take courses in at least two departments. Furthermore, the second language requirement means that students need to take at least one course to learn a language that is neither English nor Dutch. This requirement fits into the international character that UCU wants to provide. The total amount of courses students have to choose during their studies is about the same. The difference lies in the moment the student starts choosing, which in the case of UCU is in the first year, whereas most UU BA programs do not allow students to choose their electives until their second year.

Interestingly, Utrecht University provides a major program that is similar to UCU's setup. The “Liberal Arts” major allows a student to explore their interests in a broad first year of classes before declaring their main field of study in the second year. The main difference between the two programs is not in UCU's curriculum, but rather in the other features of the college, such as its residential characters, small classes and selection of motivated students.

¹⁶⁸ “Major in Humanities,” Utrecht University, 5 January 2010.
<<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/studying/Pages/MajorinHumanities.aspx>>

Amherst College provides a much more open curriculum than UCU. Beyond courses for the major and a first-year seminar, the curriculum has no core requirements. It is also possible for students to double-major or to combine courses into an interdepartmental major, such as is possible at UCU. It is also possible for students to engage in independent scholarship, with the guidance of Amherst's instructors. Writing a thesis in the senior year is optional.

4. Courses

The courses, which were modeled after the courses of Amherst College, UC Berkeley and Smith University¹⁶⁹, are divided into three levels: 100, 200 and 300. Some courses fit into a traditional discipline, such as history, linguistics or psychology. Other courses are related to the interdisciplinary majors, such as "Approaches to the Humanities." At the moment of writing, University College Utrecht has a course catalogue consisting of 239 courses for the academic year of 2009-2010. UCU students also may follow courses at Utrecht University, which has a wider selection of courses. At the time of writing, Amherst College offers 1071 courses, and there is a possibility for students to take courses at other colleges within the Five College Consortium (a collaboration of Amherst College, Smith College, Mount Holyoke College, Hampshire College and the University of Massachusetts).

The format of courses follows the format of courses at the American liberal arts colleges. Compared to regular Dutch universities, the courses have a higher participatory character. Whereas first-year courses in the bachelor's programs in the arts at Utrecht University are sometimes given to classes of 100-200 students, this is not the case at UCU. Classes are purposefully kept small – up to 25 students can

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

enroll in each class – to encourage participation. This is similar to the practice of American liberal arts colleges. Amherst College, for instance, has an average class size of 17 students.¹⁷⁰ However, this also differs from regular American universities, as these institutions have an average of 75 students per class in their first-year classes.¹⁷¹

The amount of hours students spend in class is also higher at UCU than is the case at regular Dutch universities. In 2007, the Onderwijscommissie found that the average amount of hours students spend in class in their first year of university was thirteen hours per week.¹⁷² This number of hours usually decreases as students progress in their studies. At UCU, the average number of contact hours per week is 16-20 hours per week throughout all three years of the program. American liberal arts colleges follow this same format.¹⁷³

5. Conclusion

The major reason for this difference in the scope of majors and courses is not a matter of cultural difference; it is money. Amherst College is a private school, with a tuition fee of \$48,400 per student for the academic year 2009-2010.¹⁷⁴ University College Utrecht falls under the umbrella of Utrecht University, which is a public institution charging the regular Dutch tuition fee of € 1.620,- to EEA students, and

¹⁷⁰ “Academics,” Amherst College, 10 November 2009. <<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife>>

¹⁷¹ “Are Liberal Arts Colleges Really Different?” The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Change*, 22:2 (1990).

¹⁷² “Onderwijstijd in het hoger onderwijs,” Inspectie van het onderwijs (2007), 10 January 2010. <<http://www.minocw.nl/documenten/18823a.pdf>>

¹⁷³ “Are Liberal Arts Colleges Really Different?” The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Change*, 22:2 (1990).

¹⁷⁴ “Amherst at a Glance,” Amherst College, 15 December 2009. <<https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/glance>>

€ 8.300,- to non-EEA students.¹⁷⁵ Amherst College also draws on private endowments, totaling \$1.26 billion as of 2009.¹⁷⁶ To compare: the overall budget of Utrecht University was € 715 million in the year of 2008. The budget of University College Utrecht is not public, but it is safe to assume that it significantly smaller than that of America's private liberal arts colleges.

Therefore, the scope of majors and courses of UCU is hard to compare to its American counterparts. However, it can be concluded that the setup of the curriculum – starting out broadly, narrowing down as the student progresses – was modeled after the American higher education system. UCU still has to adhere to the requirements of the Dutch government, which means that the curriculum is less open than is the case at Amherst College. Therefore, while the form could be called American, the content of the curriculum is still similar to that of regular Dutch bachelor's programs in the Arts.

However, while University College Utrecht was definitely modeled after the American liberal arts colleges discussed in this chapter, it is too early to conclude that the existence of UCU should be regarded as an instance of American cultural influence. The next chapter will focus on the international character of UCU, and explore to which extent this internationalization follows the supposed phenomenon of Americanization.

¹⁷⁵ "Fees," Utrecht University, 15 December 2009.

<<http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/universitycollege/admissionsfinance/Pages/fees.aspx>>

¹⁷⁶ "Amherst at a Glance," Amherst College, 15 December 2009.

<<https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/glance>>

Chapter four

UCU, an International Institution

The Dutch higher education system has always had an international focus, adapting to whichever reference model was the highest regarded on an international scale. However, it also knows its own tradition: the Dutch academic calendar differs from those of other countries, the grading system follows a one-to-ten scale rather than a letter system or Grade Point Average (GPA), and until recently, almost all academic programs were taught exclusively in Dutch. University College, however, deviates from all these traditions: it adheres to the American calendar, provides grades via the American letter system combined with a GPA, and all its courses are taught in English. Since the founding of UCU, several regular Dutch universities provide students with a GPA next to the Dutch system of grading, and most graduate programs are now completely English-taught. This chapter will explore these issues, and analyze to what extent these recent changes can be considered an American cultural influence.

1. Academic calendar

All Dutch universities adhere to the Dutch academic calendar, which runs from September until July. The first semester is interrupted by a Christmas vacation that usually lasts from mid-December until the beginning of January. In the summer break of eight weeks, Dutch students typically find a summer job to pay for their vacations. Most universities also offer summer courses, although these summer schools mainly attract exchange students.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ “Wie vooruit wil, blokt in de zomer,” *De Volkskrant*, 13 August 2009.
<http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl/img/press/Volkskrant_130809.pdf>

University College Utrecht deviates from this semester format by adopting the American semester division. The fall semester runs from September until mid-December, when classes break until the start of the spring semester, which runs from the beginning of February until the end of May. This means that the UCU Christmas break lasts six weeks: a full month longer than the regular Dutch vacation. The same goes for the UCU summer breaks, which last three months. During this period, UCU collaborates with Utrecht University to organize the Utrecht Summer School, a summer term program for Dutch and foreign students. University College also has a separate summer program for UCU students who could not follow a course during the regular semesters.

There are several reasons why the founders of UCU chose the American format over the Dutch format. Hans Adriaansens names the main advantage for teachers: more time for research. At the regular Dutch universities, teachers combine their research with teaching by taking research leaves during the academic year. At UCU, teachers are encouraged to do their research and visit conferences during the Christmas and summer breaks.¹⁷⁸ This way, classes are not affected by research leaves. Aside from this advantage for teachers, Adriaansens believes that this semester structure also benefits the students. During the long summer breaks, students can follow internships or summer courses to expand their horizons, or catch up on courses they might have missed during the academic year. Whether UCU students employ this extra month of summer vacation to further their education is unclear, as there are no statistics available on this topic.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Hans Adriaansens, 11 January 2010, Middelburg.

2. The English Language as Lingua Franca

At the University College campus, English serves as a lingua franca. Apart from the language courses, all classes are taught in English. To make sure that all students are able to follow the courses, they must graduate from high school with an average grade of 8.0 (out of ten, the equivalent of an American A) or higher for English. Furthermore, all students take “Academic English” in their first year of studies at UCU. According to Hans Adriaansens, every person graduating from UCU is a near-native English speaker. This is not only because all coursework is in English, but also because 30% of all UCU students come from outside of the Netherlands. In this international setting, English functions as a lingua franca.

The use of English as a common language in the Netherlands has become accepted in the past 15 years. While most undergraduate programs at regular Dutch universities are in Dutch, more than half of the graduate programs at Utrecht University are presently completely English-taught.¹⁷⁹ This makes the Netherlands a more attractive study-abroad option for international students, and also prepares Dutch students for an international career in the professional or academic field. While the dominance of the United States on a worldwide scale has most probably been crucial in the adoption of the English language as a lingua franca, viewing the use of English as an American cultural influence would be too quick of a conclusion. In this time of rapid globalization, there is an increased need for international standards that make the exchange of employees and information possible. As linguists such as David Crystal have noted, the English language is no longer owned by the countries that use it as a native language, but by all people who speak the language.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ “Why Utrecht University?”, Utrecht University, 20 January 2010.

<<http://www.uu.nl/EN/informationfor/internationalstudents/whyutrechtuniversity/Pages/default.aspx>>

¹⁸⁰ See, for instance, *English as a Global Language* by David Crystal (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

3. Grade system

University College Utrecht uses the American grade system of letters; students receive a grade from A to F, which is linked to a number from 4 to 10. The cumulative grades result in a Grade Point Average, also after the American model. Dutch universities are increasingly the GPA system next to the Dutch numerical grade system for the purpose of increasing the international mobility of students. However, Dutch universities do not use the letter system. This has resulted in confusion for UCU students seeking admission to a master's program at a regular Dutch university, as the UCU diploma does not come with a conversion chart. A difference between UCU and some American liberal arts colleges is that the former does not grade on a curve. The adoption of this American model can be viewed as an instance of American cultural influence, though Hans Adriaansens has noted that this form of grading has simply been adopted to allow for a greater international mobility of UCU's students. However, an international conversion chart, such as Utrecht University provides as a standard feature on all its diplomas, could also have sufficed.

4. Conclusion

In the past decade, Dutch institutions of higher education have increased their focus on internationalization. In this process, University College Utrecht has taken the lead. Many of the "international" aspects find their origins in the United States, though it would be too simple to name this phenomenon "Americanization." In fact, it might be that academe is simply following the lead of other industries in joining a "global village." as described by scholars of the process of globalization. This global village, or hyper-culture, predominantly wears an American face, which often makes it difficult to distinguish between Americanization and globalization.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ See, for instance, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* by Thomas Friedman (London: Harper Collins, 1999).

While it would be too easy a conclusion to assume that the founding of University College Utrecht has directly led to the wider implementation of American-influenced elements in the Dutch higher education system, it might be that establishing UCU has accelerated the already ongoing process of internationalization.

It is interesting to note that American universities, including liberal arts colleges, are hardly focused on internationalization. While most liberal arts colleges require their students to take classes in a second language, most students are not fluent in any language but English. The number of students participating in exchange programs is also significantly lower in the U.S., compared to the Netherlands, and Europe at large.¹⁸² Many educational experts have called for an increased focus on internationalization, although the fact remains that the American research universities are dominant in the global academic field. In any case, it could be stated that exactly the focus on internationalization is what makes Dutch universities un-American.

¹⁸² Madeleine Green, Dao T. Luu and Beth Burris, *Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses, 2008 Edition* (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 2008).

Conclusion

As early as 1919, German sociologist Max Weber feared that the German academic life was Americanizing, which would have an effect on German society at large.¹⁸³ Dutch sociologist J.C.C. Rupp had a more optimistic view, concluding in *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten* (1997) that the Dutch higher education system had not “adopted the American...way of thinking.” However, since Rupp’s book was published, several major changes have taken place in the Dutch higher education system: the bachelor/master system was implemented, the Dutch system of credits has been replaced by the Anglo-Saxon ECTS, and the number of English-taught programs has increased dramatically. The first institution in the Netherlands to take the lead in these changes was University College Utrecht, a liberal arts college modeled after American colleges such as Amherst College and Smith University.

