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By Tanya Jones

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FROM THE EDITOR

The articles in this issue of *The Confluence* are particularly timely. Three of them address racial heritage, suggesting ways that heritage shapes our contemporary region.

Two of the essays examine the racially motivated riot in East St. Louis in 1917, which was commemorated this past summer. Samanthé Bachelier’s fine scholarship examines the ways it was described, by everyone from *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reporter and eyewitness Carlos Hurd (who, incidentally, also wrote the first eyewitness account of the sinking of the *Titanic*, since he was aboard the *Carpathian*, the ship that rescued survivors) to people like W.E.B. DuBois and coverage in *The Crisis*, published by the NAACP. In a similar vein, Lou Robinson takes a fascinating look at the subtleties of descriptions of women as an effort to discredit them, consciously or not. The use of descriptions of attire were coded messages, Robinson asserts, that shaped people’s responses to them. We’ve heard a great deal about this in our own lives, of course, regarding the “uniforms” of white nationalists in the aftermath of the Charlottesville protests.



But the roots run deeper. Kenneth Winn introduces us to a compelling account of the notable and nationally prominent abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson and his visit to St. Louis. Admittedly, visiting the city and a slave dealer was not the purpose of his trip—he was traveling to Kansas in 1856, with a stopover in St. Louis—but it is nonetheless a fascinating aspect of his journey and the record. Seeing the experience of enslaved people being sold through the eyes of a New England abolitionist gives us a fresh view of the debate over the so-called “peculiar institution” as the cause of the Civil War.

We are also pleased to be publishing the work of the recipient of the annual Morrow Prize, presented by the Missouri Conference on History. This prize is granted to the best student paper on a Missouri topic presented at its annual gathering in March. Student work such as this paper by Tanya Jones can offer new insights and interpretations. A committee of scholars select the paper. In full disclosure, I don’t serve on that committee, but I’m proud to say that Ms. Jones is a graduate of Lindenwood; this is her senior seminar paper. It’s interesting and very good. We’re proud of her.

By the way, a related note: Back in spring 2011, we published a special issue of *The Confluence* commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. That issue included an article by Patrick Burkhardt examining the efforts to erect a Confederate monument in St. Louis—the one taken down this past summer. You can read it on our website; the title is “The Lost Cause Ideology and Civil War Memory at the Semicentennial: A Look at the Confederate Monument in St. Louis.”

Jeffrey Smith, PhD
Editor



The Impact of Jewish American Identity and Assimilation in the Reform Movement

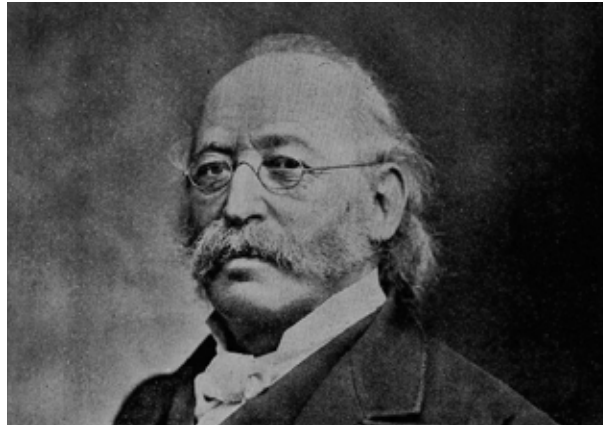
Solomon Sonneschein (1839–1908) was a controversial rabbi in St. Louis; his final rabbinate was in Des Moines, Iowa.
(Image: Modern View, 25th Anniversary Deluxe Edition (1925))

BY TANYA JONES



In 1886, the St. Louis Jewish community was split at its core. Shaare Emeth, the only Reform temple in the area, was divided between those who stayed with the old congregation and those who split to form Temple Israel. This divide was facilitated largely by Solomon H. Sonneschein, who was Shaare Emeth's acting rabbi from 1869 until 1886, when he became the new rabbi of Temple Israel.¹ Throughout his time in St. Louis, he became the clear leader of Reform in the area, but he was also active in Reform as it was emerging nationally. Despite the contentious nature of some of his ideas, the movement in St. Louis remained mostly peaceful, with Sonneschein having popular support from congregants and the board through the 1870s. His efforts transformed Shaare Emeth into the most prosperous temple in the Midwest.² Yet, Sonneschein broke away from Shaare Emeth in a very public scandal, after he had poured so much into creating a new Reform congregation. Publicized episodes of his private behavior—including excessive drinking habits and sexual liaisons—created tension between Sonneschein and the Shaare Emeth board members.³ Sonneschein's increasingly radical attitude also prompted a congregational split. Rather than seek reforms that remained well within the confines of the Jewish faith, as had his earlier reforms, Sonneschein proposed reforms in the 1880s that often conflated Judaism and Christianity. Ensuing tensions eventually divided the temple and the Reform movement in St. Louis. Far from being exclusive to St. Louis, division over assimilation would also divide Reform at a national level. The tensions surrounding Americanization that divided the Reform movement in St. Louis offer a window into the division that appeared throughout Reform Judaism as it developed in America.

The split between Shaare Emeth and Temple Israel was not an isolated event but part of a larger historical development. Judaism was finding its niche in American society amidst rapid social and organizational change in the Jewish communities across America. Baltimore's Har Sinai, New York's Emanu-El, Albany's Anshe Emeth, Chicago's Sinai, even Cincinnati's K.K. B'nai Yeshurun (which was spiritually headed by national Reform leader Isaac Mayer Wise) all experienced temple splits between 1842 and 1855.⁴ While Sonneschein's ideological modifications to Judaism were perhaps the most extreme examples of Reform, he was certainly not the only radical Reformer in St. Louis or America.



Trained in Prague, Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) moved to the United States in 1846, and became rabbi in Albany, New York. He introduced a number of innovations and reforms, including family pews in the synagogue and counting women in forming a religious quorum. He was instrumental in forming the Hebrew Union College to train rabbis in 1875. (Image: *The History of the K. K. Bene Yeshurun, of Cincinnati, Ohio, from the Date of Its Organization*, Published by Bloch Printing Co., 1892)

Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, there was a great deal of emigration, both Jewish and non-Jewish, from Germany. Reform-minded rabbis found America's laissez-faire attitude toward the establishment of new religious institutions to be liberating from the stifling German laws that were more controlling of religious change.⁵ As American Reform Judaism developed its institutions and doctrines and established more temple associations in the wake of a rapidly increasing Jewish population with more spiritual leadership, Jews in America found themselves collectively deciding what Reform in America would look like, what it meant to be both Jewish and American, and how practice within temples would reflect this newly emerging Jewish-American identity. Defining a "Jewish-American" could entail various levels of assimilation. The task of a definition became even more difficult considering that many Reformed Jews were assimilated in the non-religious parts of their lives, even if they sporadically attended a temple. Nationally, various organizations sprung up to try to fit Reform Judaism under one clear, concise definition. Ultimately, the need to define a Jewish-American identity and the questions surrounding what that identity meant in terms of religious practice and assimilation of temple life into broader American secular life brought about

(Left) Congregation Shaare Emeth, at the corner of Pine and 17th Street in St. Louis, as it looked when Sonneschein arrived. This stereograph view dates from the 1870s; stereographs like this were popular in middle-class parlors as a form of entertainment after the introduction of inexpensive viewers just before the Civil War. (Image: *Missouri History Museum*)



David Einhorn (1809–1879) stood at the other end of Reform from Isaac Mayer Wise. He came to the United States to become rabbi at the Har Sinai Congregation in Baltimore, the oldest Reform congregation in the United States. He was forced to flee to Philadelphia in 1861, when he delivered a sermon calling slavery a “deplorable farce” that ran counter to Jewish beliefs. He moved to New York in 1866 and became acknowledged as the leader of Reform Judaism in America until his death. (Image: American Jewish Archives)

division in the Reform movement both nationally and locally.

While the earliest Reform temple was established in Charleston in 1824, Reform Judaism emerged as a prominent religious and social movement in America around 1850. Although Reform was an international movement, in America it broadly sought modernity and to make the temple more adapted to its American home. Isaac Mayer Wise articulated this sentiment when he declared, “the Jew must be Americanized.”⁶ Rabbis throughout America, including Sonneschein, followed suit. American Jewish congregations, which organized separately before the Civil War, began to organize themselves at a national level because of the efforts of Wise and other Reform leaders. Nationally, this movement began in 1855 with the Cleveland Conference and continued with subsequent establishments such as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) in 1873. The UAHC was to act as a unified centralized body for all member congregations with particular emphasis on religious instruction.⁷ The Hebrew Union College, which was also Wise’s brainchild, was established in 1875 as the first organized rabbinical school in America to provide trained spiritual leadership for a growing Jewish population.⁸ Perhaps most important to Reform on a doctrinal level was the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform. This meeting between prominent Reform leaders set forth a series of resolutions meant to guide congregations. All of these organizations were an effort on the part of Reform leaders to come

to some measure of consensus on the direction and pace of the Reform movement.

As the movement began to organize nationally, division almost immediately appeared over the question of assimilation in America. On one side of the divide was Wise, who championed a more Americanized type of Judaism his entire career. On the other side of the divide was Rabbi David Einhorn of Baltimore’s Har Sinai. Einhorn was an elitist who believed in a uniquely Jewish identity for a uniquely Jewish mission and history.⁹ While he was ardent in some aspects of Reform, he was unwilling to modify elements of Judaism that he thought would facilitate the loss of a Jewish identity. For this reason he vehemently opposed mixed marriages, for example, calling them the “nail in the coffin of the small Jewish race.”¹⁰ Despite decades in America, Einhorn remained German at heart and was always somewhat ambivalent in his feelings toward America. While he enjoyed the religious liberty of America, he detested the seeming push of Christianity upon the Jews engaged in public life. He saw America as a place where showmanship trumped ideals, and he disdained what he saw as the ostentatious nature of wealthy Americans in an overtly capitalist system.¹¹ Einhorn eschewed Wise’s strategy of creating a uniquely American Reform movement and preferred to look to German Reform and culture for inspiration.¹² To sever Reform from its German origins, including the German language, Einhorn believed would spell catastrophe for Reform as a whole.¹³ This was in stark contrast to Sonneschein and Wise, who readily adopted English as one of the languages in which they preached. While Einhorn saw Americanization as dangerous to Judaism, Wise—and later Sonneschein in St. Louis—welcomed it as strengthening Judaism’s future.

After a failed attempt at unity in Cleveland in 1855 and amidst stiff competition between Wise’s prayer book *Minhag America* and Einhorn’s prayer book *Olat Tamid*, a meeting was called in Philadelphia in 1869 involving Einhorn, Wise, and rabbis who fell in either camp. Sonneschein, having only recently begun his career in St. Louis, was also there advocating for his friend and like-minded reformer Wise.¹⁴ Everyone at the meeting agreed on certain general elements of Reform, including anti-Zionist sentiments and the use of vernacular above the use of Hebrew. However, these agreements were more formal than anything else; both Einhorn and Wise had accepted them well before 1869. The cause of most of the division at the meeting was the rite of circumcision. Einhorn starkly adhered to the necessity of such a rite because “the acceptance of

proselytes [converts of mixed decent], through which Judaism acquires many impure elements, must be made more difficult and it is precisely circumcision which can form a barrier against the influx of such elements.”¹⁵ Wise, on the other hand, true to his accepting nature, believed Judaism should “open the gates” to create a more unified humanity.¹⁶ Although Wise’s vision of Reform would eventually become more prominent than Einhorn’s, the two never reconciled their differences. This debate over direction and assimilation was only one of many more to come, as questions of identity in America would prove to be equally as divisive within local temples as they were in national organizations.

While division concerning a uniquely Jewish-American identity was well underway nationally by 1855, St. Louis up to that point remained virtually unscathed by the question of assimilation because Jewish organized religious bodies headed by Jewish spiritual leaders were still new to the area. If the idea of a collective American Jewish identity was new to America nationally, then it was barely in its infancy in St. Louis. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the Jewish population in St. Louis practiced largely outside of temple life. Although the first documented Jewish immigrant settled in St. Louis in 1807, the first temple congregation in St. Louis, United Hebrew, was not established until thirty-four years later, in 1841.¹⁷ This was much later than many other industrialized cities. While Jewish organizations such as charities, fraternal orders, and cemetery societies allowed earlier Jewish immigrants to be active in their faith, the lack of temple organizations largely made it the responsibility of individuals and families to determine what it meant to be a Jew in America. This also meant that it was largely up to the individual family to decide what Jewish practice looked like outside of the well-defined Jewish communities of Europe.¹⁸

It was not until 1866, in the wake of heavy German immigration, when the first Reform temple, Shaare Emeth, would finally be established in St. Louis. The stated purpose of the new temple was to serve members of the two existing orthodox congregations, B’nai El and United Hebrew, as well as unaffiliated Jews.¹⁹ Born in Hungary and educated in Germany, Solomon H. Sonneschein came from New York to St. Louis in 1869, originally only to give a speech for the dedication of one of the buildings at Shaare Emeth. However, he clearly made an impression on the Reform population of St. Louis. The local press reported, “The Reverend Dr. Sonneschein delivered an elegant prayer and benediction, dedicating each particular part of the temple to its

particular function.”²⁰ Shortly thereafter, Sonneschein became the full-time rabbi. Sonneschein and Wise were personal friends as well as colleagues, and Sonneschein adhered to Wise’s vision of Reform in many ways. However, starting his career in St. Louis he was quite modest in his Reforms, yet by the time he left Shaare Emeth, he was in many ways more radical than Wise.

As Reform began in St. Louis, changes were already happening all over the country. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century with the Reform movement, the ascetic customs of external worship began to transform to look more like Protestant worship. This trend had begun by a more conservative Reformer, Issac Leeser, who in 1829 instituted sermons as a legitimate part of the Jewish service.²¹ By 1846, Wise had made preaching part of his weekly service.²² Earlier reforms also saw an increased emphasis on preaching in English as opposed to Hebrew or German.²³ The use of organs and music in worship appeared, as did choirs and congregational singing.²⁴ Service structure began



The United Hebrew Congregation building at 21st and Olive streets in St. Louis around 1880. United Hebrew was the oldest Jewish congregation in St. Louis. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

to shorten and change to make room for a longer sermon.²⁵ These reforms were meant to be engaging to both the immigrant and the native-born Jew. The architecture of the temple also began to change. The once very distinctive architecture of the synagogue began to look more in line with Christian styles of architecture.²⁶ These reforms also broke with

longstanding elements of Judaism that were rooted in tradition and theology. By 1865, family pews were introduced at the temple headed by Isaac Mayer Wise in Cincinnati to accommodate the less rigid attitudes toward gender, rather than the traditional practice of segregating men and women.²⁷ A year later Wise also began holding services on Friday evening to accommodate congregants who worked on the traditional Sabbath.²⁸

As Reform took a more solid footing in St. Louis in the late 1860s and throughout the 1870s, it did so along the same lines that Wise and other Reformers across the country had set. In 1870, during his first full year as acting rabbi at Shaare Emeth, Sonneschein proposed a committee to make a new Reformed prayer book with shortened services and attended a meeting in New York at which he would consider the possibility of prayer with uncovered heads.²⁹ Both were clear breaks from orthodoxy. That

Isaac Leeser (1806–1868) ranked among the most important Jewish thinkers of the nineteenth century in the United States. As part of his reform efforts, he published a Hebrew-English version of the Torah in 1845. (Image: Library of Congress)



same year he helped organize a religious school that would become successful as the congregation grew. Sonneschein's first few years as acting rabbi also were characterized by growth in the congregation itself. By 1870, Shaare Emeth, which originally only had 80 congregants, had grown rapidly to 140 members.³⁰ By 1875, the congregation numbered 200 members with 128 pupils in the religious school.³¹ It would seem by the temple's unprecedented growth in the early years of Reform in St. Louis that the Reform population was happy with the changes made and with their rabbi. Later actions on Sonneschein's part would bring Shaare Emeth into the broader St. Louis religious community as well. In 1879, he gave assistance to the Second Baptist Church and let it use the sanctuary to worship while its own church was being repaired from fire damage.³² Although it had always been the Sonneschein's practice to preach in his German vernacular, he had also taken up the practice of preaching in English on Friday evenings by 1882, contributing to the increased sense of Americanization in the temple.³³ Many of the reforms during the 1870s and early 1880s were both religious and symbolic of a Jewish congregation moving rapidly towards Reform, yet they had little documented backlash.

