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Oklahoma Politics, an annual publication of the Oklahoma Political Science Association, published articles, research notes, and book reviews that have a significant Oklahoma component. For inquiries, email Erick Ananga (eananga@ecok.edu).

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STATEMENT FROM THE EDITOR

The peer-reviewed journal Oklahoma Politics publishes articles, research notes and book reviews that have a significant Oklahoma political, social, and environmental related issues. Consequently, we consider work that addresses practical methods and make significant contributions to scholarly knowledge about theoretical concerns, empirical issues, or methodological strategies in the sub-field of political science and or environmental politics in the State of Oklahoma. Manuscripts submitted for review should address an important research problem and or question, display a modest level of creativity and or innovation in research, contribute in a significant fashion to a body of knowledge, and lastly demonstrate the use of appropriate quantitative and or qualitative methods.

Our core concern is to ensure that we provide a platform for authors from Oklahoma and their collaborators from around the United States and around the world to inform the larger scientific community of current political science and environmental politics related research issues in the state. All manuscripts submitted for publication in our journal are thoroughly reviewed by anonymous referees. The submitted manuscripts first goes through a detailed check including a plagiarism check. The editor together with the editorial office takes charge of the review process. When a manuscript is accepted for full review, the editor will collect at least two review comments and prepare a decision letter based on the comments of the reviewers. The decision letter is sent to the Corresponding Author to request an adequate revision after which the manuscript is forwarded for eventual publication. If you would like to publish your research in Oklahoma Politics, please submit your paper for peer-review at: eananga@ecok.edu

Erick Ananga
Editor in Chief, Oklahoma Politics

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

This letter is my final act of my second term as President of the *Oklahoma Political Science Association*. I joined OPSA in 2016. I was immediately impressed not only with the scholarly activity but also the collegiality among the members. Not long after, I was asked to join the OPSA Executive Committee which has given me the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues I admire serving institutions across the state. I have enjoyed the benefit of having role models become friends. For those reasons and more I am quite grateful for this organization.

In the past year we have attempted to expand our networking and marketing efforts of political science related events in Oklahoma. We hope that our membership will continue to notify us of opportunities so we may further communicate that information through appropriate channels; especially through social media. It is our intent to be as collaborative and supportive across institutions as possible in order to highlight the good work occurring at institutions across the state. As such, please consider this an invitation to let us know of your successes, speaking events, and opportunities that we may publish.

I anticipate an excellent conference this fall hosted at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, OK by Dr. Brett Sharp. The conference program is reflective of the distinguished work being produced by our members across a variety of subjects within the discipline of political science. I am encouraged by the amount of student participation this year and look forward to their eventual transition to colleague. I hope that our students will continually join us at the conference and contribute to our journal as they move forward in their careers.

This thirty-third publication of our journal, *Oklahoma Politics*, is a representation of the continued scholarly work produced by the

members of this organization. Our thanks go to our editorial team Dr. Christine Pappas and Dr. Erick Ananga for their countless hours of work they put into this publication.

The 2024 OPSA conference will be hosted by Dr. Emily Stacey at Rose State College in Midwest City, OK immediately following the election. We look forward to seeing you there. Thank you for allowing me to serve the Oklahoma Political Science Association.

Shanna Padgham
President, Oklahoma Political Science Association

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

GENERAL

Oklahoma Politics invites submissions that explore the broad context of politics affecting Oklahoma and its place in the surrounding region. We are especially interested in submissions that bring to bear a variety of methodological, analytical, and disciplinary perspectives on state and local politics of the central-south region of the United States: Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Because “politics” cannot be thoroughly explored from only a single disciplinary point of view, trans-disciplinary and collaborative projects are encouraged. Though we are the journal of the Oklahoma Political Science Association, we encourage submissions from historians, economists, sociologists, environmental scientists, policymakers, analysts, as well as political scientists and practitioners whose substantive research bears on the politics and issues of the state and region.

Oklahoma Politics is a fully peer-reviewed journal. Each submission receives at least three anonymous reviews and each is reviewed by the editors before a decision is made to accept a manuscript for publication.

MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be no longer than 30 pages or more than 9,000 words, double-spaced; text, graphics, notes, and references included; no extra space between paragraphs. Do not indent paragraphs. Type font: Times New Roman; 12 point. Notes should be footnotes, not endnotes, and references should be the last part of the manuscript. Graphics (tables and figures count 300 words) submitted separately, one per page, with internal reference indicating the approximate placement in the body of the text (i.e.: “[Table 1 about here]”). Tables/figures must not be larger than a single page.

INTERNAL NOTE STYLE

Footnotes, sequentially numbered superscript (e.g. ^{1,2,3,4}).

Internal reference style: (author last name year); e.g. (Jefferson 2007).

Internal reference with page number: (author last name year, page #); e.g. (Jefferson 2007, 32). Multiple internal references separated by semi-colon; alphabetical first, then by year: (Author A 2007; Author B 1994; Author CA1 2007; Author CA2 1992).

REFERENCE AND NOTE STYLE

Manuscripts and book reviews must follow the APSA Chicago Manual of Style or Style Manual of Political Science. These format and citation styles can be found in the journals of the American Political Science Association: *American Political Science Review*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and *PS: Political Science & Politics*.

Examples

Journals: Author last, author first or initial. Date. "Article Title." Publication Volume (Number): Page-Page. Example: Budge, Ian. 1973. "Recent Legislative Research: Assumptions and Strategies." *European Journal of Political Research* 1 (4): 317- 330.

Books: Author last, author first or initial. Date. Title. Publication City: Publisher. Example: Green, Donald, and Ian Shapiro. 1994. *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

GUIDELINES FOR CITING CHAPTERS AND WEBSITES

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Author last, author first or initial. Date. "Chapter Title." In Book Title, ed. Book Author First, Last. Publication City: Publisher. Example: Mezey, Michael L. 1991. "Studying Legislatures: Lessons for Comparing Russian Experience." In *Democratization in Russia: The Development of Legislative Institutions*, ed. W.H. Jeffrey.

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TABLE & FIGURE STYLE GUIDELINES

Each table or figure must fit on a single page. Authors must submit tables and figures in appropriate format.

Table 1: Similarities Between Oklahoma and West Virginia

	Mean*	SD
Not Term Limited (n=72)	2.4	7.5
Term Limited (n=28)	5.0	8.6
Majority Party	Republican	Republican
* Difference significant at the .10 level		

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Manuscripts must contain: a cover page with title, author, and author affiliation and contact information; a separate cover page with title only; an abstract of no more than 150 words and the text of the manuscript. Authors whose manuscripts are accepted for publication must submit a short biographical sketch for inclusion in the journal.

BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews should be no longer than 1500 words. Reviews should be of books on topics relevant to the journal as delineated in the Submission Guidelines. Review style should follow that of the journal as a whole. Full bibliographic information should be included as the lead to the review.

Manuscripts (or ideas for manuscripts) should be emailed to: Erick Ananga, Editor, Oklahoma Political Science Association – East Central University, 1100 E. 14th St., Ada, OK 74820. Email: eananga@ecok.ed. Telephone: 580-559-5413

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PAPERS AND BOOK REVIEWS

They must be submitted electronically, in either Microsoft Word 2003 (or later) format (.doc/.docx) or Rich Text Format (rtf). No other forms of submission will be accepted. Manuscripts of papers not in format compliance will be returned without review.

**SHOTS FIRED: DECODING THE SEQUENCING
OF OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS
IN OKLAHOMA CITY**

JOSHUA M. MINNER
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

This study examines whether the disposition or perception of an officer-involved shooting may be correlated to the occurrence or non-occurrence of other officer-involved shootings within the same police department. The subject is examined based on the theoretical underpinnings of social learning theory and the copy-cat effect. Data on officer-involved shootings from the Oklahoma City Police Department has been gathered, coded, and analyzed to determine whether officer-involved shootings that result in criminal charges against the officer may inhibit other officers from shooting and whether lawful and heroic shootings may produce additional shootings. Analysis of the data reveals that the criminal charging of an officer following a shooting tends to have a chilling effect on future shootings, but that lawful and heroic shootings do not necessarily produce additional shootings. The data also reveals officer-involved shootings tend to occur in clusters with longer periods of time with no shootings between the clusters. These findings and others have important implications for police administrators.

INTRODUCTION

Officer-involved shootings have increasingly been a topic of interest to researchers. Most of the research has focused on officer-suspect characteristics, particularly race and situational factors (Phillips and Kim 2021). Absent from the literature however is any analysis on whether the disposition or perception of one officer-involved shooting may be correlated to the occurrence or non-occurrence of other officer-involved shootings. Can the occurrence of an officer-involved shooting make it more likely another officer will be involved in a shooting in the near future? What if the shooting saved someone's life or an officer was shot? Is there a copy-cat effect influencing officer-involved shootings? Does any correlation depend on the disposition of the criminal investigation into the shooting? Can the prosecution of an officer following a shooting make it less likely other officers will be involved in a shooting?

These questions form the basis of this study. They are explored within the context of the Oklahoma City Police Department (OCPD). OCPD offers an ideal test population. OCPD is not only local, but it is the largest law enforcement agency within the busiest district attorney's jurisdiction in Oklahoma. OCPD is diverse, is more transparent than most agencies in Oklahoma, and experiences multiple officer-involved shootings every year (OCPD 2022).

This study is an attempt to contribute to the growing body of officer-involved shooting research. It is an effort to offer police administrators new insight into officer-involved shootings so that they may improve the safety of officers and the community, limit shootings to only when they are necessary, and manage the aftermath of shootings in an informed and calculated manner, thereby minimizing the likelihood of additional shootings and the trauma associated with them.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study draws on two theoretical frameworks to evaluate how an officer-involved shooting affects the likelihood of other officers in the same department to shoot someone. The two frameworks are the social learning theory and the copy-cat effect.

Social learning theory offers a fitting theoretical framework to evaluate how dispositions or perceptions of officer-involved shootings affect the likelihood of other officers in the same department to shoot a suspect. Social learning theory has previously been used to evaluate police conduct (Chappell and Piquero 2004).

Social learning theory was developed by Ronald Akers. Social learning theory proposes that four variables function to shape attitudes toward social behavior: differential association, definitions, reinforcement, and modeling. The balance of these variables determines whether people will be prone to engage in conforming or deviant behavior (Akers 1977).

Differential association refers to interaction and identity with groups. Groups provide the environment in which people are exposed to definitions, reinforcement, and modeling. Definitions are norms, attitudes, or orientations about what is acceptable behavior. Definitions are shaped through imitation and reinforcement and can act as stimuli for other behaviors. The more a behavior is defined as positive, the more likely people are to engage in it. Reinforcement is the process whereby behavior is strengthened or weakened as a result of stimuli that follow behaviors. Behaviors are strengthened through reward and avoidance of punishment and are weakened by aversive stimuli and loss of reward. Finally, modeling is the process whereby behaviors are learned from others and then imitated (Akers 1977).

Social learning theory posits that behaviors are primarily influ-

enced by groups that control people's major sources of reinforcement, exposure to behavior models, and normative definitions. Friends and family tend to occupy strong sources, but so can work groups or colleagues. On balance for the same behavior, reinforcement is a greater influence than punishing contingencies and reinforcing-punishing contingencies for alternative behavior (Akers 1977).

The copy-cat effect offers another potentially valuable theoretical lens from which to evaluate whether an officer-involved shooting is likely to spur or inhibit additional shootings. The copy-cat effect is based in criminological theory but has also been identified in the occurrence of suicides, terrorism, product tampering, and other phenomenon. The term has been used to refer to imitative crime influenced by the media. Copy-cat crime can be motivated by real or fictional media. There is growing evidence that copy-cat crime is a real phenomenon exacerbated by the media (Helfgott 2015). Studies have found that 25% of offenders have reported that media or popular culture played some role in their crimes (Surette 2013).

Research on media effects on crime have focused on six concepts: catharsis, social learning, priming, arousal, desensitization, and cultivation and fear (Helfgott 2015). Of these concepts, all but catharsis provide a potential avenue to understanding possible correlations between officer-involved shootings. The social learning concept posits that media characters serve as role models and that when people see aggressive behavior get rewarded, they are more likely to imitate the aggressive behavior. The concept of priming provides that exposure to violent media images plants aggressive and violent cues in people's minds. In turn, these cues are more accessible during emotional states and increase the likelihood of aggressive behavior. The concept of arousal suggests that people become physiologically aroused when they view media violence and that arousal intensifies their emotional state. Desensitization postulates that the more violent media people consume, the more dulled their sensitivity to violence will become, thereby contrib-

uting to the likelihood of aggressive behavior. Finally, the concept of cultivation and fear recognizes that viewing violent media cultivates a particular social reality and induces high levels of fear that can persist for significant periods of time after exposure (Helfgott 2015).

The copy-cat effect admittedly does not perfectly fit the subject of this study. The copy-cat effect was developed as a possible explanation for the commission of crime and was established at a time when the term “media” primarily referred to news programs on television, newspapers, or radio. Officer-involved shootings are generally not crimes (unless the officer is subsequently charged and convicted of an offense). Officer-involved shootings are also largely considered part of an officer’s lawful responsibilities, at least when presented with circumstances justifying deadly force and lawful force is used.

Despite these differences, there are three factors that make application of the copy-cat effect relevant to this study. First, officer-involved shootings arguably bear at least a superficial relationship to the commission of a crime. Shooting someone is a violent act and violent acts are generally prohibited by law. A shooting by a private citizen might be considered murder, while the same shooting, if done by an officer, might be considered justified. Officers are also subjected to criminal investigation after a shooting, the same as private citizens. Second, the concept of media influence has exploded since the inception of the copy-cat effect. Media is now all-consuming, more potent, and almost impossible to avoid, making it more likely to affect people, including police officers. Finally, there are certain characteristics in police work that match significant factors of concern in the copy-cat effect literature. Officers are constantly exposed to crime and violence, not just in the media, but in person, and they are often forced to respond with aggressive and controlling behavior to situations in the course of their responsibilities. Since researchers have found some association with these conditions and the commission of crimes (Helfgott

2015), studying the effects of these conditions on officers and their propensity to shoot someone offers potential value.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE OKLAHOMA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

OCPD has an authorized strength of 1,235 sworn police officers and 304 civilian employees. The command structure of sworn police officers includes in descending order the chief of police, five deputy chiefs, eleven majors, thirty-three captains, and 155 lieutenants. The remaining, non-supervisory sworn police officers are sergeants and officers (OCPD 2021, 5-7). Eighty-nine percent of the department's officers are male, and eleven percent are female. In 2021, the department received more than 1.1 million emergency calls and responded to nearly 4,288 violent crimes and 25,365 property crimes (OCPD 2022).

OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTING RESEARCH

Officer-involved shooting research has picked up in recent decades. The most common research subject has been a focus on the characteristics of the officers and persons they shoot, specifically the race of the participants. Results are mixed. A number of studies have found that race is not a determinative factor for determining whether officers will shoot a suspect (Phillips and Kim 2021). Other studies have found that white people are more likely to be shot than black people (Fryer 2019). On the other hand, some researchers have found that officers are quicker to shoot black people and show more restraint with white people (Durán and Loza 2017).

Researchers have also focused on the situational factors associated with officer-involved shootings, such as the presence of weapons and whether the suspect was aggressive or attacking the officer. Many researchers have found that the presence of a weapon is associated with an officer's decision to shoot and that attacking an officer is associated with getting shot by the officer (Shane et al.

2017; Worrall et al. 2018). Phillips and Kim (2021) found that situational factors are the driving force behind an officer's decision to shoot.

Neighborhood characteristics have also been the focus of studies. Some researchers have found that the violent crime rate was associated with an officer's decision to shoot (Jacobs and O'Brien 1998; Sorensen et al. 1993; Wheeler et al. 2018), although Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2017) found there was no association between police shootings and the murder rate, poverty level, violent crime rate, or percent of black people in the population.

Still other research has focused on individual officer characteristics and police shootings. Drawing on Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime, Donner et al. (2017) found a positive association between low self-control and police shootings. They also found that male officers, officers with a parent that was an officer, and officers with lower levels of education were more likely to be in a police shooting (Donner et al. 2017).

Researchers have yet to put the magnifying glass over how an officer-involved shooting itself might affect the likelihood of other officers in the same agency to shoot someone, making this study a novel endeavor.

POLICE DUTIES AND CULTURE

Attempting to understand how the occurrence of an officer-involved shooting may affect other officers in a department and the likelihood of other officers to shoot someone requires an understanding of the nature of police work and police culture. Policing is a unique occupation. Police officers are generally exposed to the worst of our society on a daily basis: poverty, neglect, recklessness, abuse, crime, hate, and death. At the same time, they are expected to be friendly, compassionate, forgiving, and restrained, even when under assault themselves. Police officers are given privileges not available to regular citizens. In the course of their

duties, they may be authorized to drive fast, take property, stop people, lock people up, and even shoot people. Police officers commonly operate independently with limited supervision (Chappell and Piquero 2004).

The nature of police duties and experiences tends to create an attitude of suspiciousness or distrust towards regular citizens (Ingram et al. 2018). At the same time, abuse of privileges and power that are experienced or made public work to undermine community trust in police. These forces isolate police officers from the rest of society and make them more likely to withdraw into the police culture for support and approval (Alpert and Dunham 1997). As officers spend more time with each other, it becomes more important for them to feel accepted by their peers (Chappell and Piquero 2004).

Another significant element of police culture is masculinity. Some researchers have suggested police work itself is a manifestation of hegemonic masculinity and that all police officers—male and female—are taught that dominant masculinity is necessary to perform the duties of an officer (Prokos and Padavic 2002). Officers normally avoid appearing weak or expressing more feminine emotions because they want to avoid any ridicule for not being a tough or macho officer (Farrell et al. 2020; Prokos and Padavic 2002).

Other attitudes traditionally shared by police officers include a preference for aggressive policing tactics, negative views of supervision, and an emphasis on law enforcement over service and order maintenance (Terrill et al. 2003).

Understanding police cultural attitudes is particularly important because they have been found to be associated with certain officer behavior. For example, Terrill and Paoline (2015) found that officers that subscribe to a crime-fighter orientation of policing tend to receive more citizen complaints. Terrill et al. (2003) found that officers who relate to traditional police attitudes are more likely

to use higher levels of force. Alpert and Dunham (1997) found that officers collectively see little to no issue with accepting free meals, services, and discounts and consider it a fringe benefit of the job. And Worden (1996; 1989) found that officers' views towards citizens were related to improper force and traffic stops.

POLICE AUTHORITY TO SHOOT

Officer-involved shootings cannot be evaluated without consideration of the legal and policy restrictions that accompany them. The authority for a police officer to shoot a person is highly regulated by the law and in most cases department policy. The primary source of legal restrictions on officer shootings is the Fourth Amendment, made applicable to state and local police officers through the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. The United States Supreme Court began shaping the current constitutional standard for the use of deadly force in the 1985 case of *Tennessee v. Garner*. In *Garner*, the Court held officers may use deadly force when they have probable cause to believe that a suspect poses a threat of serious physical harm, either to the officers or others. 471 U.S. 1, 11-12. Since *Garner*, the Court has used the standards it established in *Graham v. Connor* to determine whether a particular use of deadly force complies with the Fourth Amendment. 490 U.S. 386 (1989). This test requires that an officer's force be objectively reasonable in light of the facts and circumstances. *Id.*, at 397. Different factors may be considered, such as the severity of the crime, whether the person posed an immediate threat, and whether the person was resisting or trying to escape. *Id.* at 396. The determination is a balancing test not capable of precise definition or mechanical application. *Id.* The test is objective—meaning an officer's intent or motivation is irrelevant. *Id.* at 397.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions this study attempts to answer are: (1) whether OCPD officers are less likely to shoot a suspect after a

fellow officer's shooting results in criminal charges filed against the officer, (2) whether OCPD officers are more likely to shoot a suspect after a fellow officer's shooting is found to be legally justified, and (3) whether OCPD officers are more likely to shoot a suspect after a fellow officer's shooting is perceived to be heroic.

For purposes of this study, references to "officers" refers to all sworn employees of all ranks, not the specific rank of officer, unless otherwise explained in context.