This paper has attempted to examine to what extent University College Utrecht was shaped by American cultural influence, and how this institution has in turn influenced the Dutch higher education system. The first chapter shows that the American liberal arts college as it exists today, finds its roots in seventeenth-century England. Through the centuries, these liberal arts colleges adapted to the needs of American society, making the liberal arts experience a quintessentially American tradition. This is why University College Utrecht is an interesting case study: if the liberal arts college is typically American, then how was the model adapted to fit the Dutch host culture?

The second chapter relates the founding history of UCU, and the reasons for adopting an American system of higher education in the Netherlands. According to

¹⁸³ J.C.C. Rupp, *Van Oude en Nieuwe Universiteiten. De Verdringing van Duitse door Amerikaanse Invloeden op de Wetenschapsbeoefening en het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland, 1945-1995* (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997), 13.

the founder, Hans Adriaansens, the main reason for the establishment of UCU was the increased need for internationalization in the Dutch higher education system.

Furthermore, Adriaansens believes that students fare well by the residential character of the liberal arts campus. Selecting students at the gate, finally, replaced the Dutch egalitarian system so excellent students would not be rejected for their program of choice.

The third chapter zooms in on UCU's curriculum, comparing it to that of Amherst College. The structure of UCU's courses was partly based on the courses offered at Amherst, with an interdisciplinary character and a large focus on interaction between teacher and students. The amount of courses on offer, however, is much more extensive at Amherst College. This is not a matter of cultural difference, but is simply attributable to the large difference in funds that both institutions have at their disposal. The same is true for the majors and minors that are offered: both institutions offer interdisciplinary, interdepartmental and individual majors and minors, but Amherst's choice of majors and minors is larger. However, it can be concluded that UCU's curriculum was largely modeled after American liberal arts colleges, within the restrictions that the requirements of the Dutch government instill.

The final chapter focuses on the aspect of internationalization within the context of University College Utrecht. The college has adopted several American aspects to accommodate to its large percentage of international students, such as the Bachelor/Master structure, the American semester format and grading system. In addition, UCU uses English as a lingua franca. In the ten years of UCU's existence, many Dutch universities have followed suit, although regular Dutch universities currently still adhere to the traditional Dutch academic calendar and grading system. While these changes can definitely be considered an American influence, it should

also be considered that academe is just taking steps to join the “global village,” which is especially important for a small country like the Netherlands because it needs to be visible in an international context.

The scope of this paper is too small to draw any real conclusions about the way Americanization works, or if the Dutch higher education and Dutch society at large are subject to this phenomenon of Americanization. If anything, it illustrates the complexities of the topic, as education systems have influenced each other for centuries, and UCU’s existence might well be an example of “globalization wearing Mickey Mouse ears.”¹⁸⁴ However, it can be concluded that since Rupp published his 1997 book, the Dutch higher education system has increased its focus on internationalization, most aspects of which predominantly find their roots in the United States.

¹⁸⁴ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (London: Harper Collins, 1999), 382.

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Course: Topics in American Diversity
 Location: Utrecht University
 Instructor: Dr. Derek Rubin
 Date: 29 January 2010
 Word count: 3347

The Postethnic Hospital: An Analysis of the Depiction of Minorities in ABC's Grey's Anatomy

Introduction

In 1999, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) found that the lineup for the 1999-2000 television fall season “did not feature a single actor of color in a starring or leading role.”¹⁸⁵ The organization condemned this “whiteout”, calling on the major television networks to further ethnic diversity, not only in the casting for their TV shows but also in the employment opportunities for people working behind the scenes. For this purpose, the NAACP founded its Hollywood Bureau in 2002, “which monitors the entertainment industry in an effort to hold it accountable for advancing diversity in front of the camera and behind the scenes.”¹⁸⁶ Since the NAACP first rang the alarm bells, several events have sharpened the debate about multiculturalism in the United States. In its 2008 report, the organization names the September 11 attacks, the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States as major influences on the multicultural debate.¹⁸⁷

Despite these landmark events, NAACP's Hollywood Bureau concluded in its 2008 report that America's major television shows still depict a society that is dominated by a hegemonic white culture. The Bureau found “there continues to be an undeniable and persistent lack of representation of minorities at all levels of network

¹⁸⁵ *Out of Focus - Out of Sync Take 4*, (Baltimore: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2008), II.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, I.

television and throughout the entertainment industry.”¹⁸⁸ Vikanda Pornsakulvanich, in line with the Hollywood Bureau’s findings, writes in “Television Portrayals of Ethnic Minorities in the United States that while there has been an “improvement of television depictions of minorities regarding the frequency of portrayals and the distribution of ethnic portrayals”¹⁸⁹ in the past decade, “minorities still [are] depicted in minor roles ... and with stereotypes and misrepresentation of minority groups.”¹⁹⁰

The Hollywood Bureau’s 2008 report does discuss a few exceptions to this rule. Network ABC has shown leadership when it comes to the advancement of minorities, employing the highest total of minority actors out of all major networks.¹⁹¹ One of ABC’s most popular series, *Grey’s Anatomy*, has been lauded for its ethnically diverse cast not only by the NAACP, but also by organizations such as the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition.¹⁹² The series first aired in 2005, and was created by African American writer Shonda Rhimes. This medical drama series follows the principle of color-blind casting,¹⁹³ which means that the best actor for any role is selected without considering the actor’s ethnicity. Because of this process, almost half of *Grey’s Anatomy*’s actors belong to an ethnoracial minority,¹⁹⁴ including some of the leading roles.

However, it is not just this diverse cast that makes the series an outlier among other American mainstream TV shows. Ms. Rhimes’ vision of America has been

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., II.

¹⁸⁹ Vikanda Pornsakulvanich, “Television Portrayals of Ethnic Minorities in the United States: The Analysis of Individual Differences, Media Use, and Group Identity and Vitality,” *ABAC Journal* 27:3 (2007), 22.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 25

¹⁹¹ *Out of Focus - Out of Sync Take 4*, (Baltimore: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2008), 11.

¹⁹² The 2007 Asian Pacific American Media Coalition Report Card on Television Diversity,” published by the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition, 29 October 2007.

¹⁹³ Matthew Fogel, “*Grey’s Anatomy* Goes Colorblind,” *New York Times*, 8 May 2005.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

described as “one in which color is more description than definition.”¹⁹⁵ Journalist Alessandra Stanley writes in a review in the *New York Times*:

There are no token blacks on *Grey's Anatomy*. The three top surgeons who rule the interns with princely authority are all African-Americans, and that sign of social advancement is presented as a given, without fanfare or comment. Similarly, female doctors seem to outnumber the men, and nobody on the show finds that remarkable.¹⁹⁶

Race and ethnicity are usually not a part of the doctors' storylines. Interracial relationships are a part of life, minority characters are usually not discriminated against, and social mobility is not reliant on ethnicity.

At first sight, it seems that the universe of *Grey's Anatomy* is very similar to the future America that David Hollinger envisions in his book, *Postethnic America*. Derek Rubin has summarized this vision as a society “in which the constructedness of race and ethnicity is widely acknowledged, so that these are no longer perceived to be based on primordial ties and inherited identity but rather on voluntary affiliation.”¹⁹⁷ Hollinger theorizes beyond multiculturalism, and contends that while “the word *identity* implies fixity and givenness ... the word *affiliation* suggests a greater measure of flexibility,”¹⁹⁸ as individuals can be fluid in their affiliation with one or several aspects of their cultural heritage. The minority characters of *Grey's Anatomy* all seem comfortable with their fluid identities, and apparently, there is no need to discuss matters of race in their daily lives.

A closer look at the series, however, might lead to a different conclusion.

While the discussion of ethnoracial issues is usually avoided in the main storylines,

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Alessandra Stanley, "Grey's Anatomy: Tales of Sex and Surgery," *New York Times*, 25 March 2005.

¹⁹⁷ Derek Rubin, "Postethnic Experience in Contemporary Jewish American Fiction," *Social Identities* 8:4 (2002), 509.

¹⁹⁸ David Hollinger, *Postethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 7.

they are implicitly present. As Devon Carbado, a professor of law specializing in race issues, has argued, the show is “color conscious in a particular way – namely, it presents non-white actors in roles that do not explicitly invoke race. That is neither colorblind nor race neutral.”¹⁹⁹ Ethnoracial issues are usually treated as the “pink elephant in the room”: everyone knows they are relevant, but they are not discussed. This becomes clear in the depiction of some minority characters that are decidedly stereotypical, but also in the few instances that topics of race come to the surface.

This paper will question the ways in which the fictional society portrayed by *Grey’s Anatomy* is truly postethnic, loosely drawing on David Hollinger’s vision of a postethnic America as a theoretical framework. It is beyond the scope of this paper to research the influence of the depiction of minorities on this television show on its viewership. However, in keeping with research conducted in this field, I will assume that “television portrayals of ethnic minorities have influenced audiences’ perceptions and stereotypes of minorities.”²⁰⁰ If a major television drama shies away from discussing race altogether while giving an impression of postethnicity, this could have a profound impact on its audience.

For the sake of clarity, I will focus on two of the show’s leading characters that each belong to a different ethnoracial minority. Cristina Yang is a woman of Korean-American descent who grew up with a Jewish stepfather. Although her identity could be seen as an example of fluidity, the character is in many ways stereotypical, reminding of the “model minority” myth associated with Asian Americans. Furthermore, the other characters’ preconceptions about Asian Americans prevent her from freely moving between the different parts of her identity,

¹⁹⁹ Devon Carbado, “The Racial Anatomy of *Grey’s Anatomy*,” *Blackprof.com*, September 2006.

²⁰⁰ Vikanda Pornsakulvanich, “Television Portrayals of Ethnic Minorities in the United States: The Analysis of Individual Differences, Media Use, and Group Identity and Vitality,” *ABAC Journal* 27:3 (2007), 22.

emphasizing her primordial ties. Calliope “Callie” Torres, is a Latin American bisexual woman who is disowned by her family when she becomes romantically involved with another woman. While the discussion about her ethnicity is never made explicit, her ethnic background is crucial in determining her family’s reaction to her coming out. By means of a character analysis focusing on issues of ethnicity, I will try to prove that while *Grey’s Anatomy* gives the impression of being a postethnic society, the series in fact depicts a society that is still shaped by race and ethnicity in important – if sometimes implicit – ways.

Cristina Yang

When the first season of *Grey's Anatomy* aired, the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition commended ABC for “providing opportunities for talented minority writers which helps to foster the creation of roles depicting minorities, including [Asian Pacific Americans], as quality, non-stereotypical characters.”²⁰¹ However, after a few episodes, scholars pointed out that the way Cristina Yang, an Asian American character, was portrayed was far from non-stereotypical. In *Asian Americans and the Media*, Kent A. Ono and Vincent Pham argue that Cristina Yang adheres to the stereotype of the Asian-American model minority. This stereotype has been defined by William Maddux, Adam Galinsky, Amy Cuddy and Mark Polifroni as follows:

Recent psychological research strongly supports the existence of a positive or model minority stereotype regarding Asian Americans, comprising such traits as being intelligent, capable, ambitious, hard-working, mathematical, skillful, and self-disciplined. . . . However, stereotypes of Asian Americans are not uniformly positive; negative perceptions about Asian Americans also exist. Asian Americans tend to be viewed as cunning, sly, selfish, nerdy, and lacking interpersonal warmth and kindness.²⁰²

The character of Cristina Yang fits this stereotype perfectly; nicknamed “the robot” by her peers, she is one of the best medical interns of her year, very ambitious and not very empathetic. Sandra Oh, who plays Cristina, has said in an interview in the *New York Times*: “Of course Cristina is smart and ambitious - she's in medical school,”

²⁰¹ “The 2007 Asian Pacific American Media Coalition Report Card on Television Diversity,” published by the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition, 29 October 2007.

²⁰² William W. Maddux, Adam D. Galinsky, Amy J. C. Cuddy and Mark Polifroni, “When Being a Model Minority Is Good . . . and Bad: Realistic Threat Explains Negativity Toward Asian Americans,” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 34 (2008), 74.

pointing to the other characters, who are at least as ambitious. However, this does not explain why this Asian American character is the only doctor perceived to be a “robot”.

