

LETHAL FLORAL PATTERNS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF
ORIENTALISM ON THE SPORT OF MUAY THAI

By

Timothy R. Macias

A Thesis Presented to

The Faculty of Humboldt State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Social Science: Environment and Community

Committee Membership

Dr. Anthony Silvaggio, Committee Chair

Dr. James Ordner, Committee Member

Dr. Nikola Hobbel, Committee Member

Dr. Mark Baker, Program Graduate Coordinator

May 2020

ABSTRACT

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Edward Said's 1987 examination of Orientalism suggests that fields of learning are constrained and acted upon by society, cultural traditions, worldly circumstance, and by stabilizing influences. According to Said these fields of learning work to sustain Western notions of superiority and designate what became considered backwards, degenerate, and uncivilized: the Oriental. Just as the West became the creators and keepers of particular domains of knowledge, specific knowledge concerning martial arts has been altered and modified in ways which reflect the appropriation of martial arts for Western consumption, via the processes of Orientalism. The Orientalization of martial arts preceded in a manner which removed the philosophical and moral aspects of mutual prosperity; establishing a philosophy of meritocratic individualism central to Western sports. I suggest Muay Thai - the marital fighting culture of Thailand - has been Orientalized during the Westward appropriation of martial arts. In this thesis, I will utilize Said's framework of Orientalism in an examination of the sport of Muay Thai. My purpose being to leverage sport as a lens to show how Orientalism is utilized by the West in order to culturally appropriate the East. I suggest the fundamental underpinnings of

Orientalism are at play as Muay Thai has moved from martial fighting style and traditional contest to a formalized sporting event.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Masters in Academia or in Martial Arts, is not about the mastering of material or technique; but mastering one's self. To all those who have contributed to my academic, martial and personal growth . . .

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

The West places itself as the creators and keepers of knowledge in order to discern power and authority over subjects, regions, and ultimately, cultures (Said 1978). What is accepted as knowledge, history, and science are rarely objective, but versions of a story; neglecting to represent the conquered side (Said 1993; Parenti 1995, 1999). The result is a manipulation of fields of learning whereas Western knowledge omits the suppression of tradition, the stifling of social agency, and the loss of cultural diversity (Said 1978). Edward Said detailed these ideas in his theory of Orientalism. Said declared Orientalism a systematic process defining and separating the Orient (East) from the Occident (West) in terms of their social, historical, scientific, and/or literary knowledge. Knowledge impaired by Orientalism is not limited to the social, historical, scientific, or literary; but includes specific corporeal knowledge.

Specific corporeal knowledge of martial arts was too altered and modified in ways reflecting the processes of Orientalism. The westward expansion of martial arts removed the philosophical and moral aspects of mutual prosperity; establishing a philosophy of meritocratic individualism central to Western sports - *sportization* (Guttman 1994). Through this process, martial arts moved away from spontaneous fluidity; into a formal, rationalized sporting events. However, the relationship between martial arts and its westward expansion has yet to be examined through the lens of Orientalism. As a centuries old, embodied knowledge, the Thai martial art and national sport - Muay Thai -

is as a prime medium to examine the Orientalization process, and will be the key focus of this thesis.

Statement of the Problem

Martial arts are specific forms of knowledge, actively reflecting the societies from which they emanate (Whalen-Bridge & Douglas 2011). Muay Thai is the specific fighting style of the Thai people; developing in Thailand throughout the nation's history, incorporating itself into the nation's cultural milieu to become the national sport. There are countless ways Muay Thai can be practiced and consumed, all with sociocultural origins affected by class ideologies (Vail 1994, 1998). Despite Muay Thai's popularity, it is rarely used in conjunction with critical social theory and has yet to be examined for effects of Orientalism. Orientalism has shaped, coded, and influences the formation of knowledge within fields of learning, but has yet to be applied to martial arts knowledge; or Muay Thai more specifically. Western appropriation of martial arts severs the philosophical and moral aspects of martial arts in order to situate traditional martial contests as contemporary sporting events; establishing a philosophy of meritocratic individualism central to Western sports. This process is similar in sports such as lacrosse (Fisher 2002; Vennum 1994), whereas traditional practices have been rationalized by the West in order to create formal sporting events. However, this process has not been applied to combat sports. The implications of these processes - Orientalization and

sportization - put the foundational knowledge, traditional, and cultural importance of Muay Thai at risk of becoming abandoned in favor meritocratic individualism.

Background and Need

Said outlined Orientalism as a reflection of Eurocentric ideals upholding Western cultural values communicated through constant reiterations of tropes conferring inferiority and subordination (Said 1993; Dirks 2010). Through Western colonization, Orientalism became a geopolitical ideology reflecting how the dissemination of cultural ideas is an expression of greater power differentials between societies (Said 1978; Loo 2014). Orientalization subjects targets to a barrage of onslaughts discrediting and devaluing cultures, their traditions, and their beliefs based on hierarchical notions of objectivity, modernity, or development. Said used Orientalism to explain how European hegemony reiterated European superiority, through othering and mythification, over a backwards oriental. For some, including Said, Orientalism is a designed archive of knowledge; more about the production of the West and its identity, then about understanding another culture (Hamdi 2013; Dirks 2010). However, Orientalism within scholarly research is limited and has yet to be used as a theoretical lens to examine corporeal knowledge and the pugilist practices of combat sports.

Martial arts being the product of a people's cultural expressions, act as their own forms of knowledge. Muay Thai is a specific, centuries old martial art developed in Thailand (Delp 2005; Krauss, Cordoza, & Yingwitayakhun 2006). It is the

comprehensive articulation of the practitioner's emotions, knowledge, and cultural upbringing; and demonstrates the mastering of their mental and emotional capacities within the praxis of pugilistic experience. Generally, martial arts are studied by a group of intellectuals: fight scholars. However, Muay Thai, even within fight scholarship, has received little attention compared to martial arts such as Karate, Aikido, or Judo. Moreover, fight scholars have yet to consider the functioning of Orientalism in this field of study. The gap left by fight scholars neglecting the practice of Muay Thai and the operations of Orientalism creates an opportunity to fulfil the purpose of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore, then highlight the effects of Orientalization on the sport of Muay Thai. In doing so, two additional objectives will be accomplished. One, to demonstrate Orientalism pervasiveness and applicability outside the realm of original use - critiques of social, historical, scientific, and literary knowledge. This thesis will expand the use of Orientalism into the arena of sport; more specifically, the sport of Muay Thai. Two, the literary gap created as Orientalism and Sport have yet to be associated together will be addressed. Orientalism is scantily used outside of its original context of literary, historical analysis; while Muay Thai is underrepresented in scholarly efforts and narrow is its scope of use. Thus, this thesis uses Orientalism as the lens to conduct a critical analysis of the sport of Muay Thai.

Research Question

Because Orientalism has not been applied within the social milieu of sport, the scope of this thesis has the potential to become considerably large if all of the possible applications of Orientalism are considered in multiple research questions - its origin, spread, effects, and/ or the subsequent transformations of sport. Rather, I wish to keep the scope of this thesis narrow in order to exhibit Orientalism's applicability in sport more generally. Effectively, this research question will demonstrate how Orientalism's effects on the sport of Muay Thai are similar to the effects on the larger social climate; especially in regard to knowledge formation, othering, and modernity. Therefore, I have chosen to ask just one research question:

What are the effects of Western Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai?

Significance to the Field

This research will contribute to the social science field in two ways. First, the utilization of Orientalism within Muay Thai will help to broaden its theoretical application. The theory of Orientalism has yet to be employed by scholars as a theoretical lens to engage with the world of sport. Leading academics who operate within the realm of sport and fight scholarship such as Dunning (1999) and Wacquant (1995, 2004, 2014), have yet to acknowledge the pressures of Orientalism on sport broadly or combat sports

specifically. As such, I intend to connect Orientalism with sport by examining how it's drivers function within Muay Thai.

Second, Muay Thai is an underutilized avenue of research used in theoretical application by scholars or martial arts aficionado. Social scientists, even those whose primary focus is the sociology of sport, have overlooked Muay Thai in their analyses. For example, both Houlihan (2010) and Grant (2006) exclude martial arts, combat sport, and Muay Thai in their text dedicated to sport and society. Even Texts which include discussions of combat sports, for example Scambler (2005), addresses the topics of the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship), prize fighting, boxing and Queensberry rules, wrestling, and even pankration but does not include Muay Thai in their literature. Similarly, text concerning sports specifically in Asian societies, such as Mangan & Fang (2003), neglect Thailand as a country and its national sport all together.

Because experts in the field of social science have only scantily touched on the subject of martial arts or combat sports, there exists a gap in this field of study. The underrepresentation in the study of social science arts leaves the practice, history, and traditions of Muay Thai susceptible to remaining neglected or seen as a valuable avenue of research. This thesis thus helps to unify and address the literary space between Orientalism and Muay Thai; positioning them in an original context. Accordingly, the significance of my thesis research is to fill this literary gap by connecting Orientalism to sport, and utilizing Muay Thai in an academic effort.

TOPIC

In order to address my research question - how does Orientalism affect Muay Thai - it is important to understand how Muay Thai acts as discourse for the fighters, trainers, and all those involved in the sport. Muay Thai is a physical, spiritual, and cultural discourse; a lens used by fighters to engage with the world, a means for expressing their social condition. What is included below is not meant to be a comprehensive articulation of every nuance of the sport, but an outline of the basic aspects of Muay Thai harboring rich socio-cultural discourse.

