

## Greenblatt Meets Foucault in Movies and Comics:

### The 1980s America Resonated in the 2010s America and Lebanon via the Character of Joker

1. Zahraa Jabber Abdulkadhim, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad
2. **Azra Ghandeharion\*** (Corresponding Author), Associate Professor of English Literature and Cultural Studies, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad Associate Professor, [gandeharion@um.ac.ir](mailto:gandeharion@um.ac.ir)
3. Zohreh Taebi Noghondari, Assistant Professor, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

#### Abstract

This study aims to discuss the events in America of the 80s and how they are related to the last ten years' events through the application of Greenblatt's concepts of resonance and wonder. To achieve this goal, the character of Joker in Phillips's movie entitled *Joker* (2019) will be analyzed in order to understand the impact of the movie on the viewers and how the movie is connected to Moore's comic book *Batman: The Killing Joke* (1988). Utilizing Greenblatt's theories will prove how history is repeating itself and that there is no work of art created in the vacuum. Both *Joker* and *Batman: The Killing Joke* deal with America of the 80s. This article proves how Phillips's movie is connecting the past to the present by showing Trump's era and also the events in Lebanon, making people see reality and realize that they are in many ways similar to the character of Joker. Subsequently, Foucault's concepts of power and resistance will be employed in order to investigate the way injustice leads people in Lebanon to rebel by using Joker as a symbol of their revolution. This article proves to befit the need of those researchers who are working on adaptations and new historicism in that it connects fiction to the real world; it shows how a work of art is affected by culture and vice-versa. It is concluded that a work of art is related to its culture and the history of this culture. Moreover, this study reveals the relationship between reality and fiction and how Gotham city as the setting of *Joker* is connected to Lebanon and America.

**Keywords:** Joker, Culture, Power, Resistance, Resonance, Wonder

## 1. Introduction

In order to understand the elements that shape a literary work and the way it is, benefitting from the theories of Greenblatt and Foucault can be extensively helpful because they both share the perspective that the ideologies of the time during which a text was written play a chief role in its interpretation. This is why it is important to investigate the social, cultural, political, and economical aspects of a particular work as its central characteristics. Furthermore, using Greenblatt's concepts and blending them with Foucault's interpretation of power and resistance will provide a suitable framework for a thorough analysis of a literary work. According to Foucault (1982), there will be resistance whenever power is exercised. Thus, resistance does not originate from outside the numerous sources of power in society; rather it goes along with them (pp. 777-795). It can be inferred that what has made people use Joker as a symbol in their rebellion is because of the way he exercises his own formula of resistance towards the society.

As Greenblatt's concepts of resonance and wonder are extensively important in understanding the influence of any work of art on people, this article is going to focus on the contextual background of *Joker* and *Batman: The Killing Joke*, which is America in the 1980s and the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will in turn reveal how the movie projected the 1980s America in the eyes of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century America. In addition, the similarity between these two works' social and political backgrounds and how that helped shape both works will be clarified. It will also be found that wonder has led to the resonance of both works, since the readers and the viewers are engaged emotionally and sympathize with Joker.

This sympathy has encouraged the audience to think more critically and raise questions concerning the real world and the association of Joker and Gotham City with their own situation. This would provide the reader with the elements that have made both the comic book and the movie special and different in comparison with the previous Batman comics and movies.

These two qualities will help find how America in the 80s is connected to our present time especially Trump's era. *Batman: The Killing Joke* was written in 1988 by Alan Moore. In order to analyze Moore's book through the lens offered by new

historicism, it is important to search for the historical events in addition to the cultural,

social, and political background of America during the 1980s, which have had a significant influence on this book. *Batman: The Killing Joke* was later adapted by Todd Phillips who directed the film *Joker* in 2019. The events of the film mostly happen during the America of the 1980s while the film itself has been released in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This issue has led to the creation of a link between the 1980s and the 2010s, which is going to be discussed in this article.

## 2. Greenblatt's New Historicism

The primary focus of the theory of new historicism underlines how “our understanding of the past is always conducted by our present consciousness” (Doğan, 2005, p. 79). Stephen Greenblatt (born 1943) as an important critic of the new historicism has coined numerous terms such as ‘resonance,’ ‘wonder,’ ‘culture,’ and ‘social energy’. Through applying these concepts in the analysis of a literary work, the reader will be able to gain a deeper knowledge about the effects of the culture and the power of a society on its literary works. In his book *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (1988), Greenblatt argues that there is no such thing as a work created from nothing or with absolute originality, as there is always something behind each work of art (p. 2). Moreover, no society can be regarded as an idealized society or, as Greenblatt (1988) calls it, a “totalized society” (p. 2). Hence, Greenblatt (1988) proposes the idea of mirroring, which means that a text is a mirror to the society but it is neither objective nor neutral; in other words, a text has knowledge (p. 3).