Yet discontent developed in the congregation and publicly expressed itself beginning in 1881. The Sonneschein family took a three-month trip back to their Hungarian home, and upon Sonneschein's return he learned that some members of the board had been working against him.³⁴ Tension between the board and Sonneschein continued to mount even more as Sonneschein's attitude became increasingly radicalized and as his reforms became increasingly in favor of a more Americanized and assimilated temple. The religious trouble began when, during a lecture, Sonneschein suggested that Jews and non-Jews should celebrate Christmas and Chanukah as one national holiday.³⁵ The secular and Jewish press publicized the story, and many congregants were outraged.³⁶ The Christmas-Chanukah imbroglio was not simply a reform to modernize Judaism. It sought to consolidate Jews and non-Jews into one American religious holiday. Indeed, Sonneschein's justification for the suggestion of such a holiday was that it would be common to both Americans and Jews.³⁷ While this scandal would not spell the end of unity for Shaare Emeth, by 1884 fifty-four congregants had petitioned that Sonneschein's contract not be renewed.³⁸ In addition, it demonstrated that while Reform was focused in its efforts to create a Jewish-American identity, there was still the lingering question of how far these Reforms should go. Furthermore, the

Christmas-Chanukah controversy proved that there were obvious limits to the extent of assimilation that even Reform-leaning temples, like Shaare Emeth, were willing to take.

However, division over assimilation grew most prominently in 1885 at a national Reform conference that produced the Pittsburgh Platform, which was one of the later attempts to consolidate Reform Judaism into one clear definition and direction, a movement that had begun at least by 1855 with the Cleveland Conference. The Pittsburgh Platform would have some success, especially compared to the other failed conferences that had come before it. Even though it by no means marked the end of division in the Reform movement, it was the beginning of a more uniform movement. It was presided over by Wise and not surprisingly was a triumph for Reform and the effort to bring Judaism into the modern age. Mosaic and rabbinical laws such as those that regulated diet, priestly purity, and dress were deemed to have developed “under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state.”³⁹ The Pittsburgh Platform also stipulated that the observance of such traditions was more likely to “obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.”⁴⁰ While many Reform temples had already done away with their adherence to dress codes and dietary laws, the Pittsburgh Platform represents a substantial step toward codifying reform.

Yet as Reform began the process of successful consolidation at a national level, the local St. Louis Reform movement was ripping at the seams. In 1885, a number of rifts emerged in the St. Louis Jewish community over politics and religion conflated with assimilation. While division was already underlying the community, the rift would become more obvious as Sonneschein pushed more vigorous reforms. The troubles in 1885 began in April when, in its annual message to the *Jewish Free Press*, Shaare Emeth expressed concern for its lower attendance at temple services. Following the path that many other Reform temples throughout the country had taken, it suggested a number of changes to draw in more congregants.⁴¹ To combat this problem, Shaare Emeth proposed changes in leadership, both of the congregational school and of the Ritual Committee.⁴² Among the ritual reforms considered to combat low attendance was the introduction of singing during services as well as the discontinuation of Hebrew in the Congregational school.⁴³ While it is not entirely clear to what extent Jews in St. Louis found Hebrew unimportant for their children’s education, popular reports on the subject of the discontinuation of Hebrew cite this as Shaare Emeth’s motivation.⁴⁴

However, this incited backlash from congregants as well as from Sonneschein. While the Pittsburgh Platform did not directly address the use of Hebrew, prior conferences such as the Philadelphia Conference in 1869 stressed Hebrew as important to religion yet gave it a backseat to the vernacular.

Sonneschein took an active stance against that removal. To remove Hebrew from a Jewish school, he argued in a statement to the *Jewish Free Press*, would be like taking an “iconoclastic hand at the vessel of all religious truth.”⁴⁵ Subsequently, he compared it to forcing practicing Jews to eat pork and noted how the dissolution of Hebrew in religious schools would be unfair to the newer and poorer Eastern European immigrants who did not have the money to get a religious education anywhere else.⁴⁶ Being one of the leading voices for reform in St. Louis, Sonneschein’s conservative stance on Hebrew in Jewish schools was somewhat uncharacteristic. Although he described the removal of Hebrew from schools as an assault on the Jewish faith, other members of the Jewish community would characterize many of the reforms he later suggested and effected similarly. The fact that the man who became radical in other aspects of Reform would cling so vehemently to Hebrew speaks as much to the fluid and divisive nature of Reform as it does the idiosyncrasies of Sonneschein. Although the use of the vernacular over Hebrew was not contested nationally, the unbinding nature of conferences combined with the ambiguous language they often used meant that the precise way in which Reform was instituted in a given temple could be controversial, as was the case with Hebrew at Shaare Emeth’s religious school.

Reform’s general stance against Zionism, a movement to re-establish an Israeli state in Palestine, became an avenue through which Reform leaders attached themselves more closely to America as a homeland. The debate within the Reform movement over the question of a Palestinian homeland began in Germany and later stretched into America. The 1869 Philadelphia Conference asserted that the Jewish purpose was “not the restoration of the old Jewish state under a descendant of David” but rather the “dispersion of the Jews to all parts of the earth, for the realization of their high-priestly mission, to lead the nations to the true knowledge and worship of God.”⁴⁷ The Pittsburgh Platform would commit Reform to an anti-Zionist sentiment even more strongly than the Philadelphia Conference. It accepted Mosaic legislation as historically “training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine [and] accept as binding only its

moral laws.⁷⁴⁸ In addition, by rejecting Zionism as a view “not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization,” the Pittsburgh Platform accepted Judaism as “no longer a nation, but a religious community” and sought to usher in a “modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect [and] the approaching of the realization of Israel’s great Messianic hope.”⁷⁴⁹

There seemed to be a clear consensus among Reform leadership concerning the Zionist movement. Yet, under the surface there was much more debate. The Zionist movement became a facet of Reform through which limits of assimilation were tested. Reform leaders throughout America, including Sonneschein, followed the Pittsburgh Platform and spoke out against Zionism as a political movement. Building on his earlier attempts of more complete assimilation of Judaism, he advocated against Zionism because he believed that “constantly looking to the orient would deny that a high minded ethical community could exist in America.”⁷⁵⁰ Furthermore, he believed that Jewish success in America rested, in part, on whether the Jewish youth can be as “proud of their American Citizenship as they ever were their Oriental aristocracy.”⁷⁵¹ Yet the institutions, which developed themselves as resoundingly against Zionism during Reform, were always more of a loose federation than an agent for binding religious change. Although the national sentiment leaned against Zionism, individual sentiment varied greatly on the matter. Zionist leanings eventually became evident among the students and faculty at the Hebrew Union College.⁷⁵² The anti-Zionist consensus that seemed prevalent throughout all Reform leaders was in actuality so weak that by 1897 the Federation of American Zionists was founded and headed by many Reform leaders. It would also receive funding from national Reform organizations like the UAHC.⁷⁵³

The division concerning Zionism which eventually became apparent nationally appeared earlier in 1885 in St. Louis. Sonneschein’s zeal for the Pittsburgh Platform would get him into trouble with the board when in 1885 he introduced debate-style lectures on the Pittsburgh Platform in place of religious services.⁷⁵⁴ While it was eventually resolved that these lectures take place after traditional religious services in a different building, the controversy surrounding resolutions of the Pittsburgh Platform did not end there. The conflict-ridden nature of the Zionist movement is most obviously demonstrated by Sonneschein’s wife, Rosa. Although Sonneschein was himself opposed to the movement, Rosa was so openly in favor of it that in the debates Sonneschein held in 1885, she publicly argued against her husband

in favor of a homeland for Jews.⁷⁵⁵ Rosa took a more active role in matters of religion than was common for women at the time and would eventually become the creator and editor of the first magazine targeted toward Jewish American women, *The American Jewess*, in 1895. In it, she advocated for many of the same changes that male reformers were urging, such as a national organization and an American homeland for Jews.⁷⁵⁶ She sought to bring women into a more broad national Jewish community and often endorsed organizations that were designed to do so, such as the National Council of Jewish Women.⁷⁵⁷ However, in her magazine she also supported the Zionist effort, both as a way to bring women more actively into their faith and as a way to more broadly unite Judaism.⁷⁵⁸ To her mind, there was “no loftier ideal, worthier of realization than Israel’s dream of nationality.”⁷⁵⁹ Zionism was not only a point of division on a national and local level, but in this instance, also a division between a husband and wife. Both Sonnescheins’ stances on Zionism were part of their overall commitment to an American Jewish community and identity. The division between the

Austrian-born Rosa Sonneschein (1847–1932) married Soloman Sonneschein in 1864 in Croatia; they moved to St. Louis in 1869. She was founder of *The American Jewess*, the first magazine for Jewish women written in English in the United States. (Image: American Jewish Archives)



two over the question of a Palestinian homeland within an American context was an indication of the later division over the same question at a national level.

Tensions in 1885 continued to pile up, not only over Zionism and the use of Hebrew in schools, but also over the fact that Sonneschein had held Sunday services in a German Protestant School.⁶⁰ Later that year he was once again involved in scandal when he invited a Christian minister to preach from the temple pulpit.⁶¹ While all of the reforms exhibited strain over religion, they also held an undertone of stress over the question of the level of assimilation that would be present in a rapidly emerging Jewish American identity as they involved the larger Christian community. Beginning with the Christmas-Chanukah imbroglio in 1883, reforms initiated locally by Sonneschein were blurring the once clear lines of what it meant to be Jewish with what it meant to be a part of a larger and mostly Christian America. By 1885, the board of Shaare Emeth and the congregational members had already expressed discontent over the direction of Reforms by maneuvering against Sonneschein. The tensions that were already very clearly underlying a peaceful façade finally came to a head in 1886. Sonneschein, having by this point become a more radical proponent of assimilation and Americanization, was called to perform a funeral for a Sephardic family at their home. At the funeral he was faced with tradition, something he found increasingly abhorrent. In his distaste for anything that he saw as lacking modernity, Sonneschein, much to the dismay of all present at the funeral, pulled off the traditional coverings on the mirrors for a family in mourning and is reported to have said after completion of the service, “may the God of Truth and Justice in His mercy never visit this house.”⁶² The ensuing tension over Sonneschein’s comment nearly ended in a fistfight between Sonneschein and a congregant present at the funeral. This particular instance, although telling of his temperament, was only the final push for members of the board to more actively campaign against Sonneschein who, amidst hostility of the board, finally resigned in 1886. Although the incident at the funeral alone was enough to upset the board, it also demonstrates that Sonneschein was increasingly eschewing anything that he saw as too traditionally Jewish and therefore not American enough. The events at the funeral and Sonneschein’s resignation were only the beginning of a schism between the board of Shaare Emeth and Sonneschein that reflected a substantial rift in the congregation itself.

Although Sonneschien resigned in April of 1886,

it did not take full effect until October to ensure there was an acting rabbi for High Holy Days at Shaare Emeth. During this lame-duck period, in what would become the most scandalous act of his career, he went to Boston to seek a position at a Unitarian church. Shortly after his return from Boston, he married a Jewish woman to a Presbyterian man despite advocating against intermarriage earlier in his career.⁶³ The scandal broke upon his return and shortly after the marriage. The press, both Jewish and secular, turned on him very quickly. As if the fact that he was an ordained rabbi was not scandalous enough, the fact that he was still the presiding rabbi at a Jewish congregation made the event even more condemnable in the eyes of the public. Several reports of the incident publicized that Sonneschein had sought such a position because “the Jewish pulpit had become too narrow for him.”⁶⁴ The whole scandal was further substantiated by Reverend Minot Savage’s statement in the local *Jewish Free Press*, which was edited by Sonneschein’s own friend-turned-enemy, M.C. Reefer, who eventually became Sonneschein’s strongest critic as he expressed discontent with the fact that for seventeen years Sonneschein was never met “with denial in anything reasonable or unreasonable.”⁶⁵ Upon learning of the scandal surrounding Sonneschien’s involvement with the Unitarian Church, Reefer, in his own editorial piece, warned the Jewish public to defend Judaism “against the encroachment of the enemy” and to “beware of the traitors within our camp.”⁶⁶ As Sonneschein turned even further toward the idea of a more fully merged Jewish and American identity and exhibited the willingness to leave Judaism, even his former friends considered him not only a personal enemy, but also an enemy to Judaism.

While Sonneschien was clearly radical, his reforms cannot simply be written off as the ramblings of one zealous reformer in a much more moderate movement. As the schism between Sonneschein and the board of Shaare Emeth deepened, divisions within the congregation itself came to the fore. Although Sonneschien was pressured to resign in April, only a month later a group of congregants petitioned Sonneschein on May 10, 1886, to re-apply for the position of rabbi, which he did. In June, Sonneschien was called before the board to defend himself. This was the first time a rabbi had ever been so ordered by a temple board in American history.⁶⁷ The board denied the application to reinstate him as rabbi. However, congregants in favor of Sonneschein were not finished fighting to keep their rabbi. On June 3, the board’s denial to re-hire Sonneschein was overturned by a congregational meeting that

voted to keep him.⁶⁸ By September, the board agreed to offer him a one-year extension on his contract, which he denied with the intention of starting his own congregation.⁶⁹ The whole debacle ended when both sides agreed that Sonneschein would finish out his remaining contract at which point he would be awarded \$5,000 and leave Shaare Emeth.⁷⁰ Shortly thereafter, Sonneschein and a group of between sixty to seventy congregants of Shaare Emeth broke away to form Temple Israel.⁷¹ Temple Israel took with it just under half of the congregants of Shaare Emeth.⁷² Not surprisingly, in his first sermon, Sonneschein championed radical Reform. Passionately, he proclaimed that the new congregation should do “away with half measures of old, [and] away with complete compromise, crush it under the heel of principal.”⁷³ To Sonneschein, orthodoxy was an “immobile ship in a harbor” which transforms those inside into “big babies.”⁷⁴ The decision for Sonneschein to leave Shaare Emeth ended in a mutual agreement between the two. However, Sonneschein’s exit did not come without a push on the part of the board to rid itself of him, and a pull from some of the congregants to keep him as their rabbi. Furthermore, the fact that the initial gesture to suspend Sonneschein came not from the board, but congregants in the form of a petition, also suggests a disconnection within the congregation itself. While Sonneschein was clearly pivotal in invoking conflict throughout St. Louis Judaism, he was also a figure through which congregants could express either their desire or contempt for further reform by advocating for or against his place as rabbi.

The scandal surrounding Sonneschein’s connection to the Unitarians rang throughout the national Reform and secular community. It was even reported by the *New York Times*.⁷⁵ It also put Sonneschein’s friends in a difficult position. Wise, being Sonneschein’s close friend, decided to cancel the annual conference of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations that year after he realized that many other attending rabbis did not want Sonneschein there.⁷⁶ Although he would excuse the cancellation by attributing it to the death of James K. Gutheim, his real motivation was obvious to anyone in the Reform community.⁷⁷ Despite his pivotal role in the creation of Temple Israel, Sonneschein left St. Louis for another congregation in 1893, only seven years after its

establishment.⁷⁸ His legacy however, was lasting; Shaare Emeth and Temple Israel remained separate even though the rabbi that exacerbated tensions was gone.

The questions surrounding a Jewish-American identity that led to the temple split were the direct result of increased German immigration to St. Louis as well as a nationally organizing movement which sought to define the movement as a whole. However, Judaism in America prior to the mid-nineteenth century had never had any centralized leadership. The institutions that developed to try to guide the Reform movement nationally had little control over Reform rabbis and even less sway over the minds of individuals who attended newly formed Reform congregations across the country. While Reform came about peacefully in St. Louis from 1886 through the early 1880s, as it developed it would have to face the same anxieties over assimilation that the national movement and other communities in other cities had faced since the 1850s. A rabbi who sought to keep pace with a national movement while serving a local congregation that was divided over resolutions agreed upon nationally then exacerbated these anxieties.

In the 1850s, the national Reform movement debated assimilation to its American home through circumcision and the German language. Later in 1885, in the aftermath of one of the most groundbreaking conferences in the Reform Jewish movement, St. Louis would also debate assimilation, although through different avenues. Rather than German language or circumcision, St. Louis debated assimilation of the temple through Zionism, which also was argued nationally at the time. More prominent locally, the use of Judaism’s traditional spiritual language, Hebrew, proved to be quite contentious. Although Sonneschein was confident in his own reforms, for board members and congregants of Shaare Emeth, there was no clear answer as to at what point an assimilated Jewish identity ceased to be truly Jewish and was altogether replaced by an American one. On the other hand, there was also no clear answer as to how long orthodoxy and strict traditions could exist in America without being detrimental to Jewish life in America.