Muay Thai

Muay Thai, can be translated into the “fighting style of the Thais” (Delp 2005; Krauss, et al. 2006). It is the martial fighting styling born, refined, and mastered by the people of Thailand. Muay Thai possesses origin stories of battlefield supremacy, technical mastery, and warrior conduct similar to other martial fighting styles in other regions of the world: Karate in Japan, Kung Fu from China, or Krav Maga in Israel. Muay Thai lore is rooted and characterized by legends portraying outnumbered Thai warriors defending the region in the name of the Thai crown (Vail 1998, 2014; Rennesson 2011). The supremacy and efficacy of Muay Thai in battle is recognized as a point source of historically protecting Thailand’s regional independence (Renesson 2011; Krauss, et al. 2006). However, as battlefield combat was replaced with modern

warfare, the practicality of practicing Muay Thai as a martial effort gave way to the practice becoming exclusively demonstrative; with regional and national demonstrations and contests held at festivals, royal celebrations, and religious events (Kitiarsa 2003, 2007).

Through the aforementioned demonstrations and contests, Muay Thai became the national sport and one of Thailand's largest cultural exports (Vail 1998, 2014; Rennesson 2011). Within Thailand, more prestigious Muay Thai bouts are held similarly to Americanized sports - such as American football and baseball - in national stadia. Fighters train and fight year-round; with no season like those in baseball or American football. At times a fighter may have only a few weeks between bouts (Krauss, et. al. 2006). Muay Thai fighters - *nak muay* - often maintain this pace from childhood until their careers have ended. After their competitive fighting careers have ended, some fighters make transitions to being trainers, coaches, and in some instances, gym owners or operators; with many more fading into obscurity, returning to industrial or subsistence labour. The social value of Muay Thai is evident as demonstrations are commonplace in Thai society overall.

There are strong socioeconomic divides in Thailand reinforced by ideologies of old Siamese societies (Muttarak 2004). The sport of Muay Thai mirrors the socioeconomic divides, hierarchical strata, and class conflict active in Thai culture at large (Renesson 2011; Glassman 2011). The various regions of Thailand - Central, North, South, and Northeast - are separated not just by geography, but by socioeconomics (Ouyyanont 2017). For example, Thailand's capital - Bangkok - and its proximal regions

enjoy more economic resources, stability, and means of production. As one moves to the periphery of Bangkok and towards the northern and northeastern regions, the landscapes and peoples become more rural and the resources necessary to increase economic value become scarce (Glassman 2011; Ouyyanont 2017); with the Northeastern region becoming synonymous with poverty (The Asia Foundation 2019). These regions often produce fighters whose fighting styles are characteristic of the sociocultural values of the region; emulated by the fighter's bodily proximity, physicality, and/ or energy expenditures during a contest.

How a fighter demonstrates their Muay Thai skill, training, and fighting prowess - style - is vast. The environmental, geographic, and socioeconomic positioning of a fighter, and/ or their training camp, will influence their style (Renesson 2011). The styles produced in Thailand's various regions include (but are not limited to): *Muay Dtae* - kickers; *Muay Khao* - knee strikers and clinch fighters; *Muay Maat* - boxers; *Muay Femur* - "King's style" (muaythai.co, n.d.). In addition to these styles, there are the traditions of *Muay Boran* and *Muay Korat* (Delp 2005). *Boran* and *Korat* are references to "old" or "traditional" styles. *Boran* and *Korat* have little application in modern sporting incarnations and are usually seen only in demonstrations or exhibitions. With the exception of *boran*, there is a hierarchy to Muay Thai styles - *muay pae tahng gan* - separating specific techniques by their dominance and social acceptance (von Duuglas-Ittu 2018).

The styles of *muay khao* and *maat* fighters receive less prestige in the *muay pae tahng gan* hierarchy; as these styles are often practiced by fighters from the Northern

regions - such as Issan where farm labour is concentrated and the people are socioeconomically poor (Draper 2016; Glassman 2011). Fighters who favor the *muay khao* and *maat* styles are considered brutal and stalky - these fighters will continuously push forward, being willing and able to take and/or absorb bodily damage in order to demonstrate their technique (Rennesson 2011). *Muay khao* for example, favor a very physically straining technique: clinching - seizing an opponent by the head or upper-body in an effort to control and strike them with hard knee strikes to the head and body. Clinching often results in enduring a barrage of strikes as the fighter gets close enough to seize their opponent. The physicality of *muay khao* is thought to be produced by the fortitude needed to sustain the hard, physical demands of subsistence labour. While *muay khao* and *muay maat* are considered to be physically dominating, these styles and the regions from which they originate are considered low-brow in the *muay pae tahng gan* hierarchy and by those who embody high-Thai culture (Draper 2016).

Muay dtae and *femur* styles are accepted with high regard for they are refined around Thailand's capital: Bangkok. The urbanized metropolis of Bangkok is Thailand's social, cultural, and economic development center (Ouyyanont 2017; Sresunt 2011). The fighters from or trained in/ near Bangkok are associated with a similar regard as the capital itself. These fighters and their styles represent a more "artistic" aesthetic and their mastery acts to minimize damage inflicted on their bodies (Rennesson 2011). *Muay dtae* and *Muay femur* favor keeping an opponent at a distance with long range kicks and evasive tactics. Successful application of *muay dtae* and *femur* techniques prevents close bodily proximity of their opponent - like that needed to clinch - and makes an opponent

look as if they are not in control of their body or techniques. Because the techniques of *dtae* and *femur* are representative of a practice in which bodily proximity is minimized, it is regarded with more prestige in the *muay pae tahng gan*.

Demonstrations of stylistic options are put on display in Muay Thai bouts - fights. Bouts have moved away from demonstrations and contests where participants wore hemp hand wraps, to resembling styles of boxing popular in the west; taking on a standardized organizational format: a ring, timed rounds, padded gloves, and weight classes (Vail 1998, 2014). Fighters are paired via weight classes, fighting in matches of three to five rounds; each round last three to five minutes. A single referee is charged with managing fighters pace, enforcing rule sets, and protecting a grounded fighter (i.e., throwing an opponent to the ground is permitted, encouraged, and an integral part of Muay Thai, but punching and kicking a grounded opponent is not allowed). Three judges sit ring-side and score the match based on criteria ranging from strikes attempted and landed, technical difficulty of strikes, and dominance or aggression. A fight can be won by completely incapacitating an opponent - knocking them unconscious with strikes (KO); an opponent being on the verge of incapacitation after a barrage of strikes but is still technically conscious, barely (TKO); or by judges' score cards cumulatively deciding a victor - the fighter with the most accumulated points wins (decision).

Traditionally, there are a series of pre-fight rituals a fighter and their trainer(s) observe: a massage, the donning of traditional regalia, and the completion of an intra-ring performance. To begin with, the trainer(s) give their fighter a hard, vigorous massage using either a standard massage oil, or what is known as liniment - a medicated oil which

gives a heating sensation when applied. Fighters then have woven tassels placed around one, or each arm and adorn a headpiece. The tassels - *prajioud* - are representations of Muay Thais' origins in warfare (Delp 2005); when warriors' mothers wishing them safety would tie pieces of their sarong - skirt - around their sons' arms. Contemporarily, *prajioud* are given to fighters as a symbol of luck. The headpiece worn as fighters enter the ring - *mongkhong* - is a circular piece of woven rope and is a physical representation of the spirit of the fighter and their trainers (Delp 2005). Both *prajioud* and *mongkhong* are ceremoniously woven by members of the gym, who often recite prayers or incantations during their making.

Fighters entering the ring perform a *wai kru*, or *ram muay*. A *wai kru* is a means of paying respect to the fighters' trainers, families, and supporters, as well as spiritually asking for luck and protection during their bout (Delp 2005; Krauss, et al. 2006). The *wai kru* takes two to three minutes to perform and its elements include the fighter "closing off" the ring, reciting prayers, and demonstrating their balance, rhythm, and style. The *wai kru* often acts out scenes from Buddhist lore and can even mock or taunt an opponent. It was at one point common for gamblers to place bets on a fighter based on their performance of a *wai kru*; the fighter with an especially emotionally charged, unique, and/or skillful *wai kru* would translate into stronger fighting prowess. Fighters perform their *wai kru* simultaneously around or next to each other while a traditional Thai musical ensemble - *piphat* - plays a rhythmic composition (this music also plays continuously throughout the bout). As the fighters finish the *wai kru* they return to their

corners where trainers say a final prayer and remove their *mongkhon*; at which the fight may officially begin.

Rituals do not occur just inside the ring or pertain only to fighters. Outside of the ring there exists a dizzying array of fight rituals for some of the spectators. Muay Thai is the largest spectator sport in Thailand and part of Muay Thai's spectatorship is an astonishingly prevalent gambling circuit. Often, the majority of spectators at any given event will be there specifically *for* the purpose of gambling. There are various levels to Muay Thai gambling, ranging from lower stakes "recreational" levels to more high-risk professionals; all who display an exhaustive use of hand-signals and gestures to place bets. More invested gamblers, who often supplement the pay of a fighter, will come up to the ring shouting instructions to the fighters. This practice of gamblers supplementing fighters' purses can affect the outcome of a fight with fighters acting in accordance with the wishes of the gambler, rather than their fighting prowess.

