THE CAPSULE

CONNECTING THROUGH COMMON EXPERIENCE

VOLUME 2
2022-2023

THE CAPSULE

—Connecting through Common Experience—

2022 - 2023

Volume 2

Editorial Staff

The Capsule is published annually at
https://blogs.ubc.ca/thecapsule/
by the Coordinated Arts Program at the University of British Columbia
(Faculty advisors: Kasim Husain & Anne Stewart – the.capsule@ubc.ca

With special thanks to
Felicity Gutierrez, Dr. Neil Armitage, Dr. Connor Byrne Dr. Emily Fedoruk, Dr. Kenny Ie, Dr. Amir Shiva, the Coordinated Arts Program, and the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia.

Submission Guidelines

Essays should be based on original research completed in a CAP course during the year of publication. Essays should be 3000 words. Reviews should cover events and projects completed in the CAP program during the year of publication. Reviews should be 1000 words.

Submission inquiries can be addressed to the.capsule@ubc.ca

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather belongs to the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Sel̓íl̓witulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. As a collective community at UBC, we continue to respect and seek the truth behind the sacred history of the Indigenous nations and the relationship they have had with this land from the beginning of time. We believe it is because of the culture, history, and traditions that have been passed down by the Indigenous peoples for millennia, that we are able to continue inhabiting this land and passing down our traditions as well. In the Coordinated Arts Program, we observe how the five streams use their different approaches to explore topics that shed light on harsh realities and issues in both global and local aspects, but mainly in regard to Canada and its history as a nation. *The Capsule* showcases the unique and brave voices behind these featured articles, and we also get to hear some Indigenous narratives as well, allowing us to get a deeper understanding of Indigenous traumas and how we, as modern settlers, continue to be involved in such colonial harm.

UBC has not always acknowledged the Indigenous history of the land it stands on and the harmful role it has played in it. It wasn't until December of 2006 that a Memorandum of Affiliation was signed between UBC and the Musqueam people. In it, they formalised their relationship and set the objective of bringing Indigenous visibility to the campus and incorporating Musqueam education and participation into the university's curricula. Additionally, in 2015, Aaron Lao, UBC Sustainability Scholar, collaborated with the Musqueam First Nation to create Connecting Communities: Principles of Musqueam-UBC Collaboration, which outlines the principles for collaboration between the university and Musqueam. Other initiatives have been created throughout the years to further the efforts of mending this relationship, such as Knowing the Land Beneath our Feet, which highlights Indigenous stories to remind all members of the UBC community of the responsibility we hold by working and studying on unceded territory. UBC continues to create events and programs to strengthen its relationship with the Musqueam people to honour its history, culture, and language.

Table of Contents

Political Science, Philosophy & Economics

Year in Review

Editors' Introduction

—— Annaliese Gumboc, Andrea Reyes Moran, Umbar Nadeem, Nuha Naseer ——

As we embrace the arrival of a new academic year, we are proud and excited to present the second issue of *The Capsule*! Being an undergraduate journal publishing outstanding student work, students from the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP) engage in thought-provoking dialogue as they dismantle the different elements of arts and society through a multidisciplinary approach, viewing the world through the lens of the humanities, social sciences, as well as creative and performing arts. Whatever the subject chosen as a point of discussion, in this year's issue students engage in an analytical exploration of our dynamic society in relation to the themes specific to the concepts of community, communication, and connection.

In "Relationship between Literature and Politics as seen in *The Best We Could Do*," Chantal Lee explores how Thi Bui, author of the graphic novel *The Best We Could Do*, incorporates and refutes the narratives American society has historically imposed on Vietnamese refugees seeking to live in the US due to the effects of the Vietnam War. This addresses some of the core societal and political themes of the Globalization, Power, and Society stream, while Laurel Schroeder's "Crumbling Haiti: Examination of an Unnatural Disaster" delves into the global aspects of the stream by explaining how Haiti's colonialist foundations made the territory vulnerable to events such as the catastrophic 2010 earthquake.

The Individual and Society stream conducts an investigation into humans as agents in this world and their influences on society, as well as how societal forces play a role in shaping human outcomes. This is achieved primarily by viewing society through the lenses of psychology, economics, social justice, and pop culture. The paper, "Analysis of *Danganronpa*'s Core Message in Dialogue with its Narrative, Development, and Marketing," by Silis Hui, explores the psychological and social elements of the video game to unveil the true intent and purpose of the game in relation to the commodification of human life. Indra Sharma's "The Canadian Dream: Promised versus Lived Experiences of International Students in Canada" discusses the plight of international students who sacrifice a lot to study in Canada, only to be faced with disappointment after uncovering the false promises of the 'Canadian Dream.'

The articles chosen to represent this year's Media Studies stream are united in their individual examination of a unique text that dissects the experience of a marginalised community. In "Intimate, Intersectional Depictions of Islamist Radicalization in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*," Morris Hayes analyses and critiques the novel *Home Fire* and its depictions of an Islamic family living in the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, in "Manifestations of Indigenous Trauma and Possible Reconciliation in Eden Robinson's 'Terminal Avenue,'" Maile Kilen discusses how Robinson's short story represents the transgenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples, particularly those living in Vancouver. Together, these essays tell the story of the consequences of identifying with a marginaliz-

ed community, the prejudice that persists against these individuals, and the steps our society must take to heal from these wounds.

Through the Law and Society stream, we are able to delve into how society and law shape one another and we can see some of these connections being made in this year's submitted articles. Zoe Bishop explores the instability of carceral safety, in the article, "Pedagogy of Safety: Application of Theoretical Alternatives to Carceral Safety Within Educational Spaces," and discusses alternative approaches to creating safety, bringing in themes of transformative justice and the importance of pedagogy. In "Misunderstood Anti-Heroes in Education: A Reflection of Dyslexic Students' Emotional Well-being in Traditional Schooling," Assia Malapanis explores how dyslexic students often get misunderstood in the system of traditional schooling, explaining how people with dyslexia face challenges of isolation and exclusion because of a lack of resources in classrooms. This is central to some of the key societal themes in Law and Society and also touches on structural inequalities that are set up by the education system.

Anna Kouao's "Then and Now: Insight into the Relationship between Vancouver's Black Community and the City of Vancouver" examines the historically strained relationship between the City of Vancouver and its Black population, and the efforts to reconcile between them through urban development projects in Hogan's Alley and False Creek. These themes are central to the Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics stream, that aims to approach society through understandings of government policy, economic activity, and social justice. Also exploring these themes is "Cleaning Up the Dirt: The Model Minority Myth, the Backgrounding of Asian Labour, and Outsourced Emotional Labour in The Philippines" by Megan Raitt, in which she investigates how an unseen emotional labor market has been produced as a result of a history of colonization and the model minority myth.

About CAPCON and CEL:

This volume of *The Capsule* additionally includes student reviews spotlighting Community Engaged Learning (CEL) and CAPCON, the Coordinated Arts Program's annual student conference. Of the six CEL talks held over the course of the CAP year, four talks are surveyed. Each CEL review showcases a different talk, with each reviewer utilizing their unique experience within their CAP stream to inform their analysis. These reviews, along with the papers selected for *The Capsule*, are apt representations of the diverse, interdisciplinary nature of CAP.

MEDIA STUDIES

Intimate, Intersectional Depictions of Islamist Radicalization in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*

—Morris Hayes —

In the case of Islamist terrorism in the Western world, perspectival diversity is often bypassed in favor of oversimplified, monolithic narratives of Western good and Muslim evil. As Edward Said posits, Western powers dodge accountability for their provocative role in creating anti-Western sentiments, by rhetorically removing Islamist terrorists from historical context and causality, ignoring their plight, reductively denouncing them as "ontologically and gratuitously interested in wreaking havoc" (830). Said excoriatingly quotes (then UN ambassador, now Prime Minister of Israel) Benjamin Netanyahu's *Terrorism: How The West Can Win,* to provide an example of the aforementioned willful ignorance: "The root cause of terrorism lies not in grievances but in a disposition toward unbridled violence. This can be traced to a world view which asserts that certain ideological and religious goals justify, indeed demand, the shedding of all moral inhibitions" (199). This professed Western fear of Islamic inclination towards violence materializes in "counter terrorism" legislation, especially in the UK, resulting in the over-surveillance of Muslim communities as a whole (Guru 1153). Under the widely cast net of "suspicion of terrorism," many British Muslims—the majority of them innocent—find themselves legally subjected to arrests without warrant, extended detainment and search and seizures of property. (Guru 1154; Pantazis 652).

This dangerously monolithic, one sided rhetoric permeates Western popular culture as well as policy. Even literature that seems to offer an alternatively sympathetic understanding of Islamist terrorists can, as Jessica McDonald maintains in her analysis of the novel *Falling Man*, uphold mainstream reductionist narratives, in their failure to develop autonomous Muslim characters. Despite their attempt towards multiple perspectives, these patronizing depictions of pitiful radicals stifled by the manipulative straightjacket of Islam are only a roundabout way of arriving at monolithic Islamophobia (McDonald 7). Annie Marie McManus warns similarly against the alluring comfort of condescending oversimplification, interrogating the sufficiency of (relatively) tidy novelistic narratives that exempt readers from "questions of social and political engagement" (101).

Kamila Shamsie rejects this trend of one-sided narrative distortion in her novel *Home Fire*, which centralizes British-Pakistani teenager Parvaiz Pasha, from whose perspective we witness the process of his radicalization, culminating in his decision to join ISIS. Though he eventually becomes disillusioned with the group and attempts to escape, Parvaiz's radicalization is thoroughly depicted, providing unique insight into the perceived allure of the caliphate to a potential radical. An intersectional analysis of Parvaiz's character reveals the multiple complementary factors of his identity that led to his radicalization. By juxtaposing these integral traits against the aforementioned representational shortcomings, I argue that Shamsie succeeds in straying away

from monolithic Islamophobic narratives, diverting sole blame of radicalization away from Islam itself in her construction of a complex, free-thinking radicalized character. Shamsie's critique of authoritative Islamophobic narratives manifests in the character Karamat Lone, Britain's Home Secretary, who misinterprets Parvaiz's radicalization as simply following in the footsteps of the boy's jihadi father. Lone's assessment reflects the mainstream gravitation towards oversimplified narratives of fundamentalism as a natural predisposition for Muslimness (Shamsie 90). Shamsie derides this dictatorial, hegemonic interpretation through the condemnation of Parvaiz from the perspective of his Muslim sisters, whose practice of Islam is peaceful and accepting. More importantly, Parvaiz's own perspective works as a direct antithesis to Lone's assertion, as we see other, more decisive factors of his personality—rather than religion—exploited by Farooq, an ISIS fighter back from the caliphate to recruit Londoners. Farooq hones in on Parvaiz's insecurities and dissatisfactions—his lack of a father and perceived masculine deficiencies; his frustration with his family; his underwhelming social status—modulating them against his sisters and Britain, and articulating the caliphate as the solution to his every problem (147). Although Parvaiz is naive and easily entranced, his radicalization process is logically depicted, revealing itself to be a misguided pursuit of personal discovery, rather than mindless religious aggression.