This stereotypical coldness also becomes a factor in her romantic relationship with Preston Burke, an African American colleague. In *Postethnic America*, Hollinger writes about a future America wherein its citizens may embrace a solidarity that “may help the species diminish its traditional fear of intimacy across ethno-racial lines.” (204). This fear is completely absent in this storyline of *Grey’s Anatomy*. In fact, almost all characters date people outside of their ethnoracial group, and the interracial character of the relationships is never problematized or even discussed. Still, there are numerous episodes wherein it is implied that ethnoracial differences might be a factor in the eventual ending of the characters’ relationship. Preston’s mother does not approve of Cristina because she feels the young woman is “selfish”²⁰³ and “unemotional”. Preston frequently reminds her of her inability to show interpersonal warmth, and eventually leaves her because she is unwilling to compromise her career for their relationship. While it is never explicitly stated that in the matter of perceived coldness she might be dealing with preconceptions about her ethnicity, Ono and Pham do believe this is the case.²⁰⁴

Cristina’s ethnicity is dealt with briefly in the second episode of the first season, when a Chinese patient comes in and Cristina is asked to translate. She answers: “No, I can’t. I grew up in Beverly Hills; the only Chinese I know is from Mr. Chow’s menu. Besides, I’m Korean.”²⁰⁵ Throughout the series, she makes it clear that she affiliates much stronger with the Jewish community, as she was raised by a Jewish

²⁰³ An example of this occurs in *Grey’s Anatomy*, season 3, episode no. 2, first broadcast 28 September 28 2006 by ABC.

²⁰⁴ Kent A. Ono and Vincent Pham, *Asian Americans and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 86.

²⁰⁵ *Grey’s Anatomy*, season 1, episode no. 2, first broadcast 3 April 2005 by ABC.

stepfather. Her Jewishness could be seen as an illustration of a voluntary affiliation that is typical for a postethnic society. Cristina was not born a Jew, but as she was raised observing Jewish practices, she chooses to sit Shiva when one of the characters dies. This raises some questions: “Is it Shiva even if [the widow] is a Catholic?”²⁰⁶ but Cristina believes it is: “Shiva is what I know, so yeah, it’s Shiva.”²⁰⁷ She is at once part of the Asian-American community and the Jewish community. As such, Cristina apparently fits perfectly into the vision of a postethnic America, as “[p]ostethnicity prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiple identities, pushes for communities of wide scope [and] recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups.”²⁰⁸

However, while it is never articulated that it is not common for someone of Asian American descent to affiliate with the Jewish faith, it is strongly implied. The strongest example of her co-workers’ preconceptions about Cristina’s identity occurs in the one episode that deals directly with race issues. A patient who has become the victim of a car accident comes in, refusing to be helped by Miranda Bailey, an African American surgeon. Bailey asks Cristina to examine the patient, because she is considered to be neither white nor black.²⁰⁹ During the examination, it is revealed that the patient has a swastika tattooed on his stomach. Eventually, Bailey is the only surgeon available to operate on the patient, and she is very verbal about her dislike for the patient. Cristina remains silent until the end of the episode, when she explains that she feels resentful for being asked to tend to the patient: “you used me because of the

²⁰⁶ *Grey’s Anatomy*, season 3, episode no. 1, first broadcast 21 September 2006 by ABC.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ David Hollinger, *Postethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 116.

²⁰⁹ *Grey’s Anatomy*, season 4, episode no. 9, first broadcast 22 November 2007 by ABC.

color of my skin.”²¹⁰ She also reiterates that her stepfather’s family died in Auschwitz, which results in a visible flinch from Bailey: she had forgotten that Cristina is Jewish.

In this episode, it also becomes clear that the creators of *Grey’s Anatomy* are aware that the seemingly postethnic universe they have created is a fictional one.

When the patient is asked how he is able to work with his Afro American colleagues if he believes in white supremacy, he counters:

I’m not the devil. I’m just a guy with a belief system ... If [an African American woman] wanted to marry my brother, I would have a problem with that. So would a lot of people. I’m not that different from most of the people that you know.

Here, it becomes clear that while issues about race are not usually discussed in the series, the characters of *Grey’s Anatomy* do not live in a postethnic society. Race has become “the pink elephant in the room,” the issue characters avoid discussing because it is too sensitive. Characters make good-natured jokes about Cristina’s Jewishness sometimes, but it is never discussed in the context of her ethnicity. It literally takes a man with a swastika on his body to enter the hospital for the characters to discuss race, and while it is obvious that the minority characters harbor a lot of subdued anger about these issues, the incident is never mentioned again.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

Calliope “Callie” Torres

Before Mexican-American actress Sara Ramirez joined the *Grey’s Anatomy* cast to play the character of Callie Torres, she wondered about the absence of a Latin-American character in the show:

I was really proud to see the ethnic people on the show. I thought, Wow, there are no color limits. Nobody’s making comments about how there are African-Americans on the show and an Asian on the show. However, I did think: Where’s the Latin person?²¹¹

With the introduction of Callie as the Latin-American character, almost all major minority groups are represented by at least one lead actor.²¹² However, while this diversity is a significant step forward in the advancement of minorities, Calliope Torres is also a character that can be considered stereotypical to some extent.

At first sight, Callie seems the ultimate postethnic character. She comes from a wealthy family, is a well-performing surgeon and is fully bilingual. While her family is devoutly Catholic, she is a self-proclaimed Atheist. She refers to the faith she was raised with sometimes for comfort, and is very close to her family, with whom she speaks Spanish. In her daily life in the hospital, ethnicity is never an issue: she is not discriminated against, and no one ever remarks on her Hispanic background. In her romantic relationships, she also makes decisions regardless of ethnicity. She has been married to a white man and has casually dated other white men, before she discovered a liking for women.

Interestingly, this is where the controversy begins: her lesbian relationship with one of the other female leading characters led to much uproar, both in the

²¹¹ Jada Yuan, “Belle Curves: Sara Ramirez,” *New York Magazine*, 18 September 2006.

²¹² Still absent from the series is a Native-American cast member. According to the 2008 NAACP report, none of the major networks feature a Native-American actor among the regulars of any of their shows.

fictional world of the series and in the non-fictional media. Through this plot twist, it becomes clear that while Callie does not address the issue of ethnicity, her cultural heritage is crucial when it comes to her family's acceptance of her sexual preference. In this storyline, her family is heavily stereotyped. Her father is heavily upset when Callie tells him that she is involved with another woman, and turns into what W. Madsen has described as the Latin American macho stereotype of the "fighting rooster."²¹³ Mr. Torres comes to the hospital, physically attacking whomever he holds responsible for the failure of her heterosexual marriage. In a display of extreme chauvinism, Mr. Torres appeals to Callie's boss, demanding that he release her from her contract so he can take her home to "cure" her. This behavior fits into Baca-Zinn's description of the stereotypical Latin American father, who is marked by "exaggerated masculinity, physical prowess, and male chauvinism".²¹⁴

Callie, usually an independent and highly professional woman, is at first unable to stand up to her father. When her colleagues suggest that she tell her father he is placing an inconceivable demand on her, she replies:

You don't understand. There isn't anything he hasn't done for me. ...
My Dad is taking me home ... He's making me quit my job, and quit
my relationship, which he has yet to acknowledge even exists.²¹⁵

She never articulates that her ethnicity has been important in defining her relationship with her father, but it is clear that she cannot make her colleagues understand her reaction. The culmination of this storyline happens when her father brings in a Hispanic Catholic priest to "pray the gay away."²¹⁶ Callie, upset that her father cannot

²¹³ Madsen, W. (1973). *The Mexican-American of south Texas*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

²¹⁴ Baca-Zinn, M. (1994). Adaptation and continuity in Mexican-origin families. In R. L. Taylor (Ed.), *Minority families in the United States: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 64-81). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

²¹⁵ *Grey's Anatomy*, season 5, episode no. 20, first broadcast 15 October 2009 by ABC.

²¹⁶ *Grey's Anatomy*, season 5, episode no. 20, first broadcast 15 October 2009 by ABC.

accept her relationship with her girlfriend, eventually asks him to leave the hospital. The consequence of this action is that her family disowns her, a fact that is made clear by her father even though her mother and sister are never given a voice. The patriarch of the family has decided, citing religious reasons for his inability to accept his daughter's bisexuality.

The possible importance of Callie's ethnicity is never mentioned, while it is likely that it played a large role in the matter. In *Postethnic America*, Hollinger argues that "it is generally accepted that the degree of involvement in a religious community can vary enormously ... [and a] multiculturalism less conspicuously aloof from religious cultures would necessarily engage the right of exit."²¹⁷ Therefore, it would be expected that a society would accept the idea of religion by voluntary affiliation before moving on to become a postethnic society. With regard to the above example, it might be concluded that it is exactly the fact that the United States is nowhere near being postethnic that allows the creators of *Grey's Anatomy* to bring issues regarding religion to the plot, but not discuss the ethnicity they are tied to.

In the case of Callie's bisexuality, it seems highly likely that her Latin American ethnicity played an important role. Sager, Schlimmer and Hellman have described the challenges many LGBT²¹⁸ Latin Americans face: "there is a deep sense of family obligation that overshadows individual needs ... making it especially difficult for LGB Latin Americans to embrace their sexual orientation."²¹⁹ Callie's coming out story indicates that she is not able to fluidly move between the primordial ethnicity of her family and the atheist community she is a part of, where homosexuality is not considered to be unnatural.

²¹⁷ David Hollinger, *Postethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 121.

²¹⁸ LGBT stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual."

²¹⁹ Jennifer Sager, Elizabeth Schlimmer and James Hellman, "Latin American Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients: Implications for Counseling," *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education & Development* 40 (2001), 25.

Conclusion

The avoidance of ethnoracial issues in the storylines of *Grey's Anatomy* has led to critique from some scholars. For example, Donald Bogle, author of the book *Primetime Blues: African Americans on Network Television* has remarked: “we don't want to see a racial or cultural problem every week, but at some point if you ignore them it becomes dishonest.”²²⁰ The creator of the series, Shonda Rhimes, has responded by saying that she is not interested in discussing race: “[My friends and I are] post-civil rights, post-feminist babies, and we take it for granted we live in a diverse world.”²²¹ At first sight, the diverse world of *Grey's Anatomy* seems postethnic: minority characters fluidly move between parts of their cultural heritage and discrimination by race or ethnicity usually does not occur, giving the impression that ethnicity is no longer an issue. However, a closer look at the series reveals that this impression is a false one. Two leading minority characters, Cristina Yang and Callie Torres, have strongly been influenced by existing stereotypes of their respective minorities. Furthermore, analysis of the two characters shows that their decisions might be influenced by their ethnicity, even though this possible factor is never made explicit. Ethnoracial issues are not so much absent or irrelevant, but rather treated like the “pink elephant in the room”: everyone is aware of its presence, but the issue might just be too sensitive to discuss openly. Perhaps it is helpful in this argument to refer to Barack Obama’s speech about issues of race:

Even for those blacks who did make it, questions of race and racism continue to define their worldview in fundamental ways ... the memories of humiliation and doubt and fear have not gone away; nor has the anger and the bitterness of those years. That anger may not get

²²⁰ Matthew Fogel, “*Grey's Anatomy* Goes Colorblind,” *New York Times*, 8 May 2005.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

expressed in public, in front of white co-workers or white friends. But it does find voice in the barbershop or the beauty shop or around the kitchen table.²²²

In the case of *Grey's Anatomy*, that kitchen table is usually not to be found within the walls of the hospital. However, a close look at the series reveals the underlying ethnoracial tensions that prevent even this fictional universe from being a society that is truly postethnic.

²²² Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union," Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 18 March 2008.

