

English Composition Program
Department of English
Award Ceremony
March 15, 2016

University of Miami
College of Arts and Sciences
Coral Gables, Florida

Award Winners

Twenty-Second Annual
Audley Webster
Memorial Essay Contest



Audley Webster Memorial Essay Contest

2014-2015 Contest Coordinator:

Adina Sánchez-García

English Composition Program Director:

Joanna Johnson

English Composition Senior Administrative Assistant:

Mary Cano

Contributing Judges:

Susan Leary

Hallie Johnston

Josie Urbistondo

Samantha Philips

Melissa Burley

Joshua Schriftman

John Wafer

Darryl Ellison

Sarah Cash

Giovanni Turner

Alisa Bé

Judy Hood

Charlotte Rogers

Adina Sánchez-García

April Mann

Diana Dabek

Paul Deveney

Booklet Design/Cover Photograph:

Roxane Pickens



As the elevator doors open on the fourth floor of the Ashe building, Audley Webster exits and walks down the hall with a student by his side—always, a student by his side. As a graduate student in the English Department, I wondered how he made such an impact on his students because I could sense the admiration and respect that they had for him. After several semesters of observing him on these walks with students and of talking to him outside of his office (mine was just next door), I came to realize that the admiration and respect was mutual, that he made everyone who crossed paths with him feel important, special. As someone who has now been teaching for more than 20 years, I am thrilled to have this annual reminder of Audley Webster, of his commitment to his students, and of the impact that we can have—not just on writing but on the students themselves.

Adina Sánchez-García
Audley Webster Essay Contest Coordinator, 2015-2016



Dear Friends of the Audley Webster Memorial Essay Contest,

Every year the Audley Webster Memorial Essay contest showcases the outstanding writing we see daily in our composition classes. The exemplary writing you read here is informed, lively, and engaging, and it reflects the formidable efforts of both the students and their instructors. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to each of the winners in this 22nd anniversary year. We know that our student writers will continue to pursue their passions and writing in future years with the same vigor, intelligence, and spirit of inquiry that is exhibited in these pages.

Joanna Johnson, Ph.D.
Director, Composition Program
English Department



Contest Winners

Joi Wu – Martha Otis, instructor

Gabrielle Argimon – Joshua Schriftman, instructor

Honorable Mention

Jerry Bonnell – Ben Alsup, instructor

Audley Webster—The Professional

by Charlotte Rogers

Twenty-two years ago we selected the first winning essays of the Audley Webster Memorial Essay Contest. These yardsticks of quality prose from the University of Miami's first-year writing courses continue to identify the highest standards. How fitting, then, to boast this name: Audley Webster! Webster's years of teaching composition at our University convey a working definition of the professional.



Webster felt responsibility to a larger educational goal, says his daughter Dr. Susan Webster: “[a] love of teaching, and broader—imparting knowledge.” He loved sharing knowledge and rational thought with all his students, and he “believed that the greatest gift is the gift of learning, and that that gift is not complete until it is passed on.”

Throughout his professional life, Webster made expertise his specialty. He developed skills necessary for both his job and beyond, kept his knowledge up to date, and taught the individual as that individual learned best. Pictures remain of Webster sitting with a student, both concentrating on polishing that clear sentence. Did he succeed? Testimonials offer evidence: “He made instruction so clear,” and “He really cared that I learn to write,” assert two UM alumni. Evidence came, too, in the Monday newspapers wrapped in quotable quotes of the NFL or NBA week's hero, his former students; evidence remains in both national and international market plans that came from UM alumni now in the business world; and evidence appears in the clear, persuasive writing in legal briefs filed by former students, periodically remembering and using Webster's standards for rational thought.

And his was a personality of candor, honesty, courtesy, and respect for human dignity in all relationships. Many teachers of writing remember his advice—about both life and writing. That advice included a professional attitude and optimism. In addition, he could relate a narrative—often personal—to sharpen a point. For example, Dr. Webster, a psychologist, remembers when meeting students their saying, “Oh, you are the feminist daughter.”

Webster in his quiet, dignified, and confident manner, earned the respect of students and faculty with his high values and principles. Even before joining the U.M. faculty, he helped bring about equality through diversity on campuses. He lived the belief of Martin Luther King, Jr. that “An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of the individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.” Audley Webster embodied King's words, and through the above professional qualities—and more—he reminds us all of the highest standards in both teaching and imparting knowledge. —C.R., 2012, *edited*.

CONTENTS



Joi Wu	9
“Collaborative Consumption: How the Sharing Economy Is Shaping the Future” ENG 107 • Martha Otis • Spring 2015	
Gabrielle Argimon	21
“A Day in the Life of a Classical Principal” ENG 105 • Joshua Schriftman • Fall 2015	
Jerry Bonnell	27
“Tom and Jerry: Taking Over the Steamboat Willie” ENG 106 • Ben Alsup • Spring 2015	

Writing entries appear as originally submitted, with no additional editing.

Instructor Reflections—Martha Otis on Joi Wu

I had the good fortune to be Joi Wu's instructor for two semesters, during which she thought deeply and long about matters currently transforming our culture, from selfie culture and its roots to healthcare cost assessments under the Affordable Care Act. And then she wrote about it all, with deft hand and unfailing perspicacity. Note, in the first paragraphs of this winning essay, how skillfully she dramatizes her interview with Roger Walsh, a man who, in the middle of his conversation with Ms. Wu, realizes just how much he has invested already in the sharing economy and so decides to call himself "Roger Incorporated." This is a telling and funny detail, and she handles it like a pro, allowing the humor to rise to the surface and speak for itself. Note also Wu's concluding reflections on ways in which ownership itself—cornerstone of capitalist culture, she reminds us—is being redefined and revalued in the sharing economy: "The power that collaboration bestows upon its participants must be understood and utilized in a manner that will forward the global community as a whole, rather than just the individual," she ventures to say, in the voice of Leadership at the Cutting Edge. Of our writing classes, Wu commented, "Most significantly, they taught me to ask questions. Finding a question and allowing intellectual curiosity to lead the direction of a paper allows the research and writing processes to flow more organically. This was a method that I learned in your class and have applied to multiple research papers, including several that I have since written for various Anthropology courses." The ability to transfer methods and habits of mind across the disciplines represents one of the best possible outcomes of Freshman writing instruction, and in Wu's case, is an indicator of great things to come. I expect we will all be hearing more from, and more about, Joi Wu.



English 107 • Spring 2015
English Composition II

For your formal paper this semester, you will do an inquiry into something that fascinates you. All semester, reading and discussing the pieces in *Best Science and Nature Writing* 2008 and 2013, you have been encouraged to develop criteria for what makes good science writing for the general audience. Using these criteria, you can write about anything—even if it does not fit our "science and nature" theme. Remember the two triangles: ethos, pathos, logos; argument, protagonists, cinema. Make the strange familiar and the familiar strange. "A" papers will be very strong in higher order concerns: they will start and end with critical questions, they will offer ideas about your findings, and they will leave the reader unable to so easily make the same old assumptions about this topic.

Collaborative Consumption: How the Sharing Economy Is Shaping the Future

Joi Wu

ENG 107 • Martha Otis

Spring 2015

“I have no sense of safety,” he admitted, stretching back in his chair. The humdrum of coffee shop clamor dampened the sound of his nonchalant laughter. Roger Walsh rested his fingertips along his jawline; his brow stayed relaxed even as he tapped his chin in contemplation. I leaned forward to mimic his demeanor as he dove into yet another captivating story about one of the many strangers who has stayed in his home. This particular one involved an Argentinean artist, a dinner date, and a marketing campaign via Instagram. Roger Walsh is one of millions of hosts on Airbnb, a peer-to-peer marketplace that matches people who have space to rent, with people who are looking for a place to stay. This alternative to hotels is one of many booming companies in what is known as the sharing economy.