METHODOLOGY

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable in this study is the occurrence or non-occurrence of an OCPD officer-involved shooting after a fellow officer-involved shooting in OCPD. The dependent variable is operationalized through secondary data collection and coding.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables in this study are (1) fellow officer-involved shootings that result in criminal charges filed against the fellow officers, (2) fellow officer-involved shootings found to be legally justified, and (3) fellow officer-involved shootings perceived to be heroic. Independent variables are operationalized by identifying such incidents that meet the criteria from the data provided by OCPD.

For purposes of this study, officer-involved shootings are defined as incidents where at least one officer intentionally discharged a firearm towards a human being with the intention to shoot that human being. Excluded from this definition and study are incidents where officers unintentionally fired their firearm or where officers intentionally discharged their firearm at an animal, such as a vicious dog or injured wildlife, whether or not a human being was shot.

Determining which officer-involved shootings might be perceived as heroic is operationalized by identifying the shootings where the suspect fired shots at the officers and the officers were cleared of any criminal wrongdoing.

CONTROL VARIABLES

The control variables in this study are (1) gender, (2) rank, (3) time of shooting, (4) time since previous shooting in days, (5) time after a shooting until the next shooting in days, (6) shooting disposition, (7) whether an officer or others were in danger, (8) whether a suspect was armed with a gun, (9) whether a suspect fired shots at officers, (10) whether an officer was attempting to apprehend a known violent suspect or a suspect actively shooting prior to the involved officer's arrival at the scene, (11) whether a suspect died as a result of a shooting, (12) whether a suspect was hit by officer gunfire, (13) the number of officers involved in the shooting that fired shots, and (14) whether an officer was on or off duty at the time of the shooting. The control variables will be operationalized through secondary data collection and coding.

POPULATION

OCPD is the subject of this study. The population of the study is all sworn officers within OCPD from 2007 to 2021.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is a mixed-mode case study. It uses secondary data collection and voluntary interviews to examine the research questions. Secondary data on officer-involved shootings was collected from OCPD. The data collected included the information necessary to operationalize all of the control variables. Primary data were collected using select interviews. Separate interviews were conducted with Oklahoma City Chief of Police Wade Gourley, Deputy Chief Brian Jennings, and Deputy Chief Ron Bacy regarding the subject of this study.

DATA ANALYSIS

Secondary data obtained on past officer-involved shootings was collected, coded, entered into a spreadsheet, and subjected to quantitative and qualitative analysis. Responses to the interviews were collected, coded, and analyzed using qualitative techniques. All data obtained was analyzed in an effort to build theories based on patterns or other information revealed and to answer the research questions.

FINDINGS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

In the last fifteen years, from 2007 to 2021, OCPD had 142 officer-involved shooting incidents with 239 individual officers discharging their firearms. On average there was less than ten shootings a year. The most shootings occurred in 2014 and 2019 with fourteen shootings each year. The fewest shootings occurred in 2009 with only three shootings. Officer-involved shootings gradually increased from 2009 to 2014, fell by 2016, picked up by 2019, and have been on a decline ever since.

Officer-involved shootings occurred between the hours of midnight and 8 A.M. 30% of the time, during business hours (8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.) 26% of the time, and between the hours of 5:00 P.M. to midnight 41% of the time.¹ Shootings most often occurred during the 3:00 PM hour, with 11 shootings occurring during that hour. Shootings were the most infrequent during the 5:00 AM, 6:00 AM, and 2:00 PM hours, with only one shooting occurring during each of those hours in the past fifteen years. In general, shootings were infrequent throughout the morning, sharply picked up around 3:00 PM and then remained at a relatively high level until tapering off around 2:00 AM.

Out of the 239 officers that discharged their firearms, 97% of them were male and 3% were female. In 2021, females comprised ap-

¹ The time of the incident was not available for four shootings.

proximately 11% of all officers (OCPD 2022). Although female population percentages were not available for all fifteen years, their current percentage suggests they were less likely to be involved in an officer-involved shooting than their male colleagues. However, to more accurately determine if female officers were less likely to be involved in a shooting, consideration would have to be given to assignments, as not all assignments subject officers to situations where they may become involved in a shooting.

The appropriate district attorney cleared officers of criminal charges in 98% of the incidents, clearing 232 individual officers. Only three or 2% of the incidents resulted in criminal charges filed against officers. Out of these three incidents, two of them resulted in charges filed against one officer and one of the incidents resulted in charges filed against five officers. In total, seven officers were charged for their part in a shooting. All three of the incidents that resulted in criminal charges against officers occurred within the past five years. Two of them occurred within the past two years.

The vast majority of incidents involved a threat against the officers themselves. Only 7% of the incidents involved a threat to someone else. In 22% of the incidents, officers were either intentionally looking for a suspect based on a violent crime or knew they were headed to an incident where the suspect was firing or had just fired shots at someone. The suspects in officer-involved shootings had a firearm 62% of the time. Officers were shot at in 27% of the incidents. Officers were actually shot in 9% of the incidents. When officers were shot at, they were actually shot 33% of the time. No officers were killed as a result of the shootings, although one officer was critically injured, and several officers were saved by their bullet-proof vests.

The suspects in officer-involved shootings were killed in 49% of the incidents. In 25% of the incidents, the suspects were not hit by officer gunfire at all. Of the incidents where the suspects were hit by officer gunfire, the suspect died 65% of the time.

Looking at officer-involved shootings by month, November and December were the most active months with fifteen shootings each. The slowest months were April and June with seven shootings and eight shootings respectively. At the highest level, the Spring was the slowest time for shootings, with shootings picking up in the Summer, peaking in late Fall or Winter, and descending into the Spring.

SEQUENCING OBSERVATIONS

General Sequencing Observations

The shortest duration between two officer-involved shootings was zero days. Two shootings occurred on the same day. The longest duration between two shootings was 275 days. The average number of days between shootings was thirty-nine days. There were forty-seven instances of two shootings occurring within two weeks of each other, making it 66% likely that after any given OCPD officer-involved shooting another one will occur within the following two weeks. There were twenty-eight instances of two shootings that occurring within one week of each other, making it 39% likely that after any given OCPD shooting, another one will occur within the following week.

There was a total of eight separate periods where at least three shootings occurred within two weeks. On six occasions three shootings occurred within two weeks, on another occasion four shootings occurred within two weeks, and on one occasion five shootings occurred within two weeks. Looking at the first shooting that initiated each of these eight patterns, there are several commonalities (see Table 1). All of the first shootings were cleared by the district attorney and involved a threat to the officers themselves. In all but one of the first shootings, the suspect was armed with a gun (88%), in five of the first shootings shots were fired at the officers (63%), and most notably, in three of the first shootings officers were shot by the suspect's gunfire (38%). These factors were significantly more prevalent in first shootings that resulted in a pattern compared to shootings in general. Overall, only 62% of

Table 1. Shootings Initiating Pattern of at Least Three Shootings within Two Weeks

Characteristics of First Shooting in Two Week Period

Incidents with at Least 3 Shootings within 2 Weeks	Disposition	Officer Shot	Self/Other in Danger	Suspect Armed with Gun?		Fired at Officers	Officer Attempting to Apprehend Known Violent Suspect?		Fatality?	Suspect Hit?	Number of Officers
				Y	N		Y	N			
December 7, 15, 25, 2007	Cleared	N	Self	Y	N	Y	N	No	No	Yes	2
May 8, 15, 26, 2008	Cleared	Y	Self	Y	N	Y	N	No	No	No	2
October 18, 25, 28, 2012	Cleared	N	Self	Y	N	Y	N	No	No	No	1
August 18, 24, September 3, 2014	Cleared	N	Self	Y	Y	N	Y	No	No	No	1
February 25 (x2), March 1, 2018	Cleared	Y	Self	Y	N	Y	N	No	No	Yes	3
November 11, 19, 23, 2020	Cleared	Y	Self	Y	Y	Y	Y	Yes	Yes	Yes	9
August 26, September 9, 10, 15, 2019	Cleared	N	Self	Y	N	N	N	No	No	No	2
July 6, 12, 19, 22, 29, 2008	Cleared	N	Self	N	N	N	N	No	No	No	1

the incidents involved a suspect with a gun, officers were shot at only 27% of the time, and officers were shot only 9% of the time. In the first shootings that started a pattern, the likelihood of the suspect being armed with a gun was higher than the norm (42% increase), the likelihood of officers being fired at was significantly higher (133% increase), and the likelihood of officers being shot was exponentially higher (322% increase).

Shootings with Criminal Charges

Turning to incidents where officers were criminally charged after an officer-involved shooting, the first incident occurred on November 15, 2017. Sergeant Keith Sweeney fatally shot an unarmed, suicidal man who was holding a lighter while doused in lighter fluid (Elfrink 2019). The district attorney charged Sweeney with second degree murder shortly thereafter on December 6, 2017 (Hawkins 2017). Looking at the shootings that followed these events, there is not strong evidence that there was any type of chilling effect on other shootings. Twenty-six days elapsed after the Sweeney shooting before the next shooting, which was below average for time between shootings, and another shooting occurred on December 11, 2017, just days after the district attorney announced criminal charges. There was a longer than average period of time (forty-six days) following the December 11 shooting. But beginning on January 26, 2018, there were two shootings within one week of each other and starting on February 25, 2018, there were three shootings within four days. The average number of days between shootings for the periods of six months and one year after the Sweeney shooting and the announcement of charges against Sweeney remained about thirty, which is also below the average of thirty-nine days.

Sweeney was convicted of second-degree murder on November 4, 2019 (Elfrink 2019). The duration between the officer-involved shootings following Sweeney's conviction produced mixed results as to a possible chilling effect. Eight days after the conviction there was another shooting. Although this shooting was followed

by an above-average period of forty-two days, the next two shootings were approximately two weeks apart. Significantly, however, there was an extremely long period (108 days) with no shootings following the shooting on January 22, 2020. This quiet period started approximately two and a half months after Sweeney's conviction. Moreover, after the next shooting on May 9, 2020, there was another exceptionally long period with no shootings (seventy-four days). While it is not clear whether these two longer quiet periods can be attributed to the conviction, the timing of them at least provides a basis for further inquiry.

The second incident with criminal charges filed on an officer occurred on November 23, 2020. Five officers fatally shot a juvenile that had robbed a store at gunpoint. The suspect climbed out a window of the store, dropped his firearm, and then began reaching into his back pocket, at which time officers fired their weapons. The district attorney charged all five officers with manslaughter on March 10, 2021 (Madani 2021). Charges are still pending. Although there was a shooting seventeen days after this announcement, the average number of days between shootings for the six months following the manslaughter announcement was fifty-two days, which is significantly higher than the overall average number of days following shootings. This indicates there may have been a chilling effect from the announcement of these charges.

The final and most recent incident with charges filed occurred on December 11, 2020. There, officers were attempting to persuade a suspect to put down a knife at the scene of a disturbance. After the suspect refused to put down the knife, and officers used a TASER and pepper spray on the suspect with little to no effect, the suspect began charging one officer with the knife. But the suspect sharply changed directions away from that officer by the time the officer that had been using the TASER fired three shots that hit the suspect in the back (Rankin 2021). This shooting was followed by a forty-three-day quiet period, a slightly longer period than average. The shooting officer was charged with manslaughter by the

district attorney on February 25, 2021, approximately two weeks before the district attorney also announced charges against the five officers from the November 23, 2020, shooting. Charges are still pending. The average number of days between shootings for the six months following the announcement was forty-one days, which is also slightly above average.

The final shooting of 2021 also provided a case of interest, not because of what the officer did, but because of what the officer did not do. This incident is also significant because it occurred shortly after and within the same year a total of six OCPD officers were criminally charged for shootings. On December 8, 2021, an officer responded to a disturbance at an apartment complex. The officer made contact with a suspect who was attempting to enter an apartment he did not live in. The suspect, who had his hand in his pocket when the officer approach him, pulled out a gun. The officer slowly backup up, told the suspect to put the gun down, and never drew his own firearm. The suspect started calling the officer a “rookie,” approached the officer with the gun and his hand back in his pocket, and told the officer “don’t do that.” The officer appeared to have his hand on his holster but had still not drawn his gun. The suspect drew his gun again, pointed it at the officer, and the officer told him “don’t shoot.” The suspect kept walking towards the officer, telling him “don’t do that” [presumably referring to the officer drawing his gun which he had still not done], all while gripping his gun with two hands and pointing it directly at the officer, who kept walking backwards. Eventually the officer tripped on stairs as he was walking backwards and at approximately the same time, he apparently managed to draw his gun and a shot was fired. It was not clear whether the shot was fired at the suspect. The suspect was not hit (Casiano 2021). Police officers are trained to have their firearms out and aimed at the threat anytime they face a threat of serious bodily injury to themselves, especially when confronting a suspect with a gun. It is apparent from the video of this incident that the officer did not want to shoot the suspect, despite risking his own life. The officer

is no longer employed by OCPD. Why did the officer not shoot? It cannot be ruled out that the recent criminal charges filed against OCPD officers had a part in the officer's hesitation.

Shootings Found Justified

Officer-involved shootings determined to be justified by the district attorney encompassed 139 out of the 142 incidents. While there were patterns that existed within the shootings found to be justified (discussed above), those patterns did not seem to be correlated with the mere fact the shootings were justified. The only trend that was identifiable regarding cleared shootings was that officers have only been criminally charged following a shooting in the past five years.

Shootings Perceived as Heroic

There were thirty-nine officer-involved shooting incidents that met the criteria of being heroic—incidents where shots were fired at officers and the officers were cleared of criminal charges. The average number of days following these shootings until the next shooting was forty-one, which is slightly above the overall average of thirty-nine. This evidence does not support the proposition that heroic shootings might inspire other officers to engage in a shooting in the near future. Perhaps more interesting is that the average number of days prior to the last shooting was fifty-one, which is well above average. This statistic suggests that longer periods without shootings tended to be followed by shootings that could be deemed heroic. Overall, getting shot at, by itself, did not necessarily result in a shorter duration before the next shooting. Remarkably, the longest duration between shootings in this whole study occurred after an officer was ambushed with an assault rifle and almost lost her life on August 29, 2010. That shooting was followed by 275 days without another shooting.

There were thirteen incidents where officers were shot by gunfire. Looking only at these officer-involved shootings, the overall average period of time following the shootings was forty-one

days, which is above average. This subset of data was significantly skewed, however, by the 275 days following the shooting on August 29, 2010. Taking away the longest (275 days) and shortest (zero days) period from this subset results in an average of twenty-one days following these shootings until the next. This number is well below the average, indicating there may be some correlation between officers getting shot and the next shooting occurring.

INTERVIEWS

Chief Wade Gourley, Deputy Chief Brian Jennings, and Deputy Chief Ron Bacy take officer-involved shootings very seriously. Chief Gourley goes to every single officer-involved shooting, no matter the day or time, and speaks with and provides support to the involved officers. The chiefs explained that officer-involved shootings can evoke different thoughts and perceptions in officers. Following officer-involved shootings, many officers think to themselves, “this could happen to me” (Bacy 2002). Although officers want to help each other out in these situations and want to be there for their partners, many officers are relieved they were not involved (Gourley 2022). Officer-involved shootings are traumatic events for officers. Officers tend to feel bad for the involved officers. They know that the involved officers will be subjected to an endless barrage of negative and stressful consequences, even under the best of circumstances when a shooting is completely justified: criminal investigation, criminal interview, possibility of criminal charges, media scrutiny, activist criticism, administrative leave, getting sued, and leaving their partners short of help during administrative leave, which can last for extended periods of time (Jennings 2022). Chief Gourley (2022) sees the weight of these circumstances on officers.

The chiefs recognized there are factors that might inhibit officers from shooting a suspect. Foremost among those factors is a fear of criminal prosecution (Bacy 2022; Gourley 2022; Jennings 2022). It is a real factor that weighs heavy on officers’ minds, particularly in the past couple years. Fear of criminal prosecution can cause

anxiety in officers and result in hesitation in critical moments (Bacy 2022). Chief Gourley (2022) did not think it was merely a coincidence that the department has experienced unprecedented mass resignations and retirements in the past two years.

Deputy Chief Bacy (2022) did not believe an officer-involved shooting that results in criminal charges against an officer will necessarily have an inhibiting effect on future shootings. Rather he argued the filing of criminal charges is more likely to have such an effect when officers do not perceive the involved officer's conduct to have been criminal or at least not clearly criminal (Bacy 2022). Deputy Chief Bacy (2022) did not recognize any inhibiting effects following the Sweeney shooting. However, he observed inhibiting effects following the two more recent shootings that resulted in criminal charges against officers (Bacy 2022).

While historically some officers may have seen an officer-involved shooting as a badge of honor (Jennings 2022), the chiefs were adamant that in the current environment no officers want to be involved in a shooting, not even a shooting that might be perceived as heroic (Bacy 2022; Gourley 2022; Jennings 2022).

This is not to say that officers do not learn from officer-involved shootings. Officers are learning from other shootings more than ever (Jennings 2022). After significant events and shootings, OCPD officers are now debriefing and discussing what worked and what didn't work (Bacy 2022). Body-worn cameras are capturing details of shootings that were not traditionally available. Police administrators are now able to dissect shootings, both the good and the bad, and share those videos and lessons learned with all officers (Jennings 2022). Chief Gourley (2022) also established the Reality-Based Training Unit, which recreates many of the shootings and puts other officers through the scenarios.

The chiefs explained there are also many factors beyond officers' control that also affect the occurrence and frequency of officer-in-

involved shootings. Chief Gourley (2022) pointed out that a number of social issues can have an effect on the occurrence of shootings. Mental health, easy access to firearms, poverty, recently relaxed drug laws, and loosening of criminal penalties are factors at play in Oklahoma that can affect the occurrence of shootings (Gourley 2022). Deputy Chief Jennings (2022) has observed a recent increase in violence and aggressiveness directed at officers. Deputy Chief Bacy (2022) has found criminals to have become more emboldened lately and sees the lack of accountability in the judicial system as a contributing factor. Deputy Chief Bacy (2022) also suggested perhaps all the attention that shootings receive in social media might influence or inspire other suspects to engage in similar bold behavior.

Regardless of the complexities involved, the chiefs appreciate the trauma involved in officer-involved shootings and strive to prevent shootings to the extent possible and provide the degree of support and resources necessary to keep officers healthy in body and mind (Bacy 2022; Gourley 2022; Jennings 2022).

DISCUSSION

The findings in this study yielded some unexpected yet interesting patterns in OCPD officer-involved shootings. OCPD officer-involved shootings tend to occur in clusters within a relatively short period of time with longer intervals in between the clusters. This pattern was generally consistent across the entire fifteen years studied. Despite an overall average of thirty-nine days between officer-involved shootings, every time there was a shooting, there was a 66% chance another one would occur within the following two weeks and there was a 39% chance another one would occur within the following week. There were also eight separate sequences of officer-involved shootings where at least three shootings occurred within two weeks, with one sequence of five shootings occurring within two weeks. There was a strong correlation between the shooting that started each of these eight sequences and shootings where the suspect had a gun, the suspect fired shots

at officers, and officers were hit by gunfire. Determining why these patterns occurred will be a far more challenging task than it was to find them. The questions presented in this study offer a starting point.

SHOOTINGS WITH CRIMINAL CHARGES

There is fair evidence that OCPD officers were less likely to become involved in a shooting following an officer-involved shooting where criminal charges were filed against the officer. Although the sequencing of shootings following the Sweeney shooting, the filing of criminal charges against him in 2017, and his subsequent conviction in 2019 produced mixed results, the subsequent shootings and the criminal charging of the six other officers did appear to have such effect. In the six months following the announcement of criminal charges against the five officers that shot the armed robbery suspect, the average number of days between shootings was fifty-two days, which is significantly higher than the overall average number of days between shootings. The shooting of the suspect that had been running towards an officer with a knife, but was shot in the back, was followed by a forty-three-day quiet period, which was also a longer period than average, and in the six months following the announcement of criminal charges against him, the average number of days between shootings was forty-one days, which was also above average. Moreover, within months following these events, an officer was in a situation where he would have been justified in shooting a suspect, had the time and opportunity to do so, yet did not do so. Finally, the OCPD chiefs were adamant that the criminal charging of the six most recent officers has produced anxiety in many officers and in some cases hesitation in critical circumstances. Through their interaction and conversations with their officers, the chiefs know these events are something that weighs heavy on officers' minds (Bacy 2022; Gourley 2022).