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Hidden History: The Whitewashing of the 1917 East St. Louis Riot

BY SAMANTHÉ BACHELIER

T I M E L I N E O F E V E N T S

Monday, May 28, 1917:

- Sixty delegates of the East St. Louis Central Trades and Labor Union met with Mayor Mollman and the East St. Louis City Council at City Hall to protest African American migration into the city.
- Outside of the meeting, there were nearly 3,000 supporters of the protest.
- After the meeting was over, a rumor that an African American man had shot and killed a white man during a robbery swept through the crowd.
- White mobs proceeded to beat every African American person that they saw as they walked through the downtown district.
- Local police forces and Illinois National Guardsmen were unable to stop mobs, but they dispersed early in the morning of May 29 without killing anyone.
- Attacks by whites on African Americans continued sporadically throughout the month of June.

Sunday, July 1, 1917:

- Around 9 p.m., there were reports that a black Model T Ford was shooting into the homes of African Americans in near the “Free Bridge.”
- Later in the evening, a service at the St. John American Methodist Episcopal Zion Church ended. The news of shootings in black neighborhoods spread through the crowds gathered after the service.
- Several African Americans continued to hear gunshots, which prompted them to gather together at the aforementioned church and to ring the church bell to call others to join them.

Monday, July 2, 1917:

- Sergeant Samuel Coppedge, Detective Frank Wodley, and three other officers in “plainclothes” were sent in Coppedge’s unmarked black Model T Ford to the area around the church at 1:30 a.m.
- A confrontation between the policemen and a group of around 150 armed black men led to the car being shot at, wounding and eventually killing Coppedge and Wodley.
- In the early morning light, Sergeant Coppedge’s car, full of bullet holes and blood stains, was put on display outside of the police station where a crowd of white laborers developed.
- Around 9:30 a.m., the first African American victim was shot, but he was able to escape.
- Between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., Collinsville Avenue between Broadway Avenue and Illinois Avenue was the background for severe beatings of African Americans of every age and gender.
- Around noon, streetcars were stopped and an African American family, Edward and Lena Cook and her teenage son, were severely beaten and the men were murdered.

(left) “Colored man in front of car being mobbed. Militia looking on.” Published in the September 1917 issue of *The Crisis*.

- As the afternoon continued, the white mobs were no longer content with beating their victims; they turned to murdering as many African Americans as they could.
- The Free Bridge to St. Louis allowed passage of hundreds of African Americans to safety throughout this event, and the Municipal Lodging House was opened up to East St. Louis refugees.
- By early evening the mobs were intent on burning and destroying African American homes and businesses, often forcing their occupants into the fires. More than two hundred houses were destroyed.
- Later in the evening, the intersection of Broadway and Collinsville Avenues witnessed multiple lynchings.
- Throughout this time, Illinois National Guardsmen and local police officers did little to protect African Americans or to punish members of the white mobs.
- By midnight, local firemen and firemen from the St. Louis department tried to extinguish fires throughout the city.
- Late in the night and into the next morning, hundreds of refugees were escorted to City Hall by the Illinois militia.
- There were approximately three hundred National Guardsmen by the end of the day.

Tuesday, July 3, 1917:

- Shortly after midnight, Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard, Frank S. Dickson, took charge of the militia and began to break up the remaining mobs and reinforce security at City Hall.
- In the early morning, many spectators returned home and the mobs were smaller and scattered throughout the city.
- The last large outburst of mob violence occurred in the morning near “Bloody Island.”
- Illinois Governor Frank Lowden came to tour the damage in the afternoon.
- By the evening of July 3, there were nearly one thousand National Guardsmen.

Wednesday, July 4, 1917:

- Ida B. Wells-Barnett arrived in East St. Louis from Chicago to interview victims of the violence in East St. Louis and St. Louis.

Sunday, July 8, 1917:

- W.E.B. DuBois and Martha Gruening left for East St. Louis from New York to investigate the violence.

Saturday, July 28, 1917:

- The NAACP held a silent protest in New York with nearly eight to ten thousand African Americans.

Thursday, October 18, 1917

- The House Select Committee to Investigate Conditions in Illinois and Missouri Interfering with Interstate Commerce Between These States opened hearings at the Metropolitan Building downtown in East St. Louis.

**“The mob watches the law,
and is always ready to attack it
whenever it shows weakness.**

**Those who form mobs have seen for a
half century that the law is weak so far
as Negroes rights are concerned. They
have seen that the constable,
the sheriff, the police,
the judge and jury have all fallen
before the monster PREJUDICE
when called upon to enforce the law,
where both races are
involved. Prejudice always
overbalances justice in favor
of the mob.”**

-Editorial, *St. Louis Argus*, July 12, 1917.

In the early hours of Monday, July 2, 1917, white citizens gathered at the East St. Louis police station to discuss what should be done about the African Americans who had shot and killed two detectives the night before. The detectives' bullet-riddled car was parked outside of the police station, surrounded by a crowd of about fifty white men. Hysteria overtook the crowd as they began to devise ways to confront this boiling point in the “race issue” that had been brewing for months. Should they force the black population out of town? Should they retaliate? Should the black population be “wiped out”? These ideas turned to action when the group of men gathered at the station began to “march” toward Collinsville Avenue to meet their first victim, a lone African American man who was walking the streets of the business district. He was beaten and shot, but he recovered shortly thereafter. The crowd of angry, white East St. Louisans quickly swelled to somewhere between 500 and 1,000 people as the violence escalated. By the afternoon, the violence had taken a deadly turn that would continue throughout the late evening and into the next day.¹ An African American family returning to St. Louis from a fishing trip outside of East St. Louis was pulled off of a streetcar. The father was beaten to death, and his head “was crushed in as if by a blow from a stone.”² His 14-year old son was shot to death. Their wife and mother was beaten until her “hair was

torn out by the roots and her scalp was partly torn off.”³ She lost consciousness, and when she awoke, she found herself in the back of an ambulance on top of the bodies of her dead, mutilated husband and son (the photo that opens this article is one of the only pictures of the mob violence, and it depicts this account of violence). The violence progressed, with children as young as two years old, along with their mothers, being beaten and burned alive as the bloodthirsty revenge burned through the city. As the embers cooled, the city, region, and nation began a long process of creating narratives of the event and its causes. These narratives influenced the ways that the event is remembered or forgotten in the current era.

The Roots of a Riot

By the turn of the twentieth century, East St. Louis featured large industrial centers for meat packing, zinc processing, aluminum ore processing, and iron and steel plants.⁴ The most prominent feature of the city's booming industrial prestige was the Aluminum Ore Company. In October 1916, the Aluminum Ore Union commenced a strike when the managers at the plant refused to recognize the union as an organization. Over the following year, racial tensions in the city increased as African Americans began to replace the striking workers. Tensions mounted when National Guardsmen began protecting the African American workers to ensure the plant's successful operation for the sake of the war effort. This led to racial violence, first on May 28, 1917, when members of the East St. Louis Central Trades and Labor Union beat African American men as they walked toward the intersection of Broadway and Collinsville Avenue. The laborers eventually lost interest, and no one died that night, but as the violence subsided, the tensions grew.⁵

The number of deaths during the riot that began July 2 is still contested by historians, but the death toll is thought to have been somewhere between 39 and 200 African Americans.⁶ The actual number of deaths is hard to know because many people died in burning buildings, dozens were thrown into the Mississippi River, and an unknown number of African American migrants were in the city at the time. But while the Aluminum Ore Company strike and the racial tensions associated with it provided the spark that led to the explosion of the riots, the kindling that fueled the violent slaughtering of African Americans regardless of class, age, or gender is often overlooked or downplayed in popularized narratives of the event. To discuss how and why the 1917 East St. Louis Riot was whitewashed and

forgotten in the collective consciousness of the St. Louis Metropolitan area, one must examine the newspaper coverage in the riot's immediate aftermath. After analyzing the *Daily Journal* (East St. Louis), the *Belleville News-Democrat*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, it becomes clear that the disappearance of the riot from memory is largely because of the event's "whitewashing" by the local and national media, and the exclusion of African American narratives from what white-owned papers considered to be a racial massacre.⁷

"Majestic Theater Blackface and Orchestra Pit," c. 1915
(Image: The Andrew Theising Research Collection, item 45/19: "Majestic Theater Blackface and Orchestra Pit," c. 1915, the Bowen Archives of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville)



Early Scholarship

Numerous historical examinations of the causes and events of the East St. Louis Riot were published in the last century. Elliot Rudwick's meticulously detailed study of the riot's causes and aftermath was the first to argue that part of the tension leading up to the riot stemmed from a rumored plan (a "colonization conspiracy") by Republicans to bring African Americans north to sway the 1916 elections.⁸ He traced the use of racial prejudice by East St. Louis laborers and Democrats to sway the election back to strategies employed by Woodrow Wilson's administration across the north during his 1916 presidential campaign.

Many of the works focusing on the riot directly respond to Rudwick's original arguments, or add evidence to support his theories. Malcolm McLaughlin provides an insightful exploration of the power that leaders of organized crime had over political and economic elements of East St. Louis society prior to the riot. He also includes a comprehensive study of the class antagonisms leading up to the riot, which were related to economic, political, and cultural challenges to white superiority.⁹ In this view, which concurs with arguments made by labor historians like David

Roediger, poor race relations in East St. Louis largely stemmed from white laborers from European locations. The social status of these European immigrants was challenged during the Progressive Era, and they used racial arguments to distinguish themselves from the new African American laborers who were competing for their jobs, their living quarters, and their place within the social hierarchy.

Charles Lumpkins disagrees with Rudwick's early interpretations of the riot. According to Lumpkins, the destruction of the African American community was encouraged by elites and corrupt politicians who were threatened by the incoming black minorities.¹⁰ These newcomers were building community-based political power that threatened the Democratic majority of the city's base. Instead of insisting that the white laborers and union leaders were the ones behind the attacks, Lumpkins sees a much deeper white superiority within the city's upper echelons as the cause of the riot.

Nearly every piece of scholarship that focuses on East St. Louis is either specifically centered on the East St. Louis Riot or mentions it as a significant factor in the city's history. This article does not seek to re-examine the causes of the riot, as many others have done. Rather, it adds to the existing scholarship by focusing on how the story of the riot was told to the public, how it was whitewashed and controlled by white media outlets, and how it was ultimately lost to time, only to be remembered when other major racial killings sparked an inkling of a memory.

Collective Memory and History

One topic that is largely ignored by the current scholars of the East St. Louis Riot is the subject of collective memory, which has been a popular topic among cultural historians in the twenty-first century. Collective memories of tragic events are often tailored to avoid guilt or suppressed over time to elude culpability, especially in the case of particularly uncomfortable histories. For example, several scholars and historians wrote an article on the interpretation of uncomfortable history in relation to the Scott Joplin house in St. Louis.¹¹ These scholars argued that public historians have a duty to recognize uncomfortable aspects of the past and communicate them to the public. Scholars can use uncomfortable histories to shed light on continued struggles that local and national communities continue to confront. The East St. Louis Riot is an event surrounded by issues of race relations, white hatred, labor tensions, and an overarching system of government corruption which has legacies that can be felt today.

Beginning in the 1980s, the historical lens of collective memory has been applied to the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. The first historian to write about the Tulsa Riot in a historical monograph was Scott Ellsworth. In *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921*, Ellsworth discusses the national, statewide, and local factors that contributed to the burning of the city of Greenwood, Oklahoma. Although his work seeks to reveal the causes and consequences of the riot, he offers interpretations of how the riot was remembered differently by the white and black communities of Tulsa. He termed this gap in memory between the two communities “the segregation of memory.”¹² The idea of the “segregation of memory” speaks to the hidden elements of racial tensions that exist in places throughout the United States where extremely violent racial outbreaks have occurred.

An Ignored Reality: Cultural Racism in an Industrial City

Blackface minstrelsy had a long history of entertaining northern, white industrial laborers. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, white audiences watched white men in blackface perform stereotypical portrayals of African Americans that allowed them to escape the realities of their changing economic and social status as they began to compete for low-skill jobs in industrial centers before the Civil War. After the war, minstrelsy became more popular and spread to the south, enabling white southerners to re-live their nostalgic dreams of a peaceful, happy, pre-war society where African Americans were not threatening and knew their place in the social hierarchy. White audiences throughout the country after the war used minstrelsy to return to this romanticized time of “racial innocence.”¹³ East St. Louis featured blackface minstrelsy shows shortly before the racial violence occurred in 1917.

The stereotypes portrayed by black-faced performers for white audiences was transferred to the silver screen in 1915 with the release of D.W. Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation*. The second half of the film features a topsy-turvy portrayal of the “antebellum slave order” to villainize the blacks in the film, who began the “destruction of civilization of white women [and] demand political and civil rights.”¹⁴ The actions of the black-faced men in the film were used to incite fear in white viewers of the threat that African Americans posed to the stability of white Americans. The film ends with the white-robed Ku Klux Klan protagonists coming to save the day after black troops take over the city of Piedmont. The vilification of blacks and the heroic imagery

of the masked crusaders in white contributed to the “installation of Black inferiority into the shared national culture” of the audiences who viewed it.¹⁵

Birth of a Nation was popular throughout the country. In most of the northern cities where it was viewed, picketers from organizations such as the NAACP gathered at the screenings to protest the racially charged nature of the film. In February 1917, the Majestic Theater in East St. Louis showed *Birth of a Nation* twice a day for three days.¹⁶ The day before the “greatest photo spectacle” was shown in the city, editors of the paper communicated their desire that “everyone may be able to see the picture.”¹⁷ The power of this film as a cultural contribution to the “maintenance of race prejudice” was expressed in the testimony of R.T. Rucker, the assistant superintendent of the Aluminum Ore Company, in the Congressional Committee Investigation. Rucker explained to the committee that films like *Birth of a Nation* “inflame[d] the whites” like *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* “inflame[d] the negro against the whites.”¹⁸ The lead investigator, Congressman Johnson, responded by praising his home state of Kentucky for having a law “prohibiting all shows which have a tendency to inflame either race.”¹⁹

Highlights of a Whitewashed Narrative

Cultural analyses are often overshadowed by wide-ranging debates among historians, sociologists, and economists about whether class or race dominates historical issues and the present state of American cities like East St. Louis.²⁰ Newspaper accounts of the East St. Louis Riot from white-controlled press outlets focused on class: the fears the white community had about challenges posed to their economic longevity by the African Americans brought from the south to replace the striking laborers at the Aluminum Ore Company. This class issue was strengthened by the alleged crimes of African Americans against white citizens, which caused white East St. Louisans to fear for their safety. African Americans were often portrayed as being violent and accused of buying weapons to attack the white citizens of East St. Louis. These rumors interacted with the fear stirred up by *Birth of a Nation*, which was a visual representation of the repercussions of an unchecked racial re-ordering of the social hierarchy. The racial fear and hatred of the burgeoning African American population in the city was thus framed as a labor issue made worse by African Americans’ perceived violent nature, rather than an intensifying culture of white supremacy. The predominant narrative that came from the white-controlled media outlets and from the testimonies of white East St.

Louisians during the House Congressional Committee investigation revolved around labeling the riot as a labor dispute that was disconnected from other issues related to race relations in the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Region. In the testimonies given during this investigation, there was no connection made between the East St. Louis riot and other riots that preceded it. There was also no mention of the overall violence that African Americans throughout the country faced at this time.

The tone of the *Daily Journal's* initial coverage of the riot as it was unfolding on the night of July 2 was inline with the characterization of African Americans as trouble-makers that had been prevalent in the months preceding the violence. The *Daily Journal* reported that the violence experienced after African Americans shot four people the night of July 1, including the two detectives who died, Samuel Coppedge and Frank Wadley, had been quelled by police and military forces. The *Journal* placed this initial blame of violence on an event that occurred on the evening of July 1, when “literally hundreds” of African Americans, who were reportedly armed and structured in “military fashion,” gathered near the African Methodist Episcopal church. The *Daily Journal* claimed that these black residents were summoned by the ringing of the church bell to rally around “four negro politicians . . . who [were] recognized as negro leaders.”²¹ The narrative created by the *Daily Journal* as the event was still unfolding focused on the militant, aggressive actions of African Americans in the city and portrayed the violent actions of white mobs as a defensive measure to protect East St. Louis businesses and homes.