From home and car sharing services to redistribution markets, the sharing economy is empowering consumers and providing platforms for anyone and everyone to become a “micro-prenuer” (micro entrepreneur) (Botsman, “Currency of the New Economy”). I ask Walsh how he feels about his ventures in micro-prenuership. He explains to me that he is already a full-time entrepreneur,

pauses for a long moment, then declares that the addition of his endeavors in the sharing economy allows him to now consider himself a well established corporation. Grinning, he chooses a new title, Roger Incorporated. As CEO of Roger Incorporated, Walsh has control over what products and services to offer, as well as who to conduct business with. Through the online mediums created by sharing economy businesses, Roger Incorporated can sell unwanted goods on eBay, rent out his car on RelayRides, and cook dinner for EatWith, all for profit. He can fund projects on Kickstarter, run errands with TaskRabbit and share renewable energy through SolarCity. Walsh is not unique in this sense. The sharing economy is set up so that anyone can be his or her own corporation. On the other side, anyone can also participate in this economy or be a consumer in this marketplace. People can now access products and services from their peers at a higher convenience and a lower cost than ever before. This seemingly symbiotic relationship between peers is also known as “collaborative consumption.” A term coined by author and speaker Rachel Botsman, collaborative consumption is

the foundation of the sharing economy and has become integrated into the vocabulary of the business world.

Russell Belk, the Marketing Chair for Kraft Foods and Professor of Consumer Behavior at York University, describes collaborative consumption in simple terms:

If there are two of us and we do not want an entire pitcher of beer, but also do not want to pay the inflated price of buying beer by the glass, we might convince a couple at another table to split a pitcher of beer with us, with each table paying half the cost and receiving half the beer. This agreement involves collaborative consumption in which we have jointly arranged both the acquisition and distribution of the product. (1598)

Sharing economy businesses provide a platform for these exchanges to occur, extracting a small fee for helping the two couples to communicate and cooperate with one another. There are at least 10,000 sharing economy companies around the globe, many worth millions of dollars. Uber, a peer-to-peer cab service founded just over five years ago in 2009, is now in 54 countries and is worth close to 5 billion dollars (Stein, 36). As the sharing economy continues to expand, networks are rapidly being formed, and the rippling social, legal, and financial impacts of this sector are presenting new opportunities as well as new

challenges. What will cement the sharing economy in place and allow it to not only infiltrate, but to dominate the global marketplace?

Eva Castilla, a Miami resident of 37 years, is a contractor for Uber. After profusely apologizing for the spilled Greek yogurt in the front of her Honda Element (she had just finished ranting to me about the unexpected thick

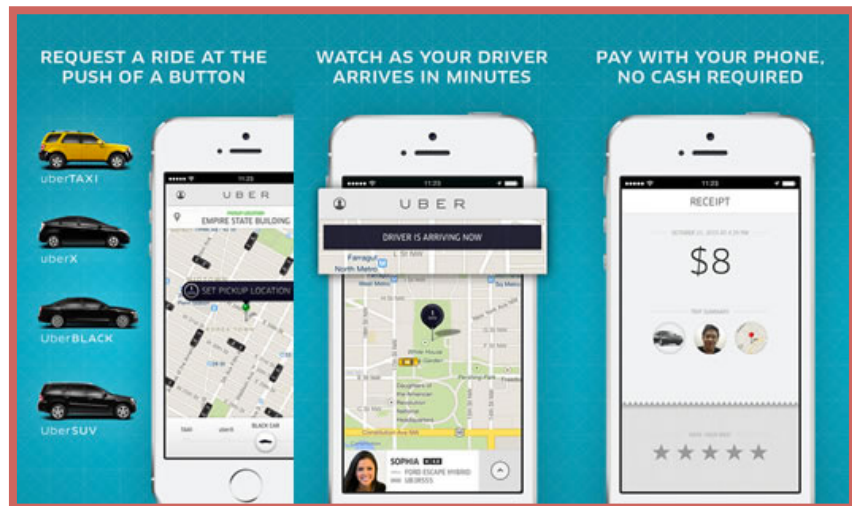


Fig. 1. Uber Advertisement Source: Uber. Screenshots. 24 February 2014. Web. 20 March 2015.

consistency of this strange new dairy product), Castilla offers me a bottled water. She then goes on excitedly, in her thick Guatemalan accent, to tell me about her experiences with Uber. According to Castilla, rude taxicab drivers have been, “abusing the people in all kinds of ways for years and years.” Uber is the new and better alternative to this abuse and for people like Castilla, a much-needed opportunity for revenue. Castilla passionately advocates for Uber to me, claiming that being a driver is a flexible and fun source of income. Interestingly, Castilla prefers to work early morning hours, claiming her 5AM passengers to be her favorite. “You get all of them then,”

she says chuckling warmly, “you see the real people... people are funny.”

Uber was first established in San Francisco in 2009 (Stein 36). The company expanded into the Miami area just over one year ago. Uber, alongside its competitor Lyft, has quickly come to dominate the cab service industry, eating into profit margins of the pre-existing taxicab companies. The main controversy surrounding Uber’s success, however, is one of ethics and liabilities. As taxicab companies lose

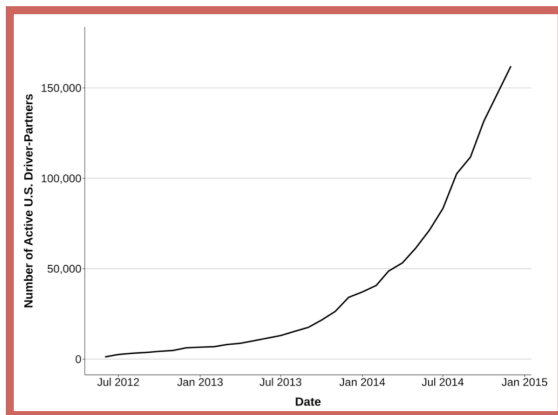


Fig. 2. Three-year trend in growth of Uber drivers. Source: Hall, Jonathon. "An Analysis of the Labor Market."

service, their employees suffer from pay-cuts and some are even laid off. Uber, on the other hand, does not consider their drivers to be employees, but rather contractors (Reich). Drivers use their own cars, pay for their own gas, and are only provided an Uber logo sticker and an optional iPhone (for \$10/week). These peer drivers do not undergo the same licensing process cab drivers do, are not offered employee benefits such as health insurance, and must give 20% of each ride back to Uber (Reich). Due to the lack of sufficient regulation on the operation of sharing economy companies, researchers Malhorta and Alstynne claim that, "these

new business models enjoy profits while offloading risk to others," thus forcing participants to pick up the tab (25). Furthermore, while the companies do create new opportunities for income, many peer-to-peer services, “[strip] opportunities form the bottom of the pyramid” (Malhorta and Alstynne). Take TaskRabbit for example. A “Tasker” who offers plumbing services just to make a little extra each month, charges rates significantly lower than standard service companies. This act of “mirco-outsourcing,” while beneficial to both the Tasker and the customer, hurts the local plumber. Furthermore, these sharing economy companies are able to, “exploit loopholes to avoid rules and taxes” (Felson and Spaeth). Many of those opposed to the sharing economy claim that only because these companies have circumvented these standards, have they been able to grow so rapidly.

In an interview with *The New York Times*, Larry Ionescu, owner of 98 taxi medallions in Chicago, reported that his revenue was down nearly 25% (Barro).