What I have included concerning the background of Muay Thai is not meant to be a comprehensive articulation of the many nuances of the sport, but rather an outline of the basic aspects of Muay Thai harboring rich socio-cultural discourse. Muay Thai has developed alongside Thailand throughout history and is incorporated into the nation's cultural milieu. The countless ways Muay Thai can be practiced by fighters and consumed by the public have sociocultural origins affected by class ideologies. Fighters themselves navigate corporeal stereotypes and aesthetic ideals, while their styles are intertwined with cultural, social, and environmental characteristics reflecting the contemporary political discourse of Thailand. The marital and political discourse of

Muay Thai and Thailand presents an ideal matrix to address my research question concerning the effects of Orientalism on Muay Thai.

THEORETICAL FRAMES

The theoretical lens at the center of this thesis and the primary means of evaluating Muay Thai, is Orientalism. Orientalism is an academic discourse leveraged by systems of modernity and capitalism in order to stifle the social conditions of others. Orientalism is bolstered in a process by which Muay Thai moves from traditional contests into formal sport – *sportization* (Guttman 1994). Sportization operates in conjunction with Orientalism, to grant less legitimacy to contest, sports, and intra-sport actions attached to tradition, emotion, and absolute values (Ingham 2004). Effectively, Orientalism and sportization act on Muay Thai in a manner which removes much of what makes Muay Thai special to those involved - the philosophical and moral aspects of mutual prosperity. In its place Orientalism and sportization establish a philosophy of meritocratic individualism.

Orientalism

Orientalism is a systematic process which defines, then separates the Orient - towards the East - from the West - Occident (Said 1978). Said developed the concept as a means for understanding how fields of learning are constrained and acted upon by society, cultural traditions, worldly circumstance, and by stabilizing influences. Meaning fields of learning sustain Western notions of superiority; designating what is considered backwards, degenerate, and uncivilized. Orientalism demonstrates how European culture

gained strength and identity by positioning itself against the Orient (Said 1978). This is accomplished by a relationship of power, domination, restructuring, and complex hegemonic structures within fields of learning.

Said discussed Orientalism operating as a structured body of (pseudo-) historical knowledge leveraged through the impetus of academic tradition - ethnology, comparative anatomy, philology, history, and other sciences. Such traditions manifest in the West; proclaiming the East is incapable of creating self-knowledge or their own sciences (Said 1978, 1993). For the purpose of discussing the effects of Orientalism on Muay Thai, three fundamental components of Orientalism's functioning are highlighted. Such components enable Orientalism's various writings, studies, perspectives, and ideological biases to conglomerate into a cohesive structure of hegemonic reiterations of European superiority. These components are: the labeling of civilized; the extension of modernity; and knowledge formations.

Civilizing: othering & mythification

Orientalism relies heavily on the ancillary strategies of othering and mythification. Othering is systematically labeling peoples and their cultural identity as backwards, strange, or ineffectual. These labels are justified by a peoples or cultures ability to meet Western standards of modernity and/ or civilized. Mythification is a projection of specific, rigid character traits, as well as idiosyncrasies and temperament of a people or culture. Such projections produce predictable, stereotypical, and objective

actions (Said 1978). Othering and mythification condone societies, cultures, and/ or peoples being discussed in whole, normative terms using authoritative definitions of rigid characteristics alleged to be inherent in a society. Such societies are considered to be frozen in the past and in rejection of modernity (Said 1975, 1978, 1993). Such actions render the oriental incapable of self-identification or knowledge of self; and thus, uncivilized.

“Civilized” is a label seeking to express superiority *of* knowledge (Elias 1998). Notions of the civilized exemplify expansionist tendencies of colonizing groups who govern the colonized by means of a power dynamic wherein mystified/ Othered societies’ versions of knowledge and understanding become instruments of imperialism, colonialism, and empire (Said 1993). As such, civilized is not incidental, but constitutive; whereas activities described as civilized derive only from the West (Giddens 1991; Elias 1978). To be civilized is to exemplify the self-consciousness of the West. Accordingly, the West finds superiority in western technology, western knowledge, western manners, western views of the world (Elias 1978), and Western sport.

Western consciousness is embedded in the institutions, as well as the behaviours of post-feudal Europe during the rise of industrialization, capitalism - modernity; all of which perpetuate tenets of Enlightenment - rationalization and scientification of knowledge (Elias 1978, 1998; Giddens 1991). Such institutions differ from the preceding forms of social order as they act to subvert traditional forms of social organization, habits, and customs (Giddens 1991) through an insistence of modernity. Accordingly,

socio-cultural traditions doing little to expand modernity have no purpose for the Orientalist; this idea is pivotal considering the cultural traditions of Muay Thai.

Modernity: imperialism, colonialism & empire

Orientalism is practiced under the aegis of imperialism, colonialism, and empire. Imperialism is a process *and* theory, whereas a metropolitan center enforces political rule over territories found to be inferior - not satisfying normative capitalist modernity. Colonialism follows imperialism, by the physical inhabitation of territories and land (Said 1993). Empire is the culminating product where the sovereignty of a society is controlled by the political structure of outside entities. Imperialism, colonialism, and empire are produced by a commitment to the notion: peoples not subscribing to normative modernist ideologies (the inferior) should be subjugated. As such, the West finds its role to dictate knowledge formation and bring the oriental into modernity.

Modernity is the industrialized world where capitalism is the outstanding socioeconomic order. The structures of modernity act in direct, fundamental contrast with traditional social order (Giddens 1991). Modernity requires a rationalized system of social order; materialized by efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control (Ritzer 2004). Accordingly, rationalized systems of social order serve fundamental roles not just in modernity, but the functioning of Orientalism. Efficiency and calculability act to stifle human agency, restrict natural reasoning, and effectively reduce an individual's choice of

means to an end (Ritzer 2004). Such processes will become evident in modern sporting events as rules are mechanisms for expressing public opinion (Guttman 2004).

Knowledge formation: objectivity

Much like the academic work produced around European Enlightenment, Muay Thai acts as its own form of knowledge. Rather literary or physical, Orientalism requires strict control over knowledge and its formation. One manner to achieve control is through the projection of objectivity. The projection of objectivity in Western academic traditions assures Western knowledge, as well as culture, is superior to all other knowledge or cultures. Orientalism functions through academic sciences to form mutually supportive discourses (Said 1978). In academic discourses, objectivity is highly praised as to render any forthcoming conclusions or judgments as facts, not values; and as such non-refutable (Said 1978, 1993); effectively upholding their superiority to other forms of knowledge.

Yet, knowledge cannot be separated from the subjective context from which it was created. The formation of Orientalist knowledge is based in relation to domination; where to know a thing is to have authority over it (Said 1978). Said finds, “[t]here are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated . . .” (36). Knowledge is what grants power to individuals and/ or institutions (Said 1978). Knowledge and power are leveraged by academic disciplines to grant the West control over the Orient. The resulting flow of knowledge, power, and domination ensure the

Oriental is not defined or attached to identities of their own creation, but defined by manipulations created by the West (Said 1978).

Orientalist knowledge is less about fact or truth, but rather the outcome of the struggle for power (Macfie 2000). Accordingly, truth in knowledge cannot be separated from the power attached to it, and as such, battles over truth are more concerned with the status of a particular truth (Foucault 1980). The formation of knowledge is thus at the mercy of those who produce history, literature, politics, and technologies (Parenti 1995, 1999; Said 1993, 2001). Later, these same pressures are present during the formation of sport, and martial arts. Orientalists act as definitive authorities declaring objective truths; at the cost of bastardizing other knowledge viewed as contradictory, or where Western knowledge and culture is not the origin.

Orientalism influences fields of learning in order to isolate peoples and cultures from mainstream European progress; effectively reconstructing and reformulating conceptualizations of the East (Said 1987). Highly politicized constructs of objectivity support the othering and mythification, creating a narrative used by an empire to create systems of rules, codes, and concrete epistemological habits. Such habits form the limitations for what is accepted as knowledge, and as such, what actions are deemed civilized. In doing so, the East is transformed from being a geographic place, to being a subject of Western intellectual and ideological rule (Said 1978). Muay Thai, a form of knowledge, steeped in sociocultural tradition, and birthed in the East possesses the characteristics needed by Orientalism to project Western notions of superiority in the arena of sport.

Sport and Sportization

Sport is a highly useful tool for the demonstration of social theory as Elias and Dunning (1986) note the developments in the study of sport can lead to theoretical models becoming useful in other efforts in the social sciences. Sport thus embodies social practices and corporeal sensibilities reflecting socially constructed values and relations of power (Loy & Booth 2004). Bourdieu (1984), as well as Dunning and Rojek (1992), found sport to be a viable avenue for sociological inquiry; in terms of how sport is consumed by the public and sports contributions to the civilization process. Sport allows the social scientist the ability to feature social values and class relations while examining how they are shaped, represented, and contested (Rowe 2004). As such, sport allows Orientalism to be examined as a key socio-structural influence moving traditional practices into formal sporting events.

Historically, sports are analogous to their “folk antecedents” (Elias 1986) - activities, games, and other forms of physical contest predating formalized sporting events. The pathways in which games and their folk antecedents progress into major sporting events are less a matter of chronology, and more a matter of socio-structural characteristics (Guttman 1994). In this way, modern sport follows empire; wherein there is a reworking of traditional form to meet the needs of national and political ideologies related to modernity (Horne & Jary 2004). Accordingly, there is less legitimacy granted to contest, sports, and intra-sport actions anchored in tradition, emotion, and absolute values (Ingham 2004). The sportization process transforms physical contests from an

uncivilized event into a formalized effort of modernity. Allen Guttman outlines the sportization process in seven stages running parallel to the operations modernity.