Masculinity is a key component of Parvaiz's radicalization. To Parvaiz, Farooq exudes conventional masculinity, he is a "powerfully built man" who "probably wouldn't cry if you drove a tank over his legs" (Shamsie 128). Parvaiz sees these traits as desirable but does not exhibit them himself, getting pushed around by neighbourhood bullies and succumbing to tears. As they spend more time together, Parvaiz realizes that this is "the central preoccupation of Farooq's life, the heart of all his lessons: how to be a man" (132). Farooq blames Parvaiz's masculine shortcomings on an "emasculated version of Islam" perpetrated by Parvaiz's sisters—who make household decisions in lieu of their dead parents—and a repressive British government that views Muslimness as a threat (133). Here, in Farooq's insistence that a "proper" execution of the Quran would see Parvaiz making decisions for "his women," Shamsie depicts the breadth of varying and contending interpretations of Islam (132). This is also the first instance of Farooq presenting his ideology as a solution for Parvaiz's problems, and its promise of acquired masculinity reflects intersectional sociological studies conducted by Sune Qvotrup Jensen and Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen. Using R.W. Connell's theory of "Hegemonic Masculinity," in which members of marginalized minority groups may feel emasculated in a society dominated by white men, Qvotrup Jensen and Fuglsang Larsen propose that ISIS propaganda, in its "articulat[ion of] an idealized and romanticized notion of masculinity" propped by a "clear-cut gender system that gives men a high status," may be especially persuasive to Muslims who feel their manhood threatened (431). Though violent and intrinsically oppressive of women, in this scene fundamentalist masculinity is articulately vindicated, given an air of heroism in its duty to "defend Muslim women and children" described as "suffering from Western attacks" (432).

Farooq utilizes this rhetorical tactic, relat-

ing stories and photos from the caliphate that seem to validate his claims, impressing upon Parvaiz a sense of righteousness that the boy internalizes, beginning to loathe the British government, coming to disregard the ideas of his sisters (Shamsie 149). Thus, Parvaiz's eager embrace of this rough-edged, conceptually righteous masculinity —which set the cogs of his radicalization in motion—should be understood as the (misguided) opportunistic attempt of an insecure boy to expeditiously obtain a status of respect, not as evidence of his Muslimness as a social liability.

A further interrogation of the familial frustrations and masculine insecurities that lay the groundwork for Parvaiz's radicalization brings us to his father, or rather, the tangible void left in his absence. Adil Pasha's death as a jihadi prisoner barred Parvaiz from ever knowing his father, or anything about him—shame and fear of reprisal smothering any possibility of discussion (beyond stories from Parviaz's grandmother about her son's prelapsarian childhood) within the Pasha family. Yet this imposed silence only exacerbates Parvaiz's unsatiated desire to "find out who his father had become by the time his son entered the world" (Shamsie 129). Drawing parallels from Christie Margrave's analysis of fatherless male characters in other European women-written novels, in which "empty spaces carve out the shape of the male heroes' characters, thought processes and life crises," I reason that Parvaiz's longing for a father figure (and the accompanying identity insecurity) defines him and catalyzes his radicalization (226). Farooq first approaches Parvaiz on the basis of their fathers fighting together in jihad. Parvaiz is enthralled by heroic stories of his father, depicted "not [as] a footloose boy or a feckless husband but a man of courage who fought injustice" (Shamsie 130). Here, the differing interpretations of Islam are again highlighted: Farooq sees Adil's fundamentalism as honourable while the Pasha family is horrified. Furthermore, within *Home Fire*—the representational literature itself—the ineffable power of depiction is emphasized: Parvaiz has no other solid notion of his father, aside from as an awe-inspiring jihadi martyr.

The necessity of this ignorance, in Parvaiz's radicalization becomes obvious when applying Ruth Stein's psychoanalytic theory of terrorism and "the primordial father" (78). Stein analyzes Islamist terrorists' rhetorical articulations of a violence-vindicating God, likening it to "the primordial father," a supremely righteous psychoanalytic entity beyond all apprehension or repercussions, that inhabits the biological father in the minds of young sons (84). Healthy childhood development sees the son metaphorically "'kill the father' in the sense of individuating" from this entity, forming their own personalities, setting realistic ideals for manhood after realizing their (physical) father's limitations and shortcomings (Stein 86). Yet if the entity is not "killed," it "goes on living forever, internally demanding constant proofs for its grandeur by means of the son's servitude" (Stein 84). In Parvaiz's psyche, the primordial father lives—albeit dormant until aroused by Farooq's fundamentalist epics. Invigorated by real-life narratives of unbridled jihadi courage, it is this awakened primordial father that supersedes Parvaiz's logical judgment—evident as he allows Farooq to subject him to the tortures his father endured as a POW, revelling in their shared pain, thinking "I am you, for the first time" (Shamsie 142). Yet again, the allure of the caliphate tugs not on Parvaiz's Muslimness

but at deeper, more pivotal factors. Parvaiz's yearning to know his father is integral to his character, and from his perspective fundamentalism is their best (and only) means of connection.

Parvaiz constantly struggles with dissatisfaction and confusion: being the only man in his family, not qualifying for scholarships that would allow him to pay for university, feeling wasted as a greengrocer's assistant. Qvotrup Jensen and Fuglsang Larsen reason that fundamentalism, by transforming pre-existing grievances into a religious context, "religiously legitimizes emotions," offering holy justification to the already indignant (437). Parvaiz's pain of losing his father is validated by the jihadis who want to avenge him (437). Further, Parvaiz's frustration with his unbelieving sisters, who see his sound engineering dreams as risky and frivolous, is soothed by the ISIS media crew that values his expertise (Shamsie 147). At the instigation of Farooq, the teenage angst of underappreciated creativity becomes yet another reason to join the caliphate. In addition to a realization of personal ambition, jihad offers Parvaiz a chance to do something impactful. By postulating his fundamentalist interpretation of Islam to Parvaiz, as a mystic solution to all his problems, Farooq modulates the idea of radicalization into a righteous, awesome fulfillment of the boy's identity. As Kruglanski et al. theorize, especially in the wake of a humiliating personal loss (the death and posthumous abasement of one's father, for example), the pursuit of terrorism can be fuelled by the "opportunity for a considerable significance gain," and acquiring "the status of a hero or a martyr"(75). As Farooq continuously asks Parvaiz questions such as "Will you protect the new revolution? Will you do the work your father would have done if he'd lived?" the caliphate is further situated in the boy's mind as the necessary redemption for his floundering life, rather than a predisposition towards violence and hatred (Shamsie 150).

As I've argued in the analysis above, Shamsie's depiction of Parvaiz rejects oversimplified mainstream narratives of Islamist terrorism in her creation of a unique and three-dimensional radicalized character. Applying real world observations to his perspectival narrative, I have deconstructed Parvaiz's radicalization, and its catalyzing factors become apparent and understandable in all their complexity, eroding notions of mindless fundamentalism. However, Parvaiz's disillusionment with the caliphate upon arrival and his attempt to return home are indicative of a more surface level devotion to fundamentalism. While *Home Fire* is an enlightening text on the process of radicalization, it does not depict the willing practice of radical beliefs—an important representational distinction, as the perspective of someone who carries out extremist violence is certain to vary considerably. Furthermore, this paper's focus on Parvaiz's perspective takes away from thoroughly addressing *Home Fire*'s perspectival polyphony. I believe that a complete holistic analysis of each character's depicted perspective and their contrasting relationships with Islam would add much-needed complexity to the discourse on Islamist terrorism.

Works Cited

Guru, Surinder. "Under Siege: Families of Counter Terrorism." *The British Journal of Social Work*, vol. 42, no. 6, 2012, pp. 1151-73.

Kruglanski, Arie W, et al. "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quests Impacts Violent Extremism." *International Society of Political Psychology*, vol. 38, no.5, 2017, pp 69-93.

Margrave, Christie. "Reading the Absence: The Shaping of Male Characters and Their Crises in the Void." *Women's Writing*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2021, pp. 212–30.

McDonald, Jessica. "Delillo's *Falling Man* and the Trouble With Sympathy in Narratives of Terrorism." *Comparative Literature and Culture*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2016, pp. 1-8.

Pantazis, Christina and Pemberton, Simon. "From the 'Old' to the 'New' Suspect Community: Examining the Impacts of Recent UK Counter-Terrorist Legislation." *The British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 49, no. 5, 2009, pp. 646-66.

Qvotrup Jensen, Sune and Fuglsang Larsen, Jeppe. "Sociological Perspectives on Islamist Radicalization: Bridging the Micro/Macro Gap." *European Journal of Criminology*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2019, pp. 426-43.

Said, Edward. "The Essential Terrorist." Rev. of *Terrorism: How The West Can Win,* by Benjamin Netanyahu et al. *Arab Studies Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1987, pp. 195-203.

Shamsie, Kamila. *Home Fire.* New York City: Penguin Random House, 2017. Print

Stein, Ruth. *For Love of the Father: A Psychoanalytic Study of Religious Terrorism.* Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 2009. Print

Manifestations of Indigenous Trauma and Possible Reconciliation in Eden Robinson's "Terminal Avenue"

— Maile Kilen —

Recently, discussions concerning transgenerational trauma are leading the way scholars interact with settler histories and the longevity of colonial abuse. In her paper discussing Eden Robinson's short story "Terminal Avenue," Hannah Skrynsky argues that the story is "a literary example of what Canada's future might look like if the collectively felt anxiety that underpins settler society remains unchecked" (317). Skrnysky analyzes the memory trope within this text as evidence of protagonist Wil's escape from the assimilatory demands imposed upon him by the settler society in which he resides: Vancouver, BC. Tihamér Bakó and Katalin Zana similarly discuss this desire for escapism through the concept of trauma coping by retreating to a healing intrapsychic "transgenerational atmosphere" (16). At the same time, Jeremy N. Thomas considers a similar form of healthy escapism through trauma play in BDSM mirrored through Wil's engagement in such practices. Trauma studies are progressively evolving in relation to transgenerational trauma and pain inflicted by dominant groups that attempt to reconcile the traumas they have inflicted, to little avail. Eden Robinson, similarly, through the displacement of her readers through the science fiction tactic of cognitive estrangement, is inflicting sentiments of spiritual homelessness, which is one example of trauma experienced by Indigenous people.

In this paper, to extend an understanding of Robinson's engagement with Indigenous trauma, I will establish the long-lasting detriments of the historical and ongoing abuse suffered by Indigenous peoples in Vancouver. To do this, I will counter Skrynsky's claims that "Terminal Avenue" is not just a warning for the future, but a reflection of the timeless abuse and transgenerational trauma imposed on Indigenous peoples, evident through their physical and spiritual displacement by settler society. I then analyze how Robinson builds on this premise of timeless Indigenous suffering by utilizing the science fiction element of cognitive estrangement to invoke sentiments of spiritual homelessness within her reader. When these elements of cognitive estrangement and sentiments of spiritual homelessness are taken together, I assert that Robinson is proposing possible reconciliation by clearly communicating Indigenous ways of growing and living with intergenerational trauma, such as through an intrapsychic atmosphere or physically, within the confines of a BDSM club, and is spreading this knowledge. In doing this, Robinson is possibly prompting feelings of empathy with estranging techniques that ultimately mirror, but at once counter, Indigenous sentiments of spiritual homelessness.