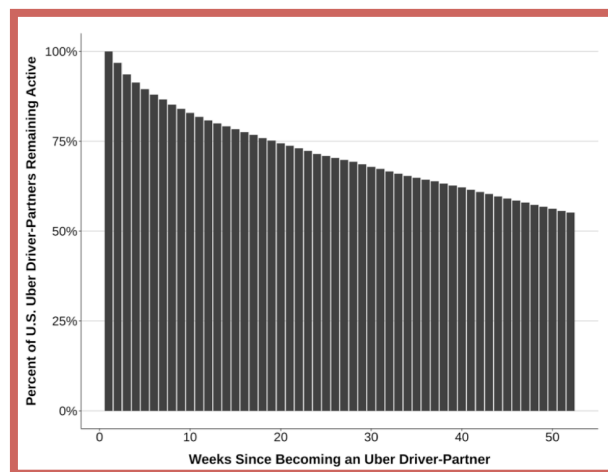


Fig. 3. Continuation Rate for U.S. Drivers Over the Course of a Year Source: Source: Hall, Jonathon. "An Analysis of the Labor Market."

He further explains his concern by laying out a price comparison. A seven-mile trip from the Loop to the University of Chicago in one of Ionescu's cabs would cost the passenger around \$26. UberX, the cheapest Uber option, would cost a mere \$12.29. It is no wonder that medallion prices in Chicago are down 17%. In other big cities where Uber has also been well established, such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, medallion prices are down between 17% -20% (Barro). Uber lures in drivers effectively; its workforce has quadrupled just over the last year (Figure 2). However, a study conducted by Dr. Jonathon V. Hall, brings to light that driving for Uber may not be all that desirable. In fact, the turnover rate on new drivers is shockingly high (Figure 3). 11% of new drivers quit Uber within one month while about 50% stop driving within one year (Hall and Krueger). Hall suggests that this may be due to the price cuts that Uber offers in new cities, where many of these drivers are signing on. This in itself highlights an entirely new concern: Uber has total control over the cost of the rides, and

its contractors have no say in any price fluctuations. The drivers still lose 20% of the ride's cost to the company, even when Uber has priced the trip to be almost 50% less than a cab ride.

Castilla, however, is adamant that Uber is still better than taxicab companies. Uber cars are often considered more convenient, more comfortable, and more customer friendly. The rating system at the end of each ride, in which the driver and passenger give each other a score out of five stars, keeps both sides of communication open, encouraging mutual respect. This, Castilla claims, eliminates, "horrible trips with the locos." In addition, when drivers sign up to be contractors with Uber, Castilla is certain that they know what they are getting themselves into. "They choose to drive," Castilla says shrugging, "so do not complain about all the insurance and legal *basura*."

As I begin sliding out of the Element, careful to avoid the yogurt spill, a photo of three young boys posing in soccer uniforms catches my eye. Castilla sees this and is quick to explain. "I have gringos for

grandchildren," she says patting the photo lovingly. She shakes her head, "I look like the nanny not the grandma." I cannot help but laugh with her as I finish climbing out of the car, wondering if any taxicab ride could ever be comparable to my experience riding with Castilla. I realize then that I cannot recall any memorable experiences in a taxicab, much less

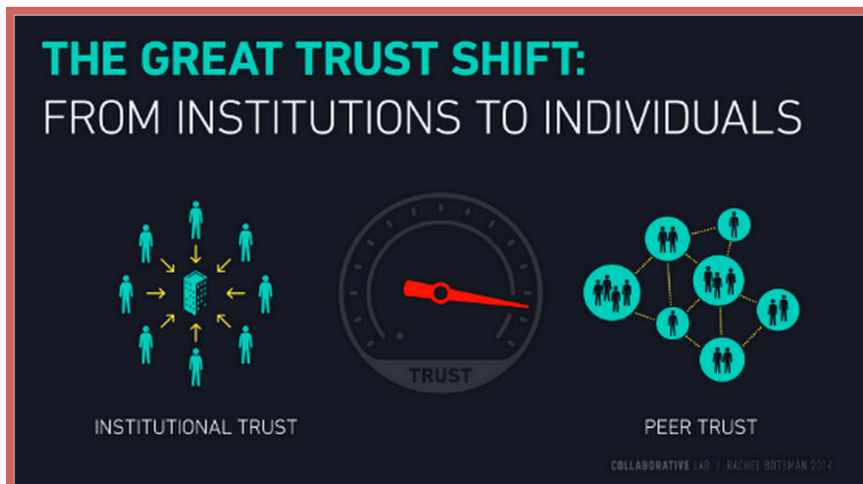


Fig. 4. Institutional vs. Peer Trust. Source: Botsman, Rachel. "Where Does Loyalty Lie?"

any cab driver's name. Castilla waves enthusiastically as she drives away; I make sure to give her all five stars before swiping out of my Uber phone application. In comparison to the traditional market, which is built upon exchanges from businesses down to customers, the sharing economy puts the consumer and the provider on the same platform, creating peer-to-peer exchanges. This new type of relationship is the core of collaborative consumption and is the key to the future of the sharing economy.

Unlike Castilla, who drives for Uber as her main source of income, Walsh participates with Airbnb for the collaborative experience. While he does host for the extra financial security, he also chooses to participate in the sharing economy for the adventure of meeting new people and forming far-reaching networks. Although sharing economy exchanges usually occur between strangers, they often build

long-lasting relationships. The concepts behind collaborative consumption are deeply rooted in such networks. According to Botsman, what allows these young companies to thrive in the marketplace is the fierce loyalty of both the contractors and the customers. This loyalty stems from society's natural tendency to place more confidence in peer trust than institutional trust (Figure 4). This shift is evident in the society's growing reliance on review platforms such as TripAdvisor and Yelp. Botsman claims that the sharing economy has started a social revolution, one in which reputation, trust, and networking are key. The act of rating an Uber driver like Castilla, or writing a review for a stay at Walsh's home, can build or break their reputation (Figure 5). The importance of peer reviews in the sharing economy is monumental. Botsman envisions the next social media network to be a "reputation profile." Similar to

The screenshot shows an Airbnb review for a property titled "Fantastic Vacation Home". The reviewer is Bill Clark from Shippenville, Pa. The review is dated 02/02/2013 and is a 5-star rating. The text of the review describes a great stay with clean facilities, quality furniture, a king-sized bed, a screened-in patio, and a pool. The reviewer also mentions the community and the quick response from the host. Below the review text, there are detailed ratings for various aspects: Check in (5 stars), Location (5 stars), Cleanliness (5 stars), Service (5 stars), Comfort (5 stars), and Value (4 stars). A question asks if the reviewer would recommend the rental to a friend, and the answer is "Yes". The property is recommended for Travelers, Romantic, and Luxury.

Fig. 5. Sample Airbnb review. Source: Airbnb. Screenshots. 13 January 2015. Web. 21 April 2015.

Facebook or LinkedIn, this network would be a central hub for collaborative consumption. The profile would not just be ratings and reviews for Walsh as an Airbnb host, but for Roger Incorporated as a whole. This reputation network would make the sharing economy exponentially more accessible, harnessing the convincing potential for global expansion (Figure 6). Participation in the sharing economy, for both the provider and the consumer, would be more reliable and much safer. Such a network could also normalize and monitor the creation of relationships between sharing economy participants, strengthening loyalty and encouraging further collaborations.