Modern sport, as viewed by Guttman, differs from physical contests by the importance placed on secularism; equality; bureaucratization; specialization; rationalization; quantification; and an obsession with records. These stages are congruent with the characteristics of modernity outlined above. Rationalization is especially discernible in relation to the civilization process, as it is essential to the functioning of modernity running parallel to the technical and scientific development of capitalism (Jean-Marie Brohm, as noted in Rowe 2004) and its accompanying ideologies.

Bureaucracies in sport represent rationalization and quantification becoming ideologically vogue; as well as the need to project objectivity. Bureaucracies, formal organizations and governing bodies, form to control a sport's operation and contests - State athletic commissions, sanctioning organizations, training authorities. Under the oversight of a bureaucracy, a contest is moved away from participants acting in a manner of relative spontaneity, with a high degree of agency, to their actions being subject to structured rule sets. Structured rule sets have an effect of depersonalization as well as oppressive aspects. The removal of one's spontaneity allows for physical practices to become commodified (Ingham 2004) and controllable.

The commodification and control brought about by rationalization and bureaucracy are what Bourdieu saw in sport as the reaffirmation of the doxa of dominant groups (Guttman 1994, 2004). The doxa of dominant groups perpetuates the importance of modernity. As such, there is a reworking of traditional order, wherein sport becomes

tied to class relations and its structuring (Bourdieu 1984). In this way, Orientalism is imposed on participants' initial selection of a sport, then again in the manner they choose to participate in a given sport.

Muay Thai and Orientalism reflect the sociopolitical values of those who engage in their functioning. Both Muay Thai and Orientalism operate in a space where practitioners and contributors engage with reality in a manner reflexive of their historical, cultural, social, and environmental upbringing. Muay Thai does so in a manner wherein discourse is embodied in the corporeality of practice. While Orientalism's sociopolitical values are levied by the declaration of civilized, the bolstering of modernity, and the formation of knowledge. Orientalism and Muay Thai converge during the process of sportization, where tradition is replaced by rationalization. This convergence is the catalyst altering the minutiae of Muay Thai; leaving what makes a unique martial art and combat sport to be left behind, altered, and standardized.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review for this thesis is divided into two categories: literature deriving from and focusing on fight scholarship; and literature focusing on application of Orientalism. Literature is separated further into specific subdivisions. Fight scholarship is separated into literature addressing violence, habitus, and Muay Thai. Highlighting these topics helps to inform this work by framing the current trends in fight scholarship, identifying gaps, and then situating this work with the genre. Literature using Orientalism is divided into sections examining modernity, East-West relations, and Marxism. These topics help to demonstrate themes in literature where Orientalism is the primary focus; while also confirming the gap left by the absence of sport Orientalist research more broadly.

Fight Scholarship

Fight scholarship is a scholastic genre where scholars communicate ideas and examine the greater social milieu through the lens of martial arts and combat sport (Sanchez Garcia & Spencer 2014). Fight scholars are often committed to primary disciplines for which they use martial arts to elaborate or demonstrate concepts popular in the social science. Within fight scholarship, Muay Thai is not a premier art receiving significant attention from scholars. Most fight scholars choose to examine martial arts enjoying more mainstream appeal – karate (Rao 2008), boxing (Wacquant 1995, 2004,

2014) and MMA (mixed martial arts) (Buse 2006; Gordon 2017). Accordingly, themes within fight scholarship include the discussions of violence, applications of the Bourdieuan concept of habitus, and a limited focus on Muay Thai.

Violence

Academic discussions about violence do not acknowledge Muay Thai. Authors such as Wacquant (1995, 2004, 2014), Gordon (2017), and Immormino (2012) explore violence as it relates to boxing and MMA - a fighting contest whereas the contestants are allowed to utilize striking, wrestling, and other combat techniques during a bout. Other authors exploring violence in martial arts (Scrambler 2005) and combat sports (Wacquant 1995, 2004, 2014) note while violence in these arenas is often exaggerated by outsiders, there is a divergence in the moral underpinnings of its application. At one time, there existed a responsibility to protect opponents from lasting damage. Sentiments of reciprocity are fleeting in combat sports however, as fight promotions project narratives of fighters wishing to inflict lasting damage on one another.

Despite aggressive narratives, the uses of violence in combat sports are instrumental rather than affective (Dunning 1992, 1999; Sanchez Garcia & Malcolm 2010; Scambler 2005); the difference between violence as a means to an end, rather than a means in-and-of itself. The habitual and structured training, strategic planning, and the formal framework of regulations which sanctioned fights operate under, ensures the ensuing violence is of functional use (Wacquant 1995; Sanchez Garcia et al. 2014). In

this context, the functional use of violence is a metric used to score a fight in terms of a fighter's aggressiveness; a metric receiving more importance in western contests, and not so much in traditional Muay Thai bouts.

Habitus

Fight scholars have given significant attention to the concept of habitus.

Researchers Sanchez Garcia and Spencer devoted an entire book to the topic of habitus in martial arts - *Fight Scholars: Habitus and Ethnographies of Martial Arts and Combat Sports* (2014) - with some ten scholars contributing to the text. Classically, Bourdieu (1984, 1990) explains habitus as a “structuring structure . . . but also a structured structure”. In other words, habitus influences an individual's worldview, but is not static and may be redefined by the individual. Habitus is a useful tool for social and martial inquiry as it provides a context to explore oppositions between practice and ethos within forms of pugilistic expression (Spencer 2014). Meaning, habitus is used to understand the intersections of lifestyle and fighting style and how they develop in an individual practitioner.

Brown and Jennings (2014) in their examination of the Chinese Wang Chung, describe an individual's habitus as their social space and the effects practitioners have on this space. Brown et. al. (2014) leverage habitus as an analytical concept for which reflexive cultural dynamics can be described in a fighter's disposition. Meaning, an individual's habitus is not fixed, but emergent in the fields of activity one engages in (i.e.,

martial arts). Elizabeth Graham (2014) extends this idea by noting habitus is subject to change via one's corporeal schema - an individual's physical theory learned by imitation and repetition; as one does in a martial art school. As the socio-cultural origins and importance of fighting styles within Muay Thai have been explained, the discussion of habitus is relative in considering how a fighter's style is influenced and how a bout might be scored.

Muay Thai

There is limited literature featuring Muay Thai as a sport in-and-of itself; a gap I aim to fill. Rather, Muay Thai is used as the matrix for elaborating academic conceptions. In seeking to locate literature addressing Muay Thai as a sport in-and-of itself, I was met with a dearth of scholarly research. What literature I was able to locate whereas Muay Thai was the primary unit of analysis, can be described as addressing the historical formation or contemporary state of the sport.

Historical Formation

Peter Vail is a scholar producing work on Muay Thai as a practice in-and-of itself. Vail's work explains how Muay Thai became the largest spectator sport in the nation and as such, a marker of Thai identity (Vail 1998, 2004); much in the same way European football and American Baseball are coveted as national symbols of identity. Vail asserts Muay Thais' rise to universal symbol of Thai national identity is birthed from a conscious

act of political theater (Vail 1998). It is Vail's claim, Muay Thai as a national symbol has been constructed by the Thai government and from royal chronicles, rather than a natural outgrowth of its popularity. Similar to the way sport was utilized by Fascist and Nazi regimes in the 1920's and 30's as a means to demonstrating national revitalization and a symbol of ideological superiority (Guttman 2004).

Thailand's government has maintained a constant effort to negotiate Thai "civilness" (through means of political reforms, professional armies, mass media, pageantry, and sport) by embellishing the historical popularization of Muay Thai; effectively inventing it (Vail 2014). The formation of Muay Thai as a sport and its injection as part of Thai identity aims to spark a sense of Thai nationalism (Vail 2014). These factors, along with the building of dedicated Muay Thai stadiums, equivalent to American football and baseball stadiums, resulted in an overtly rationalized, commercial, and modernized sport; opposed to the art it had once been (Vail 2014). Modernization of sports creates an emotional symbiosis, bonding both athlete and spectator to the virtues of modernity (Guttman 1994, 2004); effectively instrumentalizing Muay Thai.

Contemporary State

Contemporary literature involving Muay Thai notes the effects foreigners - *ferang* - have on the authenticity of the sport. One of the most prominent changes in Muay Thai comes from the emigration of Western practitioners to Thailand. The goal of foreigners training in Thailand is to learn techniques in the "motherland" and bring back "authentic" Muay Thai to the West (Spencer 2014). Once back in the West, what a *ferang* learned

about Muay Thai in Thailand is reduced to what is useful in a western sporting events. In this regard, changes have occurred in the perceived authenticity of Muay Thai; most notably in the judgement of bouts, the diversity of techniques, and the dialectic of styles. One marker of authenticity, noted by Myers, Nevill, and Al-Nakeeb (2013) in their examination of fight judging, is reflected in bout scoring around Thailand. While all bouts (in and outside of Thailand) are scored using a numeric-point scale, Spencer (2014) explains scoring in Thailand emphasizes aesthetics in how points are awarded - with visually spectacular and greater technique diversity receiving higher marks on judges' score cards (Myers et al. 2013). Scoring outside of Thailand, notes Myers et al. (2013) favors tactics and techniques which are aggressive, come in high volume, and technique diversity has been reduced to techniques deemed "efficient".