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Course: Topics in American Diversity
 Location: Utrecht University
 Instructor: Dr. Derek Rubin
 Date: 22 January 2010
 Word count: 1131

Modernity vs. Tradition in *The Family Markowitz*

Fiction writer Allegra Goodman has been critically acclaimed not only for the literary merit of her work, but also for exploring the position of Jews in contemporary American society. Her second novel, *The Family Markowitz*, was lauded because it portrays superbly the “tensions and ironies of the anomalous position of American Jews today as they try to maintain a balance between their identity as Jews and as members of the white majority.”²²³ The book is a collection of short stories about the lives of three generations of the Markowitz family, who each deal with their identity as both Americans and Jews in a different way. As such, the novel could be seen as a perfect illustration of David Biale’s vision of the Jewish role in establishing a new postethnic America:

At once part of the American majority yet also a self-chosen minority, their very belonging to both of these categories undermines the categories themselves. Between the monoculturalists who wish to erase difference and the multiculturalists who see only difference, the Jews may still have a role to play in the definition of the American future.²²⁴

However, while Jewish-American self-definition and its relevance for American society is a crucial part of the stories, they also deal with the tensions between tradition and modernity in a broader sense, and tribalism in a global context. Most characters look for ways to cope with modernization and its consequences. Some react by resisting modernity and embracing traditionalism, while others feel more at ease embracing this same modernity, using tradition largely symbolically. This paper will look into the ways the characters of Henry, Miriam and

²²³ Derek Rubin, “Postethnic Experience in Contemporary Jewish American Fiction,” *Social Identities* 8:4 (2002): 515.

²²⁴ David Biale, “The Melting Pot and Beyond,” in *Insider/Outsider*, ed. David Biale, Michael Galchinsky and Susanna Heschel (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 32.

Edward Markowitz handle these contradictions in the stories, and will argue that the issues these characters deal with are not only a result of their hybrid identity, but also a consequence of a larger process of modernization.

Two examples of characters that resist modernity are Henry and Miriam Markowitz. Henry, an art-lover and an implied homosexual, lives in Venice, California, until he becomes disgusted with the superficiality of the Californian art business. An academic at heart – Henry holds a Ph.D. in art history – he packs up his life and moves to England to manage a Laura Ashley shop. Henry has always felt an outsider, resisting American “modern” society. He describes his brother Edward, a fellow scholar, as a sell-out to the “grant-getting, TV-interview machine,”²²⁵ and as being “caught in the American rituals. Food, kids, cars, commercials.”²²⁶ The impact of standardization on the American education system is a recurring theme in the stories, which seems to suggest a connection between this institute of civic society and the tensions between modernization and tradition at large. Henry views learning as an almost religious experience, “a thing as delicate as blowing eggs.”²²⁷ A man who is ever concerned with esthetics, he sees modern scholars as being “at war with the beautiful; they are against God and metaphor.”²²⁸ Henry eventually finds his peace in “the more decorated nineteenth century,”²²⁹ in the words of his sister-in-law.

This tension between modernity and tradition is also visible in the character of Miriam Markowitz, Edward’s daughter. While her parents raised Miriam and her siblings in a “liberal, rational, joyous way – raised them to enjoy the Jewish tradition,”²³⁰ the young medical student has taken to Orthodox Judaism. Her parents do not understand why their daughter “burst out of their household with its pleasant suburban Judaism and become a little refusenik.”²³¹ Her reasons are not unfolded until the very last chapter, when it is explained that Miriam sees Orthodoxy as the only way to counter the sterility that comes with practicing

²²⁵ Allegra Goodman, *The Family Markowitz* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giourx, 2005), 76.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 187.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 241.

medicine. In the description of Miriam's thoughts about the hospital she works at, she almost echoes her uncle Henry in his thoughts about the American university: "Miriam sees hospital sterility everywhere she looks, a lack of feeling. She has become more religious in the past two years. What else could she be in those white corridors?"²³² While their solutions are different, both characters deal with the complexities of modern American life by retreating to a more traditional life.

In the chapter "Persians", the debate about tribalism in a global context is made explicit in a fictional discussion about terrorism. In "Writing with a Return Address", Allegra Goodman has said that when writing fiction, "[she is] writing not only about [the Jewish community] but also for them."²³³ This certainly seems true for this chapter, where Edward, Henry's younger brother and a professor of politics and modern history, is interviewed by a radio station. Citing from his book, *The Terrorist as Other*, he urges his readers to "avoid judging the terrorists of the Muslim world by the strictures of our own Judeo-Christian tradition as it is institutionalized in America,"²³⁴ and reminds them "the birth of Israel was facilitated by terrorist acts."²³⁵ In the wake of 9/11, which took place five years after *The Family Markowitz* was published, these messages are more profound than ever. When Edward argues that "[i]t is vital for us to examine the 'Other' in order to understand ourselves,"²³⁶ he does not only refer to multiculturalism within America, but to issues that go beyond the borders of this nation-state. In his private life, Edward practices what Herbert J. Gans has described as "symbolic ethnicity": "a love for and pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated into everyday behavior."²³⁷ Even at the Pesach seder, Edward places tradition in a modern context, stressing the holiday's relevance for oppressed

²³² Ibid., 247.

²³³ Allegra Goodman, "Writing with a Return Address," in *Who We Are: On Being (and Not Being) a Jewish American Writer*, ed. Derek Rubin (New York: Random House Inc., 2005), 268.

²³⁴ Allegra Goodman, *The Family Markowitz* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giourx, 2005), 164.

²³⁵ Ibid., 163.

²³⁶ Ibid., 164.

²³⁷ Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader* ed. W. Sollars (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 436.

minorities all around the world.²³⁸ While Edward critiques modern American society every once in a while and sometimes feels conflicted about his religion, he shies away from finding “the Other” in himself, disregarding the life stories his colleagues are swapping at a conference as “self-flagellation,”²³⁹ refusing to see a connection between his own story and his academic work. Edward is the opposite of his brother: “[Henry] has always chosen the Old World, just as Ed has chosen the New.” Here, it appears that the Old World does not only stand for Europe, but tradition itself, whereas the New World symbolizes modernity.

In *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman states:

The challenge in this era of globalization – for countries and individuals – is to find a healthy balance between preserving a sense of identity, home and community and doing what it takes to survive within the globalization system.²⁴⁰

It is exactly this balance that the discussed characters in *The Family Markowitz* struggle with. All characters come to a different solution - Henry and Miriam cannot reconcile modern life with their need for tradition, whereas Edward embraces modernity and incorporates tradition only to enrich his understanding of modern life. Tradition predominantly takes a Jewish shape in the novel, but the tension between this tradition and modernity is one that goes beyond ethnicity.

²³⁸ Allegra Goodman, *The Family Markowitz* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giourx, 2005), 196.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

²⁴⁰ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (London: HarperCollins, 2000), 42.

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Project: "America Day", Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Location: Utrecht University
Supervisors: Dr. Jaap Verheul and Drs. Willem Post
Co-authored by: Anjuly de Geus
Date: Presented at the America Day, 17 June 2010 in the Hague
Word count: 7266

Position Paper: Nederland en de Verenigde Staten; Diplomatie 2.0 en Diversiteit

Executive Summary

Binnen de hedendaagse internationale betrekkingen genieten soevereine staten niet meer de machtspositie die zij vele decennia hadden. Staten krijgen steeds meer te maken met *non-state actors* die zich op het politieke wereldtoneel begeven. Deze verschuiving van machtsverhoudingen, in gang gezet door het globaliseringproces biedt interessante nieuwe mogelijkheden. Naast de traditionele diplomatie tussen staten, is er een internationaal diplomatiek netwerk ontstaan van lokale overheden. *City diplomacy* zoals dit fenomeen genoemd wordt, wordt steeds vaker ingezet bij het aanpakken van stadsproblematiek.

Naast lokale overheden zijn het de burgers, de *civil society*, die via allerlei *grassroots* projecten en burgerinitiatieven hun stempel drukken in de vorm van *citizen diplomacy*. De macht van de burger wordt nog meer versterkt door de razendsnelle ontwikkeling van interactieve media. Sociale netwerken verbinden groepen gelijkgezinden met elkaar en hebben het democratiseringsproces van de politiek definitief in gang gezet.

Hoewel deze nieuwe vormen van diplomatie niet altijd direct vruchten afwerpen, staat de nieuwe diplomatie dicht bij de burger. Simpelweg door het lokale karakter, zoals bij *city diplomacy* het geval is, de *people-to-people* aanpak van *citizen diplomacy* of door de toegankelijkheid, zoals bij de digitale diplomatie. Dit maakt deze vormen diplomatie tot een uitermate geschikt middel om in te zetten ter bevordering van diversiteit in de samenleving en voor het neerzetten van een positief beeld van Nederland in de rest van de wereld.

Stellingen

Stelling I: Een nauwere samenwerking tussen de Nederlandse overheid en lokale overheden is noodzakelijk in de bevordering van diversiteit in de samenleving, omdat lokale overheden een directere weg naar de burger bieden.

Stelling II: De positieve houding van de VS ten opzichte van migranten heeft geleid tot het succes van de *hyphenated identity*. Door middel van de uitwisseling van *best practices* tussen Amerikaanse en Nederlandse steden kan deze houding ook worden gestimuleerd in Nederland.

Stelling III: De Nederlandse overheid moet inzetten op een actievere digitale diplomatie om de burger te bereiken, omdat het internet bij uitstek kansen biedt om grenzen van etniciteit en religie te overstijgen. Tevens nodigen de nieuwe sociale media uit tot een grotere betrokkenheid van burgers vanwege hun inclusieve en interactieve karakter.

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1. Inleiding

Op 19 september 2001 verzamelden vijfduizend mensen zich op het stadsplein van Dearborn in de Amerikaanse staat Michigan voor een stille tocht. De deelnemers, van diverse etnische achtergronden en aanhangers van verschillende religies, herdachten samen de gebeurtenissen van 11 september. Op deze tragische dag was de stad, met een moslimpopulatie van 30% ook wel de “Moslimhoofdstad van de Verenigde Staten” genoemd, overspoeld met aandacht van de lokale en landelijke media. De verwachting was dat er rassenrellen zouden uitbreken als gevolg van de aanslagen. Niets was minder waar: door een succesvolle preventieve aanpak van de plaatselijke politie, en het al heersende positieve klimaat nam het aantal *hate crimes* tegen moslims in de maanden na 11 september niet toe in Dearborn.

Helaas was de situatie in Dearborn niet exemplarisch voor de rest van het land, of de wereld. Na de aanslagen nam het aantal *hate crimes* tegen moslims met 17 maal toe in de VS.²⁴¹ In zowel de Verenigde Staten als Europa werden scherpe vragen gesteld over de pluriforme samenleving. Toch verschilde de aanpak van beide landen wezenlijk. De VS beantwoordde 9/11 met een “war on terror” en een affirmatie van de Amerikaanse identiteit, waarin culturele en etnische diversiteit werden verbonden. In Nederland leidden de aanslagen tot een intensivering van het integratiedebat.²⁴² Het Nederlandse politieke klimaat in het eerste decennium van de 21^e werd gekenmerkt door de opkomst van conservatieve partijen zoals de LPF, TON en PVV, en de moorden op Pim Fortuyn en Theo van Gogh. Alhoewel 11 september kan worden gezien als een katalysator in de discussie over multiculturalisme, waren de verschuivingen in zowel de Amerikaanse als Nederlandse samenleving al eerder merkbaar. De versnelling van het globaliseringproces sinds het einde van de Koude Oorlog zorgde voor significante veranderingen in de bestaande economische en sociale structuren.²⁴³ Door vooralsnog ongekende technische ontwikkelingen werd het mogelijk voor bedrijven en overheden, maar ook voor

²⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, “‘We Are Not the Enemy.’ Hate Crimes Against Arabs, Muslims, and Those Perceived to be Arab or Muslim after September 11,” *Human Rights Watch Reports*, Vol. 14, No. 6, November 2002, 1.

²⁴² Jaap Verheul, “How Could This Have Happened in Holland?” in *American Multiculturalism after 9/11*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 195.