Many sharing economy companies began to take off during the midst of the economic downturn in 2008. In just

one year, 2.6 million Americans lost their jobs (Goldman). The creation of financial opportunity during a difficult period established a strong platform of supporters and participants for the sharing economy. Taking advantage of how integrated social media and the Internet had become in society, the sharing economy companies could not have had better timing. Communities turned to collaborative consumption as an appealing alternative to the traditional jobs market, which had just failed them. Now established players in the market, companies like Airbnb, are taking extra steps to keep participation levels high. Airbnb considers itself to be a “Community-Driven Superbrand” (Botsman, “Collaborative Consumption”). The company offers a quarterly magazine called *Pineapple*, featuring its “Superhosts” and various

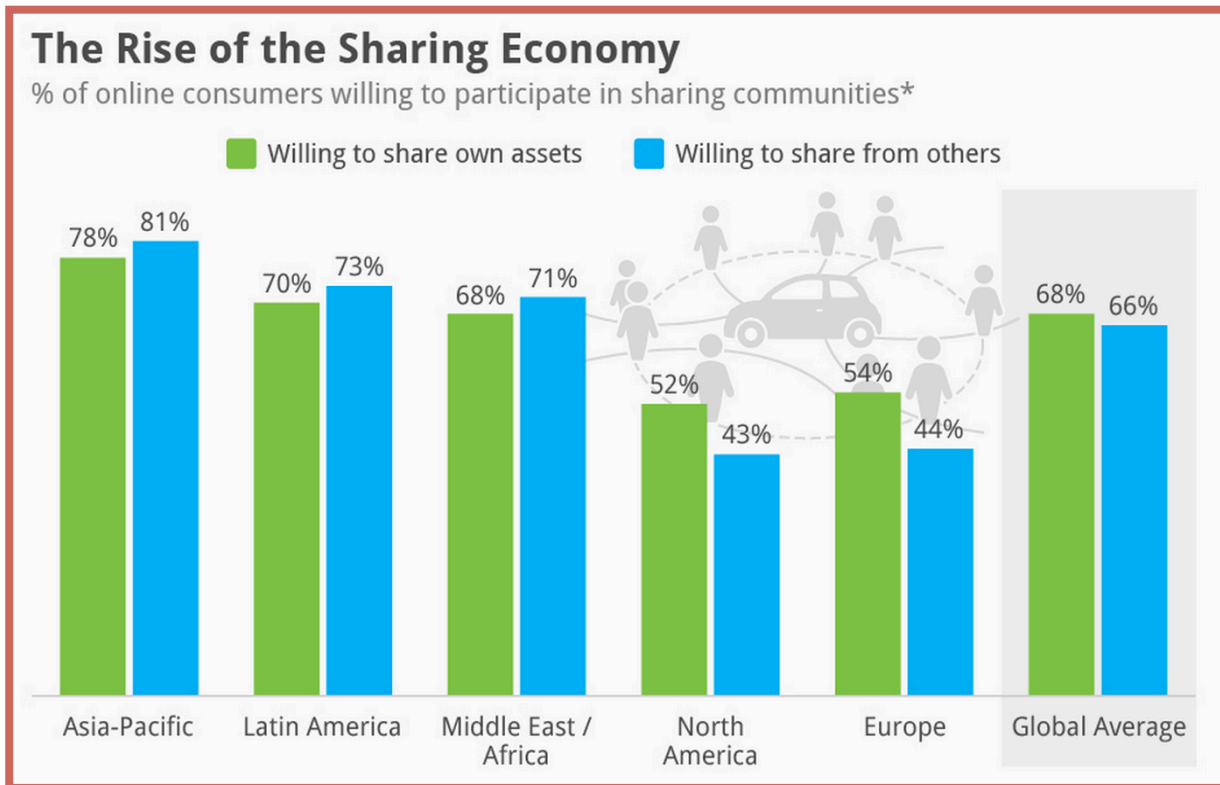


Fig. 6. Comparison of willing participants by geographical region. Source: “The Rise of the Sharing Economy.” Infographic. Nielson. 2013. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.

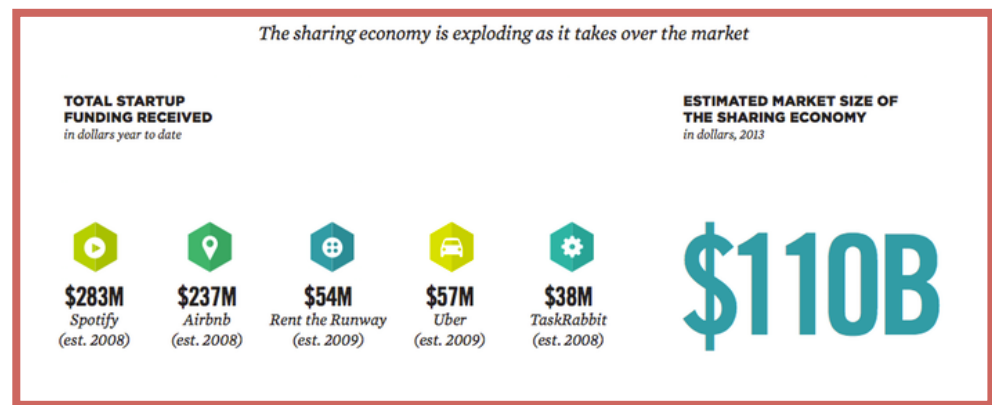


Fig. 7. Sharing economy companies' funding and estimated market size. Source: "Access is the New Ownership." Infographic. Gravity Tank, Web. 20 March 2015.

stories from the Airbnb community. They even hosted the Airbnb Open last November in San Francisco, inviting hosts to a 3-day conference for the sake of networking and strengthening the Airbnb community. The company recognizes the importance of participant loyalty, and is establishing strong bonds with and amongst users. These actions are putting Airbnb and other sharing economy companies on track to dominate the marketplace (Figure 7). Businesses outside of the collaboration consumption sector are recognizing the overpowering influences of these new community driven initiatives and are adjusting their own operations to mirror those of sharing economy companies. Home Depot is now renting out tools and trucks to customers and PepsiCo used TaskRabbit to promote its most recent product (Botsman, "Collaborative Consumption"). In fact, a wide range of companies have spotted the opportunities that come with this financial and societal shift, and are scrambling to collaborate with the sharing economy. The Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas partnered with Rent The Runway so that hotel guests can

rent luxury gowns for a night out on the town (Matzler, Veider and Kathan). BMW is working with Just Park so that its drivers can reserve parking spots from their steering wheel dashboards (Matzler, Veider and Kathan). Virgin Airlines, Patagonia, IKEA, FedEx, Bestbuy, Walgreens, GE, and even Santander Bank are working with the companies and concepts behind collaborative consumption in an attempt to adjust to the changing culture and economy.

Lawmakers have also recognized the need for adaptation in the presence of collaborative consumption. The Sustainable Economies Law Center and Shareable released a policy brief in 2013 (*Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders*) to address how city planners and urban leaders can successfully integrate collaborative consumption into their communities (Gorenflo and Eskandari-Qajar). Next month, Fordham University School of Law will be hosting a conference called, *Sharing Economy, Sharing City: Urban Law and the New Economy*. This multi-day event will feature speakers such as Eric Schneiderman, the New York City

Attorney General (“Sharing Economy, Sharing City”). The Sharing Economy is here to stay. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), a [multinational professional services](#) network, predicts that the sharing economy will control 50% of the total economic revenue in the United States by 2025 (Figure 8). And this is only considering the financial impact of this relatively new sector. The social and cultural influences of collaborative consumption are bound to transform the way in which people, communities, businesses, and lawmakers interact with one another. Ownership, a concept highly valued in capitalist culture, is being redefined in a way that encourages the redistribution of wealth. The networks developed through the sharing economy are bringing peers together on a global

scale and even re-shaping the characteristics and qualities that are valued by society. Sharing is promoting resourcefulness and sustainability. The power that collaboration bestows upon its participants must be understood and utilized in a manner that will forward the global community as a whole, rather than just the individual. The decisions of today will highly impact whether or not the next generation is run by the sharing economy. As the sharing economy challenges the traditional business model as well as modern culture, people like Walsh and Castilla are eager, as we all should be, to see which direction the changes will sway our society.

As the coffee shop quieted, Walsh gave me one more reason to try Airbnb myself: “Rather than the 5-second interaction with front desk, [Airbnb] breaks down the barrier,” By the end of a guest’s stay in his home, Walsh asks himself, “Are we friends? What is our relationship about?” These are the same questions people around the world are asking themselves about the sharing economy. What is our relationship to other citizens in this world? Are we friends? Can we be friends? Can we learn to share?