In her paper "From Dystopic to Decolonial: Reconciling the (In)Determinate Dystopia of Eden Robinson's 'Terminal Avenue,'" Skrynsky is drawn to Robinson's use of the episodic memory narrative. Skrynsky analyzes the following passage by Robinson: "When he

recalls his father singing on the boat, Wil 'doesn't understand the words, couldn't pronounce them if he tried' (214)" (323). She uses this memory in juxtaposition to narratives of an alternative time in Wil's life to explain how "His memories are never fully articulated and always fragmentary, and…his representation aligns with dominant Western postulations that regard memory as 'sensory fragmentations'" (Skrynsky 323). Skrynsky asserts that Robinson is using this memory narrative not as a call to the memories themselves, but as to how they "are organized within the story, and, more specifically how they exist as a separate space ungoverned by settler society" (323). The idea of Wil's mind as a place for intellectual activity outside of the pressures of colonial society coincides with concepts by Bakó and Zana in their book titled *Transgenerational Trauma and Therapy: The Transgenerational Atmosphere*. They describe manifestations of trauma, and how trauma can turn transgenerational through "A similar, psychological space separated from the external world"; a defined "intrapsychic reality" (15) in which the traumatized individual retreats to a psychic realm to disassociate from and cope with such trauma. This atmosphere is maintained through generations as each person is reliant on this psychic atmosphere to survive and cope. As explained by Bakó and Zana, "the moment of trauma is frozen and becomes constant, timeless" (49). Bakó and Zana's analysis of the manifestation of transgenerational trauma closely resembles Skrynsky's analysis of Robinson's memory trope as Wil attempts to cope with his existence in an abusive colonial society by retreating to the confines of his mind and memories. It is in this way that trauma at once results in escapism, but at the same time can be a measure of healing. Trauma is distinguished as transgenerational when it is a continual process that reveals the past, present, and future scopes of such emotion, and goes beyond a simple reaction through the processes of healing.

Evidence of escapism from his tormented reality is further represented in Wil's experience in the story's BDSM club Terminal Avenue, in comparison with Jeremy N. Thomas's paper "BDSM as Trauma Play: an Autoethnographic Investigation." As Wil enters the exclusive club, his partner awaits him wearing a uniform of the "Peace Officers"—government officials who inflict pain and punishment upon Indigenous peoples in Robinson's story. As their BDSM play commences, Wil recalls how "He put a painstick against the left nipple…he kept going until he was shaking so hard he had to stop" (Robinson 65). His lover then told him "It's not pain so much as it is a cleansing…It could give pleasure. It could give power" (Robinson 65). By partaking in BDSM play within the confinement of an exclusive members-only sex club, Wil is engaging in another form of healthy escapism, as he retreats to the confines of another reality—a reality in which he holds the power. Wil is, as Thomas asserts in his autoethnography, "intentionally doing these activities because in their minds there is a connection to the past" (919), and therefore participants are able to "gain further control and power over the past" (Thomas 920). Outside of Terminal Avenue, Wil is a victim of his circumstance as an Indigenous person in a settler society. Peace Officers beat him and harm his family; Wil recalls when "blood plas-

tered his father's hair to his skull" (Robinson 63), and he is helpless: "Say nothing, his mother said" (Robinson 63). Wil exists in a colonial society that is inflicting harm upon him and his family, both mentally and physically, so Wil copes by retreating to not only a mental intrapsychic reality but also a physical sanctuary of control within Terminal Avenue. Wil explicitly says that "he is not really alive until he steps past the industrial black doors of his lover's club" (Robinson 67).

The establishment of escapism from the detriments of intergenerational trauma reflects the timeless abuse of colonialism imposed upon Indigenous people. However, Robinson is not only portraying the abuse suffered by Indigenous people in the form of transgenerational trauma, she is also fostering a sense of empathy in her readers, through the use of the literary technique of cognitive estrangement. Darko Suvin, in his paper "On the Poetics of Science Fiction," quotes famous astronomer Galileo when discussing the purpose of cognitive estrangement by stating "a representation which estranges is one which allows us to recognize its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar" (Galileo qt. by Suvin 374). Cognitive estrangement in the science fiction genre aims to position the reader in an estranged, unknown place, for the purpose of recognizing the nuances in their world, possibly as a "mirror to man just as the differing county is a mirror for his world" (Suvin 372). Throughout her story, Robinson omits terms and necessary context so her reader is never fully knowledgeable of the circumstance of her story, as Robinson writes "They have a circle around him. Another standard intimidation tactic" (67). Choice of words such as "they," "another," and "standard" imply that the reader should have prior knowledge of what Robinson is referring to, and is therefore instilled with potential confusion when they inevitably don't understand. As the passage continues, Robinson further estranges her reader by using neologisms—made-up words: "The Peace Officer facing him is waiting for him to talk. He stares up at it…The smiling-faced lies from the TV haven't fooled him, or anyone else. After the Uprisings, it was only a matter of time before someone decided to solve the Indian problem once and for all" (68). Robinson's neologism, "Uprisings," is without any prior definition in the story, inflicting further feelings of confusion and estrangement.

Upon reading this story, the reader is positioned in a world with little context provided, while simultaneously being confronted with unknown terms, ultimately fostering a sense of confusion and displacement. Robinson is consciously creating a feeling of confusion within the reader, and then elevating this confusion with small hints to the real world, such as "the Indian problem" (68). This juxtaposition of the unknown and known prompts the question of how dystopian this novel really is, and the true intent of the estrangement, which I argue is made apparent through Julia Christensen's analysis of Indigenous spiritual homelessness, and its relation to manifestations of transgenerational trauma in "Terminal Avenue."

Transgenerational trauma is rooted in instances of great abuse and suffering, and a foundational example of such traumainflicted upon Indigenous communities is outlined in Julia Christensen's book *No Home in a Homeland*, which accounts for the physical and spiritual displacement of unhoused Indigenous people in colonized societies shap-

ed by transgenerational trauma, and I assert, the reason behind Robinson's intentional estrangement. In her book, Christensen discusses the concept of home in Indigenous culture, and how it is not just a physical landscape. Rather, its importance is founded in "its central role in the transmission of cultural knowledge and the reproduction of cultural identity," and therefore "attacks on the family and on Indigenous homelands through colonial processes of domination and dispossession are therefore deeply implicit in Indigenous experiences of homelessness" (168). This form of homelessness experienced by Indigenous people in a colonized society can be defined as spiritual homelessness, which relates directly to their loss of land, family and identity, as they are "uprooted or detached from those places through myriad colonial tools of social, cultural, and material displacement" (Christensen 171). This traumatic sentiment is then maintained through transgenerational trauma, as Bakó and Zana explicitly state: "The deepest level of transgenerational traumatization can be caused by social processes that affect the community of humans…approached as damage to the container function of the whole of humanity…exert[ing] an effect on many coming generations" (11), thus proving how the social process of Indigenous displacement is a legitimate foundation for the formation of transgenerational trauma.

Christensen's concept of spiritual homelessness, taken into the context of "Terminal Avenue," reveals Indigenous sentiments in settler society. The extent of this suffering is then portrayed through Robinson's episodic memory narrative and reflection on transgenerational traumas and the timeless impacts of abuse. The basis of Christensen's claim is that home is not just physical, and therefore homelessness can also be spiritual. Wil, and Robinson's use of episodic memory narrative, supports this concept as he is spiritually creating his own world and healing space to cope with his traumas—this healing space made significant by the color blue. One of the opening paragraphs in the story begins with the phrase "In his memory" and continues to describe the Douglas channel water as "a hard blue" (Robinson 62). The following sentence states how one of the mountains in the centre of Wil's memory "is the same shade of blue as his lover's veins" (Robinson 62). Wil continues to remember how he saw the same color of his lover's eyes in a dragonfly's wings, but then states that "this is another thing he will keep secret" (Robinson 63). Later in the story, when Wil's brother returns home wearing a Peace Officer uniform, made distinct by the "robin's egg blue," "Wil closed his eyes, a dark, secret joy welling in him" (Robinson 64).

Robinson is drawing many parallels to blue-coloured nature and elements of Wil's consciousness, a theme that will continue throughout the story. This parallel reveals the spiritual home Wil has created for himself, whether it be the secrets he keeps while entering the physical space of Terminal Avenue, or as a reaction to his brother joining the enemy; regardless, this retreat to his blue-tinted consciousness is Wil's spiritual home. Christensen asserts that "cultural connection and access to the land gave many men and women living homeless a positive sense of self, a sense of belonging" (184), which is seen in Wil's close connection to the land, in tandem with his secrets of Terminal Avenue club or his brother's failure, made pa-

rallel through Robinson's recurring theme of the colour blue in nature. Due to a lack of a physical home, Wil has created a spiritual home, similar to the intrapsychic atmosphere discussed by Bakó and Zana prior, yet in Robinson's story this atmosphere is manifested in Wil's secrets, memories, or dreams and has created a sanctuary for him to cope, a great reflection by Robinson on the ongoing trauma and pathways to healing experienced by Indigenous people.

Further than just a reflection, Robinson is using literary techniques to relate feelings of Indigenous suffering and spiritual homelessness to the feelings she imposes within her readers through the use of cognitive estrangement. As discussed prior, through the experience of reading this story, the reader is forced to interact with unknown terms, effectively displacing and uprooting the reader. When taken in tandem with Christensen's spiritual homelessness, Robinson is creating a "crisis of personal identity wherein one's understanding or knowledge of how one relates to country, family, and… identity systems are confused" (Christensen 172) and an "overall sense of detachment from place" (Christensen 184), revealing the parallels between emotions experienced by readers of "Terminal Avenue" and sentiments long-held by Indigenous people in colonial society. Ultimately, through this act of estrangement, Robinson is causing her readers to not only feel displaced in the world of the novel, but by incorporating coping mechanisms and traumas of Indigenous peoples along the same storyline, Robinson is drawing parallels between the timeless abuse suffered by Indigenous people and feelings of ignorance and estrangement by the reader, ultimately bridging the gap between an Indigenous reality and readers, among these being the naive colonizer.

Skrynsky asserts, in her paper on "Terminal Avenue," that this story is a warning for the future of Vancouver if real reconciliation efforts are not made and the traumas of Indigenous peoples are not properly addressed (317). However, I assert that rather than solely a reflection of the realities of Indigenous peoples living in settler society and a look into some of the roots and manifestations of transgenerational traumas they continually suffer, "Terminal Avenue" also paves the way towards reconciliation as Robinson's cognitive estrangement and displacement of her readers into the mind of an Indigenous person in Vancouver is reflecting upon the great extent of Indigenous traumas regarding their loss of home, and instilling this feeling in the reader.