On the evening of July 3, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* published several articles covering the East St. Louis riot from the day before. Carlos F. Hurd, a staff reporter and eyewitness, described the social class of the men who were initiating the violence in an article by writing, “It was a short-sleeve gathering, and the men were mostly workingmen, except for some who had the aspect of mere loafers.”²² The emphasis on class here is significant, because the lower- and working-class communities were the ones most affected by the mass immigration of African Americans from the south. The fact that the *Post-Dispatch* focused on the social class of the people who were initiating the violence lends credence to the argument that white reporters and editors were intent on portraying the event as a class-based riot. The emphasis on the class antagonisms at play in the development of the riot was a type of whitewashing designed to take the focus off of the race relations in the city of East St. Louis and the violence faced by

African Americans, regardless of class, throughout the United States.²³

Nearly two days after the July violence, the East St. Louis community developed the concept of “The New East St. Louis” to create a narrative of a “bright future” for the city.²⁴ Several articles published between July 6 and July 15 spoke of segregation as the solution to the race question. In a full-page flyer, the solution was explained by announcing that “segregation of negroes was favored. The Real Estate Exchange goes on record to taking steps to eliminate, as much as possible, cause for ill feeling between white and black. It has appointed a committee to determine what territory should be set off to the colored man and to have attorneys draft a bill to be presented to the City Council.”²⁵ The forced segregation of residential areas for African American and white East St. Louisians was championed as the remedy for the racial tensions that the riots grew out of, which echoed the advice of Reverend Edgar M. Pope, the pastor of St. Mark’s Colored Baptist Church, and Booker T. Washington’s sentiments related to the “Atlanta Compromise.”²⁶ Nearly two weeks after the violence subsided, East St. Louis real estate tycoons added a new layer to the white narrative of the riot—integrated cities cause racial violence.

After the first month of initial coverage, the massacre at East St. Louis was largely forgotten by the white-owned media. The lack of continued

Top left, “Frank Smith, burned.”; Above right, “Amos Davis, age 84, shot.”; Center left, “The refugees.”; Center right, “Camp of Troop D. 1ST ILL. Calvary from Springfield.”; Bottom left, “After the Fire.”; Bottom right, “Police Headquarters, St. Louis, MO.” Published in the September 1917 issue of *The Crisis*.



coverage and connection to the larger context of racial violence created a missed opportunity for increased awareness of the plight that African Americans in the United States faced. Ultimately, this lack of connection to thousands of other acts of violence went unacknowledged, and the East St. Louis Riot was washed away from the collective consciousness of the local and national community among the white population. The whitewashing of the racial tensions of the East St. Louis community turned the riot into an isolated event to downplay the significance that the riot had for African American activists throughout the country. These accounts largely underplayed and ignored the cultural racism that was prevalent in the years and months preceding the July violence.

Throughout this article to this point, the term “race riot” has been used to reference the violence that occurred in East St. Louis on May 28 and on July 2, 1917. White-controlled narratives of the event consistently used the term “riot.” A riot implies something that needs to be quelled. The narrative created by the white press emphasized the militancy of the black community in the city. The spark that caused the July violence was traced to African Americans organizing an uprising in the city, proved for East St. Louisans by the killing of the detectives. This term is related to a response by white citizens to call for segregation to end racial problems in industrial centers. Contrarily, African American journalists and politicians referred to the event as a “massacre.” The term “massacre” implies that the victims of violence were unjustly attacked and murdered. The term also incites a stronger emotional reaction in readers that elicits a response for action to end racial violence. For the rest of this article, the term “massacre” will be used.

African American Counter-Narratives of Persistent Prejudice and Racial Massacre

Contrary to the dominant narratives presented by the white-controlled media, African American media outlets and authors situated the East St. Louis massacre in the context of a national struggle for freedom from oppression. As millions of African Americans fled north in the hope of escaping Jim Crow violence in the south, they faced continued violence in their new homes and created outlets to share their struggle and to organize for change throughout the country. African American writers shed light on racial prejudice in East St. Louis that led up to the July violence. Prolific journalists and international politicians, such as Joseph and William Mitchell, Herbert T. Meadows, W.E.B. Du Bois,

Ida B. Wells, and Marcus Garvey, used the image of a massacre to connect the suffering of African Americans in St. Louis to the suffering felt in black communities at a national level.

The East St. Louis massacre was preceded by riots that involved the massacre of African American men, women, and children by white civilians in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1866; Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1898; Atlanta, Georgia, in 1906; Springfield, Illinois, in 1908; and Waco, Texas, in 1916. The majority of these racial massacres were in response to African American quests for greater freedom and equality after the Civil War. It was in this climate of race-based terror across the country that the East St. Louis Riot occurred in July of 1917. The racial violence that enveloped these cities before the 1917 East St. Louis violence was recognized in the consciousness of African Americans and expressed in newspapers, magazines, essays, and speeches immediately following the July 2 massacre.

One of the primary outlets for expressing this reality was the *St. Louis Argus*, a St. Louis-based newspaper that catered to the African American population. It was first published in 1912 by Joseph and William Mitchell with the aim of organizing the African American community, locally and nationally. The *Argus*'s primary goal was to raise political awareness of African American issues such as lynching, unequal education, and disenfranchisement. The Mitchell brothers also used the *Argus* to publicly attack organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, who were lynching hundreds of African Americans during the first half of the twentieth century. While many national black newspapers followed Booker T. Washington's advice to be passive and allow race relations to be changed slowly in the political realm, the *Argus* demanded a quick end to the violence and inequality that plagued African Americans.²⁷As a result, the *Argus*'s immediate coverage served as a call to arms for the African American community to defend itself against white violence and to continue to push for legislation banning lynching at the federal level. The *St. Louis Argus* was the only Metro East newspaper that connected this event with other horrific acts of violence occurring throughout the country.

While the white-owned media outlets traced the initial outbreak of violence back to the murder of two police officers by African Americans on the evening of Sunday, July 1, the *St. Louis Argus* reported that the initial catalyst in the violence of Monday, July 2, began when an automobile driven by white men began shooting into an African American neighborhood.²⁸ This account of the initial violence

completely changed the story of the riot, as it was understood by the white communities, locally and nationally. The *Argus* acknowledged that two police officers were shot and killed on the evening of July 2 by African-Americans. However, the fact that they were shot because they were mistaken as the men who had begun shooting at African American homes that evening is not discussed in any other St. Louis-area paper.

The coverage of the massacre by the *St. Louis Argus* was supported by reports from people who were not living in East St. Louis, but who came to investigate the aftermath of the violence and to communicate its truth, as they saw it, to the national African American community. For instance, the NAACP sent Martha Gruening and W.E.B. Du Bois to East St. Louis as special investigators. The September 1917 issue of *The Crisis* published a 19-page exposé, titled “The Massacre of East St. Louis,” that featured the images and firsthand experiences they discovered. The images they presented in *The Crisis* told a story of destruction by fire through photographs of burning buildings and scorched ruins. *The Crisis* also featured images of survivors of the violence that told a story of suffering regardless of age or gender, and of desperation for support.

They set the scene for the massacre by discussing “joy riders” who shot into the homes of African Americans on a block of Market Street, which led to the shooting of two detectives who were wearing “plain clothes” and driving through this same neighborhood.²⁹

Similarly, Ida B. Wells conducted her own investigation as a representative for the Negro League of Chicago. She focused on personal accounts, which created an emotional representation of the massacre. In her narrative of the massacre and its aftermath, Wells presented the experiences of four women who escaped their burning homes by crossing the “Free Bridge.” to St. Louis. Wells followed them as they returned to the wreckage of their shattered community to gather what little broken trinkets and burnt memorabilia they could find. She shared stories of brutal beatings and murders that these women told her. She highlighted the inaction of local police and national military authorities throughout her writings on the massacre. She called for a Congressional investigation and for a national focus on racial violence. While the East St. Louis paper the *Daily Journal* advocated enforced segregation of communities, Wells demanded an integrated response through a federal anti-lynching bill. Congressman Leonidas Dyer of St. Louis introduced such a bill in 1918 in response to the violence in East St. Louis.³⁰

As of yet, there has not been a published study of the collective memory of the East St. Louis Riot. The lack of memory of this event in the collective consciousness of the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Region is largely due to the whitewashing of the coverage of the riot in the white-owned local newspapers and the whitewashing of the underlying culture of racism that preceded the violence. I argue that there have been three interrelated yet distinct waves of the riot’s history and significance in the century since 1917. The first wave occurred in the years immediately following the riot and emphasized the legal redress and criminal prosecution of people involved in the riot. The prosecution of African Americans during this time aligns with arguments made earlier concerning the unequal treatment of African Americans in the criminal justice system as it pertained to the investigation of this riot. The second wave occurred during the Civil Rights Movement Era and the Era of Urban Crisis in the 1960s and 1970s, when the riot was remembered as a precursor to later riots and a background for explanations of urban poverty and crime that were largely blamed on African American communities. The most recent wave of memory has focused on memorialization and community remembrance, with particular attention paid to the current state of race relations in the region after the Michael Brown shooting in 2014 and the subsequent riots that swept the city of Ferguson.

Conclusion

The African American migrants in East St. Louis in 1917 were fighting against racial oppression like that they experienced in the Jim Crow South. When white men drove through their neighborhood firing shots, African Americans responded by shooting the next car of white men they saw, in a response that can be understood as defense and as retaliation. This act was the true turning point in the intensifying of race relations in East St. Louis, and it is the primary fact in understanding how segregated narratives were produced after the riot. In many ways, the African Americans who shot Detective Sergeant Samuel Coppedge and Detective Frank Wadley that Sunday night in July were making a statement about the violence that they were experiencing. The way that the killing of these detectives was framed became one of the most significant differences between white and black narratives of the violence in East St. Louis that day. The contradictions in narratives between white and black authors speak to a divide in the comprehension of race relations in the St. Louis Metropolitan Region that dominates ideological and cultural differences in interpretations

in our present era. Although accounts of the violence are uncomfortable to read because of the vivid descriptions of the brutality, this event needs to be discussed in classrooms to teach citizens of the region about their past, so that they can better understand the present reality they are immersed in.

E N D N O T E S

- ¹ The 65th United States Congress House of Representatives created a Special Committee tasked with discovering the root causes and consequences of the July riot. This article makes references to the related transcripts of this investigation that took place in the federal courtroom of the Metropolitan Building in downtown East St. Louis beginning on October 18, 1917. The published report of the committee was released on July 15, 1918. Ben Johnson, a Democratic lawyer and Congressman from Kentucky, was the main author of this report, but other Congressmen on the Special Committee should also be credited with the evidence that was collected and interpreted. The other members of the committee who signed this document were John E. Raker (Republican from California), Martin D. Foster (Democrat from Illinois), and Henry Allen Cooper (Republican from Wisconsin). Their report's intention was to shed light on the conditions that existed prior to these deadly riots and to expose the gravity of the crimes committed by different groups during the riots. U.S. Congress, House, Special Committee to Investigate the East St. Louis Riots, *Transcripts of the Hearings of the House Select Committee that Investigated the Race Riots in East St. Louis, Illinois, 1917* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1918), microfilm edition, 251–54.
- ² U.S. Congress, House, Special Committee to Investigate the East St. Louis Riots, *Report of the Special Committee Authorized by Congress to Investigate the East St. Louis Riots* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1918), 4–5.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Andrew J. Theising and Debra H. Moore, *Made in USA: East St. Louis, the Rise and Fall of an Industrial River Town* (St. Louis: Virginia Publishing, 2003).
- ⁵ Elliot Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis: July 2, 1917* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 27–30; Theising and Moore, *Made in USA*, 147.
- ⁶ Harper Barnes, *Never Been a Time: The 1917 Race Riot That Sparked the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Walker & Co., 2008), 210.
- ⁷ The term “whitewashing” has an important meaning for this project as a word to explain the placing of blame for the riot on the African American influx rather than on the white population of East St. Louis who participated in the murders. The most crucial meaning of the term “whitewashing” to this project is related to the process of covering up atrocities and downplaying the significance and magnitude of the riot by the white-controlled media.
- ⁸ Rudwick, *Race Riot*, 7–16.
- ⁹ Malcolm McLaughlin, *Power, Community, and Racial Killing in East St. Louis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 178.
- ¹⁰ Charles L. Lumpkins, *American Pogrom: The East St. Louis Race Riot and Black Politics* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008).
- ¹¹ Scott Joplin was a popular musician who came to St. Louis in 1901. The house that Joplin lived in while he was in St. Louis became a National Historical Landmark in 1976, but it was initially recognized as an important location on the basis of Joplin's fame. In the twenty-first century, however, scholars and museum curators have attempted to place this house in a larger framework that addresses the social history of African American migration, racial oppression, and issues related to sanitation and poverty. See: Timothy Baumann, Andrew Hurley, Valerie Altizer, and Victoria Love, “Interpreting Uncomfortable History at the Scott Joplin House State Historic Site in St. Louis, Missouri,” *The Public Historian*, vol. 33, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 37–66.
- ¹² Scott Ellsworth, *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 107.
- ¹³ Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 52.
- ¹⁴ Cedric J. Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory & Meaning: Blacks & The Regimes of Race in American Theater & Film before World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 102.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., 126.
- ¹⁶ Barnes, *Never Been a Time*, 83–84.
- ¹⁷ “Amusements,” *The Daily Journal*, February 18, 1917.
- ¹⁸ U.S. Congress, *Transcripts of the Hearings*, 1860–61.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ This debate is largely situated on the view that the primary problem with predominantly black urban areas was a result of a combined effect of racism and poverty in societal structures. For more information, see Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968); Elliot Liebow, *Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Street-Corner Men* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967); Jennifer F. Hamer, *Abandoned in the Heartland: Work, Family, and Living in East St. Louis* (Berkeley: University of California

- Press, 2011), 8–12. For a detailed study of how scholars have reconciled the differences between studies focused on class or race, see Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005).
- ²¹ “Soldiers Arrive to Preserve Order,” *Daily Journal*, July 2, 1917.
- ²² Carlos F. Hurd, “Post-Dispatch Man, an Eye-Witness, Describes Massacre of Negroes,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 3, 1917.
- ²³ There were some instances of people speaking out against the claim that the riot was fueled primarily by labor unrest. For example, in response to an editorial in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, H.B. Wilkins wrote, “The influx of negroes to East St. Louis has not hurt union labor one particle, for no negroes are taking the place of strikers. They are filling places vacated by foreigners who have gone elsewhere.” H.B. Wilkins, “Letters from the People,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 6, 1917.
- ²⁴ “New East St. Louis,” *Daily Journal*, July 9, 1917; “The Public Pulse,” *Daily Journal*, July 11, 1917; “What East St. Louis Wants to Know,” *Daily Journal*, July 13, 1917; “See Bright Future for East St. Louis,” *Daily Journal*, July 15, 1917; “Nothing Can Stop the Growth of Our City,” *Daily Journal*, July 15, 1917; James W. Kirk, “As the Journal Views It,” *Daily Journal*, July 6, 1917.
- ²⁵ “Nothing Can Stop the Growth of our City,” *Daily Journal*, July 15, 1917.
- ²⁶ In a letter that was printed in the *Daily Journal*, Rev. Pope argued that, “I would say we don’t need any segregation law, but we do need to encourage the colored people to settle in a special territory of their own in East St. Louis.” See: “Provide Settlement for Negro Influx,” *Daily Journal*, May 22, 1917; Booker T. Washington explained his philosophy of working within the system of racial segregation by encouraging African Americans to focus on education and finding employment rather than fighting Jim Crow policies and seeking additional civil liberties. He advocated for a gradual process of national inclusion for African Americans in his “Atlanta Compromise” speech at the Cotton States Exposition in 1895. See: Elizabeth Grace Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1998), 26.
- ²⁷ Edwina W. Mitchell, *The Crusading Black Journalist: Joseph Everett Mitchell* (St. Louis: Farmer Press, Inc., 1972).
- ²⁸ “Negroes Did Not Start Trouble,” *St. Louis Argus*, July 6, 1917.
- ²⁹ W.E.B. Du Bois and Martha Gruening, “The Massacre of East St. Louis,” *The Crisis*, vol. 14, no. 5 (September 1917), 219.
- ³⁰ Avis Thomas-Lester, “A Senate Apology for History on Lynching,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/13/AR2005061301720.html>.