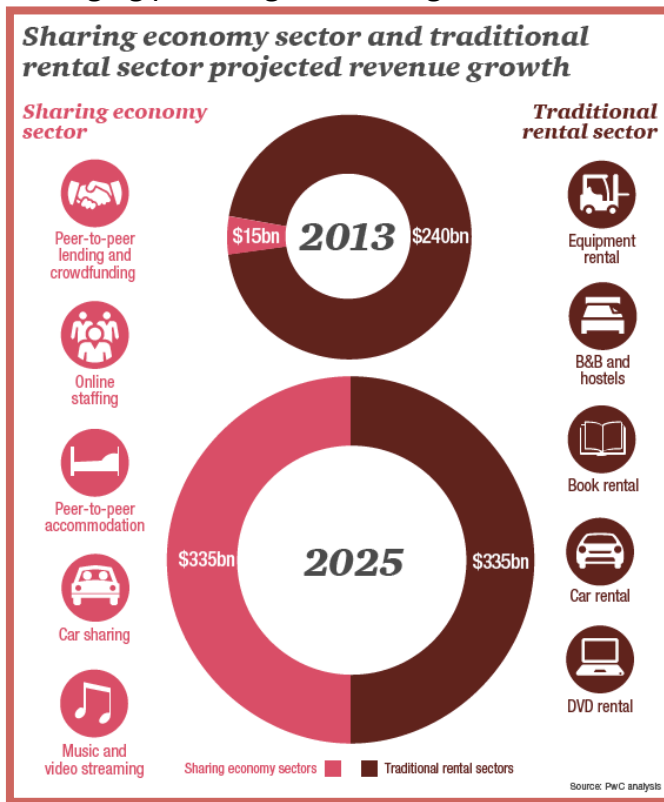


Fig. 8. Projected market share in the rental sector.
 Source: Hawksworth, John. “The sharing economy-sizing the revenue opportunity.”

Works Cited

- "Access is the New Ownership." Infographic. Gravity Tank, Web. 20 March 2015.
- Airbnb. Screenshots. 13 January 2015. Web. 21 April 2015.
- Barro, Josh. "Under Pressure From Uber, Taxi Medallion Prices Are Plummeting." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 27 Nov. 2014. Web. 18 Mar. 2015.
- Belk, Russell. "You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online." *Journal of Business Research* 67.8 (2014): 1595-1600.
- Botsman, Rachel. "The Currency of the New Economy Is Trust." TEDGlobal 2012. Jun. 2012. Scotland, Edinburgh. Lecture. 16 Feb. 2015.
- Botsman, Rachel, and Roo Rogers. *What's mine is yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption*, Collins (2010). Print.
- Botsman, Rachel. "Where Does Loyalty Lie in the Collaborative Economy? - Collaborative Consumption." *Collaborative Consumption*. 22 Feb. 2015. Web. 16 Feb. 2015.
- Castilla, Eva. Personal Interview. 27 Feb. 2015.
- Felson, Marcus, and Joe Spaeth. "Community Structure and Collaborative Consumption." *American Behavioral Scientist* 21.4 (1978): 614-25. Print.
- Goldman, David. "Worst Year for Jobs since '45." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 9 Jan. 2009. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.
- Hawksworth, John. "The sharing economy-sizing the revenue opportunity." Infographic. PwC. 2013. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.
- Johnson, Mark. "The rise of the sharing economy." *The Economist* 9 Mar. 2013: 406. Print.
- Malhotra, Arvind, and Marshall Van Alstyne. "Economic and Business Dimensions: The Dark Side of the Sharing Economy ... and how to Lighten it." *Association for Computing Machinery. Communications of the ACM* 57.11 (2014): 24. ProQuest. Web. 16 Feb. 2015.
- Matzler, Kurt, Viktoria Veider, and Wolfgang Kathan. "Adapting to the Sharing Economy." *MIT Sloan Management Review* 56.2 (2015): 71-7. ProQuest. Web. 16 Feb. 2015.
- "Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders." RSS. Web. 18 Mar. 2015.
- Reich, Robert. Status update. 13 Jan. 2015. Facebook posting. 16 Feb. 2015.
- Reynolds, Glenn H. *An Army of Davids: How Markets and Technology Empower Ordinary People to Beat Big Media, Big Government, and Other Goliaths*. Nelson Current, 2006. Print.
- Sacks, Danielle. "The Sharing Economy." *Fast Company* 155 (2011): 88-131. *Business Source Premier*. Web. 16 Feb. 2015.
- Shaheen, Susan, Mark Mallery, and Karly Kingsley (2012). "Personal Vehicle Sharing Services in North America," *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, Vol. 3, pp.71-81. Print.
- "Sharing Economy, Sharing City: Urban Law and the New Economy." Fordham University. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.
- Stein, Joel. "Baby, You Can Drive My Car, and Do My Errands, and Rent My Stuff..." *TIME*. 29 Jan. 2015:33-40. Print.
- "The Rise of the Sharing

Economy.” Infographic. Nielson. 2013.
Web. 20 Mar. 2015.

Uber. Screenshots. 24 February
2014. Web. 20 March 2015.

Walsh, Roger. Personal Interview.
26 Feb. 2015.

Zervas, Georgios, Davide Proserpio,
and John Byers. "The rise of the sharing
economy: Estimating the impact of
Airbnb on the hotel industry." *Boston U.
School of Management Research Paper*
2013-16 (2014). Print.

Instructor Reflections—Joshua Schriftman on Gabrielle Argimon

In the assignment that prompted Ms. Argimon’s award-winning essay, I asked students to compose an argument in the style of the feminist scholar and essayist Gloria Anzaldúa, but to make it their own. I said that they had to carefully present the various voices that they felt were a part of them; I instructed them to consider the many ways of thinking, speaking, and understanding that constitute their own mixed cultural positions and sensibilities. *What different positions do you occupy? I asked. What different voices are part of your background or present? What competing ways of thinking make up your own point or points of view?*

[T]he “overtone series,”... rooted in Pythagoras’ study of acoustics... implies that there are many pitches with complementing frequencies within one particular pitch, giving as to reason why music sounds pleasurable, she wrote in response.

In fact, she wrote much more than that—she wrote about herself as an artist, her chromesthesia, her anxiety, her dreams of one day being a great conductor, and her struggles and triumphs as a music educator. The line about Pythagorean acoustics was just my personal favorite. In any case, the assignment itself was designed to challenge students, to push them beyond their comfort zones and to jar them into writing something meaningful, sincere, and genuinely their own. Ms. Argimon accepted that challenge head-on. Drafting, revising, and re-revising her work, she demonstrated her unique knack for metacognitive reflection and an invested and deeply engaged spirit of inquiry. When asked about her creative process in writing the essay, she explained that she had worked hard to “abstain from word choices or phrases that didn’t match the voice I was trying to capture in a given section, meaning I also had to be constantly conscious of how the reader would grasp what I meant in each section.” This essay shines because of that awareness of her audience, her awareness of herself, and her ability to craft an essay with those things in mind.



English 105 • Fall 2015 English Composition I

In this assignment, following Anzaldúa, write an argument of your own—one that requires you to use a variety of voices-in which you carefully present the various voices that you feel are a part of you or a part of the argument you wish to make. Consider the various ways of thinking, speaking, and understanding that might be said to be part of your own mixed cultural position and sensibility. *What different positions do you occupy? What different voices are part of your background or present? What competing ways of thinking make up your own point(s) of view?*

I do not want you to adopt Anzaldúa's argument. The argument in your essay should arise as you explore the inconsistencies, tensions, and borderlands that exist between your own unique subject positions. Think about a problem or question these competing positions raise. *What do you find valuable to think through more carefully?*

You should adopt Anzaldúa's blending of voices and genres to create a text that reflects the inconsistencies you want to examine. You may find that some of the particular genres and styles that Anzaldúa used (poetry, sociology, etc.) do not make sense for your own argument. In the time since Anzaldúa published *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), new modes of communication and writing have emerged that may provide you with alternative styles to incorporate. Explore the many possibilities to find the best ways of presenting the argument you wish to make.