Social learning theory provides a possible explanation for the decrease in frequency of shootings following shootings where

charges are filed against officers. Social learning theory suggests that reinforcement is a variable that can affect an officer's decision to not shoot a suspect (Akers 1977). The lack of reward following a criminal shooting and the negative consequences associated with facing criminal charges can weaken the likelihood other officers will engage in a shooting (Akers 1977).

Given the totality of the circumstances here and the marked decrease in officer-involved shootings following the shootings with criminal charges against officers, it cannot be ruled out the filing of criminal charges caused officers to engage in fewer shootings in the aftermath.

SHOOTINGS FOUND JUSTIFIED

Unlike officer-involved shootings that resulted in criminal charges, there is no evidence that a finding that a shooting was legally justified had any impact on the likelihood of other officers being involved in a shooting themselves. To start, only three out of the 142 incidents resulted in charges filed against officers. Almost the entire pool of data consisted of incidents where the officer was cleared of criminal wrongdoing, leaving few instances of comparison. Basically, a cleared shooting was the norm. The only trend overall was that the incidents where officers were criminally charged occurred more recently (in the past five years). This is not to say that such shootings cannot influence officers or that it is impossible to obtain data that could speak to this question. Perhaps a survey of officers might provide insight or perhaps OCPD officer-involved shootings could be compared with other departments. It also cannot be said that there were no patterns following the cleared shootings. As discussed above, there is overwhelming evidence that shootings tended to occur within a relatively short period of time with longer durations between the clusters. Nonetheless, based on the data collected in this study, the data did not in itself prove a shooting found legally justified affected the likelihood of other shootings to follow.

SHOOTINGS PERCEIVED AS HEROIC

The copy-cat effect provides a basis that could ostensibly support the proposition that when a heroic officer-involved shooting occurs, other officers may aspire to do the same. Applying the copy-cat effect in this context, the theory assumes that when officers see another officer get rewarded for engaging in a heroic shooting, they are more likely to imitate that behavior themselves. The copy-cat effect also suggests that the constant exposure to violence that comes with the job of a police officer can place aggressive and violent cues in the minds of officers and can dull their sensitivity to violence, thereby making them more prone to violent behavior (Helfgott 2015).

Similarly, social learning theory suggests that reinforcement is a variable that can affect an officer's decision to shoot a suspect. Applying social learning theory in this context proposes that norms and attitudes can act as stimuli for engaging in a shooting (Akers 1977). As peer influence is one of the most profound pressures operating in police departments (Chappell and Piquero 2004), being "tough" and "aggressive" are attitudes traditionally shared by officers (Farrell et al. 2020; Terrill et al. 2003; Prokos and Padavic 2002), and shooting someone while getting shot at might be the pinnacle of heroics, it is reasonable to hypothesize that after a heroic shooting other officers might aspire to do the same themselves. The more a shooting is defined as positive and the more an officer is rewarded following a shooting, the more likely other officers will be to participate in a shooting themselves (Akers 1977).

Despite these theories, the data collected in this study provide little evidence that officers were more likely to be involved in a shooting following a fellow officer's shooting that could be perceived as heroic. The average number of days following these shootings until the next shooting was forty-one days, which is slightly above the fifteen-year average of thirty-nine days. Even incidents where officers were actually shot were not followed by a shorter-than-average duration before the next shooting. Although, taking away

the longest (275 days) and shortest (zero days) period from this subset, the average number of days following a shooting where an officer was shot was twenty-one days, which is significantly lower than the fifteen-year average of thirty-nine days.

The input from the chiefs further signified that officers are probably not any more likely to be involved in a shooting merely because of the occurrence of a heroic officer-involved shooting. The chiefs described all the negative consequences that follow from shootings, even heroic shootings, and emphasized how cognizant officers are of these consequences (Bacy 2022; Gourley 2022; Jennings 2022). While the chiefs could not speak to the attitudes of officers in the past, they were clear that the officers of today do not want to be in a shooting and the fear of criminal prosecution is foremost on officers' minds (Bacy 2022).

OTHER FACTORS

This study evaluated officer-involved shootings mostly in the form of data and drew conclusions from that data using quantitative and qualitative research methods. However, officer-involved shootings are not just numbers or formulas. They are the product of interactions between human beings and involve a highly complex culmination of factors, some incapable of objectification, and many of which are beyond the control of officers.

Consideration must be given to what society asks of officers. Society, through our governing institutions, has charged police officers with a duty to protect their community. The United States is a particularly violent western country (World Population Review 2022). There are more firearms than people in the United States and firearms are readily available (Bloomberg 2022). Oklahoma is no exception. Given the duties bestowed upon officers and the characteristics of the environment in which they operate, it should hardly come as a surprise that officers will come into contact with individuals who are threatening the lives of others or the officers themselves. This is what society has asked of officers and the oc-

currence of officer-involved shootings is an unavoidable product of this request.

The law pertaining to use of force also serves as a significant factor in the occurrence of officer-involved shootings. Officers are only legally authorized to use deadly force in particular circumstances. The United States Supreme Court has held that officers may use deadly force when it is objectively reasonable to believe that a suspect poses a threat of serious physical harm, either to the officers or others. *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1, 11-12; *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 395-9 (1989). While this is a simple notion on its face, officers are held accountable for all of the cases within their respective jurisdictions that have applied this standard to particular fact patterns. In the unique situations officers often find themselves, it is not always easy to understand what is lawful and what is not. Even judges don't always agree on the lawfulness of shootings. Yet officers are held to the legal standards nonetheless, and they are often required to make a decision in a split second in circumstances that are "tense, uncertain, and rapidly unfolding." *Graham*, at 396-97.

The performance of a behavior—in this case shooting a suspect—also depends upon officers' actual control over their performance of the behavior. Skills and abilities can override intentions and prevent a shooting from occurring (Ajzen 1991). All police officers at OCPD receive the training necessary to use a firearm in dynamic circumstances and must pass a minimum threshold, although not all officers will equally excel at the task. Further, not all officers will perform in an actual shooting as they might perform in training. Police officers are human beings. They experience fear, anxiety, stress, and the physiological effects of these emotions, such as an adrenalin rush, the same as anyone, although some officers are able to control these emotions and effects better than others. These factors can affect the occurrence and outcome of officer-involved shootings.

In addition, there are also a number of employment factors that can play into the likelihood of an officer shooting a suspect. Not all areas in a jurisdiction experience the same type of crime and social issues. Some areas are significantly more violent than others. Officers that work in districts that have higher violent crime rates may be more likely to engage in a situation requiring deadly force (Jacobs and O'Brien 1998; Sorensen et al. 1993; Wheeler et al. 2018). Moreover, not all officers share the same eagerness to go after the most violent criminals. Officers' thirst for proactive policing can also play into their likelihood of being involved in a shooting. Officers that just take burglary and collision reports all day are less likely to be in a shooting than officers who are searching for suspects with outstanding warrants for violent offenses.

Finally, possibly the single-most important factor in officer-involved shootings is the suspects themselves. This factor involves opportunity and lies almost entirely out of the control of officers. In the vast majority of incidents, it is the suspects that chose to commit crimes, to arm themselves with guns and knives, or to attack or endanger officers and others. Without the initial actions of the suspect, those shootings would almost certainly not have occurred.

CONCLUSION

Officer-involved shootings have been subjected to increased scrutiny in recent years. Learning as much as possible about these occurrences and the aftereffects is a challenging yet critical task for police administrators. Officer-involved shootings are traumatic events for officers, involved families, and communities. It is the responsibility of police administrators to prevent the occurrence of officer-involved shootings, to the extent possible, and to provide an informed response when they do occur. Understanding how the disposition or perception of officer-involved shootings might affect the occurrence of additional shootings is one step in that direction.

This study established evidence that officers were less likely to shoot a suspect after a fellow officer's shooting resulted in criminal charges filed against the officer. There is a marked reduced frequency of officer-involved shootings following the two most recent incidents where officers were criminally charged. These findings are supported by the experience and observations of the chiefs and by the body-worn camera video of the incident where the officer failed to draw his firearm and shoot a suspect that pointed a gun directly at him. On the other hand, there is little to no evidence that officers were more likely to shoot a suspect after a fellow officer's shooting was found to be legally justified or could have been perceived as heroic.

Furthermore, there is clear evidence that OCPD officer-involved shootings tended to occur in clusters within a relatively short period of time with longer intervals between the clusters. There were eight separate clusters where at least three officer-involved shootings occurred within two weeks. In one of those clusters, five shootings occurred within two weeks. Officer-involved shootings where the suspect had a gun, the suspect fired shots at officers, or officers were hit by gunfire were more likely to initiate a cluster, especially the clusters where three or more shootings occurred within two weeks.

This study looked at officer-involved shootings in an innovative way. It produced some interesting and promising results. As with many case studies, it resulted in more questions than answers. Still, the results of this study established that this endeavor is worth further pursuit.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has provided some insight into whether the disposition and perception of officer-involved shootings may have some effect on the frequency of future officer-involved shootings in OCPD. However, it has only scratched the surface. To verify the findings and determine what they mean for police administrators

will require further research.

First, future studies must include primary data collected from the officers who are currently working in the field. Although the data here told a story and the chiefs provided valuable insight, input from the officers must be factored in. After all, they are the ones that are determining when to shoot a suspect and they are the ones directly involved in and most affected by shootings. Surveys and interviews should be used to attempt to explore officer attitudes.

Second, additional focus must be given to understanding why the officer-involved shootings tended to occur in clusters. Why does this phenomenon occur? Perhaps the occurrence of certain shootings and the attention they get in the media inspires other suspects or suicidal persons to imitate the behavior. This study found that the copy-cat effect did not have a strong influence on the officers themselves. But maybe it does have an influence on suspects.

Finally, future studies should expand beyond OCPD. Chief Gourley (2022) suggested that officer-involved shootings from other agencies that occur near Oklahoma City might also have an effect on officers. These incidents should be identified, incorporated into the timeline and data, and then analyzed.

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DECLARATION OF INTEREST

I was a sworn officer with the Oklahoma City Police Department from 2009 to 2021. I spent five years in patrol assigned to the Will

Rogers Division, five years in the Planning and Research Unit, and the final two years as Executive Officer to the Chief of Police. In 2021, I left the department for an Assistant Municipal Counselor position in the Oklahoma City Municipal Counselor's Office. In my final two years with the department, I worked closely with Chief Wade Gourley, Deputy Chief Brian Jennings, and Deputy Chief Ron Bacy. Otherwise, I have no interest—financial or otherwise—to declare with this work.

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**FOUR OKLAHOMA POPULISTS:
CONTEMPORARY “POPULISM STUDIES”
IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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In June 2023—located on the Rue de la Loi and within walking distance of the European Commission and Parliament—a new think tank appeared in Brussels. Called the European Center for Populism Studies (ECPS), it now serves as a clearing house for its burgeoning discipline. Perhaps such an organization was needed, for there has been a tremendous upsurge in academic studies of populism in recent years. Thousands of peer-reviewed articles on the subject have appeared since 2003, most in the last ten years. The professional literature is filling up with studies on the influence of populism in many places: Hungary, Kenya, El Salvador, and pretty much everywhere else. Even before creation of the ECPS, the academic subject was increasingly institutionalized, with several leading universities launching populism research initiatives.

In an avalanche of books and articles, with only a handful of dissenters, contemporary scholars of populism treat their subject as a problem: as a worldwide, antidemocratic phenomenon which must be understood in order to be defeated. According to the ECPS, for example, “populism” causes “democratic decay and authoritarianism around the world and endangers global peace, security, and stability.” Leading scholarly voices on populism affirm this assessment. The center of the new academic specialty has been in Western Europe. Much of it concentrates on (and has been stimulated by) current events such as Brexit and the election

of Donald Trump.¹

This upsurge has been surprising. Until the 1990s, debates on populism had been quietly confined to the academy. They took place primarily in the United States. Such scholarship dealt chiefly with the nineteenth century—especially the American People’s Party—and focused on historiography. Populism itself seemed an historical artifact. By 1991, for example, nearly a century of academic disputation on populism appeared to be drawing to a close. This debate had mostly focused on “big P” Populism, that is, on the People’s Party and its immediate predecessors. For the most part, a favorable portrait of populism had prevailed. Numerous scholars, including historians Lawrence Goodwyn and Norman Pollack, had rather effectively refuted the negative, “revisionist” views which fellow historian Richard Hofstadter propounded in the 1950s. Several scholars waxed rhapsodic about the Populists, praising their tolerance and “commitment to political democracy” as “a glorious chapter in the eternal struggle for human rights.”²

1 Who We Are,” European Center for Populism Studies, September 21, 2023, <https://www.populismstudies.org/about-us/>; Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 103; Lawrence Rosenthal, *Empire of Resentment: Populism’s Toxic Embrace of Nationalism* (New York: The New Press, 2020); Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

2 Anton Jäger, “Populism and the Historians: Richard Hofstadter and the Birth of a Global Populism Debate,” *History of Political Thought* XLIV, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 153-94; Cristóbal Kaltwasser et al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3-13; Raymond J. Cunningham, ed., *The Populists in Historical Perspective* (Boston: DC Heath, 1968); Theodore Saloutos, *Populism: Reaction or Reform?* (New York: Holt, 1968); Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 288; Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 553-54; Norman Pollack, *The Populist*

Thus, a disconnect has developed between perspectives on populism endorsed by European political scientists in the present (overwhelmingly negative) and the views recently upheld by American historians (mostly positive). A review of populist historical experience can help connect the two sides of this academic divide and help elucidate the nature of populism. Indeed, scholars have long struggled—and continue to struggle—to define populism. Some scholars today even claim that nineteenth-century American Populists, the people who invented the word, were “not in fact populists.”³ On the other hand, many persons widely regarded as populists do not accept the designation

It has therefore been necessary to adopt a working definition of populism (that is, “small p” populism) which does not presuppose positive or negative views. Rather than merely accepting historical or *au courant* scholarly understandings, this essay adopts definitions from standard English language usage. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines populism as “a political philosophy supporting the rights and power of the people in their struggle against the privileged elite.” One advantage of this definition is that both schools of populist interpretation accept anti-elitism and championship of the common people as “necessary,” if not sufficient, conditions for populist identification.⁴

Using this working definition, then, the following essay briefly looks at the populist experience in twentieth-century Oklahoma. Such investigation necessarily deals with “small p” populism. The

Response to Industrial America (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 143.

3 Müller, 85; Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Kaltwasser, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 2-6.

4 “Populism,” *American Heritage Dictionary*, September 22, 2023, <https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=populism>; Barton C. Shaw, *The Wool Hat Boys: Georgia’s Populist Party* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1984), 1-2; Müller, 3, 102-103; Roger Eatwell, “Populism and Fascism,” in *Oxford Handbook*, 364.

People's Party had disintegrated by 1900, well before Oklahoma statehood. Oklahoma provides a prime vehicle for such an examination. Indeed, one might easily regard the Sooner State, past and present, as populist ground zero. Powerful populist personalities have made a cultural mark on the state. "Make crime pay. Become a lawyer," cowboy/entertainer Will Rogers once quipped. Decades later, country musicians Merle Haggard in "Okie from Muskogee" (1969) and Garth Brooks in "Friends in Low Places" (1990), would famously roast elitism to glorify the common person.

The state also has a long history of populist-style politics. By analyzing the ideas and actions of four Oklahoma exemplars of political populism, one may gain insight regarding the current boom in populism studies. These four notables are Thomas P. Gore (1870-1949), William H. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray (1869-1956), Willmoore Kendall (1909-1967), and Fred R. Harris (1930-Present). Gore and Harris called themselves populists. Murray and Kendall did not, but the latter men also met the "small p" populist criteria defined above. In looking at these individuals, analysis focuses on two attributes which contemporary scholars generally ascribe to populists.⁵ The essay asks, that is, whether populism has been especially prone to anti-pluralism and authoritarianism.

Pluralism can refer to acceptance of equal rights (voting, free speech, etc.) for diverse social groups (based on race, religion, or other characteristics). Taken further, however, pluralism involves the "open society." Grounded in the ideas of philosophers Henri Bergson and Karl Popper, the open society sees collective restraints on individual behavior as oppressive. Morals are best created by each person, and society should accept these individualized ethical codes. According to the ECPS, pluralism means not only full rights for diverse groups but also demands an open society.⁶ Applying this last rubric to historical figures, however, is problematic.

5 Müller, 3-4; Norris, 9-12.

6 "Who We Are," ECPS.

Several values for which the ECPS demands protection (e.g., transgenderism) would have been virtually incomprehensible to persons of yesteryear. Defining pluralism as respect for the rights of diverse groups is more analytically fruitful.

The charge of authoritarianism lies at the heart of contemporary critiques of populism. Populists, in this view, gravitate toward power-hungry demagogues. Various charismatic leaders build cults of personality by appealing to the fears and prejudices of citizens. In power they supposedly feel free to ignore the rule of law and to overawe opponents. Current day “populist” leaders in Hungary, Turkey, Brazil, the United States are said to exemplify this authoritarian tendency. Such leaders evoke fear among populism studies scholars because they are thought to endanger both “liberal democracy” and “social democracy.”⁷

Of the four Oklahomans under the magnifying glass, only Thomas Gore was ever a “big P” Populist, that is, an actual member of the People’s Party. After its collapse he transferred to the Democratic Party, serving as US Senator from 1907 until 1921, then again from 1931 to 1937. An able orator, Gore articulated common populist themes of identification with ordinary voters and distrust of elites. “I would rather be a humble private in the ranks of those who struggle for justice and equality,” he once said, “than to be a minion of plutocracy, though adorned with purple and gold.”⁸

As a stalwart anti-militarist, Gore defended pluralism, in this case, the right of Americans to express unpopular opinions. In

7 Kurt Weyland, “Populism: A Political-Strategic Approach,” in *Oxford Handbook* 54-55; Henrik Bang and David Marsh, “Populism: A Major Threat to Democracy?,” *Policy Studies* 39, no. 3 (2018): 353; Stephen Rummens, “Populism as a Threat to Liberal Democracy,” in *Oxford Handbook*, 554-70.

8 “Gore, Thomas Pryor (1870-1949),” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, September 15, 2023, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=GO013>.

1916 he broke with President Woodrow Wilson by pushing for a ban on American travel on ships of World War I belligerents. The next year he opposed the Declaration of War against Germany. Once the war started, he opposed conscription. As fierce wartime intolerance gripped Oklahoma, he braved the public's wrath by voting against the Sedition Act of 1918. As German Mennonites suffered persecution in Oklahoma for their pacifism, Gore received ferocious criticism for friendly advice to a conscientious objector. On the other hand, Gore's pluralism did not extend to questions of race. As a segregationist he *ipso facto* rejected social and political equality for African Americans.⁹

As regards authoritarianism, Thomas Gore was more victim than perpetrator. Amid crises of war and depression, he strongly challenged the domineering executive actions of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt. His was a lonely voice in the Senate in opposing various New Deal relief programs. Attacked rather viciously by members of his own party, Gore lost access to patronage and the confidence of voters. By taking stands on principle, he twice forfeited his Senate seat, first in 1920 and again in 1936. But, said he, "the people giveth and the people taketh away."¹⁰

At first glance, and maybe at second glance too, William H. Murray fits the contemporary scholarly trope of crazed, power-hungry populist. He cultivated a following among Oklahoma's plain folk, bitterly denounced corporations, and appealed to "the boys at the fork of the creek." In his own words, Murray was the cabin builder of the Oklahoma Constitution. Presiding at the state constitutional

9 Monroe Lee Billington, *Thomas P. Gore: The Blind Senator From Oklahoma* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1957), *passim*; Marvin E. Kroeker, "'In Death You Shall Not Wear it Either:' The Persecution of Mennonite Pacifists in Oklahoma," in *"An Oklahoma I Had Never Seen Before: Alternative Views of Oklahoma History*, ed. Davis D. Joyce (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press), 80-100.