Spencer notes changes in scoring represent a reflexive modernization of Muay Thai. Specifically, as Muay Thai moves outside of Thailand and into Westerns regions, there is a self-imposed severing of the philosophical and moral aspects of the art in order to situate its contest as legitimate sporting event. Invoking Edward Said, Spencer associates the disembedding of philosophical, moral, and traditional aspects of Muay Thai being subject to, "the processes of Orientalism" (2014). While Spencer references Said's work, he does not elaborate on the use of the term directly, or mention Orientalism again at any point in this work. Spencer concludes Muay Thai is a fluid object where aesthetics and corporeal investment of the body are the signifiers of authenticity (Spencer 2014), not an ethos of physical domination or brutality.

Stephane Rennesson (2011), much like Vail, examines Muay Thai as a sport in-and-of itself; looking at the fighter's body as it relates to socioeconomic class, Thai Buddhism, and national identity. A key idea for Rennesson being the sociobiologization of a fighter's style. Sociobiologization is the phrase related to *muay pae tahng gan* - the hierarchy of fighting style based on the geographic origin of the style and the socioeconomics of the North and Central regions. Rennesson noting fighting styles act in opposition to one another, reflecting different ways of life (2011). As well, Rennesson (2011) expands the characterization of styles emanating from regional environments, finding each style can also embody moral values - courage, tenacity, and self-composure - of Buddhist, Thai ideology. Rennesson notes these styles and classifications are not stagnate, but fluid and dynamic. The goal of Rennesson's work, outlining exploring the specific circumstances of fighters, enables an appreciation of the broader sociological implications of Muay Thai as discourse (2011).

Orientalism

The presence of Orientalism in fight scholarship is nonexistent (with the one exception of Spencer's 2014 singular mention). Additionally, its use in sports more broadly does not exist. Therefore, my aim with this section is to highlight the gap left in Orientalism's scope of use by outlining how Orientalism *is* being used. Accordingly, included are themes in the literature which aligned with the parts of Orientalism I have identified in previous sections. As such, Orientalism enjoys use in critical social theory

with Orientalism being used to discuss themes of modernity, East-West, relations and Marxism.

Modernity

Primary to the functioning of Orientalism, as discussed at length in the above sections, is modernity. Contemporary literature seeks to refute traditional Orientalist structuring which proclaims non-Westerners are staunchly opposed to modernity. Literature addressing modernity and Orientalism demonstrates how modernity is used to subvert middle-eastern ethnicities, cultures, and nationalities (Teo 2013; Brennan 2013; Thompson 2016). In this way, modernity has supported colonization and conquest efforts via invocations of the primitive, reframing of historical time, and representation of politico-theological ideologies (Hamdi 2013; Brennan 2013; Teo 2013). Brennan (2013) finds these ideas come together in the dialectic of tradition and modernity; in which the Middle East - a term used by Orientalist for Arab, Islamic, Palestine, etc. - is framed in staunch opposition to modernity. Accordingly, it is the West who has been tasked with bringing these peoples out of the past. Orientalism helps to maintain hegemonic discourse, in which Western cultural dogmas of what is civilized and modernity are perpetuated (Hamdi 2013; Brennan 2013).

East-West Relations

Teo (2013) finds colonized subjects in the East, while not attracted to Western idioms, are not able to completely reject them either; but rather fluctuate between complicity and resistance. Popular rhetoric since 9/11 has only conflated delicate relations between complicity and resistance as those from Middle Eastern countries and nations have been stereotyped, while Westerners succumb to Islamophobia (Arat-Koç 2014; Belli & Loretoni 2017). As such, generalizations concerning actual religious beliefs, artistic inclinations, textual productions, and rituals are the product of pseudo-objective realities reduced to their simplest interpretations (Arat-Koç 2014; Marino 2013; Thompson 2016). Accordingly, discourse surrounding East-West relations is one which both explains and perpetuates distorted Western knowledge of the East (Thompson 2016).

Marxism

An intriguing section of academic literature concerning the ideas of Said are those produced in Marxist traditions. The relationship between the two schools of thought is tumultuous and vexed (Howe 2007; Rao 2016); as they are at times in conflict, but also complementary. Both Said and Marx are radical theorists who sought to analyze the root of ruling class discourse in the tradition of social criticism (Brennan 2013; Sing & Younes 2013). Marx and Said are notable for connecting motives for financial investment with mobility of capital in the direction of imperialism (Brennan 2013). However,

Brennan notes Said's critics find his reluctance to work or address the logic of capitalism in his writings as a negative aspect of anti-Orientalism. Additionally, Said (1978) considered Marx himself to be an Orientalist.

Said (1978) identified Marx himself operating within an Orientalist paradigm. Marx (1853, as cited in Macfie 2000) in discussing British rule in India, describes the people of India as, “idyllic village communities” for which they have only known, “Oriental despotism”, and as such, have, “restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass”. Such discourse by Marx, and criticism by Said, have led contemporary theorists to analyze the relationship between the two. As such, some describe Said’s Orientalism as a full-fledged attack on Marxism (Sing et al. 2013). While others find Said to be remarking on Marxists’ neglect of imperialism (Howe 2007). The inclusion of this literature is meant to bring attention to the criticism of Said’s work, as well as where his work conflicts or overlaps with classic theorists.

In compiling the literature review for this thesis, I was not surprised to find an absence of material combining Orientalism with Muay Thai, fight scholarship, or sport in general. Therefore, my aim was to identify the themes emerging from each respective topic. In doing, fight scholarship was found to be focused primarily on using martial arts as the matrix to explore the larger social milieu, rather than to critically engage with the transformations of martial arts themselves. Orientalism, was found to focus on the complexity in the relationships between the West and the rest of the world; not venturing far from Said’s original conceptualization during the formation of the theory.

Accordingly, this work finds a home in the space left by the absence of critical social theory in fight scholarship.

METHODOLOGY & METHODS

Methodology

Because of the theoretical nature of this thesis inquiry, I used an exclusively qualitative approach to research to address my research question: what are the effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai? Such an approach included developing discourse of Muay Thai as well as utilizing a semi-grounded theory in analysis of my data. In order to develop a Muay Thai discourse, I leveraged my own immersion in the martial arts community as a practitioner, trainer, coach, and teacher - 13 years of not just Muay Thai, but American Kickboxing, Kung Fu, and Brazilian JiuJitsu - as a participant observation of the sporting community. I worked to align this discourse by utilizing materials which identified and noted fighting styles and traditions found in Muay Thai. Such materials included documentary footage, training footage, journal entries, fighter's blogs, biographies, exposés, and dedicated Muay Thai websites and discussion forums.

Interviews

I worked with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Humboldt State University in order to secure the protection of the individuals I sought to interview. Accordingly, I was granted IRB approval prior to conducting any interviews; this project's IRB approval number being: 18-090. Interviews were conducted to compare and contrast actual experience with theories expressed within the literature and the developed discourse. In

order to secure interviews, three sampling techniques were utilized. A convenience sample from my personal network was gathered first. Possessing a large network of professional and amateur martial artists, I initially reached out to fighters and trainers who could be easily contacted. After securing interviews with those in my immediate network, I begin to inquire about leads for a snowball sample. Lastly, in concluding with my preliminary convince group and following up with any snowball samples, I sent emails attempting to contact individuals with an active and visible presence in the Muay Thai world. I reached out to writers, critics, trainers, and fighters via their social media or public contact information asking them to please participate in interviews.

The individuals who participated in interviews were located all over the world; including North America, Europe, and Thailand. None of the participants were physically proximal to my location, necessitating all interviews be conducted remotely - via phone and video conferencing platforms. Interviewees were sent a preliminary informational packet containing my CV, sample interview questions, and an informed consent document (included in the appendix). Interviewees were asked to please review the material in the packet and respond with any questions, comments, or concerns. Once the interviewees were satisfied with the terms of the interview, a detailed email reiterating the terms of their interview and a copy of the consent form were sent to capture the interviewee's expressed written consent. Each interview began with the questions outlined in the preliminary informational packet. Responses to each question often prompted attentional lines of questionings to either clarify an idea or to follow up on a particularly interesting response. Four of the interviews took approximately 45 minutes

and were completed in one session. In two cases, multiple interviews were scheduled in order to honor time and scheduling constraints of specific interviewees; or fully explore the Muay Thai experience of a participant.

A total of ten interviews were conducted with six individuals. Each individual who participated in interviews possessed a minimum of two years of first-hand training experience in Muay Thai. Additionally, each individual had spent time training in and outside of Thailand. Participants' time training in Thailand ranged from four months to more than six years. Most participants started training in North America, with one individual whose first Muay Thai exposure was in an Asian country not Thailand, and one individual who began training in Thailand. One Thai national was interviewed, with all other participants born in North America. Of the six interview participants, four have at least ten fights to their credit. Combined, this sample group had participated in more than 500 Muay Thai Fights.

The sample group also included individuals who participated in Muay Thai outside the capacity of a fighter. As their fighting careers ended, two of the participants transitioned to becoming trainers and a part-time fight promoter as well as a gym owner. There were no standardized requirements interview participants needed to meet - as in minimum number of years training or minimum number of fights. The convenience sample from my personal network and the later snowball samples spontaneously resulted in a sample group who together possess more than 60 years of Muay Thai training. Accordingly, their extensive history and active positions in Muay Thai provided me with an opportunity to explore various aspects of Muay Thai at large. Interviews were

conducted until a saturation point was reached; as responses and experiences started to sound similar or have little variation, I deemed it unnecessary to continue the interview process.

ANALYSIS

The effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai are exemplified by reworking styles and replacing tradition, mediated through the rationalization of judging and scoring. These effects are sustained, by othering and mythification, via theatrical characterizations of the sport's training. What this ultimately means is discussed in relation to the parts of Orientalism outlined in the above theory section. As such, analysis is separated into three divisions reflecting civilized, modernity, and knowledge. The analysis and discussion are the product of not only the interviews conducted specifically for this thesis, but by the reflexive examination of over a decade being personally enveloped in the martial arts world prior to undertaking this work.