Your argument should incorporate ethical, logical, and pathetic appeals, as well as richly detailed description, when appropriate. Your essay should also demonstrate your consideration of structure, organization, and transitions.

A Day in the Life of a Classical Principal

Gabrielle Argimon

ENG 105 • Joshua Schriftman

Fall 2015

I'm up. What time is it? 6:22 a.m. I have approximately 48 minutes until it's most likely I'll be late for class. Now I have less than 15 minutes to get dressed so I can leave more than 10 for breakfast. What do I have today? I'm so tired. A test? No test. Anything? No, I have to go to school. Music. Yes, music; I breathe it, speak it, taste it – music is everything. This is my life, and I love my life.

I have turned my car into Carnegie Hall. The drive to my first class is an hour long orchestral concert featuring yours truly as the guest conductor and a performance of whichever symphonic piece I most recently bought on iTunes. *Hazel, orange, hazel.* Someday, I think, I can upgrade from my Volkswagen to a dream come true. *Yellow, rustic yellow.* I wonder how it must feel for my fellow Miamians, bumper-to-bumper, dealing with the percussive booming and vibrating from the vehicle of a young 21st century adult conducting in her seat. *Bittersweet. Crimson.* I eventually park by the Wellness Center—the baton is withdrawn and applause ensues.

What time is it now? 8:02 am. Damn, I'm

late to class. I'm almost there, though. Just about a minute walk more. What if there's a daily quiz? What if they started the quiz 5 minutes ago just for those who arrived on time? Am I not trying hard enough? Of course I am, I'm doing great. What time is it now? 8:03 am. Almost there.

Music Theory I is my most difficult course, occurring delightfully at eight in the morning. Today we are discussing the “overtone” series—rooted in Pythagoras’ study of acoustics in the sixth century B.C. (Berg). Pythagoras’ theory implies that there are many pitches with complementing frequencies within one particular pitch, giving reason as to why music sounds pleasurable to the ear. Even at first blush of the day, I deeply enjoy discussing music theory and the psychology of sound, and my sectional professor does a great job in terms of teaching. I would love to be in his shoes someday. Transmitting my knowledge on the subject I love most to so many attentive, dedicated students—students who want to be there—and helping them cultivate their musical abilities: At the core of my teacher’s heart, that

sounds most fulfilling. *I can't wait for my piano teaching seminar later this evening. Flash forward to eleven – I'm off to my job on campus.*

No tasks for me to do as a work study right now. Let's be productive—I can use my first hour to print and get started on my theory assignment. What time is it? 11:16. At 12:30 I can begin my musicology reading. Let's take a look. What are they asking for here? "Resolve the dominant sevenths to their respective tonic"? I don't understand. Why can't I get this? Am I just not cut out for this career? Yes, you are. Why is it so easy for everyone else? Why do I have to work so hard? Now I have to schedule an appointment with my TA. When am I free? What time is it?

My anxiety is very real. It blossomed in my sophomore year of high school and has progressively gotten worse. Now, my salvation is my intense love for music and all that it is worth; otherwise, I'm shooting my own foot, considering Dr. Dianne Kenny's observation that "anxious musicians who stay in the profession may become more anxious over time." There is always a silver lining, however, and I've adapted to a healthy insecurity that encourages me to work harder and never become complacent, especially when it comes to performing. *Practice time.*

I treasure the way I experience music. About one percent of the world's population share my chromesthesia, in which a person "associates heard sounds with a certain color" ("Chromesthesia").

My brain links every note, "A" through "G", with a unique color, as well as the individual timbres of different instruments, and these color-to-note relationships are unchangeable. Vibrant shades—ranging from red, purple, blue, to scarlet, mahogany, periwinkle—pervade the room at every practice session. This color coordination helps me memorize my music and overall enhances my musical experiences. Bernstein had chromesthesia. So did Mozart.

This beginning phrase is so enticing. I have to add a more expressive vibe here. This next chord—beautiful. So rich, so packed in color. Crimson. Yellow. Lime. Good job, keep going. Don't mess up. You need to be more confident here. Yes! That modal scale was so clean. Blue. Scarlet. Honey. Green. God, this melody is gorgeous! Brush the keys, don't slam them. Now delicately—think, a lullaby. Blue, Violet, Blue. Make it hum. Pull out those glorious tones. Feel the sound reverberate from the walls and back to the hammers. Close your eyes. Blue. Now, a swelling crescendo. Increase the tension. Yellow. Brown. Don't mess up. You're getting to the tough part. Don't mess up. Just think of how beautiful it is. Don't mess up.

Crash and burn, as expected. My fears of failure and suboptimal performance rise to the surface of my mind at every session. I've learned to experiment with new practicing habits to boost my self-confidence. *I need to play this section much slower. I should play this with purpose. Change the rhythm, the dynamics, the tempo. I should learn to*

listen to myself. Performing and passively listening to music are two completely different experiences, but they must both harmonize in my playing if I want to advance. *Five o' clock.*

How does the rest of this evening look like?

5:00-5:30 Piano teaching seminar

5:45-7:00 Practice session #2

7:00-7:45 Musicology reading and dinner

8:00-9:00 Practice session #3

9:00-9:30 Study

I've always been an organization freak. My fifty-dollar planner was carefully customized with a picture of the Juilliard School on the back cover. I have an array of highlighters and a collection of notebooks and stationary at home. I keep a schedule of my day-to-day practice routine for the entire month, and I plan out the individual curriculums of my students in a diary on a weekly basis. I am packed with the heart, passion, and ambitious energy for twelve to sixteen-hour days of grueling, hard work, practice, and dedication. Who says I wasn't meant to be a music teacher?

I have five piano students that I teach regularly, each at completely different levels and providing me with enriching learning experiences every weekend. My most exceptional, perceptive, and devoted student, who by his seventh week of lessons accomplished six months' worth of material, is autistic. Another one of my students is twenty, my most advanced, and we get to create music together. I can communicate the purpose of embellishments and focus on subtle

detail – the electricity in musical phrases, the psyche of the composer, the spiritual meaning in a whole work, a section, or a simple chord—in re-creating masterpieces. By far, the most satisfying part of the teaching experience is *when they get it.*

However, this is not always the case. In my piano pedagogy seminar, for instance, I've been assigned an excitable five-year old boy learning the basics with a short attention span and an inexorable desire to bang on the keys.

How can I get him to understand? Don't do that. Listen. Think of something else. Tell him to lower his shoulders. Keep his wrist above the keys. No, wrong note. Always remember to be encouraging. How would I describe this? Is he even listening? Focus. Play an example for him. There, now he gets it. No, tell him to look at the music. Look at the music. Read. Is he giving me attitude? Does he even care? Do I make any sense at all? Maybe I'm not set out for this career. Yes, you are. Lower his wrists again. There, that's it.

My dream to become a conductor for my own youth orchestra will take many years. My goal to attend Juilliard's graduate program will require extreme perseverance and the upmost proficiency in my art. I stress, I worry, I cry, I overthink, but I work harder, survive longer, dream bigger, and deliver better. Through it all, I am an educator at my core regardless of stature, and I am starting now, in the prime of my life, getting a taste of the moments I live for:

“I just don’t get it,” he says to me, withholding his hands and frowning at the fallboard of the piano.

“Listen, all of us can do anything we set our minds to. Music is difficult at first, and there’s a lot to *music*, but I promise it will all make sense to you. You’re improving so much and I know you have what it takes to be an amazing artist. You can’t give up now. Let’s go over this section again—you’re doing great so far.”

Finally, you see? You can do this. I’m so proud of you.