10 Billington, 178 and *passim*.

convention, he had a huge impact on its deliberations. Observers viewed the resulting document, with either admiration or horror, as a masterpiece of populist-style progressivism. Murray, a Democrat, later served as Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, US Congressman, and Governor.¹¹

In general, the charge of anti-pluralism applies to Murray. Although his cabin—the state constitution—guaranteed “perfect toleration of religious sentiment,” it also included an anti-Mormon provision against “polygamous or plural marriages.” The constitution did not restrict black voting rights or mandate Jim Crow, but the absence of such provisions reflected Murray’s tactical concerns for getting federal approval. For most of his career Murray avidly supported racial segregation. In the 1940s and 1950s, after political retirement, he loudly proclaimed racist and antisemitic views in a series of books.¹²

The charge of authoritarianism also seems appropriate for describing Murray’s time as governor (1931-35). In that post he called out the National Guard dozens of times. He used guardsmen to restrict oil production, to seize a bridge over the Red River in a border dispute with Texas, to prevent a lynching, to root out suspected communists in Henryetta, and to oversee ticket sales

11 William H. Murray, “Making a Constitution,” November 20, 1906 and “Constructing the Cabin of State,” April 19, 1910, in *The Speeches of William Henry Murray* (Oklahoma City, Harlow, 1931), 1-14; Stephen Jones, *Oklahoma Politics in State and Nation, Vol. 1: 1907-1962* (Enid: Haymaker Press, 1974), 42-43; “Murray, William Henry David (1869-1957),” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, September 14, 2023, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=MU014>; W. David Baird and Danney Goble, *Oklahoma: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 173-74; Arrell Morgan Gibson, *Oklahoma: A History of Five Centuries*, 2d ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 198-200; Keith L. Bryant, Jr., *Alfalfa Bill Murray* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), *passim*.

12 Jones, 45; Bryant, *passim*.

at the Oklahoma-Nebraska football game. He constantly feuded with members of his own cabinet, intimidated state employees, packed state government with cronies, and bulldozed bills through a reluctant legislature. Appearing frequently in the newspapers, he achieved national notoriety as the “Sage of Tishomingo.” In 1932 Murray launched a campaign for president but lost badly to Franklin Roosevelt.¹³

Unlike the other persons examined, Willmoore Kendall was not a politician. Over the years he worked as an intelligence officer, journalist, and Ivy League political theorist. Kendall was a founding editor of *National Review* and an important voice in the conservative political renaissance of the 1950s. Kendall’s views on pluralism were complex and carefully reasoned. He attacked the open society as impractical and undesirable. For a society to survive, he held, a certain degree of “orthodoxy” was necessary. No society could cohere in the real world if tolerating any and all opinions. Any society which granted absolute protection to the words of its enemies would certainly fall. Moreover, said he, any would-be open society must necessarily force opponents of the open society to accept an openness they do not desire. Thus, no such society could actually exist. As Kendall explained it, his views did not mean anti-pluralism. Rather, he argued for a “free society.” Such society would provide broad (but not unlimited) space for expression of many viewpoints by lots of groups. He believed such a society could be maintained for the long haul (as it had been in the United States) and that it would be freer than a society of coerced openness.¹⁴

Critics often accused Kendall of being an authoritarian, even of being a Fascist. Ultimately, these charges miss the mark. Kendall

13 Bryant, chs. ix-xi.

14 Christopher H. Owen, *Heaven Can Indeed Fall: The Life of Willmoore Kendall* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2021), *passim*; Willmoore Kendall, “Conservatism and the ‘Open Society,’” in *The Conservative Affirmation* (Chicago: Regnery, 1985), 100-120.

always remained a “majority-rule democrat.” He believed that the will of the people, as determined by majority vote, should prevail in politics. Initially an “absolute majoritarian” smitten by Rousseau, he became a Madisonian. The American constitutional system, he said, allowed majority will to prevail over time. Deliberation in Congress, through a give-and-take process among members representing diverse regions and interest groups, could reach decisions reflecting the people’s will. Kendall was deeply hostile to an over-powerful executive branch. Presidents, he said, treated the American people as an undifferentiated whole, but Congress worked through the people in all its plurality. He did not therefore crave a transformational strong man. Rather, he wanted a rejuvenated federal legislature which could check executive authority and thereby protect political pluralism.¹⁵

From 1964 to 1973, after a spell in the state legislature, Fred R. Harris served as US Senator from Oklahoma. He came within an eyelash of receiving the Democratic nomination for Vice-President in 1968. He also served as Chair of the Democratic National Committee in 1969-70, then exited politics. His anti-elitism focused on inordinate corporate political influence especially that of the oil industry. Through his “new populism,” he hoped to help common people achieve “widespread diffusion of economic and political power.” Harris thought that big government and big business, by limiting popular participation in decision-making, often made individuals feel powerless and depressed.¹⁶

Harris avidly embraced pluralism. His new populism tried to draw on the best aspects of his state’s populist tradition while purging it of racist, anti-pluralist features. He came up with the idea for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner

15 Owen, *passim*; Willmoore Kendall, “The Two Majorities in American Politics,” in *The Conservative Affirmation*, 1-20.

16 Fred R. Harris, *Potomac Fever* (New York: Norton, 1977), *passim*; Fred R. Harris, *The New Populism* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1973), 10-11.

Commission) which President Johnson established in 1967. One of the committee's most active members, Harris endorsed its controversial conclusion that systemic racism caused race riots. As Democratic chair, he put more women and minorities into leadership positions and reduced the power of party bosses. Recognizing the dangers of "Potomac fever," Harris was not an authoritarian. An effective wheeler-dealer at the highest political levels, he was ambitious for higher office (running twice for president). His strong liberal opinions came to rub many Oklahomans the wrong way. But Harris was no strong man promising political mayhem. He retired quietly into private life and became a teacher.¹⁷

Totting this all up, one may draw some tentative conclusions about historical "small p" populism. At first there may appear to be a connection between populism and anti-pluralism. One might see populist anti-pluralism at work, for example, in the anti-polygamy provisions of the state constitution, in segregation, and in the racially restrictive voting laws adopted after statehood. Yet nothing linked populism as such to these developments. A Republican president and Congress had demanded the anti-polygamy provision, which was not, therefore, populist in origin. Because anti-black racism was pervasive in early twentieth-century Oklahoma, there was nothing particularly *populistic* about Murray and Gore supporting racially discriminatory laws. In the first days of statehood, for example, Murray was berated by anti-populist forces for not aggressively implementing segregation and black disfranchisement. The Klan attacked Gore for being insufficiently committed to white supremacy. Racially discriminatory anti-pluralism, that is, appears to have been historically compatible with "small p" populism but not to have been produced by or specially linked to it.¹⁸ To be sure, Murray's racist diatribes from the 1940s

17 Harris, *Fever*, 106-13; 132-33, 173-75; Harris, *Populism*, 206-207.

18 "Enabling Act, 1906," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, September 23, 2023, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=EN001>; Baird and Goble, 172, 179; Gibson, 205; Billington, 138-39.

and 1950s were out of step (aka more racist) than the views of most Oklahomans at the time. For that very reason, however, they were not politically significant.

Certainly, none of the three deceased men under study supported the open society. In this sense, all were anti-pluralists. Kendall, however, cleverly turned this argument on its head by maintaining that the open society was itself inherently anti-pluralist. During his political career, Harris was about as pluralist as it was possible to be for a politician of his time. His work on the Kerner Commission, for example, focused on the dangers of white racism. But the vast majority of politicians of the day, including President Lyndon Johnson, rejected the commission's conclusions. Faced with the claim that "populists are *always* anti-pluralist," as made by political scientist Jan-Werner Müller, one must conclude that either: 1) Harris's claims to be a populist were false, or 2) Müller is wrong about the nature of populism.¹⁹ At times, one finds anti-pluralism historically associated with populism. However, such anti-pluralism does not appear to be a necessary feature of populism, nor does populism, as examined here, appear to be more anti-pluralist than society at large, and sometimes less so.

Regarding authoritarianism, three of the men examined are outright no's. To validate Müller's further claim that populists are "always protoauthoritarians," for example, one must conclude either that: 1) Gore, a self-proclaimed populist, was not really a populist, or that 2) his resistance to presidential authoritarianism was itself somehow authoritarian.²⁰ Neither Gore, Kendall, nor Harris exalted executive authority. None of them nourished a cult of personality.

As governor, however, Murray did both of these things. Yet, ironically, the chief obstacle to his authoritarian agenda was the state constitution which he himself had largely fashioned.

19 Müller, 3.

20 Ibid., 75.

He feuded with his cabinet because he could not fire its elected members. In referendums, which the populist-style constitution authorized, state voters rejected several measures, such a ban on corporate ownership of land, which Murray favored. The same document limited governors to one term, curtailing the executive's ability to build a political machine. Murray, the anti-authoritarian constitution builder, successfully stymied Murray, the would-be authoritarian governor. Thus, one may not unambiguously label even Alfalfa Bill as an authoritarian. For purpose of analysis here, then, authoritarianism does not appear strongly linked to populism.²¹ In fact, looking at all four men, one can make a better case for populist anti-authoritarianism.

Based on these four Oklahomans, twentieth century “small p” populism is not, as such, logically or empirically linked to anti-pluralism or authoritarianism. Maybe, like the “big P Populism” which preceded it, the populism of Gore, Murray, Kendall, and Harris was not *really* populism, at least as contemporary scholars define the term. This essay's conclusion does not mean that anti-pluralism and authoritarianism are lacking in twenty-first-century populism. Nor does it show that populists, as such, to be paragons of pluralism. But this quick look into Oklahoma's past does suggest that today's scholars of populism should be more mindful of history and perhaps more nuanced in their claims.

21 Bryant, 190-255; Gibson, 198-99, 221-23.

THE RISE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN OKLAHOMA

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This paper provides evidence for the rise of the women's movement in Oklahoma. The women's movement has been slow to emerge in Oklahoma, exemplified early on, and for many decades, by singular women rising to prominence in leadership roles, making slow progress in women's rights and representation against traditionalists in the legislature and local governments. We show that a movement per se has solidified and strengthened in the state since the 2016 election. Since the 1964 landslide election of Lyndon Johnson, Oklahoma has existed as a profoundly Republican state. A majority of the population still adheres to traditional roles and family structures and upholds a conservative ideology. However, in the 2016 election, women stood for elected offices across Oklahoma in unprecedented numbers and participated in the Women's Marches and Teacher's Marches in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. We use social media "followers" and "likes," and attendance at marches as measures of "joining" in political activities as a movement, reinforced by the development of new nonprofits focused on facets of women's empowerment.

"Women, if the soul of the nation is to be saved, I believe that you must become its soul." ("King, Coretta Scott - National Women's Hall of Fame")

The women's movement has been slow to emerge in Oklahoma, exemplified early on, and for many decades, by singular women rising to prominence in leadership roles, making slow progress in women's rights and representation against "traditionalists" in the legislature and local governments. Oklahoma has existed as a profoundly Republican state since after the election of 1948 (except for the 1964 landslide election of Lyndon Johnson), where a majority of the population adheres to traditional roles and family structures and upholds a conservative ideology. Seventy-seven women have been elected to the Oklahoma legislature, and one woman, Mary Fallin, served two terms as governor. Wilma Mankiller was the first woman Principal Chief of the Cherokee, and Kay Rhoades was elected Principal Chief of the Sac and Fox Nation. Willa Johnson was the first African American woman elected to the Oklahoma City Council, serving for fourteen years (Douglas, 2018). While many other Oklahoma women have made significant political contributions, we contend that a *movement* per se has only appeared in the state since 2016. In the 2016 election, women in unprecedented numbers stood for offices across Oklahoma and participated in the Women's March and the Teacher's March. Essential to understanding how and why the increase in women's political participation has contributed to the rise of a women's movement in the state is understanding the incentives underlying the rise of the women's movement in Oklahoma and what has sustained the movement.

In the first section, we review social movement theory and its contribution to explaining the rise of the women's movement in Oklahoma. The second section examines the breadth and depth of Oklahoma's women's groups and their political activism. The third section explains what motivates their participation and the groups' goals, political activities within the groups, and expectations of outcomes. Finally, we bring together the patterns exhibited by the women's movement in Oklahoma since 2016.

A gender gap exists between men and women in political social-

ization, political knowledge and interest, political efficacy, and ambition. Young men and women are taught different messages about political participation as they mature, and variances are found within race and socio-economic status as well. Women generally exhibit less political knowledge and internal political efficacy than men. The gap is even wider among people of color, particularly African-American women (Heldman, 2018). In many cases, the lives of women of color are shoved into the background in favor of men.

In the case of the three women who started the Black Lives Matter movement, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi were shoved to the background by men and ignored. As a result, “#SayHerName” became a rallying symbol in social media, highlighting gender violence, along with #MeToo and “#Timesup,” highlighting sexual harassment and sexual assault, respectively (Han & Heldman, 2018).

Examining the determinants and success of women's movements in general (Akchurin, 2013), (Costain, 1992), (Soule, McAdam, McCarthy, & Su, 1999) and (Vitema, 2008) are scholars focused primarily on the experiences of Western European and North American women. Critical elements of women's mobilization are typically issue-specific: physical security issues such as rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and discrimination in workplaces, schools, and politics. The growth of the women's movement in Oklahoma is related to the interdependence and overlapping goals of individual women's groups in the state. Murdie and Peksen (2015) analyze women's participation in non-gender-specific events such as war and corruption, where women are primary mobilizers.

THEORY

Social movement theory states that groups of people engage in collective action to achieve one or more goals that are specific

in nature and broad in reach. Social movements arise for several reasons: in response to a grievance or injustice committed against a member of a particular identity or group; responding to a perceived need to extend rights to a minority group; in response to a perceived need to raise some issue or set of issues into the public consciousness; all of which seek some policy change or remedy.

A social movement may comprise multiple groups focusing on various issues from different perspectives and specific issues within the movement, such as reproductive rights and access to health care, equity in education, equitable representation in government, and even immigration issues. We define “The Women’s Movement” as a broadly arrayed set of groups, each focusing on a specific women’s issue that contributes to the greater good of the community. The set of ongoing issues and their advocates comprise elements of the whole, and intergroup relations create a sustainable environment for the entire movement. A few of the groups that comprise the Women’s Movement in Oklahoma include supporters of Planned Parenthood, the American Association of University Women, Women March Oklahoma Chapter, Tulsa Women’s March, Women Lead Oklahoma, Lawyer Moms of America Oklahoma Chapter, and MMIW, “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.” This division of the scope of the work within the movement supports efficiencies related to achieving desired outcomes.

The central theoretical approaches explaining why women protest include relative deprivation, resource mobilization, political processes, and feminism, which underlie protest movements. When minority groups are denied access to resources, protests and domestic terrorism may arise (Piazza, 2011). Ethnic groups excluded from politics will likely rebel in response to oppression (Wimmer, 2009). Collective action is less costly when groups have access to significant resources, including financial support and organizational resources, such as communication via cell phones (McCarthy, 1977), (Murdie & Bhasin, Aiding and Abetting: Human

Rights, NGOs, and Domestic Protest, 2011) thus, the likelihood of protest increases (Bell et al., 2013), (Tilly, 1978), (Jenkins, 1983). Soule and others find that U.S. women are as likely to mobilize within political channels as outside (Soule et al., 1999). Women's organizations have been successful at getting women's issues onto the floor of the U.S. Congress. Murdie and Peksen constructed a global database capturing all non-violent protests by women between 1991 and 2009, finding that women experiencing relative deprivation acted on their grievances when their expectations did not match actual socio-economic and political conditions (Murdie & Peksen, 2015).

The socio-economic status of women organizers also matters. Scholars demonstrate that more highly educated women with access to significant resources can mobilize more effectively than those with lower education and less resource access (Moghadam, 1999), (Ray & Korteweg, 1999). Educated women have the knowledge and tools to engage in collective action. Costain contends that a favorable political atmosphere for success must exist for women to participate in dissent. The organizers must be confident that collective action will yield results and that the government will tolerate protests (Costain, 1992). However, in the second decade of the 21st Century, women in poor sections of cities and states are organizing themselves through social media, and African American women turned out to demonstrate.

Since the inauguration of President Donald Trump in January 2017, the political atmosphere in Oklahoma has been changing. Oklahoma's women, together with women across the country, engaged in collective action to protest the election, promote issues important to women's lives, engage with Oklahoma's government in support of education, and improve the safety and appropriate treatment of undocumented immigrant families, among other issues. The commonality of purpose and the broad scope of women's organizations and engagement comprise the women's movement in Oklahoma and nationwide.

Reactions to anti-feminism are an incentive to engage in non-violent protest and political activism. Anti-feminist discourse has been present in Western culture for decades and it gathered momentum in the 1980s as Ronald Reagan's right-wing politics found its imagined reflection in popular action blockbusters in which toned, white male figures dominated the screen. They were applauded for their physical strength and unapologetic confidence. Although a significant shift in gender politics has occurred since Reagan's tenure, the cultural myth of the 1980s action hero proves hard to extinguish. Some of Donald Trump's sexist discourse resonated with a similar admiration for the macho white man. Male heroes are tied to the rise of white masculine identity and its direct impact on social and cultural hierarchies, including in gendered debates. Whether intentional or not, when Hollywood uses the narrative of the powerful white male, it reinforces collective anxieties surrounding feminist criticism (Misiak, 2018), (Kumarini & Mendes, 2015). Kumarini and Mendes (2015) identify negative responses to feminism as patriarchal attempts at erasing women's rights activism from the public discourse. Misiak states that "If unaddressed, those blatant "feminist erasures" could carry an upsetting potential to halt women's continuing struggle for equality" (Misiak, 2018)

The reaction from feminists, both female and male, is promoted in writing and through open acts of social resistance to gender discrimination. Organizations promoted women to run for office regardless of political party. Those efforts led to more women being elected since 2016 to the U.S. Congress and state legislatures than in the past. In Hollywood, filmmakers began crafting movies with women in the leading roles.

"There is a strong belief in Oklahoma that if you work hard, play by the rules, and take care of your neighbors, the state and its people will flourish. Progress is visible in Oklahoma when:

- Regular citizens and professionals collaborate on best practices and policies.

- Businesses, nonprofits, and individuals encourage lawmakers to vote against hateful and discriminatory legislation, protecting Oklahoma's economy and people.
- Oklahomans can access comprehensive services for themselves and their communities, whether healthcare or education" (Sally's List, 2020)

Oklahoma City and Tulsa are thriving examples of municipalities investing in the futures of their residents. Through initiatives spurred by local action, Oklahoma's two largest cities are reviving communities, providing jobs, and spurring growth.

Two issues on women's front burners are quality education and access to health care. A robust and well-funded public education system is critical to Oklahoma's future, and women believe that state leaders have an obligation to guarantee parents that public schools will be able to prepare their children for prosperity. A strong public education system drives a robust economy, a healthier workforce, and a stronger future for all Oklahomans. Limited access to quality healthcare is a life-or-death reality faced by too many Oklahomans. Where people live or how much they earn are often deciding factors in accessing quality healthcare facilities or services, especially for rural citizens. Over the past four years, hospitals and clinics closing across rural Oklahoma caused women to travel far to access maternal and natal care (Nuñez, 2023). Access to comprehensive women's healthcare is often neglected or politicized. For Oklahoma to thrive economically, adequate access to healthcare for all is necessary.

Elected officials have an obligation to serve the best interests of their constituents. Unemployment, Workers' Compensation, and Human Services focusing on educating, re-training, and assisting Oklahomans in becoming fiscally independent are paramount in a strong economy and critical to post-pandemic prosperity. In providing economic and entrepreneurial opportunities for all Oklahomans, the state legislature must ensure that women have equal

pay for equal work. When the state legislature supports bills that discriminate against gender, ability, race, religion, creed, or sexual orientation, these are detrimental to long and short-term economic growth by closing economic doors against a skilled population. Discriminating against women is shutting out half of the population from economic prosperity. Ignoring the needs of women is an incentive for women to gather together to advocate for their needs.

Another issue for Oklahoma women is that Oklahoma is the number two overall incarcerator in the nation and the number one incarcerator of women worldwide. The state Department of Corrections has become dependent on private prisons, costing taxpayers more money, as the state pays private corporations to house inmates. In 2015 alone, \$92.7 million taxpayer dollars went to privately owned prisons Oklahoma jails (Human Rights Defense Center, 2017). This level of incarceration and the cost to Oklahoma is unsustainable. The criminal sentencing and justice system must evolve and meet the demands of modern society. Locking up individuals for non-violent or drug-related crimes destroys families, hurts the economy, and only increases the difficulties the Department of Corrections is facing. Here is another incentive for women to advocate for more humane and effective jurisprudential outcomes.