Civilized: replacing tradition and reworking styles

Replacing tradition

The effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai are exemplified as notions of what it means to epitomize civilized subverts traditional habits and customs. What is considered civilized pushes traditional Muay Thai traditions into obscurity. Changes in pre-fight rituals are examples of this trend. Pre-fight rituals do not just warm-up a fighter, but pay homage to their ancestral heritage and are spiritual in nature. The massage and performance of a *wai kru* are strongly based in tradition and are integral parts of Muay

Thais' pre-fight rituals. The abandonment of these rituals is catalyzed by changes in rule sets as western influence on Muay Thai increases.

Fighters competing in the West are not massaged by their trainers before bouts. This is a hard turn away from tradition. As a trainer told me, in Thailand, “they’re really, really serious about the massage. Like fighters don’t fight unless they have a massage. The massage is huge here” (Interviewee 4). The massage given to a fighter by their trainers is made difficult by western sanctioning bodies who do not allow the use of liniment oil (“Thai oil”) and/ or any other oil on their skin. One trainer told me, “a lot of commissions in the states don’t allow the Thai Boxing oil” (Interviewee 4). This experience was confirmed by an examination of official fight rules for a sanctioning body in California, operating in with the California State Athletic Commission, where fighters may not have oil on their skin prior and during a bout, exclaiming, “NO THAI LINIMENT OF ANY KIND IS ALLOWED ON THE BODY” (IKF, n.d.)¹. As a fighter’s massage is forgone, fighters hit pads to warm-up before a fight. One fighter who has fought both in Thailand and the US notes, “they hold pads for you, you know, they don’t do, like the Thai massage, they hold pads” (Interviewee 1).

Additional changes in pre-fight rituals are seen as performances of the *wai kru* are diminishing. *Wai krus* are either performed in an obligatory fashion or not performed at all. Some Western fight promotions neglect the tradition all together. Appearing in a Vice News blog, one contributor uses a popular American Muay Thai promotion as an

¹ original emphasis.

example of this trend, noting, “the big difference is that there's no *wai kru*, they don't play the traditional music—they essentially remove a lot of the Thai cultural pieces for an American audience” (Newhall 2015). While not explicitly forbidden by rule, the *wai kru* is often removed as cultural practices are seen as an inconvenience to the time management of a promotion. Meaning, promotions declare there isn't enough time for these traditions. Writing in a discussion form, one of the interviewees notes:

[T]he promotion basically said that only pro's could perform one [wai kru] due to time constraints. And nobody else on the shows performed one, including pro's, so it wasn't really saving so much time as just omitting the tradition all together. In Thailand they'll sometimes tell you to hurry it up if the event is televised (Forum Quote 2015).

The influence of promotions opting to remove cultural practices from their events reverberates across the entire sport. Fighters from Thailand have even become disconnected from performing a *wai kru*. One interviewee notes in a discussion forum:

[w]e were astonished to find that many Thais don't perform a Ram Muay, especially at festival fights, but sometimes at stadia too. These were often very experienced fighters who were foregoing a fancy formality and just were ready to fight. They had a distancing towards the heritage . . . (Blog Entry 2015).

While in Thailand, attending fights at the prestigious Lumpinee Stadium, I witnessed this as fighters performed the *wai kru* with little emotion or sentiment, rather seemingly performing the ritual out of obligation. Once a fighter has entered the ring, the style they choose to fight with is also influenced by Orientalism's effects.

Reworking styles

Because what is considered civilized derives from and is exemplified by the self-consciousness of the West, the diversity of stylistic expression within Muay Thai is vulnerable to diminishment as western influence on the sport increases. Muay Thai practiced in the West has dramatically less stylistic diversity than in Thailand. As such, fighting styles are valued less according to *muay pae tahng gan* and more according to specific techniques deemed efficient and performed in high volume; these techniques scoring more points. With such changes in stylistic diversity styles risk falling into an abstruse void. This is best exemplified by clinching.

Western fighters are averse to clinch fighting. Clinching is physically demanding, requiring close bodily proximity by both fighters. Each fighter risks being cut with elbows, repeatedly kned in the midsection and/ or face, or being thrown to the ground. The elements of clinch fighting are not easily rationalized; requiring an intuitive corporeal understanding of the technique. The use of the body required by *muay khao* fighting is subjected to an interpretation of these fighters being less intelligent and more brutish, i.e., less civilized: “[T]he Muay Khao fighter is figuratively painted as the somewhat stupid bull (there are sociopolitical dimensions to this figure), all brawn and instinct, while the Muay Femeu fighter is the Matador, with IQ and art on his side” (Blog Entry 9.18).

As such, *muay khao* is often seen as being less refined, more about sheer strength than technique. The corporeal engagement required for clinch fighting is not easily

rationalized, making the proximity of the fighter's bodies reminiscent of folk wrestling: "Muay Khao (knee) fighting is characteristically seen as much lower in class, a form of fighting that comes from the rural villages, where the farmers are almost un/naturally strong, due to their mean living conditions. It is unpolished" (Blog Entry 6.18). With these elements, *muay khao* fighting is deficient in many of the Western Muay Thai schools. Rather, Western Muay Thai schools focus on techniques earning the most points - punching and kicking attacks - which are perceived as being more efficient and can be used in higher volumes.

Accordingly, in western fight promotions, or promotions catering to western taste, clinching is being seen less-and-less. While some fight promotions have opted to remove clinch all together, K-1 a Japanese kickboxing promotion, other promotions have de-facto eliminated the clinch via their rule sets. According to these rules, referees are instructed to break up fighters in the clinch after just a few moments. A sanctioning body operating in the United States notes, ". . . Muay Thai bouts, the clinch will not exceed 5 seconds and sometimes as short as 3 seconds (IKF, n.d.).

Civilized seeks to express superiority and is subject to manipulations by Orientalism. Because of the perceived brutish nature and incongruence with rationalization, the clinch and the *muay khao* style is a less civilized form of fighting. Accordingly, rules are reworked in order to diminish the use, effectiveness, and relevance of the clinch. These changes represent one of the key features of civilizing and a principal characteristic of the sportization process; the retracting of tradition. Both civilizing and sportization devalue customs anchored in tradition and/ or emotion; their inclusion in

intra-sport actions is seen as frivolous. As such, their presence in the sporting event is reduced, if not eliminated altogether. This trend was reflected during interviews, in journal, blog and forum entries, as well as official rules by sanctioning bodies. The results of these sentiments devalue clinch style fighting in the West, as well as the abandonment of a fighter's massage and the movement away from fighters performing a *wai kru* prior to their bouts.

Modernity: the rationalization of scoring and judging of aggression

The effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai, exemplified by reworking styles and replacing tradition, is mediated through the rationalization of judging and scoring. The contemporary standards which Muay Thai bouts are scored and judged reflect the requirements of modernity in Orientalist ideologies. Judging has been modified in the direction Guttman highlighted whereas the standard of judgement has traded spontaneous action in anticipation of modernity. The standards of a bouts' judgment are changing in fundamental ways. First, rationalization has co-opted how a fight is scored. Second, the subtle, nuanced markers of how a bout is judged is giving way to an outward portrayal of aggression.

Rationalization of scoring

In traditional Thai scoring, not only is a fighter's technical ability up for judgement, but whether or not a technique was carried out in an aesthetically pleasing

way. As a former fighter and current gym operator notes, scoring “In Thailand it's like beautiful technique, proper technique, timing. You can win a fight defensively as well in Thailand” (Interviewee 4). Additionally, a fighter could score points by their outward emotional ability to have damage inflicted upon them: Did a fighter flinch when they were elbowed? Did they grimace when punched in a vital area? Did the fighter sway after having a kick blocked? One interviewee describes this as such:

Muay Thai scoring is about exposing the weakness of your opponent rather than showing your strength. So if you want, if you can make your opponent look off balance, or like they're chasing you, or emotionally reacting in a way that they're not in control of themselves. These are powerful victories as Thai (Interviewee 2).

The type of scoring described above has been replaced with a quantified, metric driven alternative: the ten point must system (TPMS). The TPMS is a formalized scoring scheme where up to 10 points can be awarded to either fighter at the end of each round. The TPMS is reflective of how sport adopts the mechanisms of modernity. The quantification of the TPMS is at the expense of viewing the bout as a whole. One interviewee describing the TPMS as such: “...a mechanical abstraction in which points are added up, and each point is equal like a mathematical unit that can be moved around without affecting the meaning of anything” (Interviewee 2). As well . . .

Western style scoring which is characterized by a largely atomized, mathematical, indeed mechanical view of the world (adding independent round scores together) where in small elements are awarded some sort of pre-set value (price), which then can be simply added up together to produce an ultimate value. A “significant” punch or kick equals “x” and you just add up all of “x” together, and you have a conclusive, and even unarguable result – hey, it’s math, who can argue with math? (Blog Entry, 4.19)

The TMPS does not allow for traditionally-held notions of Thai cultural desirability - emotional stability and control. Rather the TPMS is based on objectivity, efficiency, and calculability. Fighters are awarded for volume of strikes, not the quality of their application. This has a limiting effect on the agency of a fighter, effectively reducing the diversity of techniques seen in a bout. Meaning, fighters rely less on their intuition, corporeal schema, and agency during a fight. Their actions are dictated by the need to fight in a manner earning them the most points. As such, this rationale will manifest with fighters opting to use only the techniques which will earn them the most points - the most efficient techniques thrown in high volumes.