WHAT NOT TO WEAR TO A RIOT:

Fashioning Race, Class, and Gender Respectability Amidst Racial Violence

BY LOU W. ROBINSON





Daisy and Cora Westbrook probably survived because the collapse of the Broadway Opera House disturbed an attacking mob. (Image: "Broadway Opera House After the Fire. \$700,000 Damage Was Done In This Vicinity," *The Crisis*, September 1917. Original photo, St. Louis Globe-Democrat)

INTRODUCTION

During the East St. Louis Race Riot of July 2, 1917, *Post-Dispatch* reporter Carlos Hurd observed "white women of the baser sort" terrorizing and murdering African Americans.¹ The next day, Hurd further described the presumed prostitutes for the *St. Louis Republic* as "dressed in silk stockings and kimonos, with last night's paint still unwashed on their cheeks." He immediately distinguished those prostitutes from the "white womanhood" of East St. Louis.²

Clothing and the appearance of black women survivors figured prominently in the report Ida B. Wells-Barnett, anti-lynching crusader, black rights activist, and reformist clubwoman, submitted to the Illinois governor following her investigations of the East St. Louis Race Riot.³ However, the letter written by black survivor Daisy Westbrook to a friend about the hasty rescue by national guardsmen from her home further personalized the importance of women's clothing. Westbrook, the music director at the local black high school, expressed consternation that they had lost everything "but what we had on and that was very little-bungalow aprons, no hats, and sister did not have on any shoes."⁴

Although statements from mass media, reformers, and individual citizens about the behaviors and appearance of white prostitutes, "white womanhood," and black women survivors may have appeared incidental, they embodied issues of race, class, and gender. Events occurring in that rapidly changing

(Left) A mob surrounding a trolley in East St. Louis in 1917; *The Crisis*, the publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) reported it as "Colored Man, In Front of Car, Being Mobbed. Militia Looking On." (Image: "The Massacre of East St. Louis," *The Crisis*, September 1917)

urban environment reflected national anxieties over contemporaneous and controversial social and moral expectations for women. What was it about white and black women's fashions and behaviors that warranted documenting amidst the death and destruction of a race riot? The commentaries from multiple sources illuminated at the local level national anxieties about blacks' and women's claims to civil rights and equal treatment, evolving meanings and expressions of female respectability, and contested prescriptions for women's use of public space.

Extensive scholarship has analyzed relationships between expectations for socially and morally acceptable African American behavior, appearance, civil rights, and racial violence. This article especially mines the archives of Progressive Era



Frances Willard helped set standards for style and independent behavior when she learned to ride a bicycle. (Image: Frances Willard House, Willard On Her Bicycle "Gladys." Galleries, Frances Willard's House Museum and Archives. <https://franceswillardhouse.org/frances-willard/galleries-virtual-tour>)

contributors to national discourses, including Ida B. Wells-Barnett, the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACWC), the *Chicago Defender*, W.E.B. DuBois and the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the House Congressional Hearings Report on the East St. Louis Race.⁵ And, it extends and deepens analyses by contemporary scholars on the importance of how women dressed and behaved especially in relation to the East St. Louis Race Riot.⁶

The East St. Louis Race Riot occurred near the end of a long struggle for women's rights alongside other reform efforts. The work of white women's rights activists, volunteer organizations dedicated to social and moral reform, and municipal housekeeping

and the social gospel, has provided critical insights into national discourses on expectations of women's behaviors as exhibited through their attire. Early women's rights activists, including Jane Addams, played major roles during the nineteenth century, and some of them into the twentieth century.⁷ Frances Willard, president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), strongly denounced what women sometimes wore during an 1888 International Council of Women Conference. She disparaged women who wore low-cut dresses as imitative of prostitutes, stage dressing and roadhouse dancing as suggestive of impurity, and advertisers for using half-naked models.⁸



Reformers like Frances Willard disparaged women who dressed like stage actresses such as Jennie Lee, pictured here, as impure and imitative of prostitutes. (Image: Sarony Studios, Full-length Portrait of Jennie Lee Sitting on a Chair, With Her Hands Up Holding a Hair-Dress On Her Head. 1890. Charles H. McCaghy Collection of Exotic Dance from Burlesque to Clubs. <http://hdl.handle.net/1811/47635>)

Willard's complaints about women's appearance, purity, and prostitution expressed national concerns, as black migration, European immigration, and industrialization reshaped the nation and women's roles in it. In 1895, the Purity Congress, a meeting of women's and men's social and moral reform organizations, established a single moral standard that required men and women to abstain from sex until marriage. Reformers committed to actions to support their mandates that included repression of commercialized vice in red-light districts catering

to prostitution and sale of alcohol through state regulation, preventative, and educational activities.⁹

Alarm about the city and threats to purity were raised by mass media like the *Farm Journal*, which offered farm girls advice, including proper dress.¹⁰ The Illinois Vigilance Committee declared that drinking and dancing could push an at-risk girl into a downward spiral whereby she became "immodest, indecent, lawless, homeless, and a victim and distributor of vile diseases."¹¹ By World War I, many reformers believed that prostitutes and promiscuous working-class and poor women in urban areas spread venereal disease that threatened military readiness. Such beliefs created a shift among reformers from protection espoused by the Purity Congress toward persecution. Many states, including Illinois, had passed some form of Sex Repressive Law that labeled all sexually active single women prostitutes by 1921.¹² Unmarried women accused of fornication could be fined or jailed.¹³

EROSION OF BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS AND RISE OF BLACK CLUBWOMEN

Rapid social and economic changes produced national anxieties during the Progressive Era that centered on issues of equal rights, privileges, and protections for African Americans and white women. Blacks faced ongoing loss of equal rights assigned to them by the Emancipation Proclamation and subsequent Constitutional Amendments. They attempted to counter the trend through various means, including the uplift agenda, or racial uplift ideology. According to historian Kevin Gaines, "What historians refer to as racial uplift ideology describes a prominent response of black middle-class leaders, spokespersons, and activists to the crisis marked by the assault on the civil and political rights of African Americans primarily in the U.S. South from roughly the 1880s to 1914."¹⁴

A confirmation of the erosion of African American civil rights occurred in 1883. Wells-Barnett, a staunch supporter of the uplift agenda, won a lawsuit against the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad that directed the company to honor the 14th Amendment's provision governing equal access to transportation accommodations. In a legal brief, she described her refusal to ride in the segregated "Jim Crow" car that housed whites' waste, animals, smokers, and vagrants. She was subsequently ejected from the train with clothes tattered and askew. The Tennessee Supreme Court reversed the ruling in 1887.¹⁵ That reversal altered blacks' civil rights at a time when escalating mob violence against them in the form of



Ida Wells-Barnett and other members of NACWC set standards for African Americans' moral behavior and fashion as indicative of readiness for civil rights. (Image: Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library)

lynchings began to exceed white lynchings for the first time.¹⁶

The impetus to assemble local, state, and national colored women's clubs together under one umbrella began officially with the refusal of the 1893 World's Fair/Columbian Exposition to allow an exhibit fully representing African American women's quarter-century of progress since slavery. This exclusion set off a firestorm of protests by black clubwomen and other proponents of equal rights for African Americans. Wells-Barnett along with Frederick Douglass and several other rights' activists responded with a treatise denouncing the World's Fair's decision.¹⁷ Wells-Barnett's fervor towards preventing civil rights violations had begun with her own expulsion from public transportation.

Shortly after the World's Fair's affront, a Missouri white man's letter published in the United States and England, disdaining the "character and morals" of black womanhood, rallied several African American

clubs to gather for an emergency meeting in Boston in 1896 to strategize ways to salvage their damaged reputations.¹⁸ They arrived at a consensus that dress reform would present visible signifiers of moral integrity and the race's progress. Along with moral improvements, they included educational approaches to prevent further erosion of black civil rights.¹⁹ The Missouri man's letter underscored what black clubwomen understood about the pervasiveness of negative beliefs about black women's sexuality, which influenced their exclusion from claims to respectable womanhood and subjected them to sexual violations for which they were made responsible. While black women were concerned about white women reformers' exclusions of them from clubs that addressed multiple social concerns, they were especially sensitive to how this sexualized view of them had contributed to their recent exclusion from the 1893 Columbian Exposition for accusations of immorality.²⁰ Countering perceptions of black women as "ignorant and immoral," and protecting themselves from continuing debasements by white men that shame and humiliation kept them from admitting were assigned high priority. Thus, elevating and dignifying African American womanhood, as demonstrated through dress and behavior, rose to the top of their list of practical solutions, as did pledging to protest the untruthfulness of the "foul slander" placed on the race.²¹

However, as blacks moved out of the South and violent mob attacks intensified and expanded, black and white supporters of the uplift agenda believed it even more imperative to influence white perceptions of blacks by shaping and controlling how blacks appeared and behaved in public. While the *Chicago Defender* newspaper aided this agenda through its national socialization program targeting all black migrants, the NACWC and Detroit Urban League pressed middle-class black women into service to socialize black women, especially Southern migrants and women of ill-repute. Black women, as exemplars of the moral rectitude of the race by which justification for equal rights and treatment could be measured, endured significant pressure to model acceptable, respectable behavior.

Daisy Westbrook and her sister's wearing of their bungalow aprons outside, garments typically worn in and around the home, possibly created transgressions of several social and cultural contracts inherent in the relationship of colored women's clubs and the African American population.²² As middle-class professional women, the Westbrook sisters would have qualified for membership in a state club of the NACWC, whose chapters were active throughout

Illinois and Missouri, including St. Louis and East St. Louis.²³ The NACWC had declared that neither black women nor the black race could afford the slightest fashion faux pas or hints of behavioral impropriety.²⁴

Black East St. Louis women who may have prescribed to the NACWC's uplift agenda carried the weight of the race on their backs. Black clubwomen imbued the behavior of black women with extraordinary power to influence others. "Fallen" black women, the NACWC contended, through their "mistakes and stumbling" risked dragging not only women, but also the race and the nation down with them.²⁵ Consequently, black middle-class women were to "begin to carry reform through dress," and "dress with purity," because in elevating and purifying themselves and society, they demonstrated that black people deserved the same rights, privileges, and protections as other "patriotic, brave, and loyal" persons with an American birthright.²⁶ The NACWC's identification as All-American during the World War I years inundated their reformist activities with patriotic fervor. This action aligned them with the nation during the violent phase of the war, in hopes of diminishing white mob violence against them and assuring their inclusion in the country's democracy and privileges. The country's failure to do so prompted W.E.B. Du Bois to express his anger in a jeremiad.²⁷

Prior to WWI, the Illinois Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, a state chapter of the NACWC, made reaching "every black woman in every part of the State" a major focus of its activities.²⁸ The NACWC's uplift agenda for personal moral improvements and dress reform required that black women "Keep their souls and bodies free from the taint of sin," for it was only through self-improvement that they could "help women in slums and back alleys."²⁹ To further those goals, the Illinois Federation directed a stringent campaign in East St. Louis between 1910–1912 that targeted working-class black women they deemed unsuccessful in meeting high standards for morality. The program encouraged women to control their sexuality as an antidote to persistent perceptions of "black women as lewd and immoral."³⁰

The uplift agenda seemed more imperative as the nation failed to embrace black civil rights and as racial mob violence escalated after WWI. But implementation of the agenda did not progress without conflicts when black reformers classified the appearance and behaviors of some black Southern migrants as social transgressions. Those new arrivals, whether because of ignorance or unwillingness, balked at conceding control of their personal

decisions about style to clubwomen's dictates. Historian Valerie Grim's research on southern blacks who migrated to the midwest, and East St. Louis migrants' attitudes toward reform during the second



Race riot survivors Daisy and Cora Westbrook were rescued wearing bungalow aprons, or house dresses like these, which black reformers deemed appropriate only for wear at home. (Image: "Circular, Issues 263–292, 1922 Circular 280, Organization and Direction of Clothing Club." In *Clothing Club Manual*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

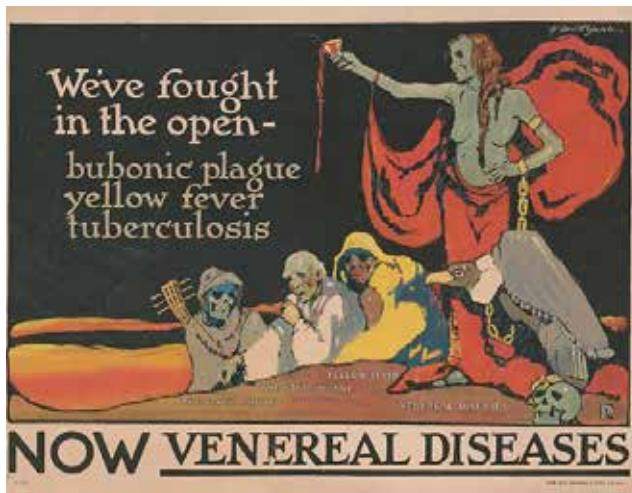
decade of the twentieth century, revealed only partial receptivity to fashion and morality uplift activities.

Southern migrants, according to Grim's oral history, expressed a liking for the fashions they saw in the city. However, they did not appreciate the emphasis on dressing a certain way every day. The migrants reported that unlike in the midwest, what one wore did not receive special attention in their rural southern communities, except for a general expectation of dressing-up on Sundays. These migrants resented reformers' suggestions of what to wear for tasks as simple as shopping.³¹ Such resentments thwarted black clubwomen's attempts to exert total control over the dress and behavior of black migrants and other poor persons in the midwest. In fact, some working- and lower-class blacks saw black middle-class reformers as "arrogant, self-appointed leaders of the race."³²

The *Chicago Defender*, a major ally of the NACWC read nationally, aggressively recruited black migrants to the north. However, beginning in 1917, as northern racial violence occurred in increased frequency and intensity, the newspaper published specific guidelines to socialize black migrants to appropriate fashion and behavior. Columns addressing dos and don'ts, with titles such as "How to Act in Public Places," appeared in the newspaper until the 1920s. These prescriptions reflected reformers' beliefs about how blacks could

best integrate into African American culture and survive in the north.³³ The *Chicago Defender's* national actions coincided with local reforms of the Detroit, Michigan, Urban League. The League established the Dress Well Club, which served many functions beyond its focus on appearance and proper etiquette education. Desired outcomes for Club participation included impressing white potential employers, minimizing segregation, and enhancing black female respectability.³⁴

In the aftermath of the Chicago Race Riot of 1919, the *Chicago Defender* partnered with the Chicago Urban League to socialize black migrants to demonstrate more acceptable fashion choices and



The outbreak of venereal disease, believed to negatively affect military readiness during WWI, helped Shift reformers' attitudes towards prostitutes and loose women from supportive to punitive, as this poster suggests. (Image: Library of Congress)

respectable behaviors in public. A patriotic urban socialization campaign went into high gear, one that harkened back to Daisy Westbrook's concerns about wearing the bungalow apron in public during the East St. Louis Riot. The League created a leaflet with an American flag design that strongly discouraged migrants' practices of "wearing dust caps, bungalow aprons, house clothing and bedroom shoes out of doors," as well as "loud talking and objectionable deportment on street cars."³⁵ While the local Illinois Federation of Colored Women's Clubs distributed the leaflets door-to-door, the *Chicago Defender* sent the messages across the country via its newspaper.³⁶ Reformers' prescriptive educational campaigns demonstrated their continuing beliefs that socializing black migrants to northern social conventions would minimize the increasing racial mob violence against blacks.

Black uplift reformers focused on assimilation and social controls, consistent with national reform trends that addressed perceived threats from venereal disease, immigration, and foreign enemies. However, their strategies, while not fully negating or minimizing the violent behavior of whites, appeared to make the victims responsible for their own violations. The appearance of blaming the victim was not relegated to black reformers and black women. In fact, the issue acquired ambiguous meanings when white reformers targeted white female prostitution, immigration, and white slavery nationally, then turned their sights to the local municipality of East St. Louis.

FAILURES OF RESPECTABILITY AND OTHER REASONS TO RIOT

When Carlos Hurd reported on the appearance and behavior of white prostitutes violently attacking blacks during the East St. Louis Race Riot, he continued a longstanding reformist commentary expressing anxieties over women, work, and moral access to respectability. Hurd drew a clear distinction between the "womanhood of East St. Louis" and the white prostitutes brutalizing black women. Those white women's "faces showed all too plainly exactly who and what they were."³⁷ Hurd's categorization of women into distinct groups spoke not only to issues of class, but also race and visible markers for social control prominent in reform discourse.³⁸ By attaching a certain appearance and aggressive behavior to prostitutes and their work, he reinforced the accepted norm that such characteristics were outside the domain of "respectable" womanhood, especially as defined by the ideology of true womanhood and the tenets of purity and piety.³⁹ This reassurance affirmed the importance of true womanhood and diminished misinterpretation of his statements.