²⁴³ Paul Lauter, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” in *American Multiculturalism after 9/11* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 23.

burgers, om te communiceren met de hele wereld. Er ontstond een mondiale cultuur, waarvan het gezicht veelal Amerikaans was.²⁴⁴

De gevolgen van globalisering stellen landelijke overheden voor nieuwe uitdagingen. Het stimuleren van diversiteit gaat hand in hand met het zoeken naar een nationale identiteit. De landgrenzen vervagen, de digitale revolutie heeft gezorgd voor een significante verandering in de manier waarop we met elkaar communiceren, en de wereld lijkt kleiner dan ooit. Tegelijkertijd is diplomatie niet langer alleen een zaak van de landelijke overheid. Diplomatie vanuit steden, *city diplomacy*, is in opkomst. Steden in de gehele westerse wereld hebben te maken met dezelfde uitdagingen, niet alleen op het gebied van diversiteit, maar ook als het gaat om energiebeleid en klimaatverandering. Sinds de Tweede Wereldoorlog werken steden over de hele wereld samen om kennis uit te wisselen, en wederzijds begrip te stimuleren. Deze samenwerkingsverbanden namen eerst de vorm aan van zusterstedenverbanden, maar zijn inmiddels steeds meer gebaseerd op een projectmatige aanpak. Deze projecten zijn soms verbonden aan nationale en internationale stedennetwerken, en steden werken ook regelmatig samen met landelijke overheden.²⁴⁵

Hoewel *city diplomacy* in Nederland tot nu toe vooral is ingezet op het gebied van conflictpreventie, peace-building en post-conflict reconstructie, is het door het lokale karakter ook uitermate geschikt middel voor de bevordering van diversiteit in de samenleving. Daarbij is het interessant om te kijken naar *best practices* in grote steden in de Verenigde Staten, waar diversiteitprogramma's vrijwel altijd een belangrijk onderdeel zijn van het stadsbeleid. Daarnaast is een verbeterde samenwerking tussen Nederlandse lokale overheden en de landelijke en Europese overheden wenselijk. Wanneer Nederlandse lokale overheden op landelijk, maar vooral op Europees niveau samenwerken, kan dit bijdragen aan een politiek sterker Europa. Een Europa dat zich kan meten met en aansluiten bij China en de Verenigde Staten.²⁴⁶

De toename in globalisering en de daaropvolgende veranderingen in communicatie hebben ook tot gevolg gehad dat het voor burgers eenvoudiger dan ooit is om betrokken te zijn bij politieke besluitvormingsprocessen. De overheid kan communiceren met de burger via websites, e-mail, en sociale netwerken zoals Twitter

²⁴⁴ Zie bijvoorbeeld Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1995).

²⁴⁵ Gesprek Jan Melissen, Clingendael, 15 april 2010

²⁴⁶ Bilderbergspeech Verhagen

en YouTube. Daarnaast heeft het internet ook geleid tot een golf van burgerinitiatieven in de vorm van *grassroots movements* en non-gouvernementele organisaties. Dit heeft de definitie van *citizen diplomacy* veranderd; was dit eerst het terrein van people-to-people uitwisselingsnetwerken waarin de burger een onofficiële diplomaat was voor haar overheid, nu maken burgers een actief deel uit van hun *civil society*, zowel op landelijk als internationaal niveau. Daarnaast is de vorm van diplomatie die voortvloeit uit de voorgenoemde nieuwe digitale communicatiekanalen, digitale diplomatie, het middel bij uitstek om de burger direct te bereiken. Dit biedt vooralsnog ongekende kansen om burgers van alle etnische en religieuze achtergronden samen te brengen in – al dan niet – virtuele netwerken. *Citizen diplomacy* en digitale diplomatie kunnen dan ook een belangrijk middel zijn om diversiteit te stimuleren en bevorderen in de Nederlandse samenleving.

Dit paper zal onderzoeken op welke manieren de nieuwe vormen van diplomatie ingezet kunnen worden door de landelijke overheid om integratie en diversiteit te bevorderen. Daarbij zal gekeken worden naar het landelijke beleid dat nu al wordt gevoerd, en tevens zal worden geïnventariseerd welke initiatieven er bestaan op lokaal en internationaal niveau.

2. *City diplomacy* en Stedelijke Netwerken

a. *City diplomacy*

In de afgelopen zestig jaar is de diplomatie, in de traditionele zin van het woord, sterk aan verandering onderhevig. Diplomatie, in essentie een systeem van communicatie tussen overheden, wordt vooralsnog gezien als iets dat voor een groot deel wordt uitgevoerd door de ministeries van Buitenlandse Zaken.²⁴⁷ Toch was dit niet altijd het geval. Vóór het Westfaalse systeem waren het steden die grote delen van het buitenlandse beleid uitvoerden. In de Middeleeuwen domineerde het Hanzegenootschap een groot deel van de internationale handel in Noord-Europa. Dit samenwerkingsverband van handelaren omsloeg zeventig steden en talloze kleinere dorpen verspreid over zeven Europese landen. De Hanzesteden waren bovendien zeer invloedrijk op economisch gebied.²⁴⁸ In de Renaissance waren het steden als Venetië en Milaan die zich als eerste met permanentie missies in het buitenland vestigden.²⁴⁹ De Vrede van Westfalen betekende het einde voor de stad als diplomatiek middelpunt. Staten namen het stokje over en tot op de dag van vandaag zijn zij de belangrijkste actoren binnen de internationale betrekkingen.

In de afgelopen decennia wordt de moderne diplomatie gezien als een proces dat zich afspeelt tussen soevereine staten en hun centrale overheden. De nadruk op de staat als middelpunt van het diplomatieke systeem is correct, in de zin dat het bedrijven van diplomatie nog altijd hoofdzakelijk een taak is die door de centrale overheid wordt uitgevoerd. Na de Tweede Wereldoorlog was dit zeker ook het geval, maar toch deden zich een aantal veranderingen voor op het internationale diplomatieke toneel. Naast de diplomatie tussen staten, is een parallelle diplomatieke wereld ontstaan waarin zogenaamde *non-state actors* opereren. Dit kunnen actoren met een non-territoriaal karakter zijn zoals NGO's en multinationals, maar ook staten binnen een federale overheid, regionale overheden en steden vallen onder deze *non-state actors*.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ Jönsson, Christer and Karin Aggestam, "Trends in Diplomatic Signalling" in *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, ed. Jan Melissen, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd. 1999), 151.

²⁴⁸ Hanzesteden: the Hanseday Historic, 6 May 2010, via http://www.hanse.org/en/the_hansa/hanseday_historic.

²⁴⁹ Cohen, Raymond, "Reflections on the New Global Diplomacy: Statecraft 2500 BC to 2000 AD" in *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, ed. Jan Melissen, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd. 1999), 13.

²⁵⁰ Van der Pluijm, Rogier and Jan Melissen, *City diplomacy: the expanding role of cities in international politics*, (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", April 2007), 7.

Globalisering heeft een grote invloed gehad op de ontwikkeling van deze nieuwe diplomatieke dimensie. Het globaliseringsproces heeft ervoor gezorgd dat staten niet langer het monopolie hebben op de sociale, economische en politieke activiteiten die zich binnen hun landsgrenzen afspelen. De grenzen vervaagden naarmate steeds meer groeperingen en organisaties zich op mondiaal niveau organiseerden. Naast de grenzen vervaagde ook de duidelijke scheidslijn tussen de nationale en internationale politiek. Het verschil tussen mondiale en nationale problematiek is moeilijker te onderscheiden, uiterst belangrijke kwesties zoals klimaatverandering worden op beide niveaus aangepakt. Door het vervagen van deze grenzen nemen *non-state actors* taken van de centrale overheden over en oefenen zij steeds meer druk uit op politieke besluitvormingsprocessen.²⁵¹

Lokale overheden en hun toenemende politieke macht zijn niet enkel het product van de steeds verdergaande globalisering, zij worden er ook door beïnvloed. Internationale kwesties zoals immigratie zorgen ervoor dat lokale overheden worden gedwongen verder te kijken dan landsgrenzen. Maar ook op financieel gebied worden steden beïnvloed door het beleid van de Wereldbank en het IMF. Grote wereldsteden zoals New York, Londen en Tokyo zijn kleine economieën op zich, losstaand van de centrale overheid, met een toestroom van mensen vanuit de gehele wereld.²⁵²

Hoewel er vanuit een staatcentrisch oogpunt dus gesproken kan worden over een parallel diplomatiek systeem naast de diplomatie van staten, is het beter te spreken over één complex systeem dat diverse lagen en actoren kent.²⁵³ Vanuit dit perspectief is het zaak deze actoren op zo effectief mogelijke wijze met elkaar te laten samenwerken. In plaats van een competitieve sfeer moet er bewustzijn worden gecreëerd voor het feit dat een goede samenwerking met lokale overheden ten goede kan komen aan het nationale beleid. Het ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken zou moeten kijken naar waar, waarom en hoe Nederlandse steden actief zijn en proberen het nationale beleid met deze actieve lokale overheden af te stemmen. Het trekken van één lijn kan bijdragen aan een efficiëntere uitvoering van het buitenlandse beleid. Het contact tussen staten verloopt directer dan contact tussen steden maar het blijft nuttig elkaar wederzijds te informeren.

²⁵¹ Idem, 8.

²⁵² Idem.

²⁵³ Idem.

b. Steden als Internationale Actoren

Met de toenemende participatie van steden aan de wereldpolitiek en hun steeds verdergaande internationale beleid is het voor centrale overheden van belang om in kaart te brengen op welke wijze steden zichzelf positioneren als internationale actoren. Lokale overheden proberen op verschillende manieren hun plek te vinden binnen de internationale betrekkingen, bijvoorbeeld door zich aan te sluiten bij (internationale) stedelijke netwerken, het aangaan van stedenbanden (zustersteden) of door samenwerking op specifieke problemen. Waar stedelijke samenwerking in eerste instantie voornamelijk werd gezocht in het vormen van zustersteden, het zogenaamde “twinning” van gemeenten, lijkt dit concept zoals het voorheen werd gebruikt achterhaald. Steden zoeken steeds vaker een bredere samenwerking met meerdere landen en bundelen hun krachten om zo hun gezamenlijke belangen te behartigen en doen dit binnen internationale netwerken en organisaties. Naast de participatie in netwerken is een trend te onderscheiden die gebaseerd is op het oude “twinning”, maar verder gaat dan een algemeen samenwerkingsverband tussen steden. Waar zustersteden vooral een algemeen partnerschap aangingen, ziet men nu steeds vaker dat steden expertise en *best practices* met elkaar delen. Het gaat hier dus om samenwerking op specifieke onderwerpen, uiteenlopend van watermanagement tot integratie en diversiteit.

c. Bestaande (internationale) netwerken

Nederland

VNG International

VNG International heeft binnen de Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten (VNG) de taak bij te dragen aan versterking van democratisch lokaal bestuur wereldwijd. Daarbij hoort het ontwikkelen en uitvoeren van projecten en programma's in het buitenland, het ondersteunen van Nederlandse gemeenten bij de vormgeving van hun internationaal beleid en het ontwikkelen van Europese projecten.²⁵⁴ VNG streeft ernaar intensief deel te nemen aan internationale netwerken en organisaties en is

²⁵⁴ VNG: VNG Deelname aan Internationale Organisaties en Netwerken, 12 May 2010, http://www.vng.nl/Documenten/Extranet/Internationaal/2009%20Europa/EUI_brochure_VNG_deelname_intern_organisaties_v2009.pdf, 4.

daarom lid van enkele Europese en mondiale overkoepelende organisaties zoals CEMR, Eurocities en UCLG.