Haisla and Heiltsuk First Nations author Eden Robinson wrote "Terminal Avenue" on the third anniversary of the Oka Uprisings, a protest that erupted from the proposed expansion of a golf course onto the Kanyen'kehà:ka burial ground (Kanesatake Resistance (Oka Crisis)). Robinson has claimed that her short story is a reaction to the crisis. In an interview with Stephanie Mckenzie, when discussing violence as a recurring theme in her works, Robinson states how the common mindset leading to such violence among groups is "you won't get our empathy, our sympathy, our compassion unless you look and think just like us" (Robinson qtd. in McKenzie). This story is a reaction to the great injustices enacted by colonizer mentalities, and at the same time Robinson believes that violence is led by a lack of empathy and understanding, therefore "Terminal Avenue"

promotes an effective message concerning the complexities of a timeless trauma while at the same time inserting the reader into the trauma. Among her readers may be naive colonizers—the ones who support, fund, and carry out the stealing of acres of Indigenous land, and those who enact such violence, knowing it is easier when the victims do not look like them or their loved ones. So while the value in this work lies not only in the reaction of a reader, the potential of Robinson's interconnecting concepts of transgenerational trauma and spiritual homelessness allow Indigenous people suffering from such agony to be heard, and force those who don't understand to listen, or maybe even feel.

In order to actively fight for reconciliation and even attempt to relieve Indigenous people of this sense of unbelonging in their own land, we must first understand their stories and their historic and ongoing traumas. We cannot continue to delegitimize their experiences, and "Terminal Avenue" serves as a glance into the mind, memory, and timeless abuse of spiritual homelessness and the consequential transgenerational trauma suffered by Indigenous people in a naive settler society.

Works Cited

Bakó, Tihamér, and Katalin Zana. *Transgenerational Trauma and Therapy: The Transgenerational Atmosphere.* Routledge, 2020.

Christensen, Julia. *No Home in a Homeland: Indigenous Peoples and Homelessness in the Canadian North.* UBC Press, 2016.

"Kanesatake Resistance (Oka Crisis)." *The Canadian Encyclopedia,* https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/timeline/oka-crisis.

McKenzie, Stephanie. "Interview with Eden Robinson." 6 Mar 2015. https://stephaniemaymckenzie.com/interview-with-eden-robinson/.

Robinson, Eden. "Terminal Avenue." *So Long Been Dreaming*, eds. Nalo Hopkinson and Uppinder Mehan, Arsenal, 2004.

Skrynsky, Hannah. "From Dystopic to Decolonial: Reconciling the (In)Determinate Dystopia of Eden Robinson's 'Terminal Avenue'." *Extrapolation*, vol. 61, no. 3, 2020, pp. 317-37.

Suvin, Darko. "On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre." *College English*, vol 34, no 3, 1972, pp. 372-82.

Thomas, J. N. "BDSM as trauma play: An autoethnographic investigation". *Sexualities*, vol 23 no 5–6, pp. 917–933.

GLOBALIZATION, POWER, AND SOCIETY

Relationship between Literature and Politics as seen in *The Best We Could Do*

—Chantal Lee—

Literature and politics: two seemingly separate entities find themselves intertwined in the genre of war. Politics shape the presentation of literature, and literature shapes the perception of politics and influences its future trajectory. The Vietnam War, a two-decade-long conflict between communist North Vietnam and the anti-communist South, is one of academia's most intensely studied topics. From refugee scholars to historians to geographers, researchers seek to unpack the impact of the US's "lost" war. By studying literature surrounding the Vietnam War, political narratives present during and after the mass migration of Vietnamese refugees to the US have weaved themselves into the writing of veterans, refugees, and scholars alike.

Vietnamese author Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do* exemplifies this claim as the author incorporates politics into her graphic novel by challenging the American government's narratives of Vietnamese refugees. By doing so, *The Best We Could Do* acts as an intervention in politics, forcing readers to reevaluate how they absorb government information and the role of critical thinking and analysis.

The Best We Could Do follows Bui's family as they flee Vietnam and attempt to seek refuge in the US. As the US government accepted millions of "boat people" into the country, certain narratives began to emerge in politics regarding these Vietnamese Americans' living conditions, lifestyle, and future. The two prominent narratives were the assimilation narrative and "model minority" narrative (Espiritu 410). In *The Best We Could Do*, Bui subtly presents a counter-narrative that disproves the popular political narratives of Vietnamese refugees. This not only provokes a sense of disillusionment in readers towards the American government but also cautions against accepting political narratives of minority groups. In this essay, I will first analyze the assimilation narrative, and how it applies to *The Best We Could Do*. Next, the same will be done for the "model minority" narrative before concluding with the harmful effects of these narratives.

The assimilation narrative originates from 1975, when the American government conducted assessment surveys on the "refugee resettlement crisis" (Espiritu 412). Government officials and scholars concluded that assimilation was the ultimate solution as Vietnamese adaptation of American economic and sociocultural norms would "protect the interests of the American public" (Dunning 55). The government then backed up their approach to the situation by selectively commissioning and choosing studies. For example, in Christine Finnan's 1981 study of the occupational assimilation of Vietnamese people in Santa Clara County, California, she stated that occupations that seem undesirable for Americans are "perfectly suited to [the ref-

ugees'] current needs" (Finnan 309). The government's assimilation narrative also found its way into refugee studies and literature. Scholars such as Alden Roberts and Paul D. Starr supported assimilation policies as they linked financial reward to a refugee's ability to assimilate in their publication, *Community Structure and Vietnamese Refugee Adaptation: The Significance of Context*. These studies perpetuated the assimilation narrative, depicting Vietnamese refugees as "docile subjects who enthusiastically and uncritically embrace and live the American Dream" (Espiritu 413). As UCSD's Ethnic Studies professor Yên Lê Espiritu points out, these publications suggest that Vietnamese workers are "naturally suited and even grateful to work in boring, repetitive, monotonous, low-paid, and insecure jobs" (414).

Through *The Best We Could Do*, I argue that Bui challenges the assimilation narrative by emphasizing her family's inability to assimilate into American society after arrival. In Chapter 8, "The Shore," Bui and her three siblings follow Ma into the airport. They are received by Ma's sister Dao and one of her daughters. However, on page 280, Ma and the kids appear far from enthusiastic about arriving, foreshadowing their following years in America. The first panel on the top left depicts the family walking through the arrival gate, looking exhausted and scared. Ma has a frown on her face as she carries the baby; one of the younger children clings onto Ma's trousers for comfort, and the other two children slouch while carrying the two bags in their possession. Bui's family's body language and facial expressions do not convey a positive attitude of longing for the "American Dream"; instead, they look uncertain and pessimistic about their future. The panel on the right depicts Ma embracing her sister, showing a brief expression of relief as she reunites with her sibling. But this relief is not shared among the children as Bui and her siblings stand looking out of place as the adults welcome them to America. They are centred in the panel, wearing orange and black stripes that look particularly jarring next to the softer and milder colours of the others' clothing. This use of contrast foreshadows Bui and her siblings not being able to fit in. The motif of orange and black stripes is repeated on page 287 as the author describes the three sisters experiences in school. These stripes continue to stand out against the softer background colours, reinforcing how out of place they feel in the US.

Aside from hinting to readers that her family felt out of place, Bui expresses how her family couldn't assimilate through dialogue with their cousins. On page 285, Bui's siblings are depicted eating cereal straight out of the box on the doorsteps of their new home. One of her cousins yells at them for being "such a refugee" and not eating cereal in a bowl with milk. While this act is seemingly trivial, Bui uses a small experience to illustrate how there seems to be a standard for being American. A standard that she and her family cannot reach. The emphasis on the word "refugee" capitalized in her cousin's speech bubble shows that the term is intended as an insult to Bui's siblings while reminding them that they must shed their old identity to fit in. However, this refugee label is not something that can be easily removed as it is part of Bui's life experiences. Thus, she portrays how the assimilation narrative prevents refugees from reconciling with their experiences. Instead, it rushes them to adapt to cultural and social norms in a new society.

Furthermore, the assimilation narrative heavily emphasizes refugees' gratefulness for acceptance into American society and for working low-paying jobs. To counter this, Bui uses the term "grateful" with heavy satire on page 291. Here, Ma and Bo discuss the possibility of moving to California with Dao's family because Bui and her siblings contracted pneumonia again during winter. Ma believes California's warmer climate would be more suitable for her children's health, and Bo does not want them to suffer either. However, when she proposed the idea to Dao's family, she and Bo were heavily criticized for being "ungrateful." Reading this the first time, readers might find the critique of ungratefulness understandable as Dao was providing Bui's family with a roof over their heads. However, through the illustration on the next page, Bui challenges the reader's normalization of critiquing refugees as being "ungrateful."

On page 292, there is a close-up panel of Ma with a concerned expression as she looks at her child, the next panel depicts Ma standing in front of the window, appearing isolated. The use of black and white in Ma's surroundings presents her as being alone, with her jumper as the only source of colour in the panel. The larger panel underneath then showcases a dark, snow-covered neighbourhood with only the steps to their house in bright orange. This colour contrast suggests that departing is the only choice for Bui's family, even without Dao's support. The desolate feeling invoked through the illustrations prompts readers to reflect upon their lack of sympathy and understanding on the previous page. Ma and Bo's decision to move to California was not because they were greedy for opportunities or a better living environment. Rather, they were acting on their instincts as parents, prioritizing their children's health and hoping that the Californian climate would prevent pneumonia. This prioritization of their children is natural for any parent, but when it comes to refugees, I find it easy to be judgemental at first glance. Any demands refugees make are seemingly outrageous, despite the same demands being considered normal for any other citizen. Thus, Bui critiques the phrasing of refugees as "grateful" as a way to discount their feelings and experiences while exposing readers to the harms of the assimilation narrative.

The second narrative that can be seen critiqued in *The Best We Could Do* is that of the "model minority." The "model minority" narrative is used by the government and popular press to publicize the economic success of Asian Americans, describing them "as embodying the human capital of diligence, docility, self-sufficiency and productivity" (Ong 77). With works such as *The Boat People* and *Achievement in America*, alleged Vietnamese refugee success stories became highly publicized in the 1960s-80s. Vietnamese refugees found themselves suddenly becoming highly visible with a monolithic perception. In part, this label of "model minority" was popularized due to the rise of civil rights movements and race rebellions. The American government searched for ways to "delegitimize black and brown demands for economic equity and formal political claims" (Espiritu 415). On the other hand, "model minority" was used to promote cultural essentialism. As James Freeman claims in his book *Changing Identities: Vietnamese Americans, 1975-1995*, the "success" of Vietnamese Americans was claimed to be rooted in their "strong work ethic, high regard for education, and family values" (Freeman 9).

However, I propose that Bui's *The Best We Could Do* offers a critique of this narrative as the government's way of offering less support for new refugees, justified as a way for refugees to become economically independent on the road to success. This can be seen in Chapter 9, "Fire and Ash," when the family relocated to California. On page 294, Bui recounts how her family received food stamps and assistance for families with children, but the resources were quickly taken away when Ma found a job on the assembly line. The middle panel on this page has one line "on $3.35 an hour and countless sacrifices," and Ma's face is zoomed in next to the text box. Bui uses a matter-of-fact tone when stating the amount her mum earned for the government to determine that she was fit to support the family on her own. Readers are first hit with the shock of seeing "$3.35 an hour," a wage rate far below what we are accustomed to. Then, as the panel shows only a portion of Ma's face, readers are directed to the deep eye bags under her exhaustedly closed eyes and furrowed brow. Ma has a hand on her forehead, supporting herself as she leans for a moment of rest. On her hand, the wedding ring contrasts with her pale skin. The ring symbolizes Ma's commitment to her family as she continues to overwork herself to support them. In the panel, the prominent contrast between the ring and Ma's face allows readers to infer Ma's persistence and resilience despite the lack of support from the government. Invoking sympathy from readers, Bui invites readers to reflect upon the government's support for her family in contrast to their actual living conditions. Ma's job is less than enough to support a family of six, but the government's narrative of "model minority" allows both officials and citizens alike to overlook the refugees' need for support. Thus, the "model minority" narrative is false and harmful to refugees like Bui's family.