Accordingly, the exchange between a society and its works of art happens through three processes: the first one is appropriation, which signifies using something that is already known and exists in a society like the working class (Greenblatt, 1988, p. 9); the second process is purchase, which refers to the customs and the likes; the third and the final process is symbolic acquisition, representing the social practices and metaphors that are already known in the society either directly or indirectly (Greenblatt, 1988, p. 10).

According to Greenblatt, the term ‘text’ refers to “a collective creation that contains the needs and desires of a society,” in addition to “an agent that helps reshape the society in return” (Doğan, 2005, p. 92). As a result, the interpretation of a text cannot

be achieved only through the “objective reconstruction of the past,” as, one should also study and inspect the social energy in order to “decipher the ideology of a given culture” (Doğan, 2005, p. 92). Moreover, Greenblatt regards man’s nature as changeable and determined through being subject to economic, material, ideological, and political circumstances in which he is living (Pieters, 2001, p. 31).

At a macro-level, culture and society are related to a literary work in a way that one inspires the other, and sometimes the literary work even changes the cultural dialectics (Veenstra, 1995, p. 180). The micro-level consists of the writer, the readers, and the individuals of a society (Veenstra, 1995, p. 181). Therefore, as Greenblatt clarifies, society, culture, history, and the ideologies of both the readers and the writers have a great impact on a literary work. Culture and art are interrelated; thus, it is not useful to study only the impact of society on art, and one must study how the social energy circulates in a work of art. For Greenblatt, “[p]ower, charisma, sexual excitement, collective dreams, wonder, desire, anxiety, religious awe’ are conveyed haphazardly, without being subject to a controlling, totalizing system” (Greenblatt, 1988, p. 19). That is why Greenblatt argues, “texts are cultures and cultures are texts” (Maza, 2004, p. 260).

### 3. Foucault’s Power and Resistance

The integration of Greenblatt’s viewpoints with Foucault’s concepts of power and resistance will provide a more all-inclusive framework to understand the reason why many people have identified and sympathized with Joker. Foucault’s views regarding the relation between power and resistance show why the Lebanese people rebel against their government just as Joker and people of Gotham city rebelled in the last scene. According to Foucault (1982), there is a direct relationship between power and the ones upon which power is exercised; moreover, he argues that “[p]ower is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free” (p. 778). Hence, when power is imposed upon a subject who is not able to act freely, there would be struggle against this type of power.

In his article “The Lives of Infamous Men” (1954), Foucault suggests that the hardest point in our lives is the time when energy is concentrated and starts to stand against the power in order to avoid its force (pp. 78-79). In fact, “resistance becomes active in the relation to oneself, the ability each of us has to affect oneself, the effect of

the self by itself” (Smith, 2016, p. 267). “In affecting myself, I open up the possibility of creating myself in a way that differs from the present forms of knowledge, and the present constraints of power” (Smith, 2016, p. 267). This means that if there is no power, there is no active resistance; we resist when we find ourselves struggling against something we are used to in our culture and society, and we want to change what we find as taking our freedom away.

Foucault (1982) suggests five key points that are required in the analysis and understanding of power: first, we have to see how we are determined by different traditions or social differences (p. 792). The second point is related to the one who has the privilege to act upon the actions of others, such as a member of the government who has the power to force actions on people (Foucault, 1982, p. 792). While the third point refers to how power is being exercised, the fourth point is related to the institutions that may force power such as family, military institutions, or the state as a more complex system (Foucault, 1982, p. 792).

The fifth point is related to the extent that the power is affective; when one looks at all these points, the relationship between power and the subjectification of people becomes clear (Foucault, 1982, pp. 792). Foucault (1982) has also stated that the most obvious power that the self might resist is the power of the government and its subjectification of people (p. 780). Such control is shown through the religious control of the church, for example, and the psycho-medical power that determines whether a person is sane or insane (Foucault, 1982, p. 781).