I really should learn to listen to myself.

Works Cited

- Berg, Richard E. "Acoustics | Physics." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d. Web. 27 Oct. 2015.
- "Chromesthesia." *Synesthesiatest.com* RSS. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Oct. 2015.
- Kenny, Dianna T. *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. Web. 27 Oct. 2015.

Instructor Reflections: Ben Alsup on Jerry Bonnell

There's nothing I'd rather do than take some small share of the credit for my students' accomplishments. Unfortunately, that's not possible when it comes to the work of Jerry Bonnell. His work is wholly and truly his own. In the three semesters that I've had the pleasure of working with Jerry, he has taken every single assignment on offer and produced works of complexity, originality, and deep thoughtfulness. All I had to do was give him something to read, hang with him a little in office hours, and wait for Jerry to write killer stuff. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Jerry over the last couple of years and equally glad that I don't have too many students like him. If I did, I'd be obliged to return my paycheck.



English 106 • Spring 2015
English Composition II

"If you know your history, then you would know where I'm coming from"
--Bob Marley

In the years between 1917 and 1967 the cool worldview was born and spread quickly. At this time cool meant something that is perhaps different from what we take to be cool today. In your next paper I want you to identify a "cool" cultural figure who was active in this time period. I want you to look closely at their life, their work, and the circumstances in which they operated. I want you to analyze their work to understand what made it significant, what made it influential, what made it cool.

I also want you to think about the way in which this person's work resonates with you in your circumstances. Does it challenge the way you think about cool? Confirm the way you think about cool? Does it offer solace or critique? What biases must you account for in engaging with their work? What presuppositions do you bring to your engagement? What do the figure and the work offer us today?

In short:

Discover something you want to look at closely.

Observe. Analyze.

Tom and Jerry: Taking Over the *Steamboat Willie*

Jerry Bonnell

ENG 106 • Ben Alsup

Spring 2015

“Tell you what I’ll do; I’ll bet another thousand I’ll go higher than you!” Billy shouts in Collins’ *Steamboat Bill*. There is a mouse who cheerfully whistles to that same tune while spinning a steering wheel, giddily pretending to be captain of a steamboat. Abruptly, the real captain appears – a big burly cat with several missing teeth. The captain grabs the mouse and shoves him aside. In this clash, he awkwardly reclaims his position of authority. Instead of apologizing, the mouse sticks out his tongue at his superior and slips on a bar of soap as soon as he leaves. A parrot laughs at his clumsiness. Frustrated, the mouse hurls a bucket of water over the parrot and dashes off to resume his work.

This is Mickey Mouse’s debut in *Steamboat Willie*. It is significant that the face-off between Peg-Leg Pete and Mickey occurs in 1928, right after World War I, when the West and the United States were reeling under its impact. It had been the first war fought in the trenches – a confined world that lacked the glory of charging forth on horseback and piercing a frantic enemy soldier straight through his body. Battles no longer depended on strength and skill, but rather on luck and chance. A whole generation of

young survivors were left to grapple with the fear and powerlessness they had experienced. The mindset of “how sweet and honorable it is to die for one’s country” echoed by poets such as Wilfred Owen, grew into a nightmare (Owen). This generation learned to despise and hate the notion. If tradition equated to pointless sacrifice, suffering, and futile death, then they would rebel against everything they knew. They sought to give life fresh meaning and that uncomfortable process became “Cool.”

In this context, “Cool” was both an act of rebellion and an expression of insecurity. It was a question and a quirky answer to the senseless mayhem that came with war. It was a sense of style crafted over the pain and anxiety of a displaced generation.

In the *Steamboat Willie* world, Pete takes on the burdens of pre-War aesthetics and values. An ex-navy man and a sometimes sadistic bully, he responds to internal rage by creating needless pain in Mickey Mouse’s life. He seems to endorse tradition and its values – the powerful, dominating male, the sense of order, top-down decision-making, and military rigor. Yet, he never quite measures up to the task. A hunk of fur and fat, he lacks likable

style and lacks empathy. He holds fast to a tradition deeply rooted in Enlightenment philosophy, a culture that promotes harmony over discordance, clarity over the static, and “glory” over realism. He can be thought of as a parody or caricature of Michelangelo’s *David*, who represents – at least physically – the ideal manly man. Peg-Leg Pete is far from this.

He is the clumsy one, left wounded and marred by either war or sickness. He is a relic, and it is Mickey’s charter to show him up. Yet, he holds fast to his authoritarian role. Pete’s worldview springs from a place of male authority and dominance. Even this is complicated because he both gives and receives direction, and he must answer to his superiors. He is “accustomed to obey orders without debating them; his life afloat is externally ruled for him” (Melville). Conversely, Mickey Mouse is sick of all this authoritarian rigidity. He rejects Peg-Leg Pete’s world and seeks to destroy everything Pete represents.

But, is he “Cool?” Or, is he like a child, throwing a temper tantrum over something he doesn’t like? Are his pursuits of independence and sovereignty a fleeting fantasy unfit for the real world? Or, does his willingness to rattle the order on the steamboat cast him as the “Coolest” mouse onboard? Who is “Cool” in this game of cat and mouse?

Cool demands that you break off from your origins and become your own source of experience. What Mickey Mouse creates is akin to what Nietzsche described as the “Hero’s journey.” Nietzsche noted that you have to “be your own source of experience. Throw off your discontent about your nature... You have it in your power to merge everything you lived

through – false starts, errors, delusions, passions, your loves and your hopes” (Nietzsche). As such, Mickey Mouse has decided to embark on the long, winding journey, even if it means putting himself in danger or wallowing in feelings of despair, fear, and panic. He has grown weary of the *status quo*. He has come to terms with the fact that reality isn’t the orderly world that Peg-Leg Pete mistakenly relies on. Instead, life reveals itself as a fleeting reality. It is like a note of whimsy, a game at the poker table – no strategy, only sheer luck will prevail.

Sound becomes the center stage in the face-off between Mickey and Peg-Leg Pete. There is a scene where Peg-Leg Pete rings a bell by spitting out his chewing tobacco into the wind, most likely ringing in the new workday. He may be reminding the crew in charge to get back to work. There is no rally speech or call to arms, just the sound of a loud, clanging bell. Meanwhile, Mickey Mouse panics, realizing that a goat has eaten his girlfriend’s guitar and her sheet music for *Turkey in the Straw*. Funny that he discovers that there is music in the goat. He decides to put on an orchestra using the animals onboard. He strikes a mallet against the teeth of a cow, and he stretches and contracts the neck of a bird. Miraculously, this creates the sound of xylophones, accordions, and drums. A hodgepodge of bizarre noises, they coalesce to make the soundtrack his girlfriend lost – *Turkey in the Straw*. In the process, he creates a much livelier, up-beat melody than Peg-Leg’s dissonant bell. Pete, displeased, banishes Mickey, and sends him off to slice potatoes in the kitchen.

At some deep level, Mickey acknowledges that life is full of cruel

contrasts. The stretched turkey's neck makes music, like an accordion. Cow's teeth can become a xylophone. A baby piglet's squeal, as he is yanked from his mother, can provide a cheery note. Despite the cruelty and suffering that have made these discordant sounds available to Mickey, they are part of the seemingly harmonious music of life. Because there is no symmetry or orderly reason in the world, there is no justification for sitting still and slavishly taking commands. On the contrary, there is every reason to test fate and seek adventure. If the gallant hero dies, and the wimpy soldier hiding in the trenches survives, then what purpose is there? Julian Barnes remarked that, "History... It's more the memories of the survivors, most of whom are neither victorious nor defeated" (Barnes). As such, Mickey Mouse seeks to repaint the dull canvas of his ironically "ordered" life with new, vibrant hues. Even though he is put down with each attempt at his "mutiny," Mickey Mouse rallies himself into becoming a new kind of awkward folk hero. *Turkey in the Straw* becomes his theme song. He approaches life, not unlike a Spanish matador, clothed in red and black and ready to take on his bull.