Moreover, Bui disputes the claim that the successes of these Vietnamese refugee children are based on Vietnamese cultural and family values. While Vietnam has a long-standing Confucian tradition, it was not clearly shown in *The Best We Could Do*. In Chapter 9, Bui emphasizes over and over again that the values she adopted as a child were centred on those her parents thought were "important to survive." Bui's older sisters, Lan and Bich, excelled in school. With multiple awards and scholarships and graduating at the top of their class as Valedictorian and Salutatorian, they fit into the success story of the "model minority." Ma also had her own success story, as she was able to acquire her certificates and was invited by her professor to become a teaching assistant. However, before readers can presume this is a refugee success story, Bui quickly dispels such assumptions via the explosion incident. Her family's response to an oxygen tank explosion downstairs in their apartment is illustrated in uniform panels with marginal gutters separating them on page 303-304. The closeness of the panels, coupled with the ominous shades of red and black, may communicate the speed of response but also a lack of chaos as her family reacts quickly without saying anything to one another. Bui then labels this as the "Refugee Reflex," which she describes as "the inexplicable need and extraordinary ability to run when the shit hits the fan." This reflex was what her parents had trained her for all her life, and this was also why her siblings worked so hard in school: to survive. By mentioning her sisters' successes in school and quickly transitioning into her family's emergency response to a fire, Bui disproves the claim of

the "startling and extraordinary progress" of Vietnamese children being rooted in culture (Caplan et al. 138).

The Best We Could Do is a memoir of Thi Bui's family, but simultaneously, it is a critique of the political narratives of Vietnamese refugees. Through illustrations of her family's experiences, Bui critiques the assimilation and "model minority" narratives as being unrealistic and harmful to the community. She invites readers to think critically about a narrative's impacts and implications before accepting it and reflecting on how they perceive the term "refugees." Thus, I argue that literature has the ability to shape the perception of politics and its future trajectory. To continue investigating the relationship between literature and politics, further studies must be conducted on how literature can impact policy making, not just by offering critique but by rallying citizens to exercise democratic actions for certain goals to be achieved.

Works Cited

Bui, Thi. *The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir.* Abrams, 2017.

Caplan, Nathan, Marcella H. Choy, and John K. Whitmore. *Children of the Boat People: A Study of Educational Success*. University of Michigan Press, 1991.

Dunning, Bruce B. "Vietnamese in America: The adaptation of the 1975–1979 arrivals." *Refugees as Immigrants: Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese in America*, 1989, pp. 55-85.

Espiritu, Yên Lê. "Toward a Critical Refugee Subject in US Scholarship." *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1–2, 2006, pp. 410-33.

Finnan, Christine Robinson. "Occupational assimilation of refugees." *International Migration Review*, vol. 15, no. 1-2, 1981, pp. 292-309.

Freeman, James M. *Changing Identities: Vietnamese Americans, 1975-1995*. Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Healy, Dana. "From Triumph to Tragedy: Visualizing War in Vietnamese Film and Fiction." South East Asia Research, vol. 18, no. 2, 2010, pp. 325–47.

Hess, Gary R. "The Unending Debate: Historians and the Vietnam War" *Diplomatic History*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1994, pp. 239–64.

Ong, Aihwa. *Buddha is hiding: Refugees, citizenship, the new America*. Vol. 5. University of California Press, 2003.

Rollins, Peter C. "The Vietnam War: perceptions Through Literature, Film, and Television." *American Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 3, 1984, pp. 419–32.

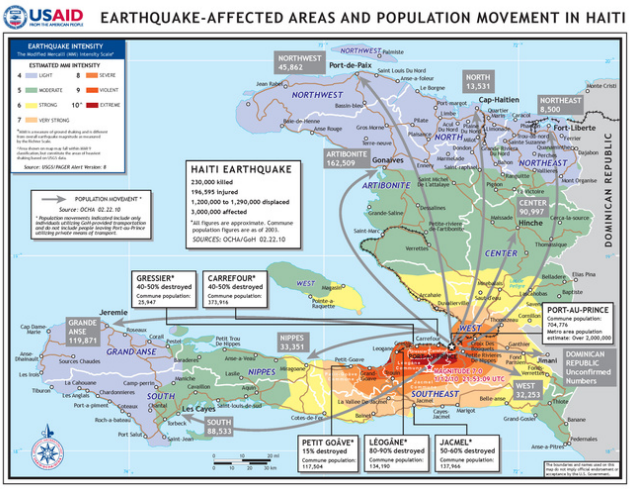
Crumbling Haiti: Examination of an Unnatural Disaster

Laurel Schroeder

On January 12th, 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook the Central American country of Haiti. A continent away in Toronto, I remember purchasing sugar cookies in my first-grade classroom for Haiti's earthquake relief donations. At the time, Haiti's earthquake was a distant and incomprehensible event that led to Canadian kids stuffing themselves with cookies, which I was preoccupied with. What actually took place was a disaster of massive reach. The earthquake caused a death toll of 217 000 to 230 000, with 300 000 more injured, as well as the destruction of 30 000 commercial buildings and one million homes (Salam and Khan 1456). Furthermore, the country took damage to sixty percent of administrative and economic infrastructure, eighty percent of schools, fifty percent of hospitals, and over 180 government buildings (DesRoches et al. 2). In the city and surrounding area of Port-au-Prince, the main site of the disaster, 1.5 million people became internally displaced, unemployment remained at eighty percent two years post-earthquake, and fourteen billion dollars of earthquake debt piled up (Polyné 167). Estimations of the overall losses are between seven and fourteen billion US dollars, which is 100 percent to 200 percent of Haiti's GDP (DesRoches et al. 17). Polyné describes Haiti's earthquake as "unique in that it was far more catastrophic in Haiti than similar and larger earthquakes have been in other parts of the world" (166). For example, the city of Canterbury, New Zealand, suffered an earthquake of the same magnitude shortly after Haiti's, yet suffered no deaths and less destruction (Schuller 12).

Figure 1

Haiti Earthquake Range and Severity of Impact



Source: DesRoches et al.

Note: This figure shows how the earthquake's severity radiated out from the capital of Port-au-Prince.

Albrecht explains how natural disasters can have such varied impacts. He says that "it is not just exposure to natural hazards that determines a society's risk of being struck by a disaster. Instead, human and political actions, or the absence thereof, determine how vulnerable societies are," (15). Thus, natural disasters are combinations of naturally occurring events

(natural hazards) and the vulnerabilities of societies made by their social, political, and economic structures and infrastructures (Albrecht 15). In this sense, both contributions *to* and impacts *of* natural disasters are inherently societal in nature. Albrecht quotes from Perry: "'It is not the hurricane wind or storm surge that makes the disaster; these are the source of damage. The disaster is the impact on individual coping patterns and the inputs and outputs of social systems'" (15). With this understanding of natural disasters in mind, I argue that an aspect of the 2010 Haitian earthquake, as well as its metaphorical aftershocks, was not natural at all, but created and exacerbated by the nation's colonial history, structural and political shortcomings, and dependence on foreign aid.

Colonial Foundations in Haiti

While many are quick to lay blame on the state alone for the scope of the 2010 earthquake (Svistova and Pyles 7), it is impossible to understand the event without first understanding the colonial history of Haiti. During both French and Spanish occupation, Haitians were enslaved and exploited for their labour, coffee, sugar, cotton, and indigo (Belizare 20). This colonial occupation impacted the infrastructure and political stability of the state into the twenty-first century. According to Svistova and Pyles, colonial occupation and the exploitation of the land increased its environmental vulnerability to disasters (29). They state that "The carving out of the ecology to create plantation farms, clear cutting of tropical hardwoods for export to France, and agricultural monocropping of sugar and coffee set in motion the current environmental degradation that exists in Haiti" (29). Later, US Marine occupation in 1915 to 1934 brought with it the exploitation of rubber that furthered "Haiti's deforestation, as well as soil depletion and erosion" (Svistova and Pyles 30). These pre-existing environmental vulnerabilities contribute to present day natural disasters by making the act of disaster recovery, especially recovery of the environment, that much more difficult (Svistova and Pyles 29).

Along with environmental vulnerability, colonialist endeavours in Haiti fuelled a neglect of proper infrastructure. Polyné explains that France's colonial project in Haiti was about extraction of resources, not settlement. As such, none of the nation's major cities (including Port-au-Prince) had the infrastructure nor space necessary to support a large population or a position as the political base of the state (170). Improving infrastructure post-independence was made difficult because the colonial project interfered with the political stability of the country as well. It became an endeavour up against a rotating series of dictators and presidents and constant regional and governmental power struggles.

This political dysfunction was also a legacy of colonialism. Haiti's independence was born out of a successful slave revolt. As such, the country was not recognised as an independent state right away and was forced to take a defensive stance against imperial threats. This led to Haiti mounting a large, active army, thus becoming a military state (Belizaire 20). Belizaire references scholar Curry to explain that this meant "'The temporary solidarity that had developed among members of diverse ethnic backgrounds, classes, and status during the war of liberation dissipated and was replaced by the emergence of opportunistic factions that exploited racial and class differ-

ences to maximize profits and self-interests'" (21). The consequence of this political entity having been born out of a revolt was a power struggle between the central and surrounding government, ruled by dictators that never stayed in power long enough to create political stability in Haiti (Polyné 169). Further contributing to an unsynchronized and insatiable rule in Haiti, its land, previously awarded by independent landowners, was largely taken over by private corporations both from within and outside the state (Belizaire 21). The economy, government, and social solidarity in the country became fragmented.

Another result of this shift in political power was that Haiti was forced to pay indemnity to France as a price for their independence. This centuries-long debt to France acted as colonial residue that increased the young states economic and governmental challenges (Svistova and Pyles 30). Adding these factors to a vulnerable physical environment, it is clear how the 2010 earthquake became magnified. The disastrous event creates a metaphor out of itself: the earthquake as a shaking building on the already crumbling foundations of Haiti.

Twenty-First Century Vulnerabilities

These foundations put into place during the colonial era remain prevalent. Investigating the physical, political, and economic structure of Haiti at the time of the disaster is also crucial in understanding its magnitude. Earthquakes present the greatest risk in highly populated, dense areas, particularly with poor and unregulated infrastructure (Salam and Khan 1457). Tobin outlines that the "growth of [Haiti's urban] population had led to unplanned urbanisation with buildings on unsafe land…placing social and physical pressures on cities and towns" (1047). The explosive population in Port-au-Prince was caused by an accumulation of factors, including agricultural policies, regime changes, and employment opportunities that led to high rates of migration to the capital, which was further exacerbated by high birth rates (Tobin 1050, 1053). Tobin writes that "by 1991, Port-au-Prince was home to more than half of the country's urban population" (1055). This urbanisation was not only rapid, it was also unsafe. The major demographic shifts happening in cities were not accounted for, and informal and unregulated housing construction emerged, including the development of and continued migration to many overcrowded slum areas (Tobin 1054-1055).