Anxieties over urbanization and the huge influx of less desirable Southern and Eastern European immigrants combined to push early twentieth century white reformers toward a frenzy of activities to suppress "white slavery" prostitution and socialize the new arrivals. White reformers' strategies included efforts to force immigrants' conformity to specific fashion styles as a sign of Americanization. This included young girls' and women's erasure of obvious signs of foreignness and lower-class status to diminish their vulnerability to prostitution. However, some immigrant domestic workers thwarted reformers' attempts to use fashion as class markers by dressing like their middle-class employers.⁴⁰

Despite this blurring of social class, immigrant females remained at risk.

National discourses by nativists demonized European female immigrants as fertile “brood mares” with questionable morals, responsible for white “race suicide,” and the men as paupers.⁴¹ Jane Addams, social worker, moral reformer, and co-founder of Chicago’s Hull House, the first settlement house in the United States, provided a crucial intervention for all new immigrants.⁴² Addams had a wide reach from co-founder of the NAACP to only female member of the Board of the American Social Hygiene Association (ASHA), an alliance of social, moral, and hygiene organizations. Infusing her programs with social gospel and municipal housekeeping, she insisted on the importance of structures and spaces in communicating her mission and Americanizing immigrants through social, educational, and practical



Jane Addams (right) and settlement house programs attempted to counter negative nativist rhetoric about European immigrants through social gospel, municipal housekeeping, and other programs that sought to “Americanize” new arrivals. (Image: Wikimedia)

programs.⁴³ East St. Louis had absorbed immigrants from Hungary, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Armenia by the time of the race riot. They had established churches and other social and recreational institutions that provided mutual support and maintained their cultural heritage.⁴⁴ Addams’ work served as a model for actively engaging with social and moral issues. She participated in national discourses throughout her adult life, including those on prostitution.⁴⁵

Lawmakers passed several pieces of anti-immigration and prostitution legislation in the early 1900s.⁴⁶ Beliefs that prostitutes infected with

venereal disease presented a major health threat to soldiers during World War I resulted in aggressive campaigns to close brothels, especially those located near military installations.⁴⁷ Reformers’ concerns that both foreign and native white males seduced new immigrant girls into prostitution spurred the passage of the Mann Act in 1910, an extension of previous anti-immigration legislation that criminalized the transportation of females across state lines for the purposes of prostitution. Chicago, more than East St. Louis, confronted prostitution and attempted to control it. The public regularly expressed its views, from ridicule of reformers to objections by prostitutes of their image.⁴⁸ In fact, identifying prostitutes by their use of excessive make-up and provocative clothing created cultural confusion. Even “respectable” women embraced the new beauty culture of wearing make-up.

Carlos Hurd’s reference to prostitutes with “... last night’s paint still unwashed on their cheeks,” contradicted the beauty trends that began in the late 1800s.⁴⁹ Respectable women began to embrace make-up as a fashion enhancement, contesting its suitability for only prostitutes and actresses. Those women negotiated acceptance of their appearance by agreeing to continue to wear the confining fashions of the times in exchange for at least discretely wearing rouge, lipstick, and eye make-up. They considered adoption of this new make-up culture a sign of independence and forward fashion and not as disrespect for womanhood. Their appeals to merchants to increase access to products ushered in the placement of cosmetics in department stores.⁵⁰ Merchants’ advertising of cosmetics helped white women overcome their concerns about make-up and morality, and transformed what had once been the domain of “public” women into a public commodity for respectable women.⁵¹

Regardless of whether “respectable” womanhood in East St. Louis engaged in contemporaneous beauty trends during the time of the race riot, East St. Louis and its women had gained reputations that invited frequent comments and visitors from outside the city. Young working-class women in search of leisure made the city’s saloons and dance halls popular destinations. Like first-generation immigrant “charity girls” described by historian Kathy Peiss, their expressions of sexuality and independence associated them with women who traded sexual favors for amusement, and contrasted with expectations for respectable female behavior. In dance halls, they engaged in provocative dance, imbibed alcohol, smoked cigarettes, propped their feet on tables, and cavorted with men by sitting



Addams' Hull House provided spaces that allowed embattled immigrants to come together, like this coffee shop, for support and socialization. (Image: *The Jane Addams Paper Project, Ramapo College of New Jersey*)

on their laps.⁵² Their actions conflated perceptions of progressive, independent single women with prostitutes. Both reformers targeting saloons and “tourists” from St. Louis visited East St. Louis, but with different objectives. Reformers sought to rescue “fallen” women, while upscale “tourists” and others participated in “slumming” to get a peek at prostitutes as though they were exotic creatures.⁵³ However, prostitutes’ preferences for open-front kimonos and silk stockings, and their reputation for walking the streets “scantily-dressed” while soliciting customers often differentiated them from more conservatively dressed fun-seeking “charity girls.”⁵⁴

Both their attire and make-up identified the white prostitutes whose brutality toward black women during the riot appeared both personal and designed to humiliate. Prostitutes “beat the Negresses faces and breasts with fists, stones, and sticks.” And, they clawed black women’s hair, ripped their sleeves, and hit them with a broomstick.⁵⁵ In fact, the Congressional Committee’s report of the riot concluded that those women were, “if possible, more brutal than the men.”⁵⁶ White prostitutes regularly had to contend with perceptions of black women as hypersexual, and therefore more desirable. European males heightened tensions around race and female sexuality. They defined the sexual nature of black women by the hyperdeveloped buttocks and genitals of an African woman, Sarah Baartman, also called the Black or Hottentot Venus. Black female sexuality became associated with deviance as mass media

presented Baartman as a caged spectacle in Europe with smiling white men gawking at her body. Even after her death, display of some of her body parts continued.⁵⁷

In addition, white men’s fascination with the sexuality of women of color inextricably entwined desire and power. As gender and postcolonial scholar Sandra Ponzanesi stated, “The white male gaze desires to unveil the female body but also fixes the black woman in her place.”⁵⁸ For the NACWC, a black woman’s place was beside every other respectable woman, regardless of race or class. But, white prostitutes’ attacks that publicly unclashed and humiliated black women underscored their historical representations as immoral, subjugated sex objects. At the same time, the unclashing offered white men the pleasure of a spectacle, as exhibition of Black Venus had done. The aggression of white prostitutes during the riot elevated them above the cowering black women victims to a closer proximity to the white males with whom they shared the public domain.

Even without the debasement during the East St. Louis Race Riot, achieving respectability presented special challenges for black women. African American studies scholar Farah Griffin suggested that “promise of protection” and “politics of respectability” within the black uplift agenda brokered an exchange of protection from black men for black women’s presentation of positive images critical to black progress and survival. However, for this reinforcement of black masculinity, black



W.E.B. DuBois' Paris Exhibition photographs like this one provided an intervention on behalf of African Americans to counter negative representations and to demonstrate respectability and readiness for equal rights, as did the pictorial of the East St. Louis race riot. (Image: Library of Congress)

women had to submit to “a stance of victimization.”⁵⁹ The caveat, however, was that nonconformity could be misinterpreted as resistance and rejection of the social contract, rather than a misunderstanding of the required behavior of black men and women for the purposes of protection.⁶⁰

W.E.B. DuBois, an uplift advocate, understood the power of black representation in achieving respectability. His prolific literature and the award-winning photographic collection exhibited at the 1900 Paris Exposition stood as proof of blacks' diversity, dignity, and humanity, and contradicted eugenicists' claims of black inferiority.⁶¹ The pictorial story of the East St. Louis Race Riot in the NAACP's *Crisis*, with DuBois as editor, provided another intervention in the discourse on black respectability. It captured both black residents' victimization and dignity, with most of the rescued women properly attired with head coverings.⁶² Thus, the absence of a hat, or wearing the bungalow apron outside the home, always contributed to discourses on black female respectability.

Spaces outside black homes required careful navigation to preserve respectability, as residents often encountered black and white prostitutes and vice in red-light districts located in or adjacent to their neighborhoods.⁶³ Saloons and gambling houses filled East St. Louis communities, and in black neighborhoods, half-clad or naked prostitutes performed lewd dances in dance halls. In addition, blacks had been associated with a rise in lawlessness

prior to the race riot. Whites expressed anger at perceived disrespect of white women by blacks. The litany of complaints contended that “White women were afraid to walk the streets at night; negroes sat on their laps on street cars, black women crowded them from their seats; they were openly insulted by drunken negroes.”⁶⁴ The House Hearings Report likened East St. Louis to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, declaring those cities to have been “more Christian.”⁶⁵ Long-held beliefs about blacks' inherent shortcomings, including criminality, aberrant sexuality, and violence fueled white reformers' acceptance of locating vice in black neighborhoods.⁶⁶ Less than a decade after the Illinois Federation campaigned to quash misconceptions about black women's moral character and respectability, East St. Louis in 1917 perpetuated those stereotypes.



Reformers portrayed dance halls, especially those associated with hotels, as sites of sexual victimization for vulnerable women initially. By the time of the riot they also represented spaces of unsavory and inappropriate sexual behavior and fashion. (Image: <http://www.archive.org/stream/fightingtraffici00bell#page/n59/mode/2up>)

POLITICS OF PLACE AND CONTROL OF PUBLIC SPACE

Investigations of the East St. Louis Race Riot by black civil rights activists, newspapers, and Congress shone a national spotlight on the inner workings of a dysfunctional city. They exposed the politics of place as the city struggled with racial strife, prostitution, immigration, and protection of “respectable womanhood” in public places. However, neither the city's reputation as a “wide open” party town where gambling, prostitution, and alcohol



Reformer Miller's complaint of an "Army of Prostitutes" congregating near the Y.M.C.A. in East St. Louis spoke to the shift to streetwalking following the closure of brothels in Illinois. These Chicago prostitutes dressed far more conservatively than those who participated in the East St. Louis Race Riot. (Image: Wikimedia)

went unchecked, nor its thriving saloon culture and red-light district distinguished it.⁶⁷ It was East St. Louis' Mississippi River location that made it especially important. Illinois Attorney General Edward Brundage declared that "East St. Louis lies at the gateway to the southwestern markets, factories, and carrier system tributaries to St. Louis Missouri." Thus, East St. Louis' affairs proved relevant to the local municipality and the regional economy.⁶⁸

This listing of the city's values suggested capital sufficient to support the people and its services. However, financial deficits left vice a major yet inadequate source for filling the city's coffers. Without revenue derived from taxing establishments of prostitution and other attendant vices, East St. Louis' ability to meet its basic needs would have been severely compromised.⁶⁹ Its importance to the national and regional economy belied the dire environment the city had created for many of its residents. By the time of the 1917 race riot, prostitution flourished and vice bosses controlled the city with the permission of the administration.⁷⁰

The city's depravity was not lost on the public. After the riot, letters to newspaper editors poured in from near and far with complaints about the city's corruption. One writer indicted the city for being "the most finished example of corporate-owned city government in the U.S." He decried the proportion of saloons to other community organizations and noted that they exceeded churches and schools combined.⁷¹ Roger Baldwin of the St. Louis Civic League, and future founder of the American Civil Liberties Union in 1920, referred to East St. Louis as the "Hoboken of St. Louis," referring to the city's reputation as St. Louis' industrial suburb. Baldwin

further asserted that the city was representative of the worst abuses, including prostitution, that reformers like himself addressed.⁷² An African American reformer from New York lambasted the rioters' cruelty for "throwing babies into the fire and shooting mothers," and the city's lawlessness for assigning no consequences to those responsible for so many black deaths.⁷³

East St. Louis' lawlessness and vice, as in many cities of the time, was not confined to black neighborhoods. The red-light district spread over a large area of the integrated "Valley" located adjacent to the central business, government, and police districts. Race riot survivor Daisy Westbrook observed that prostitutes regularly congregated near a popular corner practically across the street from law enforcement and down the street from her home



Wells-Barnett objected to East St. Louis residents evacuating the city caught without shoes and appropriate head wear. African American reformers later deemed the dust cap worn by children as unacceptable. (Image: "Refugees," *The Crisis*, September 1917)

located among whites. That location initially spared her home from rioters who believed that whites occupied it.⁷⁴ And, while prostitution also proliferated throughout the Valley, segregated white residential communities excluded both prostitution and vice.⁷⁵ The segregated "Black Valley," home of many blacks, adjacent to and south of City Hall, received very negative press. The *St. Louis Republic* painted a picture of depravity for the Black Valley and its residents, describing it as "cocaine dives, houses of pollution, gambling dens, and thieves' resorts" occupied by the "negroes of the lowest form of two-legged existence."⁷⁶

Despite the challenges of East St. Louis' public spaces, Westbrook and her sister, both middle-class professional women, had been charged by



Kimono nightgowns like these modeled after Japanese Kimonos were associated with prostitutes, so the references in coverage of the riot of African American women wearing them carried negative connotations. (Image: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Agricultural Experiment Station, "Variations in the Kimono Nightgown," Circular 280, Clothing Club Manual, 1922)

the NACWC with uplifting black womanhood for two decades. Westbrook's description of the clothes she had purchased and the jewelry she wore when rescued affirmed her attention to appropriate fashion.⁷⁷ However, the bungalow aprons, or housedresses, Westbrook and her sister wore when rescued may have complicated perceptions of their class and respectability. Although the garment had been originally marketed to white middle-class suburban women for its comfort and style for doing housework and lounging, its similarity to the stylish kimono nightgown sometimes worn by prostitutes could create fashion confusion.⁷⁸

Thus, Westbrook's bungalow apron, contrary to her usual public attire, would not readily distinguish her from black prostitutes, lower-class blacks, or the black migrants who sometimes wore the bungalow apron outside.⁷⁹ During the riot, news reports reinforced the stereotypes of blacks in East St. Louis as poor, ragged, living in squalor, and mostly recent migrants from the South. The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* led with the headline, "Barefoot and in Rags Refugees Depart: Others Better Off, Pay Way to South," on July 3, 1917.⁸⁰ It described only one black woman as dressed neatly. That headline implied that many black residents were poor and ragged, but Wells-Barnett's tour of the city with residents, and the NAACP *Crisis* photos, showed otherwise.

Wells-Barnett's post-riot report countered negative perceptions newspapers had disseminated about blacks in East St. Louis. As founder of the Chicago Ida B. Wells Club, she supported the charge of the black uplift agenda for black women to show the black race's readiness for civil rights through their behavior and dress.⁸¹ Her investigation had begun at City Hall, accompanied by a black nurse, Delores Farrow, where they met several black women returning from St. Louis to retrieve clothes and other items they could salvage. She described some women as "bareheaded and their clothing dirty," partly confirming newspaper reports of some survivors.⁸² Her attention to the absence of hats spoke to the importance of fashion and expectations of dress for respectable women at that time. Hats, by their design and material, could indicate status and were required apparel for properly attired women.⁸³ Outward signs of respectability, like appearance, carried more weight in the fight for civil rights than emotional state. Wells-Barnett's commentary on the dirty, hatless women reminded society not only of the material losses the women incurred from the riot, but also of the indignities respectable women suffered when forced to move about in public space in an unacceptable state. Her findings also challenged

newspapers' causes for the riots, such as a large influx of black migrants, and the perception that all blacks were uneducated and lived in grinding poverty.