#### **4. The Historical Background of America during the 1980s**

In order to comprehend the connection between reality and fiction or past and present, it is important to have a closer look at the history of the 80s in America as the time Allen Moore wrote *Batman: The Killing Joke*. Throughout the 1980s, there was considerable anxiety concerning the rise of crime in America, especially because people were gradually moving away from religion and moral principles (U.S. Department of State, 2011, p. 308). One of the Christian groups that had a great political influence at that time was the Moral Majority, led by the Baptist minister Jerry Falwell, Sr. (U.S. Department of State, 2011, p. 308). In the early 1980s and with the severe recession of the war, which was created due to the increase of the military budget and the tax cut,

the then US President Ronald Regan entered the picture and made changes that resulted in economic growth (U.S. Department of State, 2011, p. 309-310).

Much of this economic progress happened in the areas of skilled service and technical spheres, which made the economic situation of the poor and the middle-class less promising (U.S. Department of State, 2011, p. 310). October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1987 was called “Black Monday” since the stock market suffered from the greatest crash in the American history (U.S. Department of State, 2011, p. 311). The 1980s was claimed to be the age of greed and money and the increase of crime, as everybody was working hard to earn fast money on Wall Street, which resulted in an aggressive pursuit of money (Taylor, 1992). The 1980s was the age when wealth was the dominant interest of people; thus, society was getting away from moral values, and committing such crimes as drug dealing was regarded as the most appropriate way to become rich (Taylor, 1992).

The 1980s was the time of the Yuppies or the young urban professionals who were men and women for whom money was the most important thing in the world (Ferguson, 2016, p. 89). For the Yuppies, being successful signified earning a huge amount of money, and as such they did not have the time for a social life (Ferguson, 2016, p. 90). The emptiness and the superficiality of the Yuppies became associated with murders and serial killers of the 1980s since everyone was looking for social mobility in a materialistic world (Ferguson, 2016, p. 99).

Throughout the 1980s, many films and works of literature revolved around murders and society (Ferguson, 2016, p. 108). While the Yuppies focused on collecting money, an even more serious crisis occurred as countless people became homeless in many cities like New York, who had to sleep on the streets and on church steps (Jeantet, 2013). This rise of homelessness happened due to the chaotic process of deinstitutionalization along with drugs and alcohol addiction (Jeantet, 2013).

## 5. Joker's Character

In order to have a better understanding of the changes in the Joker's character, it is initially important to examine this character's history in comics. Moreover, analyzing the character of Joker in Phillip's movie would lead to finding the reason that has made many people sympathize and identify with him. This character appears differently in different works depending on the writer or the artist who is creating him.



Bill Finger and Jerry Robinson are the first literary figures who are given the credit of creating Batman's character and helping develop Joker as Batman's villain (Collins, 2019). Joker was first introduced to the readers as a cold-blooded criminal who uses venom in order to kill his victims. In 1942 the killing ended and Joker turned to be an armed robber who would use traps for committing his crimes. Then, in 1988 Alan Moore and Brain Bolland created *The Killing Joke* (Collins, 2019). With Moore and Bolland's Joker, for the first time the readers could see that Joker was in fact a normal person who was turned into a villain when he fell into a vat of acid (Collins, 2019).

Subsequently, Joker appeared on TV, in movies, and cartoon series. His last appearance was in Todd Phillips's *Joker* movie in 2019, which had a huge success in all cinemas of America and many countries around the world. In order to analyze the Joker's character, it is first vital to analyze the character of Arthur Fleck. Arthur is a man with psychological problems; he is in fact, a grown man who lives with his mother and works as a party clown. In addition to his bizarre appearance, he is an outcast and an anti-social who is innocent at the same time and likes others especially children. Arthur's odd behaviors lead people to feel uncomfortable around him. Arthur dreams of becoming a successful stand-up comedian. However, he suffers from a psychological condition called Emotional Expression Disorder, which means that he struggles in conveying his real emotions and goes into long episodes of laughter when he feels nervous, anxious, or ashamed (Letamendi, 2019).

The causes of Arthur's disorder are unclear but it is linked with a brain injury. During the movie *Joker* (2019), Arthur learns that he was adopted as a child who was also highly abused. Arthur is delusional as he fantasizes a relationship with a girl called Sophia in his building. Although, Sophia is a real person, Arthur's relationship with her is all a fantasy. Arthur's delusions come from his overactive thinking and a desperate need for being seen and loved. Arthur desires to become successful and win the love of people, however, the society does not give him a chance to reach this goal. Arthur confesses in his journal that "[t]he worst part about having a mental illness is that people expect you to behave as if you don't" (Phillips, 2019, 0:27:00). In fact, the society and the people around Arthur fail to support him and help him to improve; the government and people in power even do not give him a chance because they cut their funding and as a result, Arthur is not able to provide himself with the medications that he needs (Letamendi, 2019).