Despite the centralisation of Haiti's politics and population in Port-au-Prince, access to the city did not adequately compensate for such a population and activity increase. Historically, transportation around Haiti was by sea (Polyné 170) due to the repurposing of the country as a site of colonial resource extraction. Thus, networks within the country were not well developed, with only two major highways running from Port-au-Prince to the country's other major cities, and most roads in poor shape even before the earthquake (Salam and Khan 1462). Post-earthquake, these roads became largely inaccessible as they ran through mountains that surround the city. Furthermore, the city's seaports and airports took great damage (Polyné 167). As a result, getting both domestic and foreign aid to the disaster zone was a task riddled with delays and drama.

Haiti is not only centralised in Port-au-Prince in terms of population but in terms of

its government and political structures as well. Svistova and Pyles name centralized governance and political insta-bility as contributing factors to the dis-aster (38). The history leading up to the centralised and dysfunctional government created complex relationships between citizens and government. Albrecht exp-lains that citizens are more likely to dismiss the recommendations of institu-tions and government officials in times of crisis when there are low levels of trust between them and the government (27). In Haiti, this was already a risk following the history of dictatorship, corruption, politi-cal instability, and colonial rule. Trust in the government only worsened after its poor response to the disaster.

Salam and Khan (2020) found that there was poor "civil-military cooperation and coordination" (1455) in the wake of the earthquake. Hou and Shi (2011) voice criticisms over the government's response to the crisis, bringing up that even two weeks after the earthquake, less than two thirds of police officers from Port-au-Prince responded to the call for assistance made by the government (29). Addition-ally, a state of emergency was only declar-ed on day six following the earthquake, when it should have been treated as an emergency on day one (29). According to Hou and Shi, this demonstrates that the Haitian government lacked the means to assess the situation and the capacity to deal with it (29).

Foreign Aid Entanglement

The world's response to this political disorganisation was foreign aid and intervention. While the interference of oth-er states and organizations provided immense aid, it also added to the chaos of the disaster and to the furtherance of Haiti's status as a dependent nation (Polyné 170). In global South nations like Haiti, natural disasters such as the 2010 earthquake need foreign aid. Yet, this aid is often exploitative and self-interested, and fur-ther entrenches developing states in neo-colonial relationships. In the aftermath of the earthquake, Haiti received nine billion dollars in aid from foreign governments and another two billion dollars from NGOs, in addition to having foreign disaster relief workers deployed in the country (Polyné 177). Even beyond financial complexities, this foreign intervention became a major logistical challenge. While having multiple national and international jurisdictions affected cooperation and coordi-nation of the response (Polyné 177), the inaccessibility of Port-au Prince lengthened the response times of foreign aid (Salam and Khan).

In terms of the ethical implications sur-rounding financial aid, the Haiti earthquake response was rife with what journalist Naomi Klien refers to as "disaster capitalism" (Svis-tova and Pyles 44), in which the instability and vulnerability presented by the disaster is capitalised on for the economic and political gains of both the state and foreign actors (44). In response to the earthquake in Haiti, "many international organisations have bypassed the Haitian government and local community organisations and businesses" (Svistova and Pyles 46). 2.5 percent of donated funds went to Haitian companies while ninety percent went to donor countries' own for-profit and military entities (Svistova and Pyles 44). Not only is foreign aid itself a business, worth about twenty-eight billion dollars in 2015, disaster capitalism profits "the private sector, corpo-

rate actors, elites, and the 'global ruling class'" by inserting neoliberal economic policies and privatization while de-emphasizing local and state control (Svistova and Pyles 44). Svistova and Pyles quote the International Federation of the Red Cross, who describe the earthquake by saying "'From Tragedy to Opportunity'" (33). Economic aid post-earthquake came in the form of hotel deals with Marriott, partnerships with Nestle and the Colombian Coffee Federation for coffee plantation, an agreement with Korean voltage cable company, LS Cable and Systems, and the construction of an export processing zone (47). In this way the "tragedy to opportunity" objective is clear. The natural disaster presented the world of global capitalism with a perfect opportunity to permanently entangle itself in Haiti's economy.

This foreign interference leading to economic and political restructuring created by the earthquake only exacerbated a previously existing neocolonialist dynamic. Prior to the earthquake, the government of Haiti was receiving sixty percent of its funding from NGOs (roughly 10 000 NGOs operated in Haiti at this time) (Polyné 170). Furthermore, the country was under the weight of loans from governmental organisations such as the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development that ultimately worked to serve private companies and elites while forcing the state to bend to the conditions and demands enforced by these organisations (Svistova and Pyles 28). Additionally, some debts, such as those to France and the International Monetary Fund, serve as constant tampers on Haiti's economy, ways for these entities to keep the nation under their thumb (Svistova and Pyles 28). This neo-colonialism and foreign involvement restricts Haitian sovereignty and disempowers its own population. Thus, it reinforces a version of Haiti not only indebted to the global North, but as well indefinitely dependent on them. This dynamic in combination with disasters such as the earthquake become mutually reinforcing: Haiti was in debt, so they relied upon foreign support to aid with the disaster, however, this support further indebted Haiti to foreign support. In this position the question arises as to whether Haiti is really an independent state after all.

Conclusion

The increasing rate and severity of natural disasters associated with climate change are only exacerbated by growing urbanisation, slum cities, and foreign entanglement, which means that not-so-natural disasters are an increasingly prevalent problem (Albrecht 17). This paper has highlighted that Haiti's 2010 earthquake was not a natural catastrophe alone, but one rooted in colonial history as a foundation of the state, present-day infrastructural and political vulnerabilities, and a simultaneously exploitative and necessary relationship with foreign aid. Understanding how these factors contribute to Haiti's earthquake better equip prevention and preparedness efforts for future disasters in Haiti. Developing this understanding is also crucial on a global scale, for Haiti is not the only post-colonial, developing nation that is vulnerable to such disasters. Outlining these non-natural contributors invites potential for a more proactive approach to be taken in countries such as Haiti so that future natural disasters can be mitigated. While earthquakes and other disasters of its nature are difficult to

prevent or manipulate, it is impor-tant to keep in mind that the myriad non-physical components of these events are very much shaped by human action.

Works Cited

Albrecht, Frederike. The Social and Politi-*cal Impact of Natural Disasters: Investigating Attitudes and Media Coverage in the Wake of Disasters.* Uppsala University, 2017.

Belizaire, Gessie. *The long term impact of French colonial administration on Haiti and Guinea factors that affect the unmet potential of Haiti and Guinea.* Howard University, United States--District of Columbia, 2011.

DesRoches, Reginald, Mary Comerio, Marc Eberhard, Walter Mooney, and Glen J. Rix. "Overview of the 2010 Haiti earthquake." *Earthquake Spectra*, vol. 27, no. 1, 2011, pp. 1-21.

Polyné, Millery. *The Idea of Haiti: Rethink-ing Crisis and Development.* University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

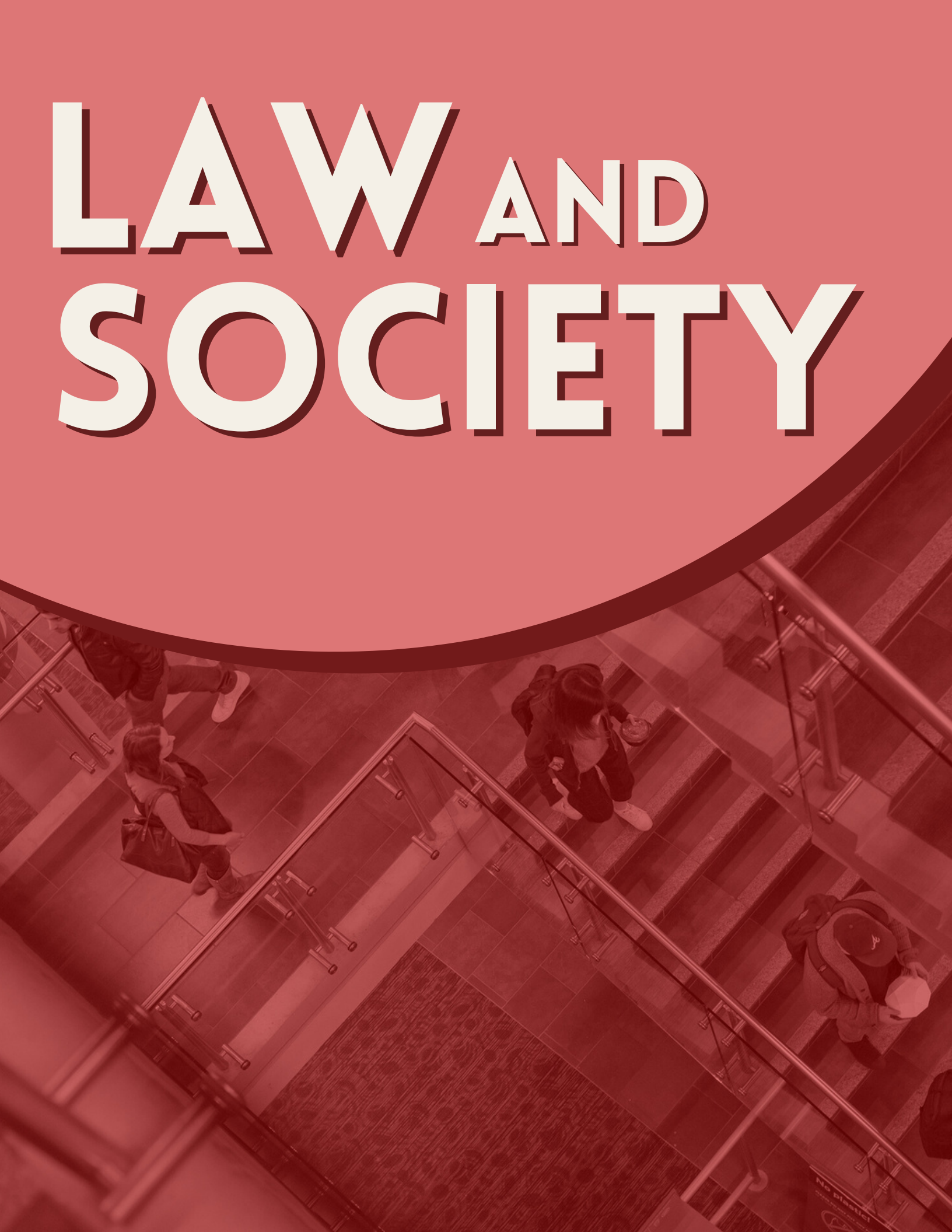
Salam, Mohammad Asif and Sami A. Khan, "Lessons from the Humanitarian Disaster Logistics Management: A Case Study of the Earthquake in Haiti." *Benchmarking*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2020, pp. 1455-1473.