From City Hall, Wells-Barnett and Farrow accompanied the black women to what was left of their homes. Those women had lived in East St. Louis from a few months to almost twenty years. The fair to excellent quality of the furnishings the women had owned, including pianos, offered further evidence of the class of some of East St. Louis' black residents.⁸⁴ Wells-Barnett recounted that a white neighbor had taken the clothes of one survivor, subtly suggesting that the quality of those clothes made them desirable to white people. The white woman justified taking the clothes because others were doing the same thing. That woman's confession confirmed the stories of looting that blacks had claimed.⁸⁵ Daisy Westbrook's letter of her own nice clothes and piano also confirmed Wells-Barnett's findings. Westbrook's letter expressed the pain of losing "everything." The music teacher had lamented that while she had recently purchased new furniture and nice dresses for a trip, "I miss my piano more than anything else."⁸⁶

While Wells-Barnett's investigation revealed the effects of the riot and the politics of place on some black residents, the House Investigation exposed the negative effects of prostitution on residents. William Miller, director of the East St. Louis Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), complained during the House Hearings that an "army of prostitutes" hung out in the central business district near his building and harassed his tenants. Prostitutes stood around in kimonos, knocked on doors, and often interfered with the men's sleep.⁸⁷ But, neither prostitution legislation nor the 1915 Illinois law allowing suits against brothels as public nuisances had majorly impacted East St. Louis prostitution.⁸⁸ Rather, brothel closures in East St. Louis and other cities increased the visibility and practices of prostitution. Prostitutes took to the streets, flaunted their sexuality and beauty, and confounded ideas about women's place and acceptable behavior in the public sphere.⁸⁹

Such behavior aggravated Miller's anxieties about public decency, especially since middle- and upper-class women had brought their concerns for the poor, and their skills and dedication to clean, orderly homes immersed in Protestant values, into cities' public spaces.⁹⁰ Volunteer organizations, including the YMCA's sister organization, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Salvation Army, and the NACWC, often embraced municipal housekeeping combined with social gospel. They



Elaborate kimono and make-up worn by Japanese prostitutes influenced American fashion, including that of prostitutes in East St. Louis. (Image: Library of Congress)

believed in providing "redemptive places," sites with added moral guidance, for persons in need without regard for race, religion, or ethnic origins.⁹¹ However, the Congressional Committee blamed the corrupt St. Clair County attorney general, Hubert Schaumleffel, for lack of "moral courage," "civic pride," and "character" for allowing prostitution and other vices to thrive in East St. Louis.⁹² Miller chastised Mayor Mollman and the police department for failing to get prostitutes off the streets. He complained that Mollman lacked a "moral vision" for feigning ignorance about the vice problem. Miller acted on his own when local government failed to support him. Only after he enlisted a reporter who wrote an exposé about the situation did the city's government respond.⁹³

The city had previously enacted anti-prostitution legislation that required white women to justify walking the streets at night or risk arrest, and,

prohibited them from going to saloons. However, in 1913 reformers convinced the city's administration to repeal policies that severely restricted the mobility of white women and where they could go.⁹⁴ Restricting only females' mobility and use of public space blatantly discriminated based on gender. The government's assumption of superiority in determining proper female conduct harkened back to the cult of domesticity and separate spheres. Women who navigated certain city spaces at night encroached on men's place, the public domain.⁹⁵ Restrictive mobility suggested the home as the proper place for white women after dark, and that women did not possess the moral fortitude for making appropriate decisions about their actions. While the policing of prostitutes and respectable white women may have appeared protective, women with ambiguous identities who frequented saloons and dance halls lost a source of leisure during implementation of the restrictive anti-prostitution campaign.

However, as Paul Anderson reported in the *Post-Dispatch*, saloon owners showed little regard for the safety and welfare of girls and women, and often rented upstairs saloon rooms to young girls for prostitution.⁹⁶ Several hundred girls between thirteen and sixteen years old were noted to have visited connected venues in East St. Louis that included dance halls, saloons, and hotels. Described as having hair loose down their backs and wearing short dresses, they engaged in public, lascivious dancing with drunken "toughs." Rape of teens who found themselves in compromised situations was not uncommon in those environments.⁹⁷ Those young girls ran afoul of social reformers concerned with social purity, regulation of consent in sexual interactions, and the risks of "white slavery" prostitution.⁹⁸ Hence, parents and guardians of the city's youth may have viewed policing actions as preventative and protective measures rather than punitive.

CONCLUSION

Local newspapers' commentaries about black and white women's behavior, make-up, and fashions amidst the violence of the East St. Louis Race Riot offered strong confirmation of the nation's

anxieties over race, class, and gender. Daisy Westbrook's concern about wearing her bungalow apron outside was an expression of that complex interplay during the Progressive Era. East St. Louis and other cities where race riots occurred acted as local stages on which some of society's national concerns played out. Local anxieties over fashion and public behaviors manifested the nation's concerns about the changing roles of blacks and women in American society. Black reformers and civil rights organizations, via the uplift agenda, placed their hopes on black women for justifying equal rights for the whole race. Reformers' efforts to demonstrate blacks' readiness for equal rights through black women's behavior and appearance, as indicators of respectability, met with mixed results. This was especially true for new black migrants who co-opted to wear outside the bungalow apron and other garments typically worn inside, and further resisted assimilation by rejecting modification of their public behavior. In addition, the pervasiveness of red-light districts, vice, and prostitution challenged all women's claims to respectability.

Clear markers of respectable white womanhood and class were diminished by the new beauty culture, white women's progressive fashion choices, and some immigrant domestic workers' preferences for dressing up like their employers. Women who behaved like "charity girls," whose sexual behavior demonstrated changing sexual mores, challenged expectations of what some would consider public displays of mannish behavior. Interventions, such as municipal housekeeping in places like Chicago and temporary legal restrictions on women's public mobility in East St. Louis reflected national concerns about women, who had moved into the public domain alongside men.

Reformers who initially deemed white women prostitutes as victims needing protection later turned punitive as war loomed and venereal disease threatened the readiness of the nation's military. Prostitutes' visibility in public places, and the physical displays of aggression toward blacks during the race riot, underscored some white women's lack of concern for the social controls reformers tried to place on their appearance and public behaviors.

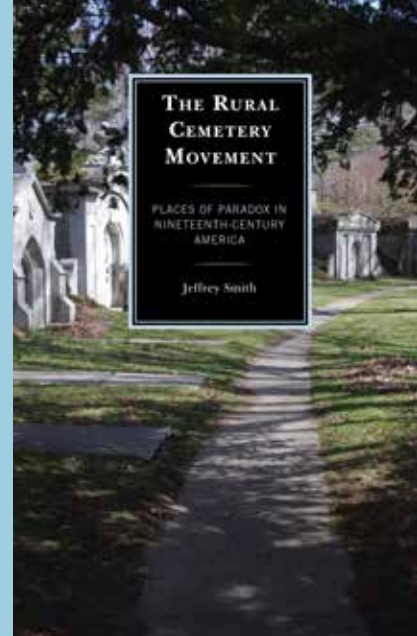
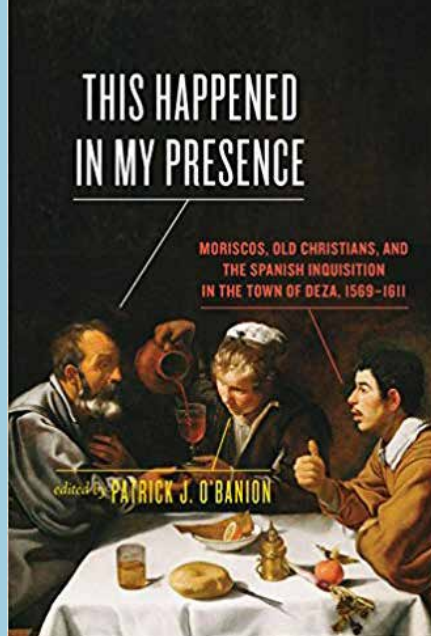
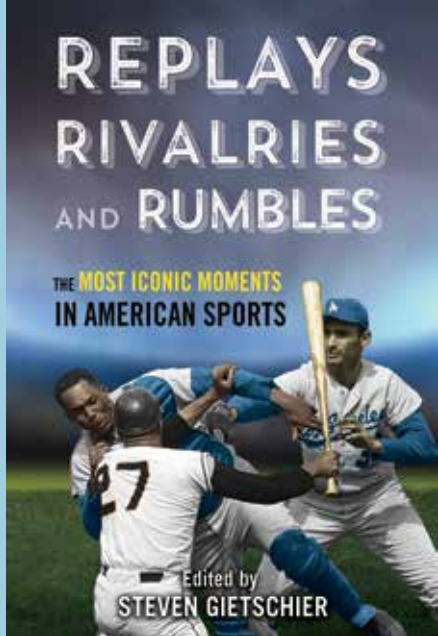
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New From the Lindenwood History & Geography Department

Replays, Rivalries, and Rumbles: The Most Iconic Moments in American History (University of Illinois Press, 2017)
By Steven Gietschier

What were the iconic sports moments of the last century? In *Replays, Rivalries, and Rumbles*, a team of sports aficionados climb onto their bar stools to address that never-solved but essential question. Triumphs and turning points, rivalries and record-setters—each chapter tracks down the real story behind the epic moments and legendary careers sports fans love to debate. Topics include Abner Doubleday and the origins of baseball; the era-defining 1979 duel between Larry Bird and Magic Johnson; how Denver and Cleveland relive *The Drive*; the myths surrounding the Ali-Foreman Rumble in the Jungle; Billie Jean King's schooling of Bobby Riggs; the Miracle on Ice; and ESPN's conquest of the sports world. Filled with eye-opening lore and analysis, *Replays, Rivalries, and Rumbles* is an entertaining look at what we think we know about sports.

This Happened in My Presence: Moriscos, Old Christians, and the Spanish Inquisition in the Town of Deza, 1569-1611 (University of Toronto Press, 2017)
By Patrick J. O'Banion

The introduction explains the medieval origins of Deza's Christian, Muslim, and Jewish populations and the changing policies toward religious minorities under the Catholic Monarchs and the Hapsburgs. The workings of the Spanish Inquisition and of Deza's local religious and political institutions are clearly described. Helpful pedagogical materials enhance the primary sources: a timeline interweaving local, national, and international events; a cast of characters; four modern images of Deza; maps; a glossary; discussion questions; and a bibliography.

The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America (Lexington Books, 2017)
By Jeffrey Smith

When Mount Auburn opened as the first “rural” cemetery in the United States in 1831, it represented a new way for Americans to think about burial sites. It broke with conventional notions about graveyards as places to bury and commemorate the dead. Rather, the founders of Mount Auburn and the spate of similar cemeteries that followed over the next three decades before the Civil War created institutions that they envisioned being used by the living in new ways. Cemeteries became places for leisure, communing with nature, and creating a version of collective memory. In fact, these cemeteries reflected changing values and attitudes of Americans spanning much of the nineteenth century. In the process, they became paradoxical: they were “rural” yet urban, natural yet designed, artistic yet industrial, commemorating the dead yet used by the living.

The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America breaks new ground in the history of cemeteries in the nineteenth century. This book examines these “rural” cemeteries modeled after Mount Auburn that were founded between the 1830s and 1850s. As such, it provides a new way of thinking about these spaces and new paradigm for seeing and visiting them. While they fulfilled the sacred function of burial, they were first and foremost businesses. The landscape and design, regulation of gravestones, appearance, and rhetoric furthered their role as a business that provided necessary services in cities that went well beyond merely burying bodies. They provided urban green spaces and respites from urban life, established institutions where people could craft their roles in collective memory, and served as prototypes for both urban planning and city parks.

A NEW ENGLAND ABOLITIONIST VISITS A ST. LOUIS SLAVE TRADER

KENNETH H. WINN



Descended from patrician New England stock, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a Unitarian minister and radical reformer, may be more popularly known today as poet Emily Dickinson's special friend and mentor, but in the late 1850s he was known for being a militant abolitionist. He advocated Northern disunion from Southern slaveholders, and he was subsequently exposed as one of the "Secret Six" who raised money for John Brown's attack on the federal armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, in hope of igniting a race war. In 1862 Higginson served as a colonel of black troops raised from South Carolina's Sea Islands, the first authorized regiment of Freedmen of the Civil War.¹



Higginson's longstanding vocal abolitionism changed into an active belligerency with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas had designed the bill to help win Southern support for a transcontinental railroad originating in Chicago. Controversially it repealed the Missouri Compromise of

1820, which forbade the spread of slavery north of Missouri's southern border, and now gave actual settlers the right to determine whether to establish slavery in the region. The possibility of creating new slave states out of the vast unorganized land acquired through the 1803 Louisiana Purchase set off a sectional firestorm and led to the creation of the Republican Party. "Bleeding Kansas" was soon engulfed by violence as "Free-soil" and pro-slavery settlers struggled for supremacy. In support of pro-slavery forces, Missouri "Border Ruffians" crossed into Kansas to cast illegal votes and intimidate free-soil settlers. As part of the effort to arm free-soilers, Higginson traveled there in 1856, stopping briefly in St. Louis.²

It was his first visit to Missouri. He had been to slave states before, and he was surprised to find so few African Americans wandering in St. Louis' downtown streets. He thought this especially strange because six steamboats had caught on fire, putting on a magnificent show at the city wharf, drawing, he estimated, a thousand spectators. Yet he could

not find more than ten black faces in the entire crowd. When he asked a stranger about the absence of slaves, he was told they generally they did not venture into the city's business district. This was a curious statement given the strong concentration of African Americans among the menial laborers on the wharf and on steamboats, but Higginson's impression was evidently sincere. More likely, he simply lacked knowledge of the city's demographic character. A few years later, the 1860 census would reveal that African Americans made up less than two percent of St. Louis' population, and the majority of those were not slave but free. By the time of Higginson's arrival, Missouri had the nation's smallest slave population, save Delaware. If he wanted to see the kind of slavery he expected in a Southern state, he would have to wait until he reached the state's central Missouri River corridor, or he might have seen it as well if he had ventured up the Mississippi River north of St. Louis.³

Whatever the case, like other New England abolitionists visiting slave states, he decided to visit one of the city's slave pens. He knew that St. Louis was no Richmond. Still, it was an important slave trade entrepot, with black captives regularly moving in and out from other geographic regions. After a search, he finally identified what he was looking for in the pages of the city's Democratic paper, the *Missouri Republican*, in which he found ads by John Mattingly and Corbin Thompson both directing him to Thompson's pen. He determined to visit it the next day.⁴

Higginson's subsequent account of his trip oozes sardonic indignation, using a clever, if rather mirthless satire, to make his antislavery points. In an age that sanctified home and family, especially sentimentalizing the bonds between mothers and children, abolitionists frequently pointed out how the slave trade violated what the larger society professed to hold dear by tearing the slave family apart. So, it is probably no accident that Higginson dwelled on the sale of sweet vulnerable little girls—pretty in pink—attempting to engage the reader's emotions, as if it might be his own daughter being sold into the hands of strangers. In some ways it was a typical set piece. By 1856 this had been a standard abolitionist polemical strategy.⁵

While Higginson is snobbish and condescending about what he saw in St. Louis, his account rings true. He notes the slaves in the pen ranged in age from about six to 40. So-called "likely" negroes, that is able-bodied slaves, typically between 15 and 35, usually sold best, certainly not seven-year-olds like "Sue." Higginson's claim that most of the slaves

Unitarian minister Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823–1911) was a leading figure in the abolition movement and a supporter of John Brown's raid. Early in his career, he invited William Wells Brown, a former slave who lived in St. Louis in his early life, to speak at his church, the First Religious Society of Newburyport. (Image: Library of Congress)

being sold at the pen were 14 years or younger is an undoubted exaggeration. In his account Thompson seems like an actual person—and not wholly unlikeable, even if engaged in a detestable business. Thompson seems more an amoral businessman than an ogre, at least until he thinks one of his “stock” might be thwarting her own sale, something that routinely angered slave traders. But Thompson has no refinement: neither the real nor fake Virginia gentility that led those easterners to refer to their slaves as “servants,” or their “people.” Thompson simply calls African Americans “Negroes” and “Niggers,” and he makes the shocking offer to strip the little girls so a buyer can see that they are sound, though this was a common offer by traders, even genteel Virginians.⁶

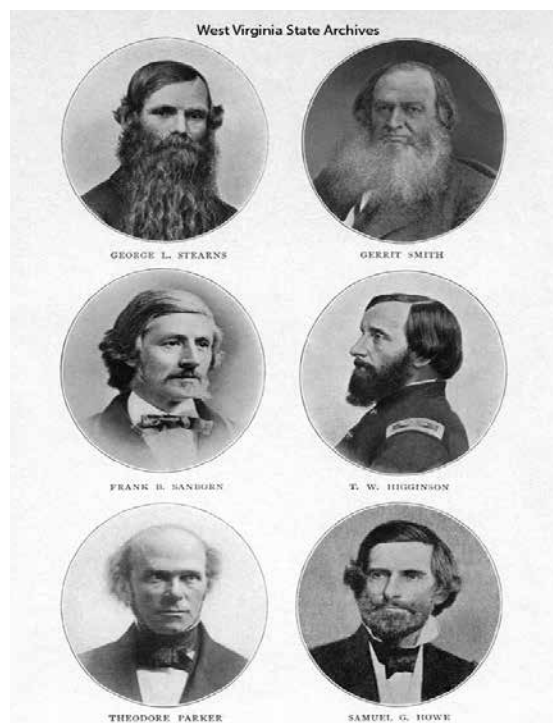
Higginson himself uses stereotypes, referring to “Sambos” and “Dinahs,” and scorns rich Southern whites, giving them names like Bulford Dashaway, Esq., and Miss Caroline Pettitoes. These wealthy Southerners, he suggests, enjoy their transitory luxuries and Northern vacations based on the misery they create by selling an expendable slave to finance their trips. The one St. Louis buyer that appears in Higginson’s article is described as a kind gentleman—“the very kindest man who ever chewed tobacco in the streets of Missouri”—but Higginson

shows that even a kind gentlemen cannot help but harm those being sold.