## 5. America in 2010s: Trumpism

Numerous objections and protests in America happened during Trump's era. As many Americans started to feel that it is important to stand up and speak for themselves. They used Joker as a symbol of their uprising, feeling that Joker would rightly represent them because he was also abused by his own society and government. During his presidency, Donald Trump (born 1946) made many changes and caused serious cuts of funding. Trump took away health insurance from 25 million Americans and cut off programs that would have supported rural jobs, health care, and economic development (The Center for American Progress, 2017). While Americans were living in bad economic situations, the Trumps was running and promoting their own businesses using the presidency as a tool (The Center for American Progress, 2017). Moreover, in Trump's era it became easier for American to buy and carry guns since Trump signed a law that weakened the firearms background check, allowing fugitives to be able to carry guns everywhere (The Center for American Progress, 2017).

As Americans were living a stressful life, the American clinical psychologist Jennifer Panning coined the term "Trump anxiety disorder" to explain what people were feeling like since the elections of 2016. Trump created a wave of hate crimes, overt racism, and violent actions, as according to *The New York Times*, during his first three years of presidency, Trump tweeted more than 11,000 times, and in almost half of them he attacked someone or something (North, 2021).

During Trump's era, there were many problems; however, the most obvious one that flouted on the surface was George Floyd's death at the hands of a white police officer (Dimock & Gramlich, 2021). This incident awakened people against racism, giving rise to the "Black Lives Matter" and #MeToo movements (Dimock & Gramlich, 2021). Most people became against Trump due to the way he handled the situation, which fortified racism even more (Dimock & Gramlich, 2021). Killing George Floyd became the spark that moved Americans to stand up and fight the injustice that they were living in.

Protests against Floyd's murder started in many cities of America where officers had to use tear gas and rubber bullets on the protesters (Taylor, 2021). Subsequently, Trump allowed the use of armed forces to end the riots and called the protesters "thugs,"



he also threatened that if governors and mayors could not take action to stop the violence, he would put the military into action in order to stop the protests (Taylor, 2021). In addition to the murder of Floyd, the tough economic situation during the pandemic of COVID-19 and Trump's refusal to develop a national strategy to face the problem contributed to the death of many people and the worsening of the economic crisis; a lot of people lost their jobs and were forced to face the choice between health and an exorbitant paycheck (House Budget Committee Democrats, 2020).

*Joker* (2019) is a film that shows “the inner tenor of a certain moment in time—in America, and maybe the world—when hate has begun to take over” the dark side of not just the Western societies like America but also the rest of the world (Gleiberman, 2019). America became the dis-united States between the middle class and the liberals; the rage and anger in the society was just like that of Joker as an angry white man who was fed up with the unfair treatment and injustice he had to go through. Phillips's film has shown Joker as a victim for the first time, where the society is to blame for his negative change. In *Joker* (2019), Phillips is trying to concentrate on the idea of Joker and what he has become rather on the outside world, with a realistic point of view (Robertson, 2019). That is the reason why Americans take Joker as a symbol of their rebellion since Joker is rebelling against injustice. Consequently, in their revolution, people choose to wear the mask of Joker. For instance, the 31-year-old Timothy O'Donnell was one of the protesters who was arrested for setting a police car on fire while wearing the mask of Joker (Seidel, 2021 , para. 3).

## 6. Lebanese Revolution

Just at the same time that people in America were revolting against Trump, Lebanese people similarly started their own revolution against their government. Both the Americans and the Lebanese used Joker as a symbol of their revolution since they were undergoing the same hitches. The spark of this revolution came to the surface when the government decided to put taxes on WhatsApp calls, subsequently, people started to cheer “All of them means all of them,” meaning all members of the parliament are the same (Kassir, 2019). It started on October 17<sup>th</sup> when people took to the streets and started to declare that they wanted food and needed to live happily; following which, on October 29<sup>th</sup>, Saad al-Hariri announced his resignation (Kassir, 2019).

However, the revolution did not end, and the peaceful protesters insisted to stay until they managed to build a new foundation for their country (Kassir, 2019).