On January 21, 2017, the day after Donald Trump's Presidential inauguration, up to four and a half million people, the majority of them women, marched across America to show their disapproval of Trump's political agenda and planned policies in what will go down in history as the inter-sectional character embodiment of present-day gender politics in America. The effects of that nationwide march go far beyond a few speeches and a day of vocal group chanting in city centers. The Women's March (the March) was reminiscent of The Great Washington March of 1963 and similar events from the decades following. However, the Women's March was the first mass-scale protest led by women who potentially would become the primary sufferers after Trump's win in

November 2016. The March also marked a shift in the methods of feminist political resistance. The subtler theoretical debates and disjointed expressions of disapproval for acts of patriarchal discrimination, which had mushroomed in social and dominant media in the preceding years, gave ground to protesters' more radical, physical presence in the streets (Misiak, 2018).

Indeed, even if certain aspects of the pre – and post–2017 Women's March feminism do not seem to be poles apart, some activist circles continue their work for gender emancipation. We can now observe a reinforcement of previously smaller-scale or marginal tendencies and directions. The illusion that *feminism has done its job* can no longer convince American women that they are being offended and discriminated against by the man at the top of the political power structure. The March demonstrated that ordinary women are angry and thus much more likely to be interested in radical discourse, even more than in any other form of a feminist message. The March revealed that to be convincing and socially visible, contemporary feminists could no longer dedicate their time to writing theory books and teaching the already privileged masses in Western-style universities. Instead, they needed to openly espouse their criticism of patriarchy outside academia (Misiak, 2018).

Even if, as some have claimed, the Women's March of 2017 only served to mobilize those women who had already been convinced that they needed to stand against sexism and patriarchal abuse, it certainly made them more active and politicized. The street protests sparked an upsurge in feminist spirit. They strengthened women's vigilance of gender equality, followed by a wave of social media campaigns and smaller-scale initiatives devised to incentivize women to oppose patriarchal abuse and the lack of equal gender treatment. Across Oklahoma, women and men marched on January 21, 2017. Moreover, 2017 and 2018 witnessed the unveiling of sexual harassment in film and TV industries and political circles, the #MeToo and #TimesUp campaigns, the rise in

political commentary on women's rights on Facebook and Twitter, the birth of support groups for women who fall victim to sexual harassment, the growing popularity of feminist podcasts, as well as open and dominant media debates on the gender pay gap, and rape cultures. These can be read as products of the new feminist renaissance (Misiak, 2018).

So, what does a "new feminist renaissance" mean for women in solidly Republican states like Oklahoma? Despite the prevalence of women who identify as Republican, dedicated groups of women in Oklahoma continue to fight for political change. The history of women's political participation in Oklahoma is long and varied. However, these are the efforts of *individual* women, which do not constitute a women's social, economic, or political movement. Oklahoma state chapters of The Women's March, particularly in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, demonstrate an upsurge in the recognition by women (and male supporters) of the need to stand up and be heard. Following the 2016 election, more women have run for office in Oklahoma than at any other period, and women teachers have protested in large numbers at the statehouse for more resources for schools, children, and pay.

In the 2016 election, not a single Oklahoma county voted for Hillary Clinton over Donald Trump. In January 2017, Gallup ranked Oklahoma as the nation's fourth most conservative state, just ahead of Alabama, based on the percentage of the state's population that self-identified as conservative. In February of that year, the Washington Post placed Oklahoma on its list of ten states where the Democratic Party is on life-support. Then, something changed. In May of 2018, Anna Langthorn, then 24 years old, ran and won the race to become the chair of Oklahoma's Democratic Party on a platform of better-preparing candidates to run for office. Since Langthorn won, Oklahoma has held four special elections for state legislative seats that Republicans held. They all flipped from Republican to Democrat despite all being solid-red Trump districts (Joyce, 2018).

Of course, the success of Oklahoma Democrats under Langthorn has been aided by the backlash to the presidency of Donald Trump. Yet no conservative state has seen the consistent Democratic victories that Oklahoma has seen in the Trump era. However, nationally, Oklahoma still has a long way to go. Two of the seventeen congressional races of 2018 that did not have a declared Democratic candidate are in Oklahoma. Ultimately, Langthorn desired to reach a broad swath of voters in Oklahoma, even those in rural bastions of conservatism, by rebranding the Democratic Party as a party that can bring tangible social goods and services to voters (Joyce, 2018).

OKLAHOMA WOMEN'S GROUPS IN THE CURRENT ERA

To assess the causes and effects of the women's movement in Oklahoma, we examine the mission, goals, and reach of women's groups within the state; then, we interviewed the leadership of women's groups in the state using the open-format snowball technique following the flow of conversations and follow-up on any additional information we gathered.

While there are numerous smaller groups throughout the state, any groups that hold hope of possessing a coveted seat at the table or may be able to show teeth in this fight are based in and around Oklahoma City and Tulsa, leaving large swaths of the female population completely out of the larger conversation. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge and explore each while focusing on their background, mission, current issues of interest, reach, and members, allowing a further and fuller understanding of how each of these individual groups are connected from Oklahoma's urban centers to rural Oklahoma women and the common issues that we all face.

The box below presents the group of organizations discussed in this paper and is not an exhaustive list of women's organizations

in Oklahoma. Most of the organizations provide education regarding their specific mission on women's issues; others provide training and promotion for community members wanting to engage in advocacy and run for office, and other groups offer services to women who are victims of domestic violence, date-violence, trafficking, and other social welfare and healthcare issues. Each women's organization is a part of the whole movement supporting women's issues in Oklahoma. That these groups take on the diversity of needs is both necessary and sufficient to comprise the whole of the current women's movement in the state.

Overlapping and complementary missions:

Education and the improvement of the lives of women and girls.

American Association of University Women	Advance gender equity
Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women:	Education/ Social and Political Advocacy
League of Women Voters:	Education / Voting / Citizen Participation
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women:	Education/ Social and Political Advocacy
Native Alliance Against Violence:	Social assistance for victims/Resource connections
OK Women's Coalition:	Health & Wellness, Economic Security
Women's Foundation:	Challenge Grants, Economic Security
Women Lead Oklahoma:	Civic education and engagement

Political Advocacy for women and children's issues

American Association of University Women	Education for Social and Political Advocacy
Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women:	Social Change, Health & Wellness
Oklahoma Women's Coalition:	Health & Wellness, Economic Security, Violence
Women's March Oklahoma:	Transformational Change / End Violence / Human Rights
Women's March on Tulsa:	Transformational change / End Violence / Human Rights

Training and Recruitment for political participation and political office

League of Women Voters
Sally's List
Women Lead Oklahoma: Leadership training

The history of women’s suffrage action began in Oklahoma when it was still a territory. In 1890, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union petitioned lawmakers to give women the right to vote on school boards. Laura A. Gregg arrived in the territory in 1895, leading a new chapter of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Territory Equal Suffrage Association, led by Margret Rees, joined with NAWSA to present voting rights bills to the territory legislature in 1897 and 1899 without success. Together with women in the Indian Territories, the Twin Territorial Suffrage Association was formed in 1904. In 1906, at the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, Laura Gregg and Dr. Frances Woods managed to get equal suffrage debated, but women only received the right to vote on school boards; they did not gain the franchise (Corbett, n.d.). **In 1918, the women’s movement successfully put a state constitutional amendment before voters to extend the franchise to women.** It passed on November 18, 1918, two years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified. Oklahoma ratified the 19th Amendment on February 28, 1920 (National Park Service, 2019). After achieving women’s suffrage, the once widespread women’s movement in Oklahoma appeared moribund until the turn of the 21st Century.

In 1919, Carrie Chapman Catt proposed the creation of a “league of women voters to finish the fight and aid in the reconstruction of the nation” (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, 2019). Women Voters was formed within the NAWSA, composed of the organizations within the states where women’s suffrage had already been attained. On February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, the organization was formally established in Chicago as the National *League of Women Voters*. Oklahoma’s first chapter was founded in Muskogee in December 1920, led by Josephine Brown (Schrems, n.d.). From the very beginning, the legislative goals of the League were not exclusively focused on women’s suffrage but on citizen education across the electorate (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma,

2019).

Since its beginning in Chicago, Illinois, the League of Women Voters has helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. In fact, the first League convention voted 69 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation. Among them were protections for women and children, the rights of working women, the legal status of women, and American citizenship. The first major national legislative success was the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act, providing federal aid for maternal and childcare programs (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, 2019). In the 1930s, members worked successfully to enact the Social Security Act and the Food and Drug Act. Due at least in part to League efforts, legislation passed in 1938 and 1940 removed hundreds of federal jobs from the spoils system and placed them under Civil Service. During the postwar period, the League helped lead the effort to establish the United Nations and to ensure U.S. Participation. The League was one of the first organizations in the country officially recognized by the United Nations as a non-governmental organization; it still maintains official observer status today (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, 2019).

The aim of the League of Women Voters is to empower citizens to shape better communities. It is a nonpartisan political organization that acts after study and member agreement to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels, builds citizen participation in the democratic process, and engages communities in promoting solutions to public policy issues. The public policy Education Fund builds citizen participation in the democratic process, studies key community issues at all governmental levels, and enables people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues. The organization believes in respect for individuals, the value of diversity, removing barriers to democratic participation, and the empowerment of grass root action, both within the League and in communities. (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, 2019).

ers of Oklahoma, 2019). Can a national, bipartisan organization be truly considered to be a part of a women's movement? Yes of course. The focus is on women, in a bipartisan manner, focusing on women's rights and needs, with a solid ball in the political game.

The League of Women Voters of Oklahoma is active on both Twitter (now X) and Facebook but is not substantially present. On Facebook, they are followed by just over 1400 (1672 on 11/3/2020) people, and on Twitter, followers number less than 500 (League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, 2019). The Tulsa Metropolitan chapter of LWV is followed by just over 2,000 (2278 on 11/3/2020) people.

While more than 12,000 women and their allies marched down N. Lincoln Boulevard on January 21, 2017, before overflowing the south lawn of the capital building, to listen to women activists and lawmakers on the day of the National Women's March, the organizers behind the Women's March on Oklahoma pondered how to channel the March's energy into action that produced political change. Sacia Fowler, an organizer, asked, "What is the best way to ensure this does not die because we have a huge fight?" She said this question ran through her mind for months following the first March. Lindsey Kanaly, the lead orchestrator of the Oklahoma Women's March, said, "We didn't want to reinvent the wheel or anything that local organizers were already doing. We got into the mode of amplifying messages and events to get people involved... We had the Women's March movement, and what they were doing was focusing on social justice issues. We were supportive of that, but we also felt like there was more we could do." (Fowler, 2020). Since the first Oklahoma Women's March, Fowler and Kanaly, along with dozens of other women, launched March On as a women-led advocacy organization to broaden the reach and goals of the well-known March. The goal is to crowdsource a political platform between women and allies and then use that platform to enact changes within the political system (Eastes, 2017).

Through an “army of marchers,” also known as “marchroots,” these women plan to “take concrete, coordinated action at the federal, state, and local levels.” Kanaly stated, “We’ve come together to focus on elections at all levels, school boards up to Congress and the President. Our mission is to inform politics and create progressive political change from the local to the national level.” (Eastes, 2017). While their presence may be small, their voices are mighty

The first sign of the potential development of a true women’s movement in the state occurred when four women came together in 2007, Dr. Jean Warner, Donna Lawrence, Jan Peery, and Pat Potts, sharing the common vision “of a statewide coalition of women that would unite individuals and organizations as one powerful voice to initiate positive change for Oklahoma’s women and girls.” (CITE). Their shared passion ultimately led to the founding of the Oklahoma Women’s Coalition, which became public on February 18, 2009.

The Oklahoma Women’s Coalition (OWC) is a statewide network of individuals and organizations that work together to improve the lives of women and girls through education and advocacy. Moreover, the Coalition promotes nonpartisan efforts while addressing issues important to the progress of Oklahoma’s women. They want Oklahoma to be known as a state with great opportunities for women to succeed at work, at home, and in their communities while promoting opportunities for success (Oklahoma Women’s Coalition: One Voice for Women and Girls, 2019).

The OWC supports legislative priorities that are important to women and families, such as a teacher pay raise proposal supported by Gov. Stitt, which was approved by the House Appropriations and Budget Committee in 2020. Support in the state legislature for healthy relationships and consent education to combat adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is actively on their agenda. They oppose legislation allowing adult residents to carry a gun

without any training or a background check due to the direct connection to gun access and domestic violence. OWC continues to track progress being made around potential Medicaid expansion legislation, including supporting a campaign to put the question on a statewide ballot initiative.

Women make about \$.70 for every dollar men earn, and OWC works closely with legislators to construct a law requiring pay transparency. Some legislators want to exclude small businesses pay transparency legislation. The OWC fights for the voices of women represented in smaller businesses to ensure they have a viable pathway to advocate for themselves and a fair salary, regardless of the number of employees (Oklahoma Women's Coalition: One Voice for Women and Girls, 2019).

The Oklahoma Women's Coalition exhibits a healthy presence on social media with active accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn. While their followers on Twitter number less than 2,000, almost 4,000 (4800 on 11/3/2020) people follow them on Facebook. For one of the more active women's groups in the state, it is a positive space to occupy (Oklahoma Women's Coalition: One Voice for Women and Girls, 2019).

The Women's Foundation of Oklahoma was established in 2003 with a challenge grant from the Chambers Family Fund that prioritized building a permanent resource for women and girls in the state. Since its inception, the Women's Foundation of Oklahoma has invested over \$725,000 through grants to organizations focused on economic self-sufficiency for women and brighter futures for our state's girls, with over \$400,000 supporting educational opportunities for single mothers in Oklahoma higher education. The view of the Foundation is that even with the opportunities made available to women in recent history, women still experience barriers that negatively impact children, families, and communities. Wage inequity, poverty, teen pregnancy, family responsibility, and insufficient education or job skills are just a few

of the many challenges preventing Oklahoma women and girls from achieving equality and economic self-sufficiency.

Funding through the Women's Foundation of Oklahoma has improved access to education, jobs, and asset growth. Outcomes include reduced teen pregnancy rates, an increased number of women and girl completing their education, supporting positive early job experiences, and strengthening sustainable economic self-sufficiency. (Women's Foundation of Oklahoma, 2019).

While the national chapter of the Women's Foundation has a robust social media presence, the Women's Foundation of Oklahoma has almost no social media presence whatsoever. This makes it difficult to gauge their membership, events, current issues, or their reach and influence on campuses (Women's Foundation of Oklahoma, 2019).

Women face more significant hurdles to entering the political process than men. These obstacles are both real and perceived. Women are much less likely to run without being asked and are less likely to be recruited to run for elected office. More importantly, women are less likely to see themselves as qualified to run, even women at the top of their fields. The barriers to closing the gender gap are significant, but there is a path forward. When women are recruited to stand for office, they are more than three times as likely to consider a run. Yet, that decision can be overwhelming.

Another organization incentivizing women to run for office is Sally's List, a nonpartisan organization with a clear mission: to recruit, train, and help elect progressive women to public office in Oklahoma. It was created in 2010. Currently, women represent 14% of Oklahoma's legislative body, while women comprise 51% of the general population. They envision a legislature that reflects the female demographic of Oklahoma. More women serving in office are vital to a government supporting its people in health, education, and a strong economy. Sally's List prepares candidates

and hosts networking events that help remove the real and perceived barriers that often prevent women from running. By recruiting, training, and helping elect progressive women to public office, Sally's List ensures that all Oklahomans' best interests are well served (Sally's List, 2019). Sally's List knows that far more issues unite us than divide us, and that is why we work with candidates—regardless of political party— who prioritize the needs of their communities. Our Lawmakers have an obligation to craft the best policies for all Oklahomans, and the most effective way is by working across the aisle with productive and respectful dialogue.

Changing the face of Oklahoma politics will take time and dedicated effort. (“Sally’s List - Overview, News & Competitors | ZoomInfo.com”). The organization supports and trains women from diverse backgrounds and empowers them to be strong, capable candidates. They encourage women to start early and run competitive campaigns, introducing potential candidates to the details of the campaign process as well as providing intensive one-on-one training. Candidates say that even if they do not win, they become stronger because they have reshaped the conversation (Sally's List, 2019). Their record of success includes former candidates now serving in the Oklahoma House, Senate, Norman City Council, and on the Tulsa School Board. From the first small class of candidates, Sally's List has grown exponentially - identifying, recruiting, and preparing women to run for office at the state and local level (Sally's List, 2019). Sally's List is continually active on social media with a Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram account. Nearly 5,000 (4588 on 11/3/2020) people follow Sally's List on Facebook. Almost 1,300 people follow Sally's List on Twitter, and their Instagram boasts nearly 1,000 followers. Their record of success includes former candidates now serving in the Oklahoma House, Senate, Norman City Council, and on the Tulsa School Board (Sally's List, 2019). The organization is continually active on social media with a Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram account. Nearly 5,000 (4588 on 11/3/2020) people follow Sally's List on Facebook. Almost 1,300 people follow Sally's List on Twitter, and

their Instagram boasts nearly 1,000 followers.

Growing out of Sally's List, *Women Lead Oklahoma* was founded in 2015 by Representative Kendra Horn and Sara Jane Rose of Sally's List to catalyze change through programs that make it easy to understand the structures that govern civic life and interpersonal communication. Beyond the current headlines and real-life experiences of women in our state, a fundamental knowledge gap prevents civic engagement and leadership. "We know that when women are engaged in the civic process, in their communities, and the workplace, everyone benefits. This is why our programs focus on structures rather than specific issues. We know this is the key to real and lasting change" (Women Lead Oklahoma, 2019).

Women Lead Oklahoma is a community of women who believe they can make a difference for women in Oklahoma. By creating opportunities to learn, connect, and take action, they challenge the status quo and improve the experience of everyone living and working in this state. They envision a state where women are empowered to act, are community-focused, and civically engaged. Women are empowered to affect change through education and resources that encourage community and civic action" (Women Lead Oklahoma, 2019).

Women Lead Oklahoma exhibited a vibrant social media presence with active Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. They numbered over 6,000 on Facebook, over 500 on Twitter, and over 1,000 on Instagram. In 2020, it suddenly disappeared from social media.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT BY NATIVE WOMEN

Finally, we investigated how Native women work for political change in Oklahoma. Much of their efforts are focused on supporting families and communities through advocacy and services. "In 1996 Peggy Bird (Kewa), Darlene Correa (Laguna Pueblo),

and Genne James (Navajo) began The Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women (CSVANW) to support other advocates working to educate, prevent, and provide assistance for domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and sex trafficking.” Their mission is to advocate for change within communities where Natives live. In pursuing violence-free communities, the organization educates the Native community and supports advocacy through the power of unity (CSVANW, 2020). The original Coalition was created in New Mexico, included parts of Colorado and Arizona, and recently established a chapter in Oklahoma.

Over more than twenty years, the Coalition has included partnerships with tribal leaders, working with state and federal representatives “to develop legislation to support best practices in education, programming, and assistance for Native women and children.” They support organizations that provide direct services but do not provide specific services themselves. The Coalition provides training and education for adults as well as technical assistance. They also engage in policy advocacy, write Impact Reports, and provide community support, including Native Youth initiatives.

A partner with the Coalition in Oklahoma through the *Native Indigenous Women’s Resource Center* is the Native Alliance Against Violence (Native Alliance Against Violence, 2020). Created in 2009 and led by Executive Director Shelley Miller, the organization is headquartered in Norman, Oklahoma (Native Alliance Against Violence, 2020) and is a nonprofit organization organizing a coalition of thirty-eight Oklahoma tribes divided into five regions. Each tribe and tribal region has an organized nonprofit assisting women, children, and families affected by domestic violence, trafficking, and stalking by connecting them to services. Included in the organization is *The Coordinated Indigenous Resource Center for Legal Empowerment*, also called the *Circle Project*, which is connected to many state, federal, and tribal legal resources and represents Native Americans all over Oklahoma (Native Alliance Against Violence, 2020).