At the end of his visit Higginson asks Thompson if he would not like to try to keep slave families together. While slave traders like Thompson did, of course, heartlessly tear relations apart normally, that work was accomplished by the slaveowners who rarely sold their captives as intact families. Thompson rather matter-of-factly responds that if he spent a lot time brooding about breaking up families, he would need to get a new line of work.

Higginson wrote the following narrative as one of a series of articles on the Kansas issue for Horace Greely’s *New York Tribune*. It is drawn here from a 1914 book of Higginson’s personal and public writings compiled by his daughter, Mary, entitled *Thomas Wentworth Higginson: The Story of His Life*.⁷

The Secret Committee of Six, pictured here, were influential abolitionists who secretly supported John Brown in his planned attack of a federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia), in December 1859. Higginson was one of the six, along with Samuel Gridley Howe, Theodore Parker, Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, Gerrit Smith, and George Luther Stearns. (Image: Institute for Advanced Technology in Humanities, West Virginia State Archives)





As this engraving suggests, St. Louis was a bustling city in the mid-1850s, when Higginson visited. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

I took an early opportunity to call on Mr. Corbin Thompson. I found him in the doorway of a little wooden office, like a livery-stable office in one of our cities; he being a large, lounging, good-natured looking man, not unlike a reputable stable-keeper in appearance and manner. Inside his stable, alas! I saw his dusky “stock,” and he readily acceded to my desire to take a nearer look at them.

Behind the little office there was a little dark room, behind that a little kitchen, opening into a dirty little yard. This yard was surrounded by high brick walls, varied by other walls made of old iron plates, reaching twenty feet high. These various places were all swarming with Negroes, dirty and clean, from six years old to forty—perhaps two dozen in all, the majority being children under fourteen.

“Fat and sleek as Harry [Henry] Clay’s,” said my conductor, patting one on the head patriarchally.

Most of them had small paper fans, which they used violently. This little article of comfort looked very odd, amid such squalid raggedness as most of them showed. One was cooking, two or three washing, and two playing euchre with a filthy pack of cards. The sun shone down intensely hot (it was noon) in the little brick yard, and they sat, lounged, or lay about, only the children seeming lively.

I talked a little with them, and they answered, some quietly, some with that mixture of obsequiousness and impudence so common among slaves. Mr. Thompson answered all questions very readily. The “Negroes” or “Niggers,” he said (seldom employing the Virginia phrases ‘servants’ or ‘people’), came mostly from Missouri or Virginia, and were with him but a little while. “Buy when I can and sell when I can, that’s my way; and never ask no questions, only

in the way of trade. At this season, get a good many from travellers.”

On inquiry, he explained this mystery by adding that it was not uncommon for families visiting Northern watering-places to bring with them a likely boy or girl, and sell them to pay the expenses of the jaunt! This is a feature of the patriarchal institution which I think has escaped Mrs. [Harriet Beecher] Stowe.⁸ Hereafter I shall never see a Southern heiress at Newport without fancying I read on her ball-dress the names of the “likely boy or girl” who was sold for it. “As for yonder Sambo and Dinah” (I meditated), “no doubt, young Bulford Dashaway, Esq., is at this moment driving them out to Saratoga Lake, as a pair of blood-horses. Or Miss Caroline Pettitoes, of Fifth Avenue, how odd it would be if, as you sit superb by his side, those four-legged cattle suddenly resumed the squalid two-legged condition in which I now behold them, in Thompson’s Negro-yard, No. 67, Locust Street.”

I strolled back into the front office and sat down to see if anything turned up. The thing that turned up was a rather handsome, suburban-looking two-horse carriage, out of which stepped lazily a small, spare, gentlemanly man, evidently a favored patron of my host. After a moment’s private talk Thompson went out, while the gentleman said abruptly to me, “Well, it is all bad enough, housekeeping, marketing, and all, but I’m—if servants ain’t the worst of all.” We then talked a little, and I found him the pleasantest type of a Southerner—courteous, kind, simple, a little imperious—finally, a man of property, member of the city Government, and living a little out of town.

Thompson came in and shook his head. “Can’t let Negroes to anybody, Mr.—.Glad to sell, anyhow.”

“Got a good article of a small girl?” said the gentleman suddenly.

“Martha!” shouted the slave-dealer, and presently three good articles, aged eleven, nine, and seven, came trotting in. I had not seen them before. Nice little pink frocks, not very dirty—barefooted, of course, but apparently well taken care of, and evidently sisters. With some manoeuvring, they were arranged in a line before my new acquaintance, the purchaser.

He fixed his eyes on Sue, a black marble statue, aged seven. Nothing could have been kinder than Mr.—’s manner in addressing the little thing. “Will you like to come and live with me, and have some little girls to play with?”

(It is a little patriarchal, I said. That kind voice would win any child.)

I looked to see the merry African smile on the child’s face. But no smile came. There was a moment’s pause.

“Speak up, child,” said the merchant roughly. But she did n’t speak up, nor look up, either. Down went the black marble face, drooping down, down, till the chin rested on the breast of the little pink frock. Down, down came one big tear, and then another over the black marble cheeks; and then the poor little wretch turned away to the wall, and burst into as hearty an agony of tears as your little idol Susy, or yours (my good New-England mother), might give way to, at such an offer from the very kindest man who ever chewed tobacco in the streets of Missouri!

Human nature is a rather unconquerable thing, after all, is n’t it?

My kind purchaser looked annoyed, and turned away. The slave-trader gave an ominous look to the poor child, such as I had not seen on his face before. “Beg pardon, sir” (said he gruffly); “they only came from Virginia yesterday, and have n’t learnt how to treat gentlemen yet” (with an emphasis).

Poor little Sue!

The purchaser next turned to Martha, the elder sister, a bright Topsy-looking thing.

“What’s that on her cheek,” he asked, pointing to a sort of scar or streak of paleness. Martha grinned.

“Somebody’s whacked her chops, most likely,” said the slave-trader, coolly (in whose face I saw nothing good-natured after that). Nothing more was said about it.

The gentleman drew the child to him, felt the muscles of her arm, and questioned her a little. Her price was 700 dollars, and little Sue’s 450 dollars.

“Well, Martha,” said he at last, “would n’t you like to go with me and have a pleasant home?”

Strange to say, the African smile left Martha’s

merry face, too. “Please, sir,” said she, “I wish I could stay with my mother.”

“Confound the girls,” said the good-natured purchaser, turning to me in despair; “they must be sold to somebody, you know. Of course, I can’t buy the whole of them, and the mother, too.” Of course not; and there was the whole story in a nutshell.

“Nonsense, gals,” said Thompson; “your mother’ll be up here, maybe, some day.” (Pleasant prospect, in the lottery of life, for three ‘articles’ under twelve years.)

On inquiry it appeared that the mother was in Virginia, and might or might not be sent to St. Louis for sale. The intention was, however, to sell the children in a day or two, together or separately, or else to send them south with Mr. Mattingly.

To avert this, I hoped earnestly that my good-natured friend would buy one or more of the poor things. “For,” said he to me, “I mean to bring her up well. She’ll be a pet for the children—black or white it will make no difference—and while I live I shan’t sell her—that is while it is possible to help it.” (A formidable reservation, considering the condition of most Southern estates.)

The little pink frocks were ordered to stand off, and a bargain was finally struck for Martha, quite to Mr. Thompson’s chagrin, who evidently hoped to sell Sue, and would, no doubt, have done so, but for her ignorance “how to treat gentlemen.”

“Girl is sound, I suppose?” carelessly inquired the purchaser.

“Wind and limb,” responded the trader. “But strip her naked and examine every inch of her, if you wish,” he quickly added; “I never have any disguises with my customers.”

So ended the bargain, and I presently took my leave. I had one last glance at little Sue. It is not long since I set foot on the floating wreck of an unknown vessel at sea, and then left it drifting away in the darkness alone. But it was sadder to me to think of that little wreck of babyhood drifting off alone into the ocean of Southern crime and despair.

St. Louis must unquestionably be a very religious place, however, for in returning to my hotel I passed a church with inscriptions in four different languages. There was Jehovah in Hebrew, “Deo Uno et Trino,” “In honorem S. Ludovici.” Finally in English and [189] French, “My house shall be called the house of prayer,” with the rest of the sentence, in both cases, omitted. Singular accident, is n’t it?

I forgot to mention that I asked Mr. Thompson, out of the dozen children in his “yard,” how many had their parents or mothers with them. “Not one,” he answered, as if rather surprised at the question;

“I take ‘em as they come, in lots. Hardly ever have a family.”

“I suppose you would rather keep a family together?” I put in, suggestively.

“Yes,” he answered carelessly. “Can’t think much about that, though. Have to shut up shop pretty quick, if I did. Have to take ‘em as they come.”

This was evident enough, and I only insert it in the faint hope of enlightening the minds of those verdant innocents who still believe that the separation of families is a rare occurrence, when every New Orleans newspaper contains a dozen advertisements of “Assorted lots of young Negroes.”

E N D N O T E S

¹ For greater biographical information on Higginson, see Tilden G. Edelstein, *Strange Enthusiasm: A Life of Thomas Wentworth Higginson* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968) and Jeffery Rossbach, *Ambivalent Conspirators: John Brown, the Secret Six, and a Theory of Slave Violence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), especially pp. 21–22, 69–72. Both Edelstein and Rossbach skate over Higginson’s short stay in St. Louis.

² Higginson’s daughter, Mary, reprinted the article in a chronological compilation of her father’s personal and public writings as a documentary biography. I have taken the account from that volume as more accessible to the general reader. Mary Thaxter Higginson, *Thomas Wentworth Higginson: The Story of His Life* (Boston, MA, 1914), 182–89, <https://archive.org/stream/thomaswentworth00higgrich#page/213/mode/2up>

³ Thomas C. Buchanan, *Black Life on the Mississippi: Slaves, Free Blacks and the Western Steamboat World* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 8; Harrison Anthony Trexler, *Slavery in Missouri, 1804–1865* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1914), 226; Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict In Missouri During the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3–11; Douglas R. Hurt, *Agriculture and Slavery in Missouri’s Little Dixie* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 215–244.

⁴ John Mattingly, a notable itinerant slave trader, worked in both Missouri and Kentucky, usually setting up his “headquarters” in hotels. In the late 1850s, he formed

an association with Corbin Thompson and, as implied below, took their slaves for sale down the Mississippi River.

⁵ Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 188–91.

⁶ Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 144–49.

⁷ I have not changed outdated spelling in the original since it is not confusing, eschewing the use of “*sic*” as overly intrusive.

⁸ Published in 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s antislavery novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly*, received immediate acclaim across the North and in Great Britain. Higginson was numbered among its most ardent admirers. See Edelstein, *Strange Enthusiasm*, 141–42.

⁹ Higginson wrote this article principally for the New York readers of Horace Greeley’s *Tribune*. but in targeting New Yorkers with his heavy-handed satire he had a real point to make. Historian Eric Foner cites an estimate that at least 100,000 southerners visited New York each summer to conduct business and to escape the South’s summer heat, often bringing their enslaved domestic servants with them. New Yorkers vigorously competed for this southern trade. See *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 45–46.

A B O U T T H E A U T H O R S



Samanthé Bachelier completed her M.A. program at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville in May 2017. She is currently an adjunct instructor at SIUE and Southern New Hampshire University. She is interested in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States history. Specifically, she is interested in large social shifts during those eras concerning race relations at local, national, and international levels.



Tanya Jones is a recent graduate of Lindenwood University, where she studied history and philosophy. She previously interned at the Jewish Federation Archives where she conducted most of her research. She continues to pursue her interest in religious studies at a graduate level.



Lou W. Robinson received an M.S. in Mass Communications from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and an M.A. and Ph.D. in American Studies from Saint Louis University. Robinson's research has focused on Progressive Era black history, race, gender, and mob violence. In 2012, she co-scripted *Muddy River*, a dance theatre production examining race relations in the St. Louis area presented by Gitana Productions, Inc. Robinson is also a former resident of East St. Louis.

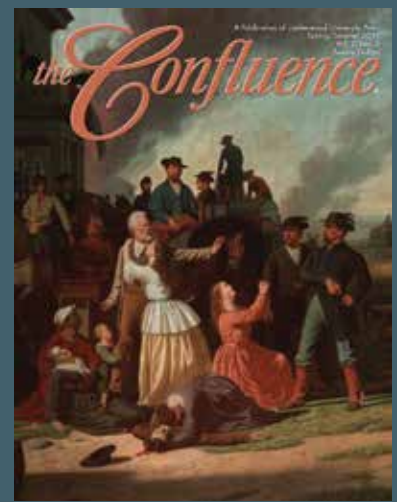
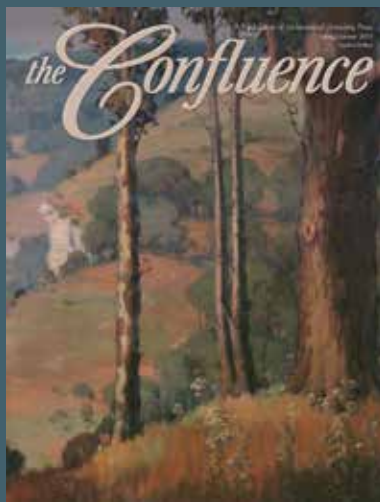
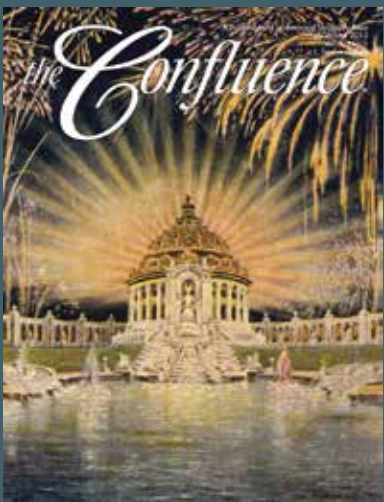
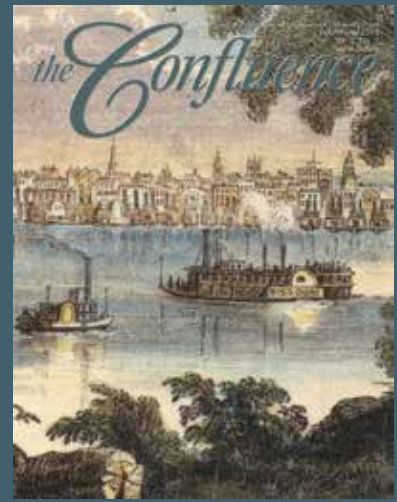
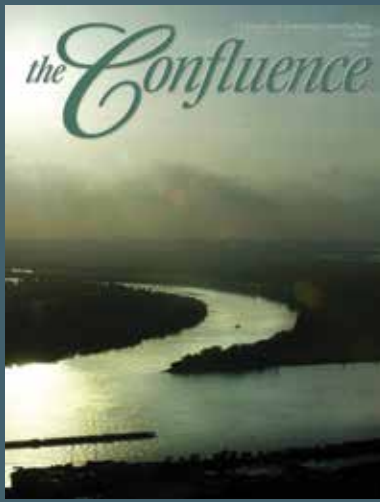
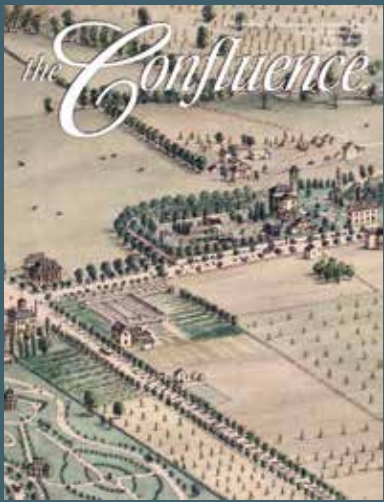


Kenneth H. Winn is the former State Archivist of Missouri and the former Director of the Library and Public Services at the Missouri Supreme Court. He received his Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis and subsequently taught history there and at the University of Missouri—Columbia. Winn is the author or editor of a number of books and articles, including *Exiles in a Land of Liberty: Mormons in America*, *The Dictionary of Missouri Biography*, and *Missouri Law and the American Conscience: Historic Rights and Wrongs*. He is currently working on the history of the St. Louis slave trade.



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