The economic situation in Lebanon at that time reached an awful downfall with the rise in dollar exchange rate, as a result of which, many people became unemployed (Bisat et al., 2021). The public sector debt had increased and reached a high level, and the banking sector, having lent the government a very large sum of the deposits, was facing bankruptcy (Bisat et al., 2021). People started to understand that it is not right to keep living that way and it is time to change what they were already used to in their country (Bisat et al., 2021).

The economic situation was not the only problem, and living in a country that did not provide a healthy environment for its people was even a bigger problem in Lebanon. In 2020, Beirut's waste problem started to become worse and worse, and waste management system reached the breaking point (UN News, 2020). It was announced that "the cost of cleaning up the environmental degradation resulting from the explosion has been estimated by UNDP at over \$100 million, which comes on top of the country's existing environmental cleanup costs, estimated at \$2.35 billion by UNDP in 2018" (UN News, 2020).

Lebanon is the country most influenced by Joker, and thus they began using this character as a symbol of their rebellion, as the Lebanese society embraces elements of the Western societies more readily than those from their neighboring countries like Iraq, in which few protesters have used the mask of Joker as a symbol of their revolution (Bocchi, 2019). Mohamed Kabbani as a Lebanese street artist told CNN that "Joker is us, ... Beirut is the new Gotham City" (Kaur, 2019). Protesters in Lebanon have seen Joker as a symbol of their protest and Gotham City as Lebanon. Moreover, the essence of the Lebanese protest is the imbalance power between ordinary people and the elite in the society. One of the Lebanese protesters claims the reason for using the mask of Joker is that they identified with "the character in the movie. Because before he painted his face, he was just living that miserable life. Nobody cared about him ... He's upset, he's angry, and it just drove him to madness and that's what's happening" in Lebanon (Mackenzie, 2019). The resemblance between the movie *Joker* (2019) and the reality of what is happening in Lebanon has led people to feel that they are Joker himself whose revolution represents theirs.

As noticed in *Joker* (2019), Gotham City is infamous for its injustice and high

crime rates; the same holds true for Lebanon, in which the rich are taking advantage of the poor without honoring their right to live as they deserve. The government forced the Lebanese to pay outrageous taxes, which made everything hard for them (Majumdar, 2019). The last straw for people in Lebanon occurred when they were forced to pay taxes on WhatsApp calls, which are free in every other country (Majumdar, 2019). The economic situation in Lebanon resembles the situation in the fictional city of Gotham where poor people are trying very hard to live through the difficult situation they face.

## 8. Concluding Remarks

A detailed analysis of Phillips' *Joker* through the application of Greenblatt's new historicism revealed that there is a close connection between the past and the present when it comes to such issues as economics, health, and power abuse. This issue implies that there is no totalized society as Greenblatt suggests. It was found that *Joker* by Phillips is highly similar to Moore's *Batman: The Killing Joke* since they both depict some events, which happened in America of the 80s. When a work of art like Phillips' *Joker* or Moore's *Batman: The Killing Joke* reflects reality, it profoundly influences people and their ideologies. It was noted that both of these works are inspired by real world events. *Joker* was released in 2019, the year that witnessed many problems in America, including the murder of George Floyd. There was a similar situation in Lebanon where people became fed up with the difficult economic situation they were going through and the taxes imposed on them by their government. This issue made Lebanese identify with Joker as a character, and see Gotham as their own country. In addition, utilizing Foucault's views regarding how power and resistance are connected together exposed that there is no resistance without power and every kind of power generates a different kind of resistance. The main points which were discussed in this article covered the subjectification of people by their governments' treating them as objects, and forcing them to live in conditions, which make them feel as if they are trapped and need to free themselves from the shackles of the governments' force. Besides, whether during the 1980s or the 2010s, people would face the same limitations imposed by the government, culture, and social forces was investigated.