Another women's organization advocates for the families of Native women who are missing or who have been murdered. Native women in Oklahoma successfully created a state-wide network of chapters of *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women* (MMIW). On January 19, 2020, chapters from around the state met in Lawton, OK at the Comanche Nation Complex and voted for their first state President, Carmen Thompson (Scavelli, 2020), (Haliburton, 2020). They partner with the Native Alliance Against Violence and the CSVANW to engage in social and political advocacy, education of the public about trafficking, and violence directed at Native women.

Social media interactions for these Native-focused organizations on Facebook and Instagram are widespread and are posted by organization advocates, family members, and survivors. However, circumstances such as living in violent relationships and those who are trafficked may limit access to these social media sites.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women

Facebook: 7,561 followers (8622 on 11/3/20)

Twitter: 718 followers

Instagram: 869 followers

Native Alliance Against Violence

Facebook: 3100 followers (3282 on 11/3/20)

Twitter: 718 followers

Instagram: 869 followers

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Facebook: 3,086 followers (1468 on 11/3/20)

Twitter: 597 followers

Instagram: 2864 followers

CONCLUSION

To establish the growth of the women's movement in Oklahoma, we have located and laid out those organizations existing prior

to the 2016 election and those that either came into being or rose into greater prominence following the 2016 election. The growth of women’s advocacy organizations began slowly. One group was founded in 2003, and others in 2009 and 2016. One new coalition was formed in January 2020. One organization folded back into its parent. Some groups are chapters of regional or national organizations, indicating access to the broader women’s movement across the United States. Each group represents a comprehensive focus on women’s issues, leaning into those issues in specific ways. As these groups intermingle members and support each other’s activities, they comprise the breadth and depth of the women’s movement in Oklahoma.

From a thorough reading of websites, it does not appear that the 2016 or the 2020 election boosted some due to their focus on specific issues such as domestic violence and trafficking, education, and healthcare. Those focused on broader political outcomes grew in prominence and support. While public demonstrations have decreased over the past three years, membership in social media sites increased until November 3, 2020, when a fall-off in membership was observed.

Five of the numerous Oklahoma women’s groups possess the most far-reaching abilities and have the most impact. However, as the evidence suggests, membership, as measured via social media, is dismal at best. Oklahoma is home to about two million women. A future question to research is to discover why Oklahoma’s women are opting to sit out rather than participate in advocating for women’s issues and with the groups that focus on them. Another question is how Oklahoma’s women’s participation compares to women’s participation in other “Red” states and with women in “Blue States” across the U.S.?

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**EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF URBANIZATION
PROXIMAL TO MUNICIPAL WATER SOURCES:
A CASE STUDY OF LAKE THUNDERBIRD
OKLAHOMA**

ANNA RAE HALL

ABSTRACT

In light of current debate over turnpike expansion, this study strives to discover the connection between urbanization and pollution of Lake Thunderbird and further the overall understanding of how proximal populations affect public surface water sources. It has become increasingly important to preserve and protect existing municipal water reservoirs located near, and presently serving, thriving metropolitan areas as there is a finite amount of accessible, viable, fresh water available.

Lake Thunderbird is an excellent source for research as it reflects the state of the reservoirs nationally. Particularly, the characteristics of the water body are relational to others due to proximal urbanization, municipal water source reliance, and continued elevations of contaminants.

This study was completed via a case study application of available secondary data regarding Lake Thunderbird and the Lake Thunderbird Watershed. The study's hypothesis is, *Lake Thunderbird is prone to pollution via soil erosion from urbanization*. The findings conclude that the declining quality of Lake Thunderbird's water is caused by multifarious, simultaneous factors in a multiphase process initiated and perpetuated by proximal urbanization. Improv-

ing the quality of the water isn't as simple as identifying a specific cause or stress, but a holistic approach to managing urbanization, restricting impervious surfaces, mitigating soil erosion, addressing sedimentation, and decelerating subsequent pollution within a watershed. The long-term implications of creating large, paved surfaces such as a turnpike proximal to Lake Thunderbird are contradictory to other efforts of sustainability. As applied to what effects urbanization may have on municipal surface water supplies, it compounds the problem and creates additional environmental strains. It is prudent, practical, and possible to thoughtfully plan the placement of impervious surfaces.

INTRODUCTION

In 1928 H.W. Streeter, a Sanitary Engineer for The United States Public Health Service, wrote "Present indications, moreover, point to the likelihood that an increasing amount of dependence must be placed, in future years, on surface sources of water supply for public use...to supply increasing populations... pollution of... many surface supplies has increased with such rapidity that questions have arisen to the possibility of a failure of existing safeguards, both natural and artificial, to afford adequate degree of protection to such supplies" (Streeter 1928, p. 1499).

Urbanization is a pernicious force. By the late 19th century, the United States ever-increasing density of industry, housing, and transportation followed by subsequent air, waste, noise, and water pollution established American resources as refuse (Merchant, 2007). History transpired with the unbridled consumption and degradation of the nation. This land use and resource consumption trend in American history continued unabated. By 1972 the federal government created and passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, amended to become the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977. The document institutes that we must "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's

waters” (Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 2002, p.3). According to the Oklahoma Long Range Transportation growth plan the goal of the CWA, working in conjunction with state agencies, is to regulate discharges of pollutants from both point and non-point sources and “achieve and maintain a high standard of water quality in surface and ground waters” (Oklahoma Department of Transportation, 2010, p. 4-1). It is imperative that the CWA and subsequent municipal freshwater resources protection policies be maintained and soundly regulated. This is paramount as urbanization continues to apply pressure upon the limited resources available.

A considerable amount of freshwater municipal sources is drawn from surface water which is defined as any water that is on Earth’s surface comprised of both “fresh and salt water such as but not limited to the oceans, streams, lakes, rivers, wetlands, creeks and reservoirs” (National Geographic Society, 2022, p. 1). Surface water is highly impacted by man-made activities such as urbanization. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Urbanization is the “concentration of human populations into discrete areas. This concentration leads to the transformation of land for residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation purposes. It can include densely populated centers, as well as their adjacent peri-urban or suburban fringes” (2022, n.p.). Conspicuously, man-made activities such as urbanization have direct negative impacts on freshwater bodies. Specifically, freshwater bodies suffer from severe pollution due to the encroachment of urban development on rural lands.

Freshwater pollution levels of municipal sources must be considered future capital as they are finite, and many are approaching the natural end of their life cycle. Some states have a pronounced number of reservoirs. It is not clear whether this is prudent water management or mere luck. However, it is inferred this insulates them from the pressures of an expanding population that is American urbanization.

Lake Thunderbird, located in Central Oklahoma, serves as a prime example of the interactions between urbanization and surface water. Originally created for flood control, the reservoir has become vital to the residents of Norman as their main source of municipal water. The impounded water also supplements water supplies for four other metropolitan populations. Worth noting is that Lake Thunderbird additionally serves as a State Park, is a designated Warm Water Aquatic Community, and is acknowledged as providing fish for human consumption (Enviroshield, 2021).

Regardless of several unavoidable factors, such as the propensity of local soils to be highly mobile, Lake Thunderbird continues to struggle to sustain clean, clear water. However, its main recorded issues today are nutrient overloading and sedimentation credited to anthropological activities such as population growth, urbanization, and impervious surfaces (Martin-Mikle et al., 2015).

This study strives to discover the connection between urbanization and pollution of Lake Thunderbird and further the overall understanding of how proximal populations affect surface water sources. Non-point pollution of waterbodies is a complex multiphase phenomenon that combines multiple natural variables simultaneously affected by various anthropogenic co-occurring activities creating biological impairment of water bodies.

The research technique employed in this study was a case study analysis. This study will exclude differentiation between sedimentation, pollution, and siltation. Sedimentation is an ambiguous term. It includes siltation, sediment both organic and inorganic in nature, and all other manners of small-suspended pollutants; thus, the terminology is often interchangeable and is not delineated within this study.

The research's hypothesis is 1) Lake Thunderbird is prone to pollution via soil erosion from urbanization. This thesis contains six chapters including the introductory chapter, the literature review,

methodology, analysis, discussion and policy recommendation, and applications and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH

LINEAR PROCESS OF WATER POLLUTION VIA URBANIZATION

It is important to understand that reservoirs are man-made catchments and part of greater systems known as watersheds. All water bodies have areas of land that drain or channel precipitation into them, these areas are known as watersheds. Watersheds can be very large, such as the Mississippi River Watershed which covers roughly one-third of the United States. That means that events, such as the growth of an urban area, or a new highway miles away from a water body can affect the water quality of a downstream lake or reservoir within the watershed.

There is a distinct correlation between static bodies of water and the anthropogenic activities within a watershed measurable in the quality of the water contained in a catchment. The process by which pollutants arrive in the catchment is a linear multi-staged process.

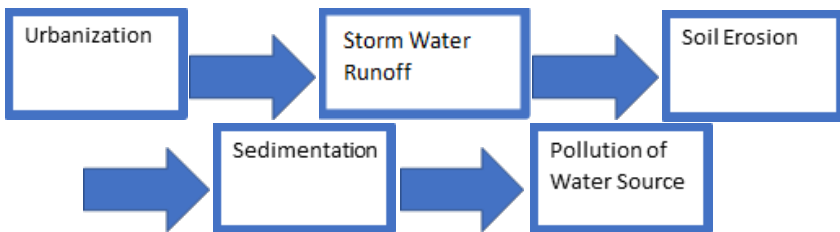


Figure 1: Linear Process of Pollution to Waterbodies via Urbanization

The cumulative effect of these linear processes of pollution to municipal water body sources is increased pollution. Sedimentation via urbanization increases cost and ultimately dictates the

mortality of the reservoir. The study clearly defines sedimentation, acknowledges its quantification (in relation to urbanization), and discusses its links to water quality as it relates to Lake Thunderbird in Norman, Oklahoma.

LAKE THUNDERBIRD: A CASE STUDY

Lake Thunderbird is a man-made 6, 070-acre reservoir located in Norman, Oklahoma (Longitude: -97° 13' 3.1 Latitude: 35° 13' 24.25) (USGS Water Data, 2023). It is in an area of Oklahoma known as Cross Timbers, a patchwork belt of low rolling hills comprised of pastureland, rangeland, and woodlands including some of the least disturbed forest land in the U.S. (Oklahoma Biological Survey, 2015). It is part of the Little River watershed and has a 256- square-mile watershed area (Water Quality Division, 2019).

The land surrounding Lake Thunderbird was previously known for flooding and was the subject of study by the Army Corps of Engineers, specifically in 1936 and 1947 (COMCD, 2023). In 1953 experts in the nearby municipalities of Norman, Moore, Del City, Midwest City, and Tinker Airforce Base, voiced concerns regarding population growth in the area and the eventuality that water supplies would cease being adequate by 1970 (COMCD, 2023). A report in 1954 led to a Plan Report in 1961; construction began on Norman Dam in 1962 (COMCD, 2023). The dam and subsequent Lake Thunderbird were completed in 1965 by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Norman Dam measures 144 feet in height and sequesters 171, 400 acre-feet of water, owned by the Bureau of Reclamation, and operated by the local Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District (COMCD, 2023). The dam henceforth has been the municipal water source for five municipalities with The City of Norman dependent on the reservoir for the majority of supplied water (COMCD, 2023).

Historically pollution of Lake Thunderbird has been chronic. Reports show that Lake Thunderbird was a little behind the criteria

for clean water (as set forth by the Clean Water Act of 1972) in 1983, and very far behind expectations set for 1985. As such the lake was listed as impaired and deemed a “Sensitive Water Supply” in 2002 and placed on a 303(d) list by the EPA consequently, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (OKDEQ) established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) parameters in 2010 (OCC, 2008). However, rising contamination levels continued. In 2013 the lake’s management came under scrutiny and serious management restructuring was mandated due to federal pressures. A five-year development plan to tackle the major contributors to Lake Thunderbird’s woes was established. The major problems were designated as; pet waste, nitrogen, phosphorus, and suspended sediment from construction runoff (OWRB, 2009). By October 2016, the 5-year Plan was implemented (*History*, 2023). It is imperative to note that Lake Thunderbird receives all recharging water from rainfall, precipitation, and inflow from the tributaries, which includes all surface runoff in the watershed (OWRB, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

The value of the case study approach is that it allows for extensive examination of complex, multiphase subjects in a real-world application by use of an actual data set from a real place (Crowe et al., 2011). Furthermore, a case study approach is especially appropriate to provide an applicative understanding of complex inter-laced occurrences and appropriate to attain a deep understanding of the sum of a case (Crowe et al., 2011).

This application is highly applicable to the exploratory facet of this study as Lake Thunderbird is an entity whereby applications (management of the resource) are examined, and results are presented regarding urbanization and its linkages to the pollution of the water body. This study was conducted via the collection whereby utilization of Google Scholar with keywords included but not limited to the terms “Lake Thunderbird,” “urbanization,”

“stormwater,” “runoff,” “soil erosion,” and “sedimentation”; reports (both historic and contemporary) submitted to or published by credible government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Oklahoma Water Resource Board, the City of Norman, and academic articles. As an expeditious study secondary data was utilized. The academic literature provides the bulk of materials while local Norman City municipalities, Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District (COMCD), and other notable stakeholders’ accurate data substantiate the information within this study. Lake Thunderbird has recognized federal attention, as such data has been abundantly generated. This statistical information provides a wealthy collection for assessment. The study strives to evaluate past implementations to avoid future failure but is not bound by these historical documents. Attention will be prioritized to relevance.

FINDINGS

The hypothesis: Lake Thunderbird is prone to pollution via soil erosion from urbanization is supported.

The following review of variables leading up to the pollution level increase in Lake Thunderbird via urbanization is expounded upon. Specifically, the elements are polluted by urbanization and collectively accrue more pollution than their natural processes upon the Earth. Furthermore, human activities exacerbate pollution levels and the evolution of natural processes of stormwater runoff, soil erosion, and sedimentation/pollution.

Table 1: Lake Thunderbird Plans

Date	Title of Plan/Action	Issuing Agency
2002	Sensitive Water Supply- Added to 303(d) list	Oklahoma Dept. Of Environmental Quality
2008	Watershed Based Plan for the Lake Thunderbird Watershed	Oklahoma Conservation Commission

A CASE STUDY OF LAKE THUNDERBIRD OKLAHOMA

2009	Lake Thunderbird/ Norman Project Resource Management Plan	Bureau of Reclamation
2009	Lake Thunderbird/Norman Project RMP (Reclamation Resource Management Plan)	U.S. Dept of Interior- Bureau of Reclamation & OK Tourism and Recreation Dept
2013	TMDL Rates Established	Ok Dept of Environmental Quality
2015	Lake Thunderbird Compliance and Monitoring Plan	City of Norman
2015	Final MS4 and Lake Thunderbird TMDL Compliance Plan	City of Moore
2016	City of Moore Stormwater Management Plan	City of Moore
2016	City of Norman Stormwater Management Plan	City of Norman
2016	City of Norman TMDL Compliance and Monitoring Plan	City of Norman
2016	Norman Compliance and Monitoring Plan-Resolution No. R-1617-41	Norman City Council
2017	City of Oklahoma City Water Conservation Plan	City of Oklahoma City
2018	City of Oklahoma City Stormwater Quality Management Plan	City of Oklahoma City

HOW IS LAKE THUNDERBIRD PRONE TO POLLUTION?

Lake Thunderbird has been steadily plagued by pollution problems almost from conception. The Clean Water Act was passed by Congress in 1972. The Act set forth specific expectations and defined the goals as: restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters. The interim goals of the Clean Water Act were to achieve "fishable and swimmable" (Cleans Water Act Fact Sheet, 2016) waters by 1983, and eliminate all discharges of pollutants into navigable waters by 1985. Noted is a geological attribute indicative of the Great Plains Region: the composition of the earth below the topsoil layer easily disperses when the topsoil is disturbed as it did during the Dust Bowl.

By 2008, Lake Thunderbird's condition had become dire. By 2013, significant action was required immediately. To its credit, the City of Norman swung into action. They commenced a 5- year plan to tackle the major contributors to Lake Thunderbirds' woes. The major problems are pet waste, an elevated presence of nitrogen and phosphorus leading to prolific algae blooms and in turn causing a separate environmental air quality issue, and suspended sediment in the water from construction run off. By October of 2016, the 5-year Plan was implemented. In the following years an aggressive course of action was enacted. There were partnerships formed, community alliances established, new rules and regulations governing construction sites launched, educational outreach instituted, and an impressive Basin Monitoring Plan executed.

Argumentatively, all action is good. However, deep inside the Enviro-Shield Solutions Water Quality 2021 report (p. 64) is this statement, "Although much has been done to address problems at Lake Thunderbird, continually poor water quality and the rising demand for freshwater for multiple beneficial uses makes it critical to continue working on the future health of the reservoir..."

Despite aggressive proactive actions and countermeasures, Lake Thunderbird's water quality remains poor. Derichsweiler, manager of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality decisively stated in 2013, "We have over a thousand impairments in this state. Lake Thunderbird is one of the priorities" (Terry-Cobo, 2014, par. 4).

Not only does Lake Thunderbird serve as a drinking water source for five municipalities, but it also serves as an example of issues plaguing many of Oklahoma's reservoirs. The consistent population growth, and subsequent construction that follows growth is known to be attributed to the rapid motility of this layer of earth.

URBANIZATION

The population of Cleveland County, where Norman serves as the county seat, has continually grown at a higher rate than the overall state of Oklahoma (Kaplan, 2023). Lake Thunderbird is Norman's primary source of water. Norman has grown 33% since 2000, adding 10,400 single-family homes and 6,120 multifamily homes (Kaplan, 2023). A comprehensive 2019 growth report for Norman recorded a 26% uptick in new construction in Ward 5, which surrounds Lake Thunderbird (City of Norman, 2020). Worth noting is that the parameters of Lake Thunderbird's watershed extend beyond surrounding municipalities; however, building permits are not required outside of city limits, ergo there would not be any way to ascertain the number of impervious surfaces added outside of city limits without layering data from multiple sources. The addition of so many impervious surfaces increase the likeliness of pollution of Lake Thunderbird via storm water run-off given that Central Oklahoma is experiencing regular intense heavy rainfall events that encourage runoff leading to the primary cause of pollution to the lake (Oklahoma Conservation Commission, 2008). Consider the figure below which displays (as of 2006) Lake Thunderbird's watershed which is approximately 40% residential and dominated by hard surfaces (Fry et al., 2011).