Europa

CEMR

De Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR ofwel Raad der Europese Gemeenten en Regio's) is de Europese koepel organisatie van nationale verenigingen van gemeenten en regio's. De organisatie heeft leden in vijfendertig landen en ruim 100.000 aangesloten gemeenten via aangesloten verenigingen. De CEMR is de grootste Europese organisatie die de belangen van lokale en regionale overheden behartigt bij de Europese Unie. CEMR vertegenwoordigt tevens de Europese sectie van UCLG samen met Europese steden die rechtstreeks zijn aangesloten bij UCLG.²⁵⁵

Committee of the Regions

Het Comité van de Regio's (CvdR) is een politiek orgaan dat als spreekbuis van de lokale en regionale overheden in de Europese Unie optreedt. Het Comité van de Regio's werd in 1994 in het leven geroepen en had als tweeledig doel het lokale en regionale overheden meer te betrekken bij Europese regelgeving en de afstand tussen de burger en Brussel te verkleinen door meer op lokaal en regionaal niveau samen te werken.²⁵⁶

Eurocities

Eurocities bestaat uit 122 Europese steden met meer dan 25.000 inwoners die een belangrijke regionale en internationale invloed hebben. een vereniging van Europese steden met een minimum bevolking van 250.000 inwoners en met een belangrijke regionale en internationale functie. Eurocities heeft als doel het uitwisselen van kennis en ervaring tussen Europese steden en begeleid tevens samenwerkingsprogramma's tussen steden. De organisatie kent zeven Nederlandse leden: Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Den Haag, Eindhoven, Utrecht, Leeuwarden en Parkstad Limburg.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ Idem.

²⁵⁶ Committee of the Regions: Presentatie, 12 May 2010,

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/>

²⁵⁷ VNG: VNG Deelname aan Internationale Organisaties en Netwerken, 12 May 2010,

G4

De G4, oftewel de vier grootste steden van Nederland, bestaat uit de steden: Den Haag, Rotterdam, Amsterdam en Utrecht. De vier steden hebben te maken met gelijksoortige problemen en hebben daarmee convergerende belangen. De samenwerking vindt plaats op meerdere beleidsterreinen en gaat zelfs verder dan interstedelijke samenwerking alleen. De G4 behartigt de belangen van de vier grootste steden ook in Den Haag en Brussel.²⁵⁸

Mondiaal

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Het grootste en meest representatieve internationale verband is United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). UCLG is op 1 januari 2004 van start gegaan en zetelt in Barcelona. De organisatie heeft de volgende kerndoelen: het lokaal bestuur vertegenwoordigen bij de internationale organisaties; internationale samenwerking en uitwisseling van ervaring tussen gemeenten en hun nationale verenigingen bevorderen; het wereldwijde informatiepunt over lokale democratie worden. UCLG heeft leden in 127 landen (uit de 191 VN lidstaten), waardoor de leden ongeveer de helft van de wereldbevolking vertegenwoordigen.²⁵⁹

Sister Cities International

Sister Cities International is een Amerikaanse non-profit organisatie met meer dan 2500 initiatieven in 134 landen. Het idee voor Sister Cities International werd in 1956 geïnitieerd door president Eisenhower, de organisatie in zijn huidige vorm kwam in 1967 tot stand. De organisatie streeft ernaar om een mondiale samenwerking tot stand te brengen op gemeentelijk niveau, cultureel begrip te bevorderen en economische ontwikkeling te stimuleren.²⁶⁰

http://www.vng.nl/Documenten/Extranet/Internationaal/2009%20Europa/EUI_brochure_VNG_deelna_me_intern_organisaties_v2009.pdf, 4.

²⁵⁸ G4 : G4, 12 May 2010,

<http://www.grotevier.nl>

²⁵⁹ VNG Deelname aan Internationale Organisaties en Netwerken, 12 May 2010, 4.

²⁶⁰ Sister Cities International: About Sister Cities, 12 May 2010,

<http://www.sister-cities.org/about/index.cfm>.

Transatlantische stedennetwerken

Het Transatlantic Cities Network (TCN) is momenteel het enige netwerk dat steden uit de VS en Europa op een officiële manier samenbrengt om expertise uit te wisselen over gemeenschappelijke problemen. Het TCN maakt onderdeel uit van het German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), een gouvernementele Amerikaanse organisatie die als doel heeft de samenwerking en het begrip tussen Noord-Amerika en Europa te bevorderen.²⁶¹ Het TCN zet in op vier focusgebieden: onderwijs, economie, duurzaamheid en integratie. Deze onderwerpen komen onder andere aan bod tijdens de zogenaamde “study tours” naar de deelnemende steden die aan de hand van thema’s georganiseerd worden.

Bij het TCN zijn vijftientig steden uit de VS en Europa aangesloten, waaronder Rotterdam voor Nederland. De afgevaardigden uit deze steden komen regelmatig bijeen om informatie uit te wisselen over vernieuwende projecten, *best practices*, en gedeelde zorgen. Rotterdam heeft een voortrekkersrol in het TCN, waarbij de stad zich vooral richt op het thema economie.²⁶² Het TCN organiseert momenteel vooral study tours op het gebied van stadsontwikkeling.

In de toekomst zou Rotterdam binnen het TCN kunnen aansturen op een grotere focus op diversiteit. Steden als Chicago en New York zouden bij uitstek geschikt zijn als gaststeden voor een study tour over migratie en integratie. De VS en Nederland kennen weliswaar grote verschillen in het specifieke karakter van de migratie, maar de Amerikaanse houding ten opzichte van diversiteit zou een inspiratie kunnen zijn voor de Nederlandse grote steden.

Samenwerkende steden

Rotterdam

Zoals eerder in dit paper al werd aangestipt, is het concept van de zusterstedenverbanden is inmiddels ingehaald door projectgerichte samenwerkingsverbanden tussen steden. Alhoewel er nog verschillende zusterverbanden bestaan tussen Nederlandse en Amerikaanse steden, kent geen van deze steden nog een actieve samenwerking. Zo is Rotterdam officieel gekoppeld aan Baltimore (Maryland), maar werkt de stad in de praktijk vooral samen met Chicago en

²⁶¹ The German Marshall Fund of the United States: About GMF, 13 mei 2010, <http://www.gmfus.org/about/index.cfm>.

²⁶² Gesprek met Julia Grimbilas, Gemeente Rotterdam, 11 mei 2010.

New York. Ook deze samenwerkingsverbanden kenmerken zich door een projectmatige aanpak. Deze projecten hebben over het algemeen een economische basis. De gemeente Rotterdam haalt bijvoorbeeld Amerikaanse bedrijven naar Nederland, en bemiddelt tussen Nederlandse en Amerikaanse bedrijven.²⁶³

Sinds kort richt Rotterdam haar pijlen ook op diversiteit in een samenwerking met Chicago. Zo bemiddelde de gemeente in het contact tussen de Rotterdamse organisatie Spior (Stichting Platform Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond) en het in Chicago gevestigde Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC). Beide organisaties richten zich op antidiscriminatie en het op gang brengen van een interculturele dialoog. In het kader van deze samenwerking organiseerde het IFYC vorig jaar een dialoogtraining voor jongeren van diverse religieuze achtergronden.²⁶⁴

De gemeente Rotterdam ziet in het stimuleren van diversiteit een belangrijke versterking van de economische positie van de stad. Naast het contact met de voorgenoemde Amerikaanse steden heeft Rotterdam ook actieve betrekkingen met Duitsland, Brazilië, Rusland, India, China, Turkije en het Verenigd Koninkrijk.²⁶⁵

Amsterdam

Dat het concept van zustersteden achterhaald is, wordt duidelijk aan de hand van het voorbeeld van de band tussen de steden Amsterdam en New York City (NYC). Tot 2006 had NYC via haar Sister City Program een zusterverbond met tientallen steden, waarvan Amsterdam er één was. In 2006 werd het zusterprogramma van NYC hervormd en kreeg het de naam New York City Global Partners mee.²⁶⁶ Binnen dit programma behoudt NYC nog steeds een speciale band met tien steden, waar Amsterdam niet meer bij hoort.

Dat dit echter geen negatieve gevolgen voor de band tussen beide landen heeft gehad, bleek onder andere in 2009, toen het 400-jarig bestaan van de vriendschappelijke verhouding tussen de Verenigde Staten en Nederland een jaar lang gevierd werd. In dit jaar, waarin het thema “Holland on the Hudson” centraal stond, werden ruim honderd evenementen georganiseerd in zowel de VS als in Nederland.

²⁶³ Idem.

²⁶⁴ SPIOR, “Dialoogtraining voor jongeren,” http://www.spior.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=219:dialoogtraining-voor-jongeren&catid=61:actueel&Itemid=56, 11 mei 2010.

²⁶⁵ Gesprek met Jula Grimbilas, Gemeente Rotterdam, 11 mei 2010.

²⁶⁶ New York City, “New York City Global Partners,” <http://www.nyc.gov/html/unccp/scp/html/sc/main.shtml>, 12 mei 2010.

Ook werd duidelijk dat Amsterdam en NYC nog steeds een bijzondere relatie hebben, aangezien de burgermeesters van beide steden het jaar mochten openen.²⁶⁷

De steden onderhouden echter momenteel verder geen actieve samenwerking. De stad Amsterdam richt zich voornamelijk op de herkomstlanden van haar migranten (Suriname, Ghana, Turkije, Marokko en de Antillen) en op steden in de nieuwe toetredingslanden van de Europese Unie (Boedapest en Riga). Het gaat hierbij altijd om een “uitwisseling van ambtelijke kennis en expertise, die met de buitenlandse partners wordt gedeeld, zodat ook de kennis binnen de eigen gemeentelijke organisatie wordt verhoogd.”²⁶⁸

Het laatste officiële werkbezoek van de gemeente Amsterdam aan de Verenigde Staten was in 2006, toen de toenmalige wethouder Aboutaleb in het kader van het International Visitor Leadership Program een bezoek bracht aan verschillende Amerikaanse steden. Bij de bezoeken stonden de thema’s van migratie en diversiteit centraal. Wethouder Aboutaleb bezocht onder andere het Pew Hispanic Center en het Council on American-Islamic Relations in Washington, D.C., ontving briefings over moslimintegratie en terrorismebestrijding, en bezocht diversiteitprogramma’s in Los Angeles, El Paso en New Orleans.²⁶⁹

De stad Amsterdam zou baat kunnen hebben bij een nauwere samenwerking met de door Aboutaleb bezochte steden. De Amerikaanse diversiteitprogramma’s kunnen een inspiratie bieden voor het Nederlandse integratiedebat, met name voor een etnisch diverse stad als Amsterdam.

Den Haag

Den Haag is de internationale stad van vrede en recht, en wil het voortouw nemen op het gebied van *city diplomacy*. Net als Rotterdam ziet Den Haag internationale samenwerking als een belangrijke motor voor de economie. Als juridische VN-stad heeft Den Haag banden met de politieke VN-stad New York City, en daarnaast werkt

²⁶⁷ NY400, “Recap of NY400 Celebration,” <http://www.ny400.org/history/recap-of-ny400-celebration>, 2 mei 2010.

²⁶⁸ Gemeente Amsterdam, “Internationaal beleid,” <http://www.amsterdam.nl/internationaal/>, 10 mei 2010.

²⁶⁹ Meridian International Center, “Mr. Aboutaleb – Itinerary,” <http://www.amsterdam.nl/aspx/download.aspx?nocache=true&file=/contents/pages/155872/itineraryus/aboutaleb.pdf>, 13 mei 2010.

Den Haag samen met Atlanta. De stad onderhoudt nauwe banden met expatverenigingen, het bedrijfsleven en vrijwilligersorganisaties.²⁷⁰

Op het gebied van diversiteit zet Den Haag voornamelijk in op de herkomstlanden Suriname, Marokko, Turkije en de Antillen. Ook voor Den Haag geldt dat een structurele samenwerking met grote steden in de VS zou kunnen bijdragen aan de integratie in eigen stad. Den Haag heeft op dit gebied al wel een samenwerking met de stad Atlanta. Zo sprak wethouder Huffnagel op uitnodiging van het Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta tijdens de viering van de Martin Luther King Day op 18 januari 2010.²⁷¹ Daarnaast wordt er gesproken over de oprichting van een Martin Luther King Centrum in Den Haag.²⁷²

Utrecht

Ook de stad Utrecht kent een actief internationaal beleid. De stad profileert zich als stad van kennis en cultuur, en diversiteit is daar een belangrijk onderdeel van. Momenteel zet Utrecht in op een meertaligheid programma, en de stad heeft nauwe contacten met de herkomstlanden van de grootste groepen migranten. Hierbij richten men zich vooral op Marokko en Turkije.²⁷³ Utrecht heeft geen actief samenwerkingsverband met Amerikaanse steden.