In this self-definition process, Mickey Mouse has begun the longer process of "Cooling." He has defied authority, even though he is physically overpowered. With big ears and a toothy grin, Mickey exudes a different kind of "toughness" which comes out of his refusal to submit to the values of the *status quo*. He refuses to back down in the wake of Peg-Leg Pete. Sometimes, to make his point, he goes as far as throwing a bucket of water on a mocking parrot. Each of Peg-leg

Pete's allies becomes an enemy in Mickey's world. In the lens of Pountain and Robins, Mickey Mouse may be displaying "the aggressive instincts of the young male warrior, by transforming them into a nonchalant cool pose that does not directly threaten, but equally does not betray weakness" (Pountain and Robins, 106). Mickey does just that by making his own fashion statement, dressed in oversized shoes and buttoned down shorts, without a shirt. He has crafted style with his own brand, in his own time. He wears it with an edgy boldness, a flare that he hopes will light the world of the steamboat. He has engaged with the "sprezzatura" – an effortless fashion statement. Beneath the mask, he is still wrestling with his panic and fear of another failure (Pountain and Robins, 53). He can only hope that people like Minnie Mouse will stay by his side and join his crusade against the hunky Peg-Leg Pete. If he is left to fend for himself, he runs the risk of wallowing in despair in the kitchen room, slicing Pete's potatoes, a staple of the sailor diet. It could be said that Mickey resents having to adopt that alien lifestyle. The kitchen episode becomes a painful reminder of exactly What-He-Does-Not-Want.

However, Peg-Leg Pete may not be the overwhelmingly powerful, ominous, and absolute figure that *Steamboat Willie* portrays him to be. He may have been more complex, ultimately acting as a symbol of self-sabotage, a walking explosion waiting to happen. In an attempt to kick Mickey down the stairs, he accidentally kicks himself. When spitting out his chewing tobacco in the wind, it comes back and hits him in the face. There is humor in this, and it may even be "cute" to see

such a burly figure struggle with something so irrelevant. However, beneath the surface of his big teeth and stony gaze, there is a kitten fretting over a mouse trying to escape its grip.

He acts “tough” when really he is afraid of a world that he cannot control. For all of his orders, bossiness, and demands, the world on the sailboat lacks order, logical reason, and thorough planning. He has high expectations, but he meets few. He would like to have the last word. But, things seldom work that way. His outfit represents the cultural baggage he clings to. He wears ill-fitting overalls and thick boots with a comical hat. His inability to shift gears, and his failure to assimilate other points of view lead to his inflexible reliance on reason. Ominously, his big belly hints at excess, ill-health, and even an eating disorder – things that are out of balance. Ironically, the logical impulse and the craving for order become thwarted in Peg-Leg Pete. The desire for order backfires and translates into sloppy clothing and an oversized body. The impulse to control becomes a cruel, punishing personality. Beauty, symmetry, and pleasing classical aesthetics collide with the ugly and the malformed.

Yet, it is quite possible that both Mickey Mouse and Peg-Leg Pete were “Cool” at different times for different reasons. Pete is just as comfortable in his unflattering garb as Mickey Mouse is in his oversized shoes. As Franz Kafka reminds us, no matter how ridiculous a set of clothes may appear, “they mean home to us; we don’t want to forget about home” (Kafka). “Cool” is all about what you do, how you do it, and whether others like your unique sense

of style enough to want to copy it. You have to present yourself in such a way that the whole act looks easy. It has to do with challenging tired old ideas about how good music should sound, clothes worn, or language used. Peg-Leg’s world is simply what “Cool” used to be. But what was once edgy becomes boring and mainstream. For “Cool” to evolve, you must be willing to create something new, original, and different. Sometimes that involves doing something dangerous. Something that involves testing, pushing boundaries – that of the law and also of common sense – to find that elusive Nirvana which lives beyond the scope of pop stars and star-struck wonder (Pountain and Robins). In the case of Mickey Mouse, stepping up the ladder and taking the helm of the Steamboat began just this kind of journey.

It was the re-televising of that scene that formed my notions of “Cool” as early as age five. He was harmless, a “cute” hero capable of anything. He banded together with Minnie Mouse, Goofy, and Donald Duck to form his own coalition against formidable foes like Peg-Leg. There was no enemy that he and his friends could not defeat. Mickey Mouse was my Hero. He was weirdly creative and performed a miracle from building an orchestra out of farm animals. He was bold in exhibiting his resolve to serve as the self-appointed captain of the Steamboat. Physically small, he was “cute” in his oversized shoes, preferring style to accessibility. And oddly enough, I did not connect my childhood hero with the “criminal” that he may have been. But, neither Mickey nor I have remained static. My journey continues to recreate Mickey and what

he once meant in my life.

As I grow older and think more deeply about my circumstances, I start to ask more of the mouse. I also demand more of myself. He has ceased being a hero and rather than cute, he is “Cool.” He defines his circumstances uniquely. He rejects the world of Peg-Leg Pete and inhabits a place that is alive with skepticism and cruelty. My childhood hero has now evolved into an uneasy symbol which captures the best and possibly the worst of “Cool.”

At the end of *Steamboat Willie*, we see Mickey Mouse slicing potatoes in the kitchen. He seems frustrated over his loss of control. He is no longer at the steering wheel, and he is perhaps angry over the abrupt conclusion of his *Turkey in the Straw* performance. Yet, it is significant that he is punished by having to do what might traditionally be regarded as woman’s work, alone in the presence of the annoying parrot. Perhaps the parrot represents that repetitive inner voice which reminds Mickey of his failings, limitations, and imperfection. Also, it may be that the parrot harbors ideas related to flight and freedom that Mickey may or may not be able to claim. Either way, Mickey appears temporarily “stuck” in a relatively powerless place. As Arthur Collins sang, in the theme song of *Steamboat Willie*, “the river’s all in mourning now for Steamboat Bill” (Collins). What, if anything, has Mickey gained? Has he merely lost the battle? Was the energy he spent overthrowing Peg-Leg well spent? Could he have been shrewder, smarter, and more calculating about how he chose to assert himself against his foe?

This kitchen scene may represent the opposite of “Cool.” Underneath the external expression of “Cool,” is there

some deep sense of loss? Instead, there may be tremendous anger, loss of voice, and frustration lurking deep below. It is hard not to conclude that behind “Cool” lies dissatisfaction, want, and a loss of agency. Like the emergence of Jazz, “Cool” often appears to be the product of suffering, displacement, and anxiety. For all of its edginess and appeal, should we strive to be like Mickey Mouse, living a life of constant striving to control? In terms of *Steamboat Bill*, how high are you willing to go to become “Cool”? What if it means making that journey all by yourself? Now, that’s just scary!

Works Cited

- Barnes, Julian. *The Sense of an Ending*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. Print.
- Collins, Arthur. “Steamboat Bill.” Vinyl. *Human, All Too Human*. BBC, 1999. Film.
- Steamboat Willie*. Walt Disney Educational Media Co., 1928. Film.
- Kafka, Franz. *The Penal Colony, Stories and Short Pieces*. New York: Schocken, 1948. Print.
- Melville, Herman, and Frederick Busch. *Billy Budd, Sailor and Other Stories*. New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: Penguin, 1986. Print.
- Owen, Wilfred, and C. Lewis. *The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen*. New York: New Directions Pub., 1965. Print.
- Pountain, Dick, and David Robins. *Cool Rules: Anatomy of an Attitude*. London: Reaktion, 2000. Print.



English Composition Program
Department of English
University of Miami

1000 Memorial Drive
Ferre Building, Rm. 229
Coral Gables, FL 33146
Ph.: (305) 284-3090 Fax: (305) 284-5396