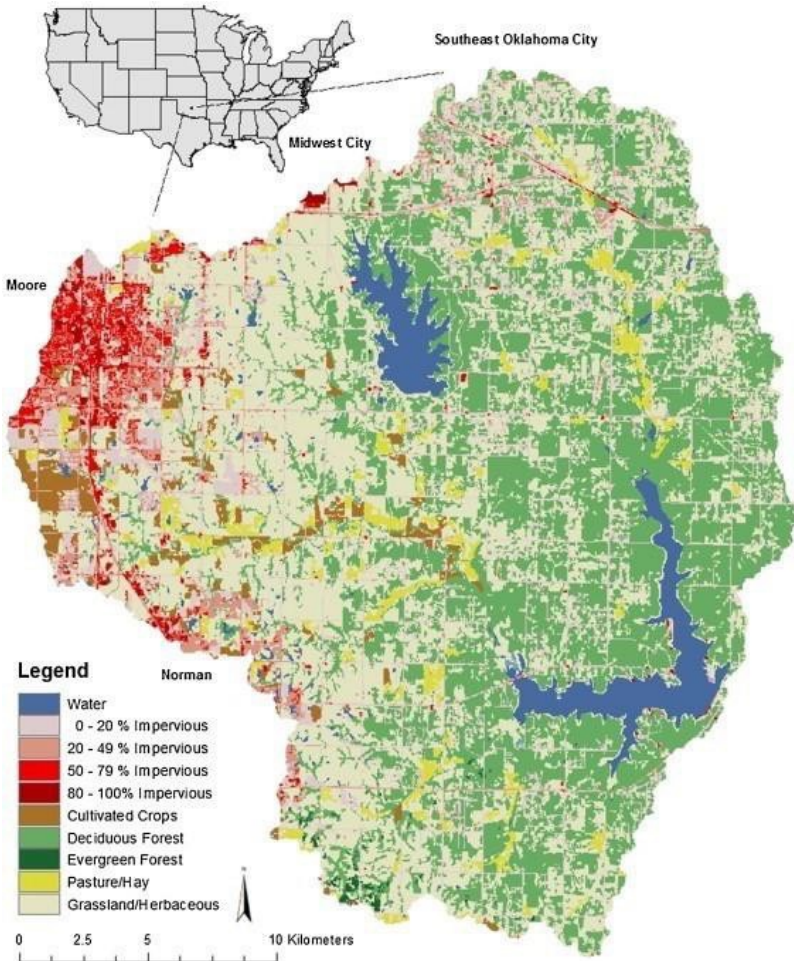
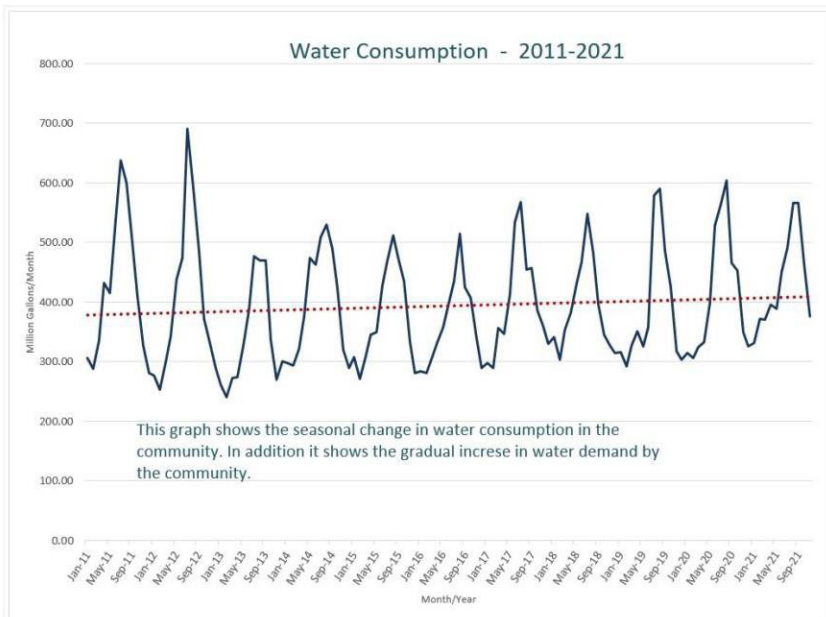


Figure 2: Lake Thunderbird Watershed Surfaces 2006 (Fry et al., 2011)

A subsequent consequence of new construction is the removal of natural surfaces as they are replaced with homes, roads, and businesses. The removal of vegetative plants, brush, and trees will increase water pollution (Bae, 2020). According to the H2OU, “in the past 30 years, the agricultural regions have decreased” and “since 2016, there is a decreased percentage of open spaces, evergreen forests, grasslands, and cultivated regions” (2021, n.p.).

A CASE STUDY OF LAKE THUNDERBIRD OKLAHOMA

Pavement and hard surfaces reduce the ability of nature to act as a natural filtration system. This means that runoff stormwater collects pollutants and disperses directly into collective water basins such as Lake Thunderbird. Not only does urbanization pollute Lake Thunderbird but the significant population increase adds pressure to the limited resource. Municipal water consumption has shown a marked escalation, while the overall average water consumption by Norman residents has increased by half a million gallons a year (City of Norman, 2023). Peak water consumption months, such as September, illustrate a variance of a one-million-gallon increase from 2011 to 2021 (City of Norman, 2023).



A look at 10 year of Water Consumption by the Norman community.

Figure 3: Water Consumption- 2011-2021
(City of Norman, 2023)

Table 2: Population Growth in Cities Contributing Runoff to Lake Thunderbird, 2000 and 2019

City	Year 2000	Year 2019
Norman	95,694	124,880
Oklahoma City	506,671	643,692
Moore	41,138	60,943

(USCB, 2020)

STORM RUN OFF / SOIL EROSION

“Stormwater runoff to Lake Thunderbird has increased in both quantity and velocity as the populations of the nearby cities that deliver the vast majority of the stormwater runoff to the Lake have grown” (Evenson, 2019, p. 5). It is recognized pollutants can be directly discharged into waterways and subsequently to the lake via stormwater runoff (Lake Thunderbird Watershed Partnership, 2019). Oklahoma does not treat its stormwater (Lake Thunderbird Watershed Partnership, 2019). This means that contaminants are not removed or even reduced before entering catchment areas. According to studies compiled from Oklahoma’s DEQ, “a TMDL was established in 2013 which identified stormwater runoff from urbanized areas as the primary contributors to the Lake’s water quality impairment” (Evenson, 2019, n.p.).

Stormwater runoff and sedimentation become very convoluted when discussing pollution levels. Recognition is given that according to a cumulative study published in 2016, stormwater runoff is responsible for specific contaminants within Lake Thunderbird, they include, natural sediments, nitrogen, and phosphorus (Chen et al.). Consider studies that compile OWRB data that identifies marked increases in phosphorous and nitrogen which is evidence of direct correlations to “residential areas, road construction, and agricultural areas, and leakage from septic systems, and other non-point sources” (H2OU Engineering, 2021, n.p.). Regard the table below which displays the total nutrient loading of phosphorous and nitrogen per city.

Table 3: Total Nutrient Loading Contribution by City

City	Total Phosphorous (%)	Total Nitrogen (%)
Norman	38.0	39.5
Oklahoma City	31.1	32.4
Moore	28.1	25.4
Other	2.80	2.60

(OWRB, 2020)

Highly urbanized areas within the Lake Thunderbird Watershed (Chen et al. 2016), have intensified water pollution in Lake Thunderbird due to storm runoff (OCC, 2008). Storm runoff is particularly injurious when it is the product of intense rainfall events. Lake Thunderbird watershed regularly experiences intense rainfall events mathematically described as 24/h 2/y=87mm/h (Martin-Mikle, 2015). Intense rain events combined with impervious surfaces (a consequence of urbanization), create destructive runoff leading to soil erosion. Additionally, the influx of abundant, swift-moving water into small tributaries contributes to bank erosion and channeling rapidly delivering overabundant sediments and disproportionate amounts of nutrients to Lake Thunderbird (Julian et al., 2015).

Soil erosion is a worldwide concern, a national concern, a concern indicative of the Great Plains region, and a concern to those in the Lake Thunderbird Watershed. Oklahoma has a long tumultuous history with soil erosion (as does Kansas, Texas, Colorado, and New Mexico). In 1934 alone, it is approximated that 300 tons of soil were dislodged from the region and transported to portions of the eastern United States (Cummins, 2021). It is estimated by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension that “50 million tons of soil are washed away from the state’s land every year by water erosion” (Cummins, 2021, p. 1).

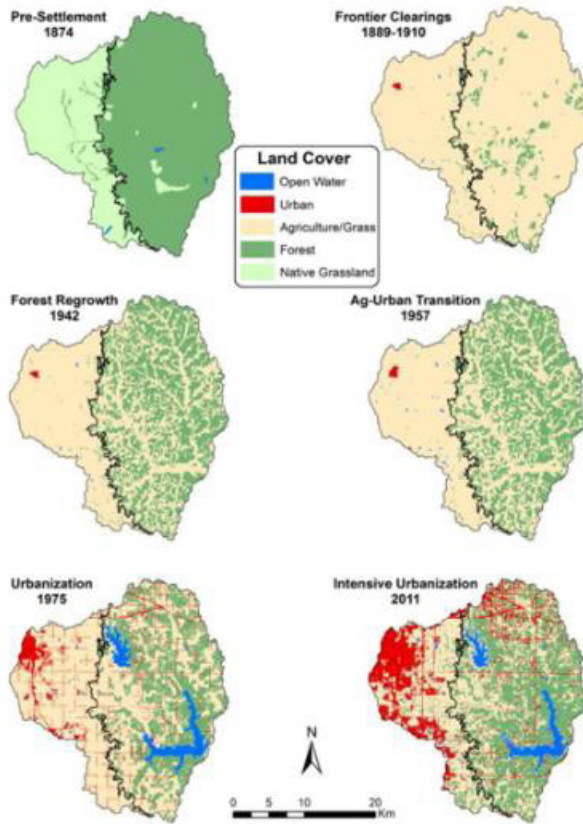


Figure 4: Chronological Land Use in Lake Thunderbird Watershed (Julian et al.,2015)

Although soil erosion occurs naturally, the activities of humans have contributed greatly to the rate at which soil erosion occurs. Urbanization has been associated with soil erosion via storm run-off in the Lake Thunderbird watershed in several ways, however, none are impactful as construction activities that expose bare land to the elements (Kamara, 2019). Exposed land is subject to soil erosion, subsequent soil loss, eventual sedimentation of water bodies, and (if not addressed) water quality impairments, property damage, habitat loss, and potential loss of biodiversity (Kamara,

2019). It has been determined that solutions to sediment control and improved water quality of Lake Thunderbird, as offered by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, begin with the prevention of soil erosion via stormwater management (Kamara, 2019). This is proposed because it is acknowledged that soil erosion becomes sedimentation which is pollution. Regarding stormwater and its impact on pollution levels of Lake Thunderbird depicts that as the elements are fluid within a segmented linear process they must be managed from the beginning of their lifecycle on the earth's surface, which is stormwater management.

SEDIMENTATION / POLLUTION OF WATER SOURCE

All flowing waters contain sediments naturally. When flowing water is delayed behind a dam, the sediments settle to the bottom of the reservoir (McCully, 2001) such as the Norman Dam of Lake Thunderbird. Despite ever-evolving research, sedimentation is the most perilous issue confronting dam management (McCully, 2001). In an effort to better understand the relationship between sedimentation and reservoirs, various studies have emerged. One such assessment revealed Lake Thunderbird received large volumes of sediment-laden runoff (Ross, 1991).

The Bureau of Reclamation completed a thorough evaluation in 2015 and concluded that Lake Thunderbird has lost roughly 12% of its original storage capacity since 1965 due to sedimentation (OWRB, 2020). Further evaluations display the annual sediment yield, or amount of sediment entering the lake from the watershed, at 1.93 acre-feet per square mile annually; this data highly exceeds acceptable amounts of sedimentation for the lake (U.S. Department of the Interior-Bureau of Reclamation, 2006).

Aside from sediments filling in the reservoir and rendering it useless, sedimentation presents a number of problems in Lake Thunderbird. The smallest of particles stay suspended causing cloudiness making Lake Thunderbird appear dirty. This is called turbidity- aside from aesthetics, turbidity harms the natural biota

of the lake. In 2008, Lake Thunderbird exceeded criteria levels of turbidity put forth for the protection of the beneficial use of Fish and Wildlife thus designating compromised (OWRB, 2008). These facts were again reiterated in 2020; specifically, regarding the lake's inability to support fish and wildlife due to turbidity (OWRB, 2020). Furthermore, turbidity creates water treatment issues and plays a significant role in the thermal dynamics of the lake establishing an occurrence known as turning over. Heavy sediment entraps pollutants and sinks to the bottom of reservoirs. Specifically in Lake Thunderbird phosphorous (JAY Engineering, 2021), nitrogen, metals (such as iron and manganese) (OWRB, 2008), and ammonia (OWRB, 2020) all attach to heavy sediment and create detrimental pollution levels within the lake. Shallow lakes (20 ft or less) are subject to a phenomenon known as turning over whereby the contents of the bottom of the lake (heavy sediments) cycle back toward the surface and vis-a-versa this releases bound pollution and continues to exacerbate contamination levels experienced by Lake Thunderbird (OWRB, 2008). The excess nutrients in Lake Thunderbird cause the prolific growth of algae. "This process of elevated algal growth and ensuing consequences is known as cultural eutrophication, where anthropogenic point and non- point sources are always the cause of excess nutrients in aquatic environments, where in-lake dynamics will exacerbate associated problems. Consequences of cultural eutrophication were observed in Lake Thunderbird in 2008" (OWRB, 2008 p. 40).

Where does the overabundance of sedimentation come from? Lake Thunderbird receives all recharging water from rainfall, precipitation, and inflow from tributaries, which includes all surface runoff in the watershed (OWRB, 2008). Furthermore, the lake has water pollution levels specifically from urban stormwater specifically in relation to intense rainfall (OCC, 2008). The nutrient-overloaded sediment was coming in from the watershed at various lake inlets. "Larger- grained sediment washed in from the watershed seems to account for the bulk of the accumulated sediment" (OWRB, 2002, p.13).

In 2020 Lake Thunderbird's nonalgal turbidity was scrutinized and was found to be predominately allochthonous, meaning the suspended sediment particles were originating from elsewhere and being transported to Lake Thunderbird (OWRB, 2020). Excessive amounts of sediment, as well as problematic phosphorus and nitrogen, are transported to Lake Thunderbird via headwater streams subsequently resulting in excessive turbidity (and algal blooms) that exceed regulations prescribed by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ, 2008). Lake Thunderbird is a victim of pollution via sedimentation originating from stormwater runoff from urban areas. Studies firmly establish, "stormwater runoff from urbanized areas as the primary contributors to the Lake's water quality impairment" (Evenson, 2019, p. 5).

DISCUSSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Lake Thunderbird is currently transcribed on Oklahoma's 303(d) list as Priority 1, in Category 5a (OWRB, 2021) such categorization indicates that a water body is impaired, water quality is diminished, and the waterbody has failed to meet its designated uses (ODEQ, 2013). Reasons for Lake Thunderbird's impairment include high turbidity as well as elevated concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus (OWRB, 2020). The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality has further classified the lake as a Sensitive Water Supply because it continues to fail to meet requirements for Fish & Wildlife Propagation for a Warm Water Aquatic Community and Public Water Supply uses (OCC, 2008). Included academic and community concerns manifested in contemporary research include deteriorating aesthetic values (H2OU, 2020) and rising water treatment costs (OWRB, 2011).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER POLICY MANAGEMENT

Worth mentioning is the concept of Low Impact Development where thoughtful implementation watershed-wide of comprehensive planning could potentially mitigate the impacts of urbaniza-

tion (Martin-Mikle et al., 2008). Low Impact Development is used in agricultural practices often, it is rarely seen in an urban setting due to the mixed-use complexities of urban settings (Martin-Mikle et al., 2015).

Furthermore, an understanding that Oklahoma's regional options for freshwater are dwindling and new management and paradigms are required. Acceptable geographic places to build and store water in the form of reservoirs (that haven't already been used for such purposes) near metropolitan areas are few and far between. John Harrington a registered professional geologist and Director of the Oklahoma Water Resource Division, is quoted as saying, "The bottom line is, we're going to have to start investing in building lakes in places that we didn't think were great 40 years ago because now we have an expanding population" (Minty, 2023, n.p.). Harrington warns against apathy in times of favorable precipitation as easy solutions to water availability are diminishing. Dams, such as Norman Dam, are temporary in nature.

Ultimately, all reservoirs fill with sediment (McCully, 2001), and are returned to land either by natural disaster or intentional removal (Glen Canyon Institute, 2018). It is not enough to address pollution at the lake, it must be mitigated at a watershed level and holistically addressed in order to preserve the reservoir as a viable source of municipal water for as long as possible.

APPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study proposes that water must be managed from the beginning of its life cycle.

Specifically, management must begin at the onset of precipitation with stormwater runoff. This study discussed linear subsections of the element's transactions after reaching the Earth: stormwater runoff, erosion, sedimentation, and pollution. Of these several scientific gaps were discovered. For example, studies regarding Lake

Thunderbird's pollutants (specifically microplastics) were nonexistent, indicating a necessity for further research. Furthermore, few if any connections are made to urbanization and pollution. Simply put, scientific linkages displaying correlations between urbanization and pollution of Lake Thunderbird are absent.

Lastly, very few data sets consider the increased cost of treating water that is highly contaminated. Studies are needed to illustrate the cost comparison of stormwater runoff management versus municipal water treatment. It is proposed that if stormwater runoff was treated (via natural processes) the cost of Lake Thunderbird's municipal water treatment would decrease exponentially.

Furthermore, Lake Thunderbird offers itself as a prime example—an exemplary setting by which to serve as a functioning laboratory to advance effective environmental buffering. This lake is an opportunity to negate long-term heartache through reasonable near-future planning. It also provides a significant source of municipal water for a significant amount of people where a population is growing, and a resource is dwindling. Simply put, water resources in Oklahoma are limited and dwindling. This Lake and study herein can be used to improve and connect pollution drivers to their source. Overall, this research is limited in its coverage. It is a foundational step in finding out the effect of urbanization on the pollution of nearby Lake Thunderbird.

THE FUTURE OF LAKE THUNDERBIRD

This study insists that a holistic nexus approach would aid in negating damages. It is recognized that obvious pollution gets all the attention; however, the environmental consequences of rampant urbanization (e.g., housing tracts, strip malls, roadways, etc.) lead to the degradation of water and significantly impact freshwater municipal sources. The omission of spatial planning damages the environment of its placement with significant deterioration of water bodies (Bae, 2019). It is known that “water contamination

is often discovered long after it has occurred... and practices of today may have effects on water quality well into the future, well before we understand the full ramifications of transportation and water issues” (Bae, 2019, n.p.).

It is understood that the addition of new roads in the Lake Thunderbird area will cause further urbanization of the Lake Thunderbird area watershed. While the additions of roads, highways, and turnpikes are meant to relieve traffic in areas that are established and heavily urbanized, the construction of roadways encourages the further urbanization of the area it intended to relieve. This is known as Induced Demand and is included in the Fundamental Law of Road Construction (Duranton, 2011). In 2010 The Oklahoma Department of Transportation stated, “Land use trends are so closely interrelated with transportation systems that it is difficult to determine which has a stronger effect on shaping the other. Since each land use type has specific accessibility requirements and transportation provides the accessibility development will take place along corridors that provide suitable access” (ODOT, 2010 p.10).

While Oklahoma is well acquainted with erosion, a decisive lack of acknowledgment is displayed when discussing large earth-moving, vegetation-clearing projects such as turnpikes. Erosion does not cease after initial construction concludes. Roads, especially very large, formidable roads, change the paradigms of interactions between soil, vegetation, and water. The addition of hard surfaces encourages run-off and additional erosion long after initial construction is completed. It is advisable to avoid building new roads or mass transits proximally close to Lake Thunderbird, or any other municipal water source. Simply put watersheds, ergo water catchments, are directly impacted by transportation (Bae, 2019) we must consider them when authorizing the employment of urbanization. Consider that no studies have been performed on Lake Thunderbird regarding pollution from roadways.

This study is relevant as it demonstrates the negative consequences of irresponsible spatial planning which is overtly displayed in the proposal of the Kickapoo Turnpike. The proposed route of the Kickapoo Turnpike Extension passes directly over two legs of the reservoir. There will be little opportunity for run-off pollution to be filtered out from natural processes. Furthermore, the Cleveland County water treatment plant is not equipped to remove pollutants such as micro-plastics from tire wear particles. Furthermore, voters have denied water cost increases for over 20 years (Wood, 2022). Regarding water pollution and roadways, several credible studies advocate for the removal of existing roads and the avoidance of constructing new roads (Trombulak et al, 2000). Roads, by their very existence, alter natural drainage characteristics, serving as a link between water sources and pollution sources (Ralston, 1997).

To protect our population and create sustainability, our society must shift ideologically from building and construction to maintaining and planning. This paper hopes to contribute one small spoke in the bike wheel of progress toward this sustainable existence. We must protect the resources we have to mitigate future loss and suffering. Arguably, reasons exist for the construction of the Kickapoo Turnpike Extension; however, the benefits would be negated by the loss of clean water. Concisely, present apathy will result in future strife.

CONCLUSION

Pollution of waterbodies is a complex multiphase phenomenon that combines numerous natural variables simultaneously affected by various anthropogenic co-occurring activities creating biological impairment of water bodies. Distinguishing specific causes of biological impairment of waterbodies, or the specific stressors that should be managed to improve the condition, is difficult (US EPA, 2023). This is substantiated and recognized as challenging.