Schuller, Mark and Pablo Morales. *Tectonic shifts: Haiti since the earthquake (1st ed.)*. Kumarian Press, 2012.

Svistova, Juliana and Loretta Pyles. *Production of Disaster and Recovery in Post-Earthquake Haiti: Disaster Industrial Complex (1st ed.)*. Routledge, 2018.

Tobin, Kathleen A. "Population Density and Housing in Port-au-Prince: Historical Construction of Vulnerability." *Journal of Urban History*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2013, pp. 1045–1061.

LAW AND SOCIETY



Pedagogy of Safety: Application of Theoretical Alternatives to Carceral Safety Within Educational Spaces

— Zoe Bishop —

What is safety? A physical state? A feeling? How do we build it? Many scholars argue that safety can be effectively built through transformative justice practices. Police, the criminal justice system, and other actors in our carceral state do not create safety for oppressed communities, in most cases they instigate further violence. This is why alternatives to relying on the carceral state have existed for decades and academics continue to theorise alternative frameworks for safety. In discourses around these alternatives, the conversation more often than not leads to examples and resources surrounding pedagogy (Jackson and Meiners 280-284; Meiners and Quinn 131-135). The power that educational spaces have in affecting thinking within communities is well-established in scholarly and non-scholarly discourses alike. However, the often inaccessible language and publication of scholarly discourse seems to be a wall that prevents a thorough integration of practical pedagogical steps to incorporating scholarly theoretical frameworks of safety. Many non-profit organizations provide detailed and free educational resources for use by educators that address how to teach and engage with social justice issues within the classroom. However, explicit connections drawn between theoretical frameworks for safety and its practical application in education is generally lacking. This obviously speaks to a larger issue in academia in regards to gatekeeping knowledge, but observing this problem simply through the lens of this paper provides an explanation for the seeming disconnect between pedagogical resources being produced on the ground and discussions of theoretical frameworks of safety happening within university walls and journal pages. Given the importance of discussions of alternative approaches to safety and the power that educational spaces hold, I aim to use my paper to fill in this underused connection.

I have split this paper into two distinct sections. First, I summarize pre-existing research and analyses that define and demonstrate the significance of feelings and ideas around safety, the ineffectiveness of state protection for actually fostering public safety, and its role in actively creating more violence in many communities. I bring in the academic frameworks of affective and insurgent safety and then the political framework and practical approach of transformative justice and demonstrate the significance of each. In the second section, I introduce the idea of pedagogy, showing education's potential for facilitating positive social change, and synthesizing educational resources from non-profit organizations that explicitly or implicitly apply transformative justice to classroom settings.

Frameworks of Safety

The hegemonic idea of safety in the US and Canada is that safety consists of the feelings of disgust, anger, and pain. This relies on car-

ceral safety to remove the perceived threats that cause these feelings (Jackson and Meiners 276). Carceral safety is the use of jail, prison, deportation, mass criminalization, and law enforcement as the only legitimate way to protect society from harm (McDowell 45-46). However, this carceral safety is inherently flawed for three major reasons. First, it is ineffective in creating safety, and in fact does the opposite in many cases, facilitating more violence for historically marginalised and disadvantaged groups of people such as communities of colour, indigenous people, immigrants, disabled people, sex workers, queer and trans people, unhoused people, and others. Second, access to carceral safety is shaped by socioeconomic status. Oppressed communities do not have the same monetary and temporal ability to privatize, fortify, and surveil their own domain, which is the only carceral system of creating individual safety outside of the police (Jackson and Meiners 273). Third, the control-based approach to safety does not address the reality that safety is highly affective; it is fuelled by people's feelings. Based on our current idea of safety as the removal of threats, in order for people to be safe, every single possible threat needs to be removed (Jackson and Meiners 276). This is physically impossible, and beyond that it is theoretically impossible because individuals have different ideas of what constitutes a threat. In the end, carceral safety breeds more fear and disgust by labelling people as criminals who need and deserve to be removed from society, which reinforces itself without actually making communities safer and individuals feel safer.

So how can we approach this problem? There are two academic frameworks that provide an alternative to carceral safety. The first is coined as "affective safety" by Jackson and Meiners (279). The key principle that guides this approach is the fact that our collective feelings, often fear and disgust, influence and justify our ideas about the relationship between safety and the carceral state (Jackson and Meiners 271). Affective safety aims to build feelings of safety through the addition of social capital to communities, such as interpersonal relationships, access to resources, communication, conflict-resolution, and more (Jackson and Meiners 280). Jackson and Meiners elaborate that affective safety uses transformative justice and other related strategies (i.e. restorative justice and harm reduction) to achieve this goal. Transformative justice seeks to develop strong community accountability; restorative justice is the practice of restoring relationships, often by bringing together the perpetrator and the community in which harm was done, and harm reduction is a process of taking small steps to promote health and reduce risk by providing access to community building, information, health care, tools to mediate risk, and food (Jackson and Meiners 282-284). The second academic framework of safety is outlined by McDowell and termed "insurgent safety." Insurgent safety emerged from the observation of and interviews with residents of Durham, North Carolina who self-identified as impacted by carceral safety (45). Through thematic analysis of this data, McDowell defined insurgent safety as "a set of locally determined, anti-capitalist practices and ethics that centre counter-carceral communication, interdependence, mutual aid, and play as strategies for reducing and responding to harm" (McDowell 50). Counter-carceral communication is the practice of building community through open communication; interdependence is the prac-

tice of collective responsibility; and mutual aid is the reciprocal sharing of resources and support. McDowell also includes play as an important strategy because it is a tangible sensory experience that embodies affective safety through outward joy and feelings of community while also relieving stress that could contribute to conflict or violence (McDowell 51-56). Instead of relying on the police or fortifying and privatising one's domain in order to create safety, affective and insurgent safety emphasises community building and care. This addresses the issue of carceral safety at its core: the public feelings and beliefs of safety that continually reinforce it.

While affective safety and carceral safety provide crucial ideas and frameworks around safety, they are limited in their accessibility. I think this is indicative of a larger issue in academia, one to which Jackson and Meiners are no exception. While they describe modes for change such as restorative justice, harm reduction, interdependence, mutual aid, and counter-carceral communication, as well as a handful of integrated examples of these strategies, they do not provide ways that individual readers can take steps to create change on the basis of the understandings they have established. This gap illustrates the necessity of transformative justice. Disability justice and transformative justice organiser and writer Mia Mingus defines transformative justice as both a political framework and a practical approach for responding to violence. She outlines its three basic principles as follows: 1) it does not rely on carceral safety, 2) it does not reinforce or perpetuate violence (like vigilantism or oppressive beliefs/behaviours), and 3) it builds modes of prevention and safety for all involved. These principles and practices are superimposed by the larger acknowledgement that violence happens within context, there are conditions that perpetuate incidents of violence such as capitalism, white supremacy, misogyny, ableism, xenophobia, trauma, poverty, and war, among too many others. Because of this, transformative justice as a practice understands that we must work to end these conditions in order to truly end state and local violence (Mingus).

Moving away from the theory of transformative justice, there are endless strategies and practices for practising transformative justice on both individual levels and community levels. Education, self-reflection, and accountability are three major ways that individuals can practise transformative justice in their daily lives. These practices include educating yourself on how to de-escalate conflict and how to talk to victims and perpetrators, reflecting on how you have created harm in your life and harmful behaviours that you embody, and how to take accountability for harms that you cause or have caused. Things as simple as taking accountability for missing a friend's birthday party, handling interpersonal conflict with a neighbour in a peaceful and generative way, stopping somebody from driving home drunk, or intervening in an escalating conflict between people is practising transformative justice—not only because these are small ways to address physical and emotional harm outside carceral systems, but because it is practise with these important strategies that can be used in bigger and much more dire situations. Accountability and generative communication are muscles that need to be worked so that when bigger conflicts and more direct violence occur, you are prepared to handle it in a non-violent way ("Everyday Practices").

The community level of transformative justice practices is equally as vital as the individual level because community accountability is a core pillar of transformative justice. When family, friends, apartment buildings, streets, and neighbourhoods can rely on each other for support and aid, it lessens harm within that community without the use of carceral safety. Building relationships in your community by attending community events, introducing yourself to the store and business owners that you frequently pass, sharing information about local police, hosting community events in which you can talk about ways that you can all support each other, and more, are all accessible ways to build trust, community, accountability, and thus safety (Dixon). A major way that community accountability can manifest in directly preventing harm is through interventions. Transformative justice interventions are a broad category of harm responses that typically include 1) supporting survivors and working with the identified perpetrator to take accountability, 2) building community members' capacities so they can participate in the intervention, and 3) building skills to prevent future violence for both perpetrators and the interventionists (Mingus).

To further aid individuals in adopting these practices, there is also a profusion of free resources made available by leading transformative justice organisations such as INCITE!, Project NIA, Audre Lorde's Safe OUTSide the System project (SOS), Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective, and Creative Interventions, to name just a few examples. For individuals, Transform-Harm.org is a resource hub for everything related to ending violence. It has articles, interviews, curriculums, and definitions that are easy and available for use. The Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective provides a one-page document explaining the basics of transformative justice for anyone who does not have the time or capacity to educate themselves in more depth ("Transformative Justice and Community Accountability"). SOS has a document full of safety tips for how to address violence as a bystander or a victim in non-violent and productive ways ("Safety Tips"), and they also have a safety planning document for individuals to fill out in order to plan for the future and to share with others so they know what the nature of the harm is, what you need, and how you want them to support you ("My Safety Plan"). On a community level, Project NIA provides a full webpage of curriculums surrounding how to teach and talk about transformative justice in a multitude of different communal spaces ("Educational Resources"). SOS provides a safe-space training agenda which is a step-by-step guide for how to talk about and take steps to create safe spaces within homes and other spaces in the community ("We Feelin' AAIT?!"). These are just some examples of the easy-to-access and language-accessible resources that these organisations make available. And in many metropolitan areas of the world, there are multiple local transformative justice organisations that individuals can get involved in for further resources, guidance, and locality-specific collective efforts for change-oriented by transformative justice.