## References

- Bisat, A., Cassard, M., & Diwan, I. (2021, March 29). *Lebanon's economic crisis: A tragedy in the making*. Middle East Institute. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/lebanons-economic-crisis-tragedy-making>
- Bocchi, A. (2019, November 14). *Why is the Joker Mask appearing at Middle East protests?* Al Bawaba News. <https://www.albawaba.com/news/why-is-joker-appearing-inmenaprotests-1321269>
- The Center for American Progress. (2017, April 26). *100 ways, in 100 days, that Trump has hurt Americans*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/100-ways-100-days-trump-hurt-americans/>
- Collins, S. T. (2019, December 16). *The complete history of the Joker*. Rolling Stone. <https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/movie-features/complete-history-of-the-joker-889033/amp/>
- Dimock, M., & Gramlich, J. (2021, January 29). *How America changed during Donald Trump's presidency*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/2021/01/29/how-america-changed-during-donald-trumps-presidency/>
- Doğan, E. (2005). New historicism and renaissance culture. *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi*, 45(1), 77-95.
- Ferguson, K. L. (2016). *Eighties people: New lives in the American imagination*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Foucault, M. (1954). The lives of infamous men. *Power*, 3, 155-175.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4), 777-795.
- Gleiberman, O. (2019, October 20). *Why 'Joker' is about all of us*. Variety. <https://variety.com/2019/film/columns/why-joker-is-about-all-of-us-joaquin-phoenix-todd-phillips-1203376414/>
- Greenblatt, S. (1988). *Shakespearean negotiations: The circulation of social energy in Renaissance England*. University of California Press.
- House Budget Committee Democrats. (2020, October 29). *President Trump has failed the American economy*. House Committee on the Budget.

[https://budget.house.gov/publications/report/president-trump-has-failed-](https://budget.house.gov/publications/report/president-trump-has-failed-american-economy)

[american-economy](https://budget.house.gov/publications/report/president-trump-has-failed-american-economy)

- Jeantet, D. (2013, March 11). *A brief history of homelessness in New York*. City Limits. <https://citylimits.org/2013/03/11/a-brief-history-of-homelessness-in-new-york/>
- Kassir, A. (2019, November 13). *Lebanon's "October revolution:" An end to the civil war?* Open Democracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/lebanons-october-revolution-end-civil-war/>
- Kaur, H. (2019, November 3). *In protests around the world, one image stands out: The Joker*. CNN News. <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/03/world/joker-global-protests-trnd/index.html>
- Letamendi, D. (2019, October 11). *The psychology of the Joker from 'Joker' (2019)*. Fandom. <https://www.fandom.com/articles/psychology-joker-2019-joaquin-phoenix>
- Mackensie, L. (2019, October 21). *Why the Joker became a serious symbol of Lebanon protests*. Wired Middle East. <https://wired.me/culture/lebanon-protests-beirut-joker/>
- Majumdar, S. (2019, October 30). *Joker is becoming the face of the fight against injustice in Lebanon, Chile*. National Herald. <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/international/joker-is-becoming-the-face-of-the-fight-against-injustice-in-lebanon-chile>
- Maza, S. (2004). Stephen Greenblatt, new historicism, and cultural history, or, what we talk about when we talk about interdisciplinarity. *Modern Intellectual History*, 1(2), 249-265.
- North, A. (2021, January 28). *"People are not okay:" The mental health impact of the Trump era*. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/2021/1/28/22249273/trump-presidency-trauma-covid-19-2020-election>
- Pieters, J. (2001). *Moments of negotiation: The new historicism of Stephen Greenblatt*. Amsterdam University Press.
- Robertson, A. (2019, October 14). *Joker mimics King of Comedy and Fight Club, but it's a completely different kind of film*. The Verge. <https://www.theverge.com/2019/10/14/20905454/joker-movie-phillips-king-of-comedy-fight-club-scorsese-fischer-comparison-society>

Seidel, J. (2021, June 29). *Ruling in Chicago rioting 'Joker' case leaves some*

*statements unusable by prosecutors*. Times. Retrieved March 9, 2022, from <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2021/6/29/22555600/chicago-rioting-joker-case-ruling-leaves-some-statements-unusable-prosecutors>

Smith, D. W. (2016). Two concepts of resistance: Foucault and Deleuze. In N. Morar, T. Nail & D. W. Smith (Eds.), *Between Deleuze and Foucault* (pp. 265-282). Edinburgh University Press.

Taylor, B. (1992, January 1). *Crime? Greed? Big Ideas? What were the '80s about?* Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/1992/01/crime-greed-big-ideas-what-were-the-80s-about>.

Taylor, D. B. (2021, November 5). *George Floyd protests: A timeline*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/article/george-floyd-protests-timeline.html>

UN News. (2020, September 1). *Beirut facing acute environmental crisis, warns UN energy specialist*. UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1071462>

U.S. Department of State. (2011). *Outline of U.S. history*. Global Publishing Solutions.

Veenstra, J. R. (1995). The new historicism of Stephen Greenblatt: On poetics of culture and the interpretation of Shakespeare. *History and Theory*, 34(3), 174-198. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2505620>