Rationalization and quantification are primary features of modernity. Therefore, each is evident in modernity's systems; including those of sport. The TPMS aligns with the trajectory of the *sportization* process and the desire and reliance on quantification; as well as Orientalism need for objectivity in knowledge. Accordingly, the aesthetic markers of who has performed with more skill and prowess is removed. Quantification replaces aesthetics and limits the agency and technical diversity of a fighter. What results are fighters whose rationale is to use a style where quality is not considered, only quantity. As such, the fighter who has more strikes thrown represents more aggressiveness.

Judging of aggression

The judging of aggression is a manifestation of rationalization and quantification in scoring. As the subtle nuances of aesthetics once used to score fights are difficult to

rationalize and do not lead themselves well to objectivity. As such, a more quantifiable metric of how a fighter's progress in a fight must be used. Historically, Muay Thai bouts have been judged by a set of characteristics which value aesthetics and cultural markers of desirable behavior, as this interviewee noted:

[T]he reason why Muay Thai is fought the way it is, is because Thais have a . . . a particular concept about how to manage your own self and how to control yourself. And how, and how to, how to, deal with anger, and rage, and fear. Things that are associated with, fighting. And that, the reason why they fight the way they do, and they score the way they do, and the aesthetics (Interviewee 2).

However, as the influence of the West increases, points are awarded not based on the aesthetic skillfulness in which they were conducted, but rather awarded based on a fighters aggressiveness. “. . . [T]hey definitely score based on aggression and keeping busy. And fighters that are walking back can't win a fight. So that's new. That's very new” (Interviewee 4).

There is no way to quantify aesthetics, render emotional stability calculable, or establish some objective criteria for their judgement. As such, the outward appearance of aggression or “domination” becomes a key scoring mechanism. The rules and regulations for Muay Thai bouts outlined by an international sanctioning body catering to western taste notes, “[f]ighters are judged by domination . . . aggressiveness . . .”. Furthermore, “[j]udges will evaluate which fighter DOMINATED the bout. NOT who threw the harder punches or kicks . . . but who landed the most and did the most damage during the entire round” (IKF. n.d.)². This is in contrast to rules developed with traditional Thai

² original emphasis.

sentiments; “Judges should award the fight to the boxer with the most effect techniques as well as mental strength, physical condition and technical ability. If a fighter is forced by his opponent to show weakness, extreme tiredness or any evidence of not wanting to fight, the judges will award the fight to their opponent” (UKMF 2009).

The characteristic of aggression works in conjunction with rationalization of scoring. As such, the volume of strikes is relative to aggression. The fighter who is or has thrown the most kicks and punches is seen as being the aggressor. Similarly, dominance is relative to both volume and aggression. In addition to who has thrown the most strikes, the fighter who has covered the most distance through forward progress around the ring is thought to be more dominant. These markers of aggression make it difficult for a fighter with a defensive style to win a bout. Thus, a win is granted to the fighter with the greater the outward appearance of aggression, marked by the fighter who pushes forward and throws the most strikes.

Scoring a bout in terms of sociocultural ideals defies modernity’s terms, and thus, must not be allowed to continue. As Muay Thai became a formal sport, fought in the age of modernity, its scoring system must reflect the rationalization of other systems of modernity. As a rationalized product of modernity, the TPMS stifles a fighter’s agency; restricting their natural reasoning, and thus reducing the diversity of a fighter’s techniques. If Muay Thai is going to meet the criteria of modernity, then standards of scoring need also match meet modernity’s criteria.

Knowledge: characterizations of the Other

Martial arts are represented, appropriated, and consumed predominantly by adherents of Western cultures; who understand the martial artist and their training based on stereotypical, theatrical media characterizations. These depictions are meant to discern the Orientalized other as being separate from the western Orientalist. Therefore, the martial artist is often represented as living in the past - portrayed through the physical manifestation of time and space. This Western representation of martial arts in the media is meant to portray a real and authentic experience of what it means to be a martial artist. However, these depictions exemplify the idea of an Oriental other who is defined by standards of the west.

Many martial arts movies depict both time and place as arrested in an undeveloped state - lacking capitalism and its products: cities, urban infrastructure, democratic idealism. Muay Thai films use this characterization in films such as: *Kickboxer* (1989), *Beautiful Boxer* (2003) and the popular Thai martial art film series *Ong-Bak: The Thai Warrior* (2003). These films present as an example of knowledge creation supplanting stereotypical, theatrical characterizations as authentic as these films are produced and distributed from Thailand. Yet these characterizations are less authentic, and more representative of an Orientalized ideal.

Orientalized characterizations of Muay Thai are portrayed by an overrepresentation of rural villages, impoverished training facilities, and antiquated training techniques. Muay Thai films favor the aesthetic of training facilities existing

only in rural, chronological ambiguous settings. As such, films do not represent Muay Thai as being available in modern metropolitan areas. Rather, movie settings are small rural village areas, with makeshift equipment, and antiquated techniques. A classic depiction of the Muay Thai fighter is one in which they will regularly kick banana trees with their bare shins. This classic, yet exaggerated reference, is meant to toughen the bones of the shin in order to carry out powerful kicks. While some of these characterizations do exist, they are exaggerated for thematic engagement. These films are often some of the first exposures to martial arts and Muay Thai individuals will encounter and have lasting effects. One interview participant noted their first exposure to Muay Thai as being theatrical depiction of the practice:

I think my first exposure to Muay Thai was with Jean Claude Van Damme's, *Kickboxer* movie. And that when he goes to Thailand . . . And there was this scene where he, he wants to go to the Thais, to teach him how to train. And he goes through this Muay Thai gym. And in the background, they're like smashing pads. And they're clenching. And their kneeing (Interviewee 1).

Theatrical depictions act much like the eighteenth-century literary efforts described by Said in defining non-Western peoples. The portrayals in theatrical depictions in effect create Othered people. A disconnect from modernity produces conditions rendering non-Western characters as backwards and strange - the other. Such othering portrayals are problematic as they saturate the thematic landscape; resulting in a theatrical representation of martial arts meant to portray a real and authentic experience - knowledge. If there are no other depictions presented of non-Western cultures, then what is presented can be assumed as fact, rather than works of fiction. As people consume

these materials, all they may never know about regions outside the West are the products of cinema whose objective is to entertain, not to inform or portray actual experiences.

The effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai are the reworking styles and replacing tradition. Such changes are mediated through the rationalization of judging and scoring. The effects of Orientalism are then sustained via theatrical characterizations in film and media. Orientalism's effects alter the minutiae of the art, altering what makes it unique and special. The possible implications of these effects contribute to an altering of the sport in a number of ways and are addressed in the following discussion.

DISCUSSION

The implications of the effects of Orientalism on the future of Muay Thai contribute to an altering of the sport in a number of ways. As traditions are replaced and styles are reworked, the threat of spectaclization and the abandonment of both techniques and styles increases. Additionally, as technical abandonment surges, there exists a likelihood of bouts becoming “de-civilized” as fighters displays of aggression are overemphasized. These changes beg the question; will the future of Muay Thai be in the hands of the Thais or will the sports appropriation, and subsequent Orientalizing, place the future of Muay Thai solely in the hands of the West?

Because Orientalism acts to replace traditions, practices such as the *wai kru* risk becoming purely spectacle. The specticalization of the *wai kru* supports the formation of the other. Their performance will not be done in earnest, but to show the difference between western fighting and its Thai antecedents. Therefore, the *wai kru* becomes the prerogative of the oriental other, not the western fighter. In a similar vein, the *wai kru* becomes susceptible to exoticism. Meaning, as the Thais abandon the tradition, it is re-appropriated by practitioners wishing to display their knowledge/ taste for the eclectic and exotic. Again, this notion of exotic acts as an othering characteristic; identifying the knowledge and traditions of the oriental as separate and different from the orientalist. As the *wai kru* goes to the wayside, whole fighting styles may follow suit.

As styles are replaced, full scale abandonment of a style becomes possible. As rules in judging and score favor specific styles with the desired criteria, those not meeting

such criteria will be valued less. As the value of a style diminishes, so too will its application. The diminishment in the application of a style, emphasized through its low point value, suggests fighters' willingness to learn such style fades; as will a trainer's desire to teach it. A linear pattern to abandonment emerges; if a technique doesn't score well, why use it? If a fighter won't use a technique, why teach it? The abandonment of styles to meet the criteria of new rule sets is then the precursor to the greater "de-civilizing" of the sport.

The notion of de-civilizing is a term used by Scambler to refer to a sports relation to uses of violence. In this instance, I extended this relation to a digression of technique orientated action, in favor of demonstrations of pure aggression. As scoring becomes based on measures of domination, via the perception of a fighter's aggression, the need for demonstrating one's mastering of skill - through composure, balance, and kinesthetic awareness - is replaced by blind application for the sake of volumes of forceful strikes. In this way, de-civilizing relates to the notions of violence divergence from the moral application; whereas the uses of violence move from instrumental to affective. Meaning, the use of violence digresses from a means-to-an-end, to a means in-and-of-itself; i.e. violence for the sake of violence. This is seen as fighters are paired based on their abilities to enact violence on each other, rather than to demonstrate the effectiveness of one style versus the other.