To reiterate, the declining water quality of Lake Thunderbird is complex. Improving the water quality is not as simple as identifying a specific cause or stress, but a holistic approach to managing urbanization and subsequent soil erosion, sedimentation, and pollution within a watershed. The long-term implications of creating large, paved surfaces proximal to Lake Thunderbird are contradictory to other efforts of sustainability. As applied to what effects urbanization may have on municipal surface water supplies, it compounds it and creates additional environmental strains. It is prudent, practical, and possible to thoughtfully plan the placement of impervious surfaces.

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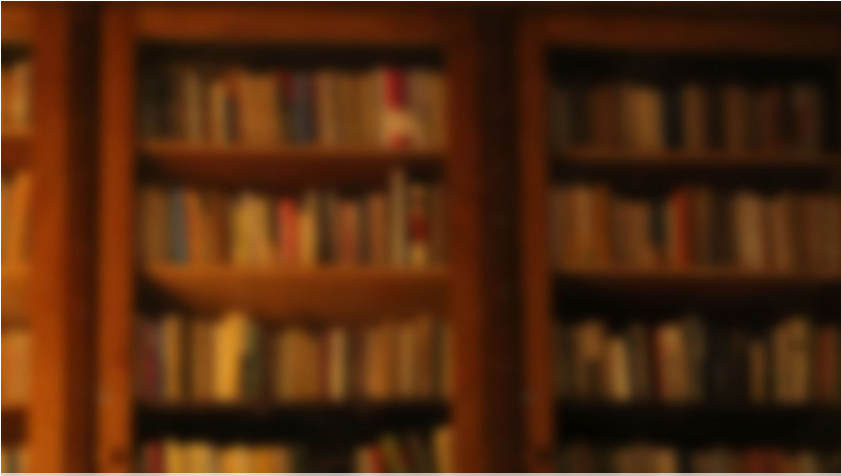
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BOOK REVIEWS



Rolison, W. Edward. 2023. *On Democracy: Essays on Principles Fundamental to American Government and the 2020 Presidential Election*. Parker, CO: Outskirts Press.

This reflective tome builds on a long career of teaching and researching in political science. Sweeping in its scope with over 400 pages, Rolison's book is a pedagogical memoir framed by lots of political analysis and lessons learned over the years. As the author notes, the heart of this book is a prioritized "list of fundamental principles of American democracy and of the United States Constitution" (p. iii). The book is organized according to Rolison's conceptual taxonomy of factors that sustain democracy. He has developed this list of principles over decades of teaching American government. It weaves an enormous gathering of Rolison's reactions about how American politics has played out over time with several of his newer essays that together comprise this book. He draws upon his class lecture notes and other interesting tidbits including a letter of political wisdom addressed to his young grandnephew. The book delves into political theory, both past and present. Intermixed are occasional (and probably therapeutic) diatribes against Donald Trump and associated threats to democracy.

On the surface, the book is clearly organized. Rolison was obviously inspired by the title, structure, and style of the "Conditions Favorable and Unfavorable" for democracy as outlined in Dahl's *On Democracy* (1998, Part IV). Rolison's work here is much more than a simple derivation of a political science classic. Rolison's *On Democracy* offers much more extensive and updated ideas about the primary and tangential principles essential for the success of American governance. The book's high ambitions are dampened by Rolison's desire to appeal to *both* students and professors. This strategy often works at cross purposes as the author swings back and forth between very elemental ideas to grand, sophisticated concepts. In other words, the book at times seems to be geared toward students and then other times it seems intended for advanced scholars. This choice of intended audiences is problematic for the

book overall.

The author says that he has written this book “specifically with students in mind” and intends it to be “a supplement to American government courses” (p. iv). Accordingly, each section starts at a very basic level—apropos for freshmen students. But then the author will suddenly veer into complex political philosophy and deep analysis of the American constitutional system. He then devotes much time in critical analysis of dense political theory not really accessible to most undergraduates—at least not without devoting better preparatory narrative. Part of this problem would be solved by a more careful sequencing of information, so that students could learn along the way and follow his train of thought. Newer concepts could build on those already introduced. As one example of this problem, Rolison discusses early in his introduction the constitutional basis for the “police power” held by American states (p. xxii), but he never bothers to actually define “police power” until nearly halfway through the book (p. 162). If the author’s purpose is to help students develop competence as citizens by becoming more knowledgeable about the inner workings of American democracy, the book fails to help them progress in sequential fashion toward that goal. As a teacher of American government myself, I know that a phrase like “police power” needs to be carefully explained so that students can comprehend that the concept goes far beyond criminal law enforcement. Likewise, Rolison uses the word “liberal” (p. xxvii) before he ever begins to explain the distinction between classical liberalism and modern liberalism.

Sometimes, Rolison will inexplicably and completely contradict himself. For example, he states, “The Supreme Court finally engaged in some judicial legislation in *Roe v. Wade*” (p. 93). Much later in the book, he asserts, “The Court, however, was not legislating in *Roe* or *Casey*; it was simply doing what courts do—it was finding fundamental and constitutional rights imbedded in the concept of ‘liberty’ protected from state infringement by the Four-

teenth Amendment” (p. 203). Well, which is it?

Rolison’s book would probably have been better served going through a traditional academic publisher that would have likely provided a much more thorough editorial treatment on grammatical, organizational, and substantive grounds. A traditional academic publisher might also recommend that *On Democracy* would better serve contemporary students with a few more features such as in-set narratives and sidebar definitions. In another missed opportunity, Rolison frequently points to other resources with little preview about what those scholars contribute to the discussion. As a case in point, he ends his third chapter by stating with undue brevity, “A deep dive into this more positive concept of ‘nationalism’ can be found in Liah Greenfield’s book, *National: Five Roads to Modernity* (1992)” (p. 43). Most readers would appreciate a bit more elaboration. Hopefully, the author can make some adjustments to better reach the needs of students if he decides to come out with a second edition.

After reading and reflecting on Rolison’s words, I think the better purpose served is his other articulated goal of providing professors with “a source for their lectures on fundamental principles” (p. iv). In spite of *and perhaps because* of his numerous digressions sprinkled throughout, I really learned a lot! I have known Rolison as a respected colleague for nearly thirty years now and was part of the process that recently awarded him the well-deserved Bob Darcy Lifetime Achievement Award by the Oklahoma Political Science Association. But I have to admit, that I did not fully appreciate the brilliance of this man’s mind until reading this work. He has distilled a lifetime of wisdom into a road map especially useful for new scholars of American politics. For that reason alone, this book is worth the price of admission!

The flavor of *On Democracy* is revealed almost immediately in its organization. The book is divided into five main parts initiated at the front end with prefatory material including his prologue, a

“Preface” and “Addendum” in the style of personal journal entries, and a reprint of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address.” Lincoln’s last line which states the hope that American democracy “shall not perish from the earth” really sets the stage for the high stakes that concerns this author. Rolison’s mission is to help preserve American democracy for future generations. Part I consists of “Six Philosophical Principles of American Democracy” including corresponding essays on natural rights/natural law, belief in rationality, individualism, liberty, equality, and justice. Part II consists of “Six Conditional Principles Conducive to American Democracy” including a favorable economy, an underlying consensus to play by the rules of democracy, fragmentation of power, an informed citizenry, a two-party system, and willingness to compromise. Part III covers procedural principles such as elections, a loyal opposition, majority rule tempered by minority rights, and free speech. Part IV is a ragtag collection of additional principles such as federalism, judicial review, religious freedom, and prohibition against emoluments. Part V contains an essay on “Democratic Collapse” and “The Trump Challenge.” He then concludes the rest of the book with an eclectic selection of items including an essay on “The Future of American Democracy,” and a letter to his teenage grandnephew explaining the “isms” starting with fascism. The rest of the appendices include speeches by Barack Obama and Joe Biden, and then the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution.

Rolison does an excellent job setting up conversations with the great political philosophers of the past. For example, he conducts a thought experiment asking about how Thomas Hobbes would react to the analysis by most modern political scientists that voters fail to live up to the ideal of being fully informed and making rational choices. Rolison concludes bluntly that Hobbes would say, “I told you so.” He brings into the conversation numerous other political philosophers such as Plato, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and John Rawls, Some of Aristotle’s political observations would likely clarify Rolison’s discussion about Locke’s social contract

requiring rulers to govern in the interests of the people. Aristotle described six forms of government: monarchy, tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy, republic (polity), and democracy. The difference between each is whether or not they rule in the interests of the ruler or in the interest of all (Aristotle, trans. 1981, p. 190). That was the very point Locke was making and Aristotle's typology still works well with students.

His chapter, "Principle Number Three: Belief in Individualism, Not Extreme Nationalism" sets up a false dichotomy in terms of the American system. Although he is correct in his initial assessment about the importance of the individual, Rolison completely disregards the importance of Madisonian pluralism in this context. In a similar vein, Rolison says that the American creed requires electoral equality by which he defines as "one person, one vote" (p. 24). Of course, that is a commonly understood view of this concept, but he does not qualify this definition within a federalist system through which the setup of the Senate and of the Electoral College distorts the one-person, one-vote standard.

Rolison is an unabashed fan of America's two-party system (pp. 50-60). He provides a few succinct explanations about how the parties emerged so quickly even though the Constitution never explicitly references their existence. These include the "single-member, winner-take-all" electoral districts and the success of major parties of co-opting the platforms of third-party competitors. He credits the two-party system as a major reason the United States has "enjoyed mostly stable, responsive, and responsible government" (p. 53). He then laments how Trump has hijacked the Republican Party by appealing to the darkest side of America's political soul by championing xenophobia and appealing to authoritarian tendencies. He questions the fate of the American political system when one of its major parties is on a fast track to autocracy (p. 59). Yet, for all his praise for the advantages of a two-party system and his grave reservations about its demise, he never makes one of the more obvious recommendation which is to rebuild the strength of

America's parties. The rise of candidate-centered politics, emergence of new media, and the role of dark money are among many explanations offered by political scientists for the weakening of the two-party system. Where is Rolison's clarion call to restore the vigor of American parties?

The author states in his "Principle Number Thirteen" that "American democracy requires that elections be free, fair, and frequent" (p. 75). Rolison must have missed the large and longstanding body of literature that suggests that the overwhelming number of elections that occur at all levels of the government in the United States plays a significant role in diminishing voter turnout (see Boyd, 1986; Jackman and Miller, 1995; Lijphart, 1997; Franklin, 2001; Rallings, 2003; and Kostelka, Krejcova, and Wuttke, 2023). To be fair, I think that Rolison is really referring to *regular* elections, but of course that would ruin the appealing alliteration.

Arguably the Beatles' best albums (and my favorite) is *Abbey Road*. Although it was not the last released, it was the last made by the four Beatles together. They knew it would be their last time in the studio. So, they took many of their best songs not fully developed and cobbled them together. This medley of songs appears on Side B of *Abbey Road* and is perhaps their very best demonstration of absolute genius. Rolison may have produced something very similar with this book. This collection of essays covering so many disparate themes demonstrates an enviable level of brilliance. It is an important contribution to the study and teaching of American politics. So much provocative material is presented here that a proper analysis of this book would need to be even longer than this book. Like many great books, this one is not easy to categorize and can be frustrating. But it is also enlightening and consistently thought provoking.

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Miller, Robert J. and Robbie Ethridge. (2023). *A Promise Kept: The Muscogee (Creek) Nation and McGirt v. Oklahoma*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

“Few moral judgments are more intuitively obvious and more widely shared than that promises ought to be kept.”¹ In 2020, the United States Supreme Court agreed in a narrow 5-4 ruling that not only acknowledged sovereign boundaries between the tribes and the state, but also offered an opportunity for the people of Oklahoma and well beyond to respect treaties forged early in the republic’s trajectory and ratified in legal documents many times since. In addition to the role of treaties as public obligations that shape human commitments into binding law, the decision in *McGirt v. Oklahoma* is an opportunity to examine the role of the courts as decision makers which mold the lives of communities.

In the wake of the American Revolution, the continent was envisioned as the land base of the new nation. George Washington outlined a calculated policy that called for engaging in land purchases with indigenous peoples through legal treaties versus war with care taken “not to yield nor too grasp at too much.” Enter, he wrote, into trade so as to “fix them strongly in our Interest.” Further, “there is nothing to be obtained by an Indian War...”² We know that Washington’s words were adhered to in part only as the historical record is replete with genocidal wars and illegal land grabs.³ People indigenous to what would become the United States were pushed off their lands and unto reservations.

Some, such as the MCN, signed treaties with the U.S. government in what appeared to be gigantic land swaps. The Muscogee Creek Nation were forced to move from the southeastern part of the United States to a 3.25 million acre reservation on the western Mississippi River. Over time their holdings would be stripped down to 135,000 acres. The contemporary upshot of the McGirt ruling is that the Muscogee Nation expanded from the stripped down 135,000 acres back to the original 3.25 million acres. Sub-

sequently, the original boundaries of seven other nations have been re-recognized by the courts. Today, “approximately 43 percent of Oklahoma, up to nineteen million acres of land in the eastern part of the state, is ‘Indian Country’, under federal law, and 1.8 million Oklahomans, about 90 percent of whom are non-Indian” live on reservations.⁴

Robert J. Miller and Robbie Etheridge have written an accessible book, *A Promise Kept: The Muscogee (Creek) Nation and McGirt v. Oklahoma*, that puts the court’s decision in the broader context of American and Oklahoma history while forthrightly discussing the realistic challenges ahead.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I uses treaties, legislative acts and court rulings related the McGirt case to provide a brief history of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. This is an informative and edifying account. Chapter 1 describes the initial relationships with the British followed by the U.S. government. Chapter 2 takes on removal from the southeast to Indian Territory now Oklahoma. Chapter 3 explores the history of the MCN Reservation in Indian Territory. Chapter 4 delves into the history surrounding Oklahoma’s “encroachment”. This is a powerful tour of a tortured past that should be read widely. The facts are that Muscogee removal was premised “on a treaty promising, in perpetuity, Creek self-governance and Creek landholdings in present-day Oklahoma, and that promise has been restated numerous times in the almost two hundred years since the original agreement.” For two hundred years attempts have been made “to break, to undermine, to change, and to limit that promise.” It should be “underscored” that the McGirt decision highlights the fact that “American Indian rights exist at the pleasure of the U.S. Congress.” This is a legislative body that shifts with “the prevailing cultural, political, and ideological winds. For now, though, the promise holds.”⁵

Part II takes up *McGirt v. Oklahoma* from the perspective of the

Supreme Court ruling. Chapter 5 uses case law emanating from the twentieth- and twenty-first-century as a prelude that established the legal path for the Court's decision. Chapter 6 is a close and informative analysis of the case. Chapter 7 examines the legal precedents that control the changes spurred by the ruling and their consequences for the MCN and the additional newly re-recognized Indian reservations.

Essentially, *McGirt* is a long overdue correction. The authors detail the role of the state of Oklahoma and its' century long promotion of illegalities while consciously operating under incorrect assumptions which were bolstered by the United States' failure to support Indian nations.⁶ This look at the bad governance which generated appalling public policy is worthy of full consideration by the citizenry. Currently, both the state and the tribes are adjusting. In some respects, the state continues its long history of working to undermine the tribes. *McGirt* is an opportunity to reverse these practices and engage in "respectful relationships and negotiations" which are at the heart of the democratic project.⁷ Can we live up to our ideals? If you reside in Oklahoma, and/or care about what happens in this state, this book is well worth reading.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Habib, A. (2022). *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/promises/>
- ² Miller, R.J., Ethridge, R, (2023). *A Promise Kept: The Muscogee (Creek) Nation and McGirt v. Oklahoma*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, p. 5 – 7.
- ³ University College of London researchers estimated in 2019 that European settlers killed 56 million indigenous people in the first 100 years of the colonization of the Americas. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2019/02/01/world/european-colonization-climate-change-trnd/index.html#:~:text=European%20settlers%20killed%2056%20million,London%2C%20or%20UCL%2C%20estimate.>
- ⁴ Miller, R.J., Ethridge, R, IBID, p. 2.
- ⁵ IBID, p. 124.
- ⁶ Miller, R.J., Dolan, T., (2022). *The Indian Law Bombshell: McGirt V. Oklahoma*. Boston University Law Review, Vol. 101:2049. Retrieved from: <https://www.bu.edu/bulawreview/files/2022/01/MILLER-DOLAN.pdf>
- ⁷ Miller, Ethridge, IBID.

Raskob, Gary E. (Ed.) with Gene Rainbolt, Sharon Neuwald, Shauna Lawyer Struby, and Marvin Smith. (2021). *Oklahoma Pride: Working Together for the Well-Being of All Oklahomans*. Oklahoma City, OK: Full Circle Press.

Oklahoma Pride is one of the most innovative policy projects ever conceived and implemented. It's a multi-front tour de force advocating for serious change in a state that so desperately needs it. The noted philanthropist and civic leader Gene Rainbolt gathered a team of Oklahoma's top leaders from education, health, business, media, and the arts to construct an excellent overview of Oklahoma's persistent public policy problems. They have produced a handy digest that can easily be read in one sitting. Its colorful illustrations and elegant prose belie the enormous amount of research that backs up this book's prognosis for the extreme challenges facing Oklahoma. Each chapter tackles a major social or health problem facing the state. Each chapter also has a corresponding reference list with numerous data points from recent, credible sources.

Although this book is quite serious in its assessments, it is far from being all doom and gloom. Workable remedies for these problems are revealed at almost every turn. The mission of this book is to build the political will to begin adopting these policy solutions. In short, it's a call to action for the state's policymakers to respond and respond quickly. In his foreword, Rainbolt compares the current situation in Oklahoma with the despair felt in this state during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl years. That era represented a major turning point in policy innovations exemplified by the New Deal and related programs. Rainbolt and his team see that now "Oklahoma is at a similar crossroads" (p. v).

The book is divided into three main parts. The first takes a look at the major health indicators that unfortunately makes Oklahoma appear at the bottom of most rankings when compared to its peers: infant mortality rate, cancer deaths, suicide rate, and addictions.

The second part tackles the lifestyle risks including tobacco, obesity, incarceration, and teen births which often compound the other problems. The third part takes a look at the underlying conditions affecting the health of Oklahomans including the poverty rate, levels of education, and the number of uninsured citizens. The entire book revolves around public health as its predominant theme.

The contributors curate a wide variety of the forces that exacerbate the quality of life for Oklahomans. The book forces us to confront uncomfortable realities. And it does so in some very clever ways. It uses powerful anecdotes, notable quotes, poems, cartoons, photographs, and graphic illustrations to drive home its points. The Rainbolt team recruited students at the University of Oklahoma School of Visual Arts to create most of the book's graphic design elements. The layout is superb, but the imagery is often deliberately disturbing. For example, to portray the human toll taken by the state's high suicide rate, student artists offer a photograph of nooses hanging "silently from playground equipment" (p. 13). Other equally alarming examples include a stylized woman's frontal body ravaged by breast cancer, baby bassinets side by side with grave markers in a cemetery for infants (p. 3), and a gun loaded with cigarettes as ammunition (p. 27). The art is so interesting and captivating. I found myself drawn back to particular graphics to better absorb their full meaning. My one significant criticism for the book is that it sometimes over-explains the art instead of letting the graphics speak for themselves. The contributors obviously do not want to allow the possibility that readers might miss some of its points.

Oklahoma Pride repeats a pattern throughout which is to first depict in both words and images the dire circumstances faced by Oklahoma communities. It then turns those same concepts on their head and paints a much brighter future if only we would adopt certain policy initiatives. The strategy is quite persuasive. One of my absolute favorite illustrations draws from the official seal of the University of Oklahoma. Here, instead of seeds, the iconic Seed

Sower distributes colorful condoms (p. 74). While the book takes a hard look at the troubling array of problems facing the state, it is consistently mindful about how such problems strike at under-served communities in even more devastating ways.

Oklahoma Pride conveys the problems it highlights with deep human understanding. The contributors make enormous effort to not only frame problems accurately, but to provoke human empathy. Its fresh presentation style is a prototype that should be emulated in other states with chronic social ills. To underscore the importance of the book, the back cover contains an endorsement signed by the presidents of both of Oklahoma's flagship universities. From front to back, this volume relies on the active participation of community-minded Oklahomans, both young and old. The next time I teach *State and Local Government* course, I will assign this book as a supplementary text. It would also serve as a worthy addition to any public policy analysis class. *Oklahoma Pride* should also be required reading among the Oklahoma Academy for State Goals crowd and for each member of the state legislature!

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