Stedennetwerken binnen de Verenigde Staten

The National League of Cities (NLC)

The National League of Cities werd in 1924 opgericht als een overkoepelende organisatie van de municipale organisaties van tien staten, en is daarmee het oudste stedennetwerk van de Verenigde Staten. Het is tevens het grootste netwerk – sinds de oprichting hebben meer dan 19.000 steden uit alle Amerikaanse staten, en van alle grootten zich aangesloten. De missie van de organisatie is het “versterken en

²⁷⁰ Gemeente Den Haag, “Verleiden en verbinden,” http://www.vng.nl/Praktijkvoorbeelden/EUI/2009/Den%20Haag_nota_verleiden_en_verbinden_2009.pdf, 12 mei 2010.

²⁷¹ Gemeente Den Haag, “Wethouder Huffnagel spreekt tijdens Martin Luther King Day in Atlanta,” <http://denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/actueel/to/Wethouder-Huffnagel-spreekt-tijdens-Martin-Luther-King-Day-in-Atlanta.htm?channel=pdf>, 11 mei 2010.

²⁷² Gemeente Den Haag, “Gemeente Den Haag en Dr. Martin Luther King Center ondertekenen Joint Declaration of Intent,” <http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/to/Gemeente-Den-Haag-en-Dr.-Martin-Luther-King-Center-ondertekenen-Joint-Declaration-of-Intent.htm>, 11 mei 2010.

²⁷³ Gemeente Utrecht, “Meertaligheid,” <http://www.utrecht.nl/smartsite.dws?id=323061>. <http://www.utrecht.nl/smartsite.dws?id=172354>, 10 mei 2010.

promoten van steden als centra van mogelijkheden.”²⁷⁴ De organisatie bewerkstelligt dit onder andere door fulltime en met één stem te lobbyen in Washington, D.C. Ook promoot NCL steden door een “agressieve mediacampagne” die op een positieve manier de aandacht vraagt voor individuele steden. Door deze vorm van city branding worden de steden op de kaart gezet op een landelijk niveau.

NLC helpt haar leden ook op inhoudelijk niveau: de organisatie maakt gebruik van trainingprogramma’s waarin leiders bijgeschoold kunnen worden. Verder worden steden die opvallen door *best practices* of bijzondere initiatieven beloond met speciale titels en *awards*. NLC is ook actief op staatsniveau: het onderhoudt contacten met de *state leagues* van staten en werkt samen om als lokale overheden sterker te staan tegenover de landelijke overheid. Tot slot biedt het NLC een platform voor leiders om de opgedane kennis uit te wisselen met hun collegae, en te werken aan een gedeelde toekomstvisie.²⁷⁵

Hoewel er geen officieel samenwerkingsverband bestaat tussen VNG International en NLC, geeft VNG in haar werkplan wel aan dat NLC een belangrijke overlegpartner is.²⁷⁶ Beide organisaties geven echter aan dat het thema diversiteit op dit moment geen prioriteit voor hen heeft.

State Leagues

Bijna iedere Amerikaanse staat heeft een organisatie die gemeenten in de staat met elkaar in verbinding stelt. Deze zogenaamde state leagues of municipalities organiseren bijvoorbeeld trainingen en workshops voor lokale leiders, en geven informatie over de wetgeving van de staat en landelijke overheid.²⁷⁷ Ook kunnen zij bijvoorbeeld groepskortingen bieden op verzekeringen.²⁷⁸ De state leagues bieden ook een mogelijkheid voor steden om zich te verenigen in zogenaamde *grassroots* acties tegen de staatsoverheden. De steden kunnen samen lobbyen op staatsniveau, en

²⁷⁴ The National League of Cities, “About NLC,” http://www.nlc.org/inside_nlc/aboutncl.aspx, 12 mei 2010.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ City Mayors Archive, “City Mayors Promotes Democratic Local Governments Worldwide,” <http://www.citymayors.com/features/iula.html>, 8 mei 2010.

²⁷⁷ New Jersey State League of Municipalities, “What is the League?” <http://www.njslom.org/njlabout.html>, 8 mei 2010.

²⁷⁸ Pennsylvania State League of Municipalities, “Mission Statement,” http://www.plcm.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={51C09E63-9073-4067-A59D-A16AF34F4D11}&DE={30BA8A3B-7E6D-4006-9816-1AE84DC5132E}, 6 mei 2010.

versterken daarmee hun positie. Over het algemeen is diversiteit geen speerpunt in de state leagues.

3. Digitale diplomatie

a. De digitale revolutie: A World of Mouth

De introductie van het internet heeft de manier waarop we communiceren fundamenteel veranderd. De technologie verandert razendsnel: waar vijftien jaar geleden de fax nog het snelste communicatiemiddel was, is e-mail inmiddels ingehaald door sociale media als Facebook, LinkedIn en Twitter. Recente onderzoeken wijzen uit dat het bezoeken van sociale netwerksites de meest populaire activiteit op internet is. Mensen maken steeds minder gebruik van conventionele media om het nieuws te volgen, en vertrouwen in plaats daarvan op hun sociale netwerk.²⁷⁹

De nieuwe technologie brengt niet alleen nieuwe mogelijkheden, maar ook nieuwe uitdagingen. Overheden moeten alert zijn op de veiligheid van persoonlijke gegevens van burgers, maar ook op potentieel gevaarlijke communicatie, zoals globale terroristennetwerken. Het internet biedt ongekende kansen voor grensoverschrijdend contact tussen mensen, maar ook voor polarisatie. Daarnaast vraagt de veranderende manier van communiceren ook om een andere, interactievere vorm van publieke diplomatie. Wilson P. Dizard noemt de introductie van digitale diplomatie dan ook de belangrijkste innovatie op het gebied van diplomatie sinds de vijftiende eeuw, toen permanente ambassadeurs voor het eerst werden uitgewisseld door de Europese koningshuizen.²⁸⁰ Het gebruik van nieuwe technologie bij publieke diplomatie is niet alleen wenselijk, maar noodzakelijk.

Digitale diplomatie is ook het middel bij uitstek om diversiteit in een samenleving te bevorderen. Het internet overschrijdt grenzen van landen, geloof, taal, ras en etniciteit. Bij een juiste inzet van digitale middelen kunnen mensen van alle achtergronden bijeengebracht worden. In virtuele 3D omgevingen zoals Second Life bestaan nu al diverse burgerinitiatieven op het gebied van diversiteit; zo is het mogelijk om een digitale moskee te bezoeken, een museum over joodse geschiedenis binnen te gaan, en te praten met mensen van iedere etnische achtergrond. Het internet opent deuren die in de “echte” wereld gesloten blijven.

²⁷⁹ Bill Tancer, *Click: What Millions of People are Doing Online and Why it Matters*, (New York: Hyperion, 2008).

²⁸⁰ Wilson Dizard Jr., *Digital Diplomacy: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Information Age*, (Westport: Praeger, 2001), 1.

b. De Nederlandse overheid

De Nederlandse overheid is bewust van de kansen van digitale diplomatie, en zet dan ook in op een beter gebruik van het internet in het contact met de burger. Zo publiceerde het Ministerie van Algemene Zaken vorig jaar “Ondertussen...Online,” een boekje over de manier waarop de rijksoverheid kan inspelen op het veranderende medialandschap. Ook verscheen onlangs “Ambtenaar 2.0,” een publicatie die gekoppeld werd aan een bijbehorende website, ambtenaar20.nl. Deze publicatie richt zich op de communicatie tussen ambtenaar en burger, en hoe deze verandert en kan veranderen onder invloed van het internet.

In de toekomst zou de overheid een relatie met de burger kunnen opbouwen die nog meer gericht is op interactie en openheid. Ook zou men kunnen samenwerken met bestaande digitale burgerinitiatieven, onder andere op het gebied van diversiteit. De rest van dit hoofdstuk zal onderzoeken hoe digitale diplomatie kan worden ingezet om de aandacht te vragen voor diversiteit, en om integratie te bevorderen in de maatschappij.

c. Burgerinitiatieven

De digitale revolutie heeft een stroom aan burgerinitiatieven op gang gebracht. Blogs, Twitter, Facebook groepen, digitale petitie's en sites als MoveOn.org en Avaaz.org hebben een nieuwe betekenis gegeven aan de definitie van de *civil society* (burgermaatschappij). Deze is niet langer gebonden aan staatsgrenzen, maar is door de toenemende globalisering steeds meer een grensoverschrijdend fenomeen, en participatie in de democratie is toegankelijker dan ooit. Er bestaan verschillende initiatieven op het gebied van diversiteit, zoals groepen op sociale netwerksites, maar bijvoorbeeld ook informatieve websites over etnische groepen.

d. De VS: overheid en think-tanks

De Amerikaanse overheid is uitermate actief op het internet. Het is onmogelijk om alle initiatieven te bespreken, maar hier volgen enkele voorbeelden van digitale diplomatie.

Understanding Islam Through Virtual Worlds

De Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, een think-tank in New York, bood vorig jaar het rapport “Digital Diplomacy: Understanding Islam Through Virtual Worlds” aan aan president Obama. Dit rapport onderzoekt de mogelijkheden van de

virtuele 3D omgeving Second Life, waarin mensen zich een digitale identiteit kunnen aanmeten en virtuele omgevingen kunnen creëren. Alhoewel de auteurs van het rapport niet verwachten dat Second Life op zichzelf een significante verandering zal brengen in de manier waarop radicale moslims denken, zien zij dergelijke virtuele omgevingen wel als een kans om de interactie te stimuleren met moslims over de hele wereld.²⁸¹ Ook geeft de organisatie het advies om culturele diplomatie via het internet uit te breiden.

Het rapport stipt tevens de gevaren van de nieuwe sociale media aan. Facebook geeft niet alleen de kans aan mensen om zich te verenigen in groepen die diversiteit vieren, maar geeft ook de gelegenheid om in de relatieve veiligheid van de anonimiteit gevoelens van racisme te uiten.²⁸² Overheden moeten hierop alert zijn, en zouden door middel van een betere informatievoorziening en interactie met de burger een tegengewicht kunnen bieden aan dergelijke uitingen.

De website van het State Department

In 2008 verscheen een rapport van de Heritage Foundation, “Reforming U.S. Public Diplomacy for the 21st Century,” waarin werd aangegeven dat het State Department te langzaam was geweest bij het toepassen van nieuwe communicatietechnieken.²⁸³

De regering van Obama heeft hierin verandering gebracht, en heeft na een succesvolle inzet van digitale kanalen bij de presidentsverkiezingen alle officiële websites van de regering in een nieuw jasje gegoten. De website van het State Department is hiervan een goed voorbeeld. Naast een uitgebreide digitale informatievoorziening, is de website een portal voor de nieuwe sociale media. Het is mogelijk om het State Department te volgen via Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, RSS en blogs. Dit illustreert de filosofie van digitale diplomatie: het nieuws komt naar de burger toe, die door het interactieve karakter van deze kanalen ook direct een terugkoppeling kan geven aan de overheid.

De website van het Amerikaanse State Department kan dienen als een voorbeeld voor de Nederlandse landelijke overheid, maar ook voor lokale overheden.

²⁸¹ Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, “Understanding Islam Through Virtual Worlds”, 8, via http://www.dancinginkproductions.com/uploads/pdfs/ui/DIP_understandingislam_policyrec_2009.pdf.

²⁸² Ibid., 12.

²⁸³ The Heritage Foundation, “Reforming U.S. Public Diplomacy for the 21st Century,” 2008, via <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2008/11/Reforming-US-Public-Diplomacy-for-the-21st-Century>.

Informatie is niet langer een eenrichtingsweg, maar burgers verwachten steeds meer een stem te hebben in hun democratie. Zo kan er een directer contact ontstaan tussen overheden en burgers, wat een bijdrage kan leveren aan het bevorderen van diversiteit in de samenleving. Het internet overstijgt grenzen van etnische en religieuze achtergrond, en verlaagt de drempel voor contact, zowel tussen overheden en burgers, als tussen de burgers onderling.