As the changes in Muay Thai become dictated by the West and its conceptions of civilized, a question is raised concerning Thai's dominance in the sport. As of now, the Thais are the most decorated, sought after, and outstanding practitioners of the sport

(naturally). However, as traditions are replaced, styles reworked, and rules are altered, will the Thais be able to hold on to their cultural ideals of the sport? While this question is worthy of its own thesis outright, if one looks to its similarities to other indigenous sport - such as Lacrosse - the answer may be bleak. As lacrosse was appropriated by imperialists, the indigenous creators were pushed out as rules changed, styles reworked, and traditions replaced. This too may be the fate of Muay Thai as comparisons of the two sports share similarities; rule changes, reworking of styles, and replacing traditions.

As traditions are replaced and styles are reworked, the threat of spectaclization and the abandonment of both and styles increases due to Orientalism. As such, these changes also bring about a de-civilizing of the sport as technical abandonment surges in favor of displays of aggression. All of these factors combine, whereas the result could mean the future of the sport is taken away from the Thai and is controlled by the West. As such, the effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai have implications for the sport which move it away from its marker of Thai identity and cultural values, and comes to further the reach of Western ideals and influence.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this research are found in three specific areas: language barriers; time frames; and funding. First, the nature of the Muay Thai being Thailand's national sport means most of the information held about its formation and current state are written in the Thai language. Similarly, some of the interview participants were Thais themselves; with English being their second language. Accordingly, historical and primary documents in English were rare, while some of the richness of the data was lost in translation. Second, this depth of this project would have benefited from a long-term ethnographic component to its methodology. Ethnography of fighters in Thailand would have supported the formation of a more insightful Muay Thai discourse. As well, a higher volume of interviews could have been completed, with more time dedicated to each participant. This would have allowed for follow-up questions and more lively discussion. Third, the need for ethnography would impart the need to be funded. A long-term ethnographic study in Thailand would accrue a significant cost: travel expenses, gym donations, translators, etc. Accordingly, these expenses are beyond the budget of a Masters student and would require long-term funding. However, these limitations are the product of this research being undertaken as a Master's thesis. And ultimately their inclusion is outside the scope of purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Recommendations for future research include, but are not limited to, addressing the topics of child participation in the sport of Muay Thai, the prevalence of gambling and its effects, and an analysis addressing if, and, or how, mixed martial arts (MMA) has contributed to the Orientalization process. Future research around these topics would show the applicability of Said's contributions in the world of martial arts.

As a child and teenage athlete, as well as a former youth sports coach and current martial arts instructor, I take special interest in how children are introduced and participate in both traditional sports and martial arts. The commercialization over the past 60 years of sports like American football, baseball, and basketball have imbued youth sport participants, and especially their parents or guardians, with an urgent need to achieve high levels of physical and mental competency in their respective sports at earlier and earlier ages; in order to secure athletic scholarships and successful professional contracts. Despite the research showing the damning connections of American football and prevalence of concussions and their effects, there still exist social stigmas around children participating in combat sports. I think there is ample evidence to show how Orientalization affects the acceptance of children in a sport statistically more physically damaging than Muay Thai, while upholding viewpoints of striking sports to be violent or "third-world".

During my background research and in some of my interviews, the topic of gambling was acknowledged on more than one occasion. However, it wasn't until a trip

to Thailand during the writing of this thesis where I was exposed to gambling's overwhelming influence and effect on the sport of Muay Thai. Gamblers supplement many of these young fighters' earnings, placing fighters at the mercy of gamblers who express the expected outcomes of each fight to the fighters through hand signals and overt verbal request. Not obeying the wishes of a gambler may mean less or no supplemental earnings for a fighter; or worse yet, an encounter with a violent mob boss - many gamblers are active members in some of Thailand's mob-gangs. The sheer power of gambling on Muay Thai as was demonstrated to me during my time in Thailand and is worthy of its own thesis outright.

The most fruitful prospect for future research, I believe, is an examination of Orientalism and MMA (mixed martial arts). MMA represents the zenith of Western appropriation of the East. MMA practitioners utilize various techniques from all combat traditions. During an MMA bout, fighters will use both stand-up striking (like Thai Boxing) and grappling (Brazilian Jiu-jitsu and/ or wrestling) in order to incapacitate an opponent. Fighters and trainers have perfected the expropriation of combat techniques from the original contexts and applying them to their contemporary style. There are strong connections to be made between how MMA fighters obtain and transfer knowledge and the process of Orientalization.

CONCLUSION

Orientalism reflects the necessity of culture to yield to the pressures of Eurocentric ideals upholding the structures of knowledge, modernity, and notions of what it means to be a civilized society. Orientalists, by nature, are obligated by the logic of Orientalism to produce and reproduce knowledge perpetuating ideologies decriminalizing the conquering of Othered peoples. Socially constructed values and relations of power are well exemplified in sport. The pathway games and the physical contest, which are the folk antecedents of major sporting events, are subject to the socio-structural characteristics which guide the formation of knowledge. Martial arts, acting as a specific form of knowledge, is the space where corporeal sensibilities meet ideological doxa. The purpose of this thesis has been to highlight the convergence of ideological doxa, knowledge formation, and martial arts in order to discern the effects of Orientalism on Muay Thai.

Prior to this work, there has been no attempt to connect Orientalism to martial arts in academic literature. This thesis thus fills a literary gap in fight scholarship and critical social examination. Where most fight scholars seek to understand the implications of violence, explore the development of habitus, and discuss the historical and contemporary states of Muay Thai, I have chosen to use the sport as an exploration of sociopolitical pressures acting on society at large. And where critical social theorists have foregone sport as an avenue to examine the pressures of Orientalism, I have placed it at the forefront of sporting events. What I have identified is in the face of Orientalism, sport

is molded to reflect the ideological doxa reinforcing modernity and what is considered civilized. In this process (combat) sports must move away from the traditions and martial sentiment from which they are birthed.

Muay Thai began as the martial tradition of the Thai people. As the practice moved away from martial application, it became a corporeal contest embodying the values of Thai society. An awareness of Muay Thai as an effective combat strategy prompted the severing of the philosophical and moral aspects of the art by Thai people as a means of situating the practice as a legitimate sport. It is from this point, I identified how the *sportization* of Muay Thai moves parallel with the process of Orientalism. As such, the effects of Orientalism on the sport of Muay Thai are exemplified by reworking styles and replacing tradition, mediated through the rationalization of judging and scoring. These effects are sustained, by othering and mythification, via theatrical characterizations of the sport's training.

Sport, much like knowledge, cannot be separated from the subjective context from which it was created. So too, sport is not free from the externalities of ideological doxa. Muay Thai is thus an all to perfect example of the above statements. Despite its combative dominance, Muay Thai has succumbed to the same pressures acting to subvert all which does not emanate from the West. The characteristics which make Muay Thai special, are the same ones being left behind in order to make the sport appear more legitimate.

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APPENDIX

Interview Questionnaire*Lethal Floral Patterns*

Graduate Researcher Timothy Macias & Faculty Advisor Anthony Salvaggio

1. Background Information:

- a. Where are you from?
- b. Where have you trained?
- c. Have you trained in other martial arts?

2. Describe your experience practicing Muay Thai:

- a. How long have you been practicing Muay Thai?
- b. How did you start training Muay Thai?
- c. Can you recall your earliest training memory?
- d. How many schools/ training camps have you trained at?
- e. Have you fought? How many times?
- f. What do you know about Muay Thai, other than the physical attributes?
- g. Who/ Where/ How did you learn about Muay Thai?
- h. Have you trained in Thailand?
- i. Was training in Thailand different than training outside of Thailand? Could you describe how?

What is it that you like about Muay Thai compared to other martial arts?

Informed Consent Form:

Lethal Floral Patterns

You are being asked to take part in a college research project in which I will be interviewing an individual to gain information about that person's experiences training/ participating in martial arts (Muay Thai). Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: You will be asked a series of questions about your experiences training/ participating in Muay Thai. The goal of this study is to gain insight on experiences of fighters/ trainers. For the purposes of this study, fighters are practitioners who are either: professionals (paid-competing); amateurs (unpaid-competing); novices (unpaid-noncompeting).

What we will ask you to do: For this study, I will ask you questions about your experiences training/ participating in Muay Thai. I will use an interview guide with some predetermined questions; with elaboration and/ or follow-up questions as necessary. The interview will last between 45 minutes - 1 hour. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview and take notes.

Risks and benefits: We do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study. There are no direct benefits to you for your participation.

Compensation: You will receive no compensation for participating in this project.

Research records will be kept in a locked file cabinet or password protected server; only the researcher will have access to the records. Data, including direct quotes from interviews, will be used in a masters' thesis and possible academic publications. Your name will not be associated with your answer unless you give explicit permission to do so. An identifier can be used in place of your name. To give or deny this permission, please check one of the three boxes provided below.

- I give permission to be directly quoted with use of my name
- I give permission to be directly quoted without use of my name
- I do not give permission to be directly quoted.

Taking part in this interview is voluntary: You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions following your participation in this study, please contact: Graduate Student Researcher Timothy Macias, (951) 660-2223, trm76@humboldt.edu **or** Faculty Advisor Dr. Anthony Salvaggio, at (707) 826-3142, Anthony.Silvaggio@humboldt.edu.

If you have any concerns with this study or questions about your rights as a participant, please contact: the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at irb@humboldt.edu or (707) 826-5165.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I understand that the Investigator will answer any questions I may have concerning the investigation or the procedures at any time. I also understand that my participation in any study is entirely voluntary and that I may decline to enter this study or may withdraw from it at any time without jeopardy. I understand that the investigator may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for the duration of the IRB approval