Internet als speerpunt in het buitenlandse beleid

De Amerikaanse overheid ziet het vrije gebruik van het internet als een verlenging van de recht op vrije meningsuiting. Hillary Clinton profileert zich als een voorvechter van dit recht, wat recent bleek toen ze bij China aandrong op een stop op censuur van de Chinese versie van Google. Het internet biedt nieuwe kanalen voor burgers van ondemocratische landen om hun stem te laten horen, en deel te nemen aan de globale economie. Zo gebruikten Iraanse burgers in januari van dit jaar voornamelijk Twitter om een demonstratie te organiseren tegen de Iraanse overheid. Hierbij bleek ook dat de Amerikaanse overheid actief inzet op digitale diplomatie; tijdens de Iraanse demonstratie was een onderhoud van Twitter gepland, maar een medewerker van het Amerikaanse State Department bedong een uitstel van deze onderhoudswerkzaamheden zodat de site in de lucht zou blijven.²⁸⁴ Daarnaast betaalde het State Department 24 miljoen SMSjes van het Pakistaanse sociale netwerk Humari Awaz (“Onze Stem”), wat bijdraagt aan een interactie tussen Pakistaanse burgers en de Amerikaanse overheid. Door het uitwisselen van *best practices* op het gebied van digitale diplomatie, kunnen Nederland en de VS van elkaar leren, en kunnen de technieken van Public Diplomacy 2.0 worden ingezet voor een veiligere en diversere wereld.

²⁸⁴ Richard Luger, “Twitter vs Terror,” *Foreign Policy*, 6 januari 2010, via http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/01/06/twitter_vs_terror.

4. Citizen Diplomacy

a. Burgers en diplomatie: “One handshake at a time”

De staat als primaire machthebber lijkt voorgoed verleden tijd. Niet enkel lokale overheden winnen aan invloed binnen de internationale betrekkingen, ook spelers uit de *civil society* leggen in de laatste decennia aanzienlijk wat gewicht in de schaal. Het fenomeen *citizen diplomacy* komt voort uit de gedachte dat binnen een democratie elk individu het recht en de verantwoordelijkheid heeft om vorm te geven aan het buitenlands beleid van zijn of haar land. De macht van het individu als katalysator van verandering is bij uitstek één van de fundamentele culturele waarden van de Verenigde Staten en het is dus niet verwonderlijk dat de wortels van *citizen diplomacy* kunnen worden herleid naar Washington waar president Dwight Eisenhower op 11 september 1956 de *White House Summit on Citizen Diplomacy* belegde.²⁸⁵ De top had als doel de bewustwording te vergroten voor het feit dat het bewaren van de wereldvrede niet alleen belangrijk was voor staten onderling, maar dat het een zaak was die iedereen aanging, dus ook burgers. Uitwisselingsprogramma's als People to People International en het eerder genoemde Sister Cities International kwamen voort uit deze historische ontmoeting, maar sinds 1956 is er veel meer gebeurd op het gebied van *citizen diplomacy*.

Burgerdiplomaten worden gezien als onofficiële ambassadeurs die participeren in uitwisselingsprogramma's of als gastheer fungeren voor bezoekers in hun eigen land. Door de interactie tussen burgers ontstaat een web van wereldwijde connecties dat later gebruikt kan worden als context voor officiële onderhandelingen en gesprekken. Omdat veel van de bestaande Amerikaanse uitwisselingsprogramma's worden gefinancierd en ondersteund door de Amerikaanse regering wordt *citizen diplomacy* in de VS voornamelijk gezien als een essentieel component van de Amerikaanse publieksdiplomatie.²⁸⁶

Naast de traditionele *people-to-people* uitwisselingsprogramma's die deel uitmaken van het Amerikaans buitenlands beleid zijn er ook genoeg onafhankelijke

²⁸⁵Council of American Ambassadors, “A Half Century of Citizen Diplomacy: A Unique Public-Private Sector Partnership,” *The Ambassadors Review*, Fall 2009, <http://www.americanambassadors.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Publications.article&articleid=189>.

²⁸⁶ Sherry Mueller, “The Nexus of Public and Citizen Diplomacy” in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, Nany Snow and Philip M. Taylor eds., (New York: Routledge, 2009), 102.

non-profit organisaties en *grassroots* burgerinitiatieven die met hun projecten proberen bij te dragen aan een stabielere wereld. Zij oefenen via de publieke opinie steeds meer invloed uit op de politieke besluitvormingsprocessen van staten en internationale organisaties.²⁸⁷

b. Verenigde Staten: Uitwisselingsprogramma's

In de Verenigde Staten ligt de focus van *citizen diplomacy* voornamelijk op uitwisselingsprogramma's met een cultureel en/of educatief element. Deze programma's hebben tot doel een positief beeld van Amerikaanse waarden en cultuur neer te zetten bij de deelnemers, die op hun beurt dit positieve beeld in het thuisland verspreiden. Op het gebied van culturele en educatieve uitwisselingen is het Fulbright programma, opgericht na de Tweede Wereldoorlog, waarschijnlijk het meest bekende en traditionele voorbeeld van een initiatief dat zich op het terrein van *citizen diplomacy* begeeft. Het Fulbright programma stimuleert al tientallen jaren een goede verstandhouding tussen Amerikanen en mensen van over de hele wereld door het verstrekken van beurzen en het investeren in educatieve projecten. Het uiteindelijke doel, een positief beeld over de VS stimuleren in het buitenland, werpt aantoonbaar zijn vruchten af. Deelnemers menen na hun 'Amerikaanse ervaring' een beter begrip te hebben van Amerika en de Amerikaanse cultuur en rapporteren hier na afloop over in hun thuisland, het zij via de media of via andere culturele activiteiten.²⁸⁸

Ook het prestigieuze International Leadership Visitors Program behoort tot één van de uitwisselingsprogramma's die worden gesteund door de Amerikaanse overheid. Het programma werd opgericht in 1940 en heeft als doelgroep jonge, veelbelovende leiders van buiten de VS die na afloop van het programma in het thuisland de Amerikaanse maatschappelijke boodschap willen verspreiden.²⁸⁹

c. Nederland en de EU : Uitwisselingsprogramma's

Waar de Verenigde Staten *citizen diplomacy* hoofdzakelijk inzetten als deel van hun publieksdiplomatie, wordt hier in Europa minder gebruik van gemaakt. Toch heeft de Europese Unie ook een eigen bezoekersprogramma, namelijk het European Union

²⁸⁷ Idem.

²⁸⁸ Fulbright Association: History of the Fulbright Association, 12 May 2010, http://www.fulbrightalumni.org/olc/pub/FBA/cpages/about_us/history.jsp

²⁸⁹ U.S. Department of State: International Visitor Leadership Program, 12 May 2010, <http://exchanges.state.gov/ivlp/ivlp.html>

Visitors Program. Via het EUVP krijgen jonge, ambitieuze toekomstige leiders van buiten de unie en met name afkomstig uit de VS, de kans om kennis te maken met Europa. Het programma wordt bestuurd en gefinancierd door het Europese Parlement en de Europese Commissie en werd in het leven geroepen in 1974.²⁹⁰

Het Nederlandse ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken heeft eveneens een bezoekersprogramma. Het Dutch Visitors Program heeft een economisch uitgangspunt en werd opgezet in 2009. Ook Nederland wil met dit programma veelbelovende potentiële leiders aantrekken en kennis laten maken met Nederland, maar mikt op *high-potentials* uit economisch opkomende landen als Brazilië, China, de Golfstaten, India en Turkije.²⁹¹

d. Burgerinitiatieven

In zowel de Verenigde Staten als Europa laten burgers van zich horen via talloze NGO's, interest groups, *grassroots* projecten en andere *civil society* initiatieven. In Nederland en bij Nederlandse gemeenten staat het thema actief burgerschap hoog op de agenda. Burgers signaleren de problemen die de overheid over het hoofd ziet of (te) laat opmerkt. Voor zowel centrale als lokale overheden is het dus van groot belang op de hoogte te blijven van wat zich binnen de *civil society* afspeelt.

De VS en de EU dienen niet enkel binnen hun eigen grenzen opmerkzaam te blijven voor signalen uit de samenleving, maar zouden onderling de banden met hun respectievelijke civil societies moeten aanhalen. Een goed voorbeeld van een dergelijk initiatief is het door de EU opgezette programma Transatlantic Civil Society Dialogues EU-USA, bedoeld om contacten tussen Europa en de VS te versterken op people-to-people niveau.²⁹² Het opzetten van meerdere soortgelijke projecten zou gunstig kunnen zijn voor zowel de publieksdiplomatie van de Verenigde Staten als de Europese Unie. Met name de EU zou van dit soort initiatieven kunnen profiteren, omdat het hiermee het Europese burgerschap concreter vorm zou kunnen geven.

²⁹⁰ European Union Delegation to the United States of America: European Union Visitors Program, 29 March 2010,

http://www.eurunion.org/eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2928&Itemid=9

²⁹¹ Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Dutch Visitors Program, 12 May 2010.

http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/Producten_en_Diensten/Economische_dienstverlening/Dutch_Visitors_Program

²⁹² European Commission External Relations: Transatlantic Civil Society Dialogues EU-USA, 7 May 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/us/grants/index_en.htm

5. Hoe verder?

Inmiddels is het duidelijk dat het monopolie van de diplomatie niet meer bij soevereine staten ligt. De grote verscheidenheid aan nieuwe spelers op het politieke veld zorgen ervoor dat een nieuwe, frisse wind waait door de internationale betrekkingen. Nieuwe vormen van diplomatie dienen zich aan en bieden mogelijkheden voor het vergroten van de reikwijdte van het centrale buitenlandse beleid. Om dit in de komende tien jaar te kunnen bewerkstelligen is het noodzakelijk een efficiëntere samenwerking aan te gaan met *non-state actors*.

Door in de toekomst in te zetten op een verbetering van deze samenwerking, het zij met lokale overheden of met burgerinitiatieven, kan het buitenlands beleid eenduidiger naar buiten worden gebracht in de rest van de wereld. Er moet bewustwording komen voor het feit dat succesvol internationaal beleid van gemeenten positief is voor Nederland als geheel en dat door de krachten te bundelen de effectiviteit van het landelijke beleid kan worden vergroot.

Niet enkel een verbetering van de samenwerking met Nederlandse *non-state actors* is in de toekomst zeer gewenst, een samenwerking op Europees en Trans-Atlantisch niveau zou een gunstig effect kunnen hebben op de onderlinge verhoudingen. Vanuit het perspectief van publieksdiplomatie zijn de *citizen diplomacy* uitwisselingsprogramma's die de Verenigde Staten al tientallen jaren met succes organiseert een voorbeeld van hoe Nederland een positief imago neer zou kunnen zetten in het buitenland.

De nieuwe vormen van diplomatie die zijn ontstaan naast de traditionele interstatelijke diplomatie hebben gezorgd voor een democratisering van de politiek. Bepaalde groepen in de samenleving hebben toegang gekregen tot besluitvormingsprocessen waar zij voorheen geen invloed op uit konden oefenen. Het gebruik van interactieve media als diplomatiek instrument kan bijdragen aan een betere zichtbaarheid en bereikbaarheid van de overheid.

Concluderend, zou Nederland in moeten zetten op een *inclusive* beleid dat zowel een nauwe samenwerking met lokale overheden als burgerinitiatieven nastreeft. De Verenigde Staten is een stuk verder op het gebied van diversiteitprojecten en zou op sommige punten als voorbeeld kunnen dienen voor Nederland. Beter nog, zou een wederzijdse uitwisseling van *best-practices* zijn, iets waar de gemeente Rotterdam op dit moment aan werkt met de stad Chicago. Het globaliseringproces heeft de traditionele diplomatie naar de achtergrond gedrukt. Het

is zaak dat Nederland zo snel mogelijk inspeelt op deze omslag door met aandacht te kijken naar de nieuwe mogelijkheden die zich op dit moment binnen de diplomatie zijn ontstaan en hier op in te spelen.

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