Bringing in Pedagogy

Now that I have illustrated the need for and presence of alternatives to carceral safety, and discussed the decades-old, on-the-ground transformative justice framework, I have one last conclusion to draw, and that is the importance of the pedagogy of safety. The intersection between the academic theoretical

approaches that illustrate how safety is based on feelings and the examples of transformative justice practices providing resources for teaching reveals the importance of teaching transformative justice in schools at the secondary level. Because safety is a taught concept consisting of feelings and beliefs about the removal of threats, the root of the problem is earlier than adulthood. Transformative justice practices are making an enormous difference right now in helping individuals and communities respond to violence in ways that do not create more violence, but these practices are arriving late, once ideas of safety have already been deeply ingrained in members of society. Starting to teach transformative justice practices and ideas of safety earlier could have an enormous impact on how future generations will understand safety and ways in which we can effectively build it. There have already been numerous examples throughout history showing the power that educational spaces have. For example, the new fields of ethnic and women's studies introduced on university campuses starting around the 1970s created more space for people of colour and white women in universities and the workforce (Meiners and Quinn 132). In their article, Meiners and Quinn define educational spaces as "one of the few common, public, and collective institutions" where community is built and shaped everyday (131). And as such an important and distinctive community, a productive way transformative justice can be taught is through practice. Using the SOS safe space training in classrooms, clubs, or afterschool programs, is a way to both practice and teach transformative justice at the same time. And beyond building a community constituted of present faculty and students, educational spaces hold the possibility for growing a greater generational community. Even though the term transformative justice has not always been explicitly used, there is huge amounts of generational knowledge around how to create safety that does not rely on the state. Sociologist James Loewen has established that history taught in schools leaves out the accounts of everyday people fighting for justice and freedom (Meiners and Quinn 134-135). Teaching these histories requires a much larger national curriculum change and is a far bigger undertaking, but it is important to see the huge potential that educational spaces hold in being able to rebuild the connection between generations of transformative justice knowledge. But returning to the more manageable individual steps that can be taken to teach transformative justice, there are curriculums that have already been created and used in educational contexts. Project NIA has a webpage of compiled resources for educational spaces related to transformative justice ("Educational Resources"). There is a huge variety of resources including interactive zines, curriculums to accompany books, curriculums to accompany recorded stories, curriculums to teach untold histories, general guides on how to talk about transformative justice, workshops to start conversations about violence and alternatives to policing, curriculums to teach about the prison industrial complex, a curriculum for self-reflection regarding violence and oppression, teaching poetry as an anti-violence intervention, and more. Additionally, *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy* is full of age-specific stories and lessons from teaching social justice topics which could be useful for any teachers who have the time to read extensive academic jour-

nal articles. These are just some of the resources that I have found on the greater internet, and there are countless other stores of resources within the network of transformative justice organizations.

Conclusion

Public feelings are what fuel our current system of carceral safety. People feel fear, disgust, anger, and other negative emotions towards people who have been deemed as threats, and this has created the hegemonic idea that in order to achieve safety, all of these so-called threats must be removed. And the way that these threats can be forcibly removed from society is through carceral systems of the state. However, carceral safety is ineffective and actively creates more violence for marginalised and oppressed communities. Because of this, scholars have theorised alternative frameworks for safety that acknowledge the necessity of addressing and altering public feelings in addition to addressing and altering the system of carceral safety. The way to foster positive feelings and safety without relying on the carceral state is through transformative justice. Transformative justice is both another framework for safety and a store of responses to violence that does not foster more violence or feelings of fear, disgust, and anger. Transformative justice focuses on community, building community trust, reciprocal care, accountability, support, interventions, and more. Decades of transformative justice practices have led to stores of free resources designed to help individuals and communities practice transformative justice in a multitude of ways. One crucial mode of transformative justice that is acknowledged yet still underused, in my opinion, is that of pedagogy. Educational spaces are incredibly powerful in their ability to both practice and teach transformative justice to future generations. The intersection of academic frameworks that build new understandings of safety as well as the generational knowledge and practical applications of transformative justice, is where the importance of implementing and teaching transformative justice in educational spaces lies.

One last point I want to address is the many assumptions that my paper makes about the ability of teachers to engage with transformative justice in classrooms. Teachers are underpaid and overworked, and implementing transformative justice and related curriculums in classrooms takes time and bandwidth that many teachers may not have. On top of that, in many areas it is grounds for firing or even illegal to teach and engage with any forms of social justice material in schools. While I do believe it is vital to pursue the goals of affective safety, insurgent safety, and transformative justice, the reality of the education system and of the challenges faced by individual teachers is not something that can be ignored.

Works Cited

Dixon, Ejeris. "Building Community Safety: Practical Steps Toward Liberatory Transformation." *truthout*, 2018, www.truthout.org/articles/building-community-safety-practical-steps-toward-liberatory-transformation/.

"Educational Resources." *Project NIA*, www.project-nia.org/educational-resources. Accessed 8 February 2023.

"Everyday Practices of Transformative Justice." *Youtube*, uploaded by Barnard Center for Research on Women, 2020, www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-UE8wwXEtc.

Jackson, Jessi Lee and Erica R. Meiners. "Fear and Loathing: Public Feelings in Antiprison Work." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 1/2, 2011, pp. 270-290.

McDowell, Meghan G. "Insurgent Safety: Theorizing Alternatives to State Protection." *Theoretical Criminology*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2017, pp. 43-59.

Meiners, Erica R. and Therese Quinn. "What Struggle Teaches: The Pedagogy of Resistance and Community." *Transformations*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2016, pp. 129-138.

Mingus, Mia. "Transformative Justice: A Brief Description." *Transform Harm*, 2019, www.transformharm.org/tj_resource/transformative-justice-a-brief-description/.

"My Safety Plan" *Safe OUTside the System* (SOS), The Audre Lorde Project, Adapted from Creative Interventions' Toolkit, www.alp.org/files/Safety_Tips.doc.pdf.

"Safe OUTside the System (SOS)." *The Audre Lorde Project*, www.alp.org/programs/sos.

"Safety Tips." *Safe OUTside the System (S0S),* The Audre Lorde Project, www.alp.org/files/Safety_Tips.doc.pdf.

"Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy." Penn State University Press.

"Transformative Justice and Community Accountability." *Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective*, 2013, www.batjc.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/tj-ca-one-pager.pdf.

"We Feelin' AAIT?!" *Safe OUTSide the System (SOS)*, The Audre Lorde Project, www.alp.org/files/We_Feelin_AAIT__SNC_Safe_Space_Training_for_Homes_2017.pdf.

Misunderstood Anti-heroes in Education: A Reflection of Dyslexic Students' Emotional Well-being in Traditional Schooling

—Assia Malapanis—

In the book, *Motivating Students with Dyslexia*, Gab Elbeheri describes the importance of motivation in dyslexic students' learning ability. Its front cover displays two children as superheroes which minimizes the hardships that dyslexic individuals face, implying simultaneously that it takes a superhero to overcome or live with dyslexia and that students with dyslexia are acknowledged as superheroes by the world at large. This could not be further from the truth. The praise, respect, and adoration that the entertainment industry heaps on 'superheroes' is in direct contrast to the isolation, exclusion, and dismissals that students with dyslexia battle daily within the educational system. The journey of the dyslexic student is grounded in the oddball outcast–misunderstood and underestimated–that defines the anti-hero; they do not get to evolve to superhero status. They are misunderstood by their many teachers and peers who lack knowledge about the shortcomings and advantages of a cognitive disability. Students with dyslexia are not respected for their differences but are belittled by common labels like 'stupid' and 'lazy.' Similar to the mythological god of mischief, Loki, who lives in the shadow of his older brother Thor, forever overlooked and misjudged, dyslexic students, live in the shadows of neurotypical students. Struggling with literacy and therefore with meeting curriculum expectations set by educational institutions, these students do not meet the educational norm and are often socially outcast in the process.

In broad research about dyslexia, many academic studies discuss the cognitive functions of dyslexia: a neurobiological learning disability that results in difficulty with fluent and accurate word recognition, along with a struggle in spelling and decoding abilities which creates challenges with reading comprehension and decoding singular words ("Definition of Dyslexia"). These struggles are due to "under activation" in three regions of the brain. Located in the left hemisphere of the brain: the temporoparietal region oversees the phonological processes; the occipitotemporal region is responsible for visual word formation and recognition. Additionally, dyslexics experience low activation in the left inferior frontal gyrus–the third region. In a dyslexic brain, there is a language networking deficiency specifically between the posterior and anterior sections which are networks relating to language development. While these neuro-functional variations are invisible to the naked eye, the social implications are very apparent to both the individual affected as well as outsiders (Peterson and Pennington 293).

Studies conducted in United Kingdom universities by professors specialising in educational psychology are the dominant voices in the field of dyslexic research, specifically focusing on the emotional and social consequ-

ences that follow this learning disability in young children and teenagers. While academic articles focus on experiments used to understand the hardships of dyslexic students in schools, I have observed three deficits in knowledge. Firstly, there is a lack of research conducted in countries outside the United Kingdom. While the information published may be applicable worldwide, there is definitely a lack of representation of different education systems and cultural values that could influence how dyslexic students are viewed and view themselves. Secondly, surveys and experiments are commonly used to capture students' perspectives; however, there is a limited number of personal testimonies available to educate non-dyslexic individuals about the personal experiences and struggles dyslexic students endure within education. Finally, there is limited research about dyslexia that extends beyond examining school environments or potential ramifications dyslexic students face as they become adults: unemployment, homelessness, and mental health problems, for example. This paper argues that diagnosing a student with dyslexia is academically beneficial; however, labelling a student with dyslexia in a traditional educational environment, unlike with specialized education, can result in low self- esteem and negatively impact a dyslexic student's mental well-being. However, acknowledging the emotional impacts after a diagnosis can help support dyslexic students. Additionally, the emotional consequences that arise in early education can persist into post-secondary.

The dyslexic label allows students to understand why they face academic challenges with literacy and categorize their struggles in order to access educational resources and support. This may include extra time on tests, teaching assistance, and access to technological databases (i.e. speech to text or dictionaries). When neurodivergent students try to reach academic standards (set for neurotypical students) with inadequate support, their self-esteem drops. Students, such as myself and my little brother, believe their failure is rooted in their abilities without recognizing the systemic inequities embedded within the school systems. Hence, the dyslexia label evens the field between different learning styles by providing access to tools and resources to support dyslexic-specific learning. Labelling students as *dyslexic* reduces the use of harmful generic terms such as "stupid" and "lazy," which can negatively affect students' perception of themselves (Knight 1111). Taylor, Hume, and Welsh mention Riddick's study, conducted in 1995, which found that children diagnosed at a young age often reacted positively because a sense of relatability is created amongst diagnosed students, and their attitudes towards themselves are shifted as they can understand themselves better (Taylor et al. 193). A sense of community is vital to the mental well being of students because it facilitates feelings of acceptance and connection. Using specific terminology to diagnose students, rather than open-ended labels like "special educational needs" removes any ambiguities by providing specific information to inform and cope with their learning difference (Taylor et al. 192-199). Labelling is crucial because parents and teachers can provide the necessary support; however, expectations about the likelihood that students labelled 'dyslexic' could impact academic outcomes (Knight 1120) and confirms students' reasons for low self-esteem. Furthermore, learners diagnosed from an early age often feel relieved after a diagnosis (Knight

1111), unlike upper-year students who struggle to adjust to an official diagnosis. There was consistent resistance among participants who struggled to accept dyslexia "into the individuals' notion of self" (Armstrong and Humphery 98). The unwillingness to accept the label dyslexia is most likely a result of negative stigmatisation, a lower sense of self-esteem, and associating dyslexic struggles with a "lack of general intelligence" (Armstrong and Humphery 99). Over time, some students accepted the label and found the labelling process to help them personally but not their "public life" (Armstrong and Humphery 100). Labelling students provides insight into their cognitive differences; however, the negative associations with dyslexia create barriers toward self-acceptance such as feelings of shame and frustration.

Diagnosing an individual during adolescence is critical as educational intervention can be implemented sooner, and doing so may increase academic success and decrease mental health issues. Parents and teachers must remain positive and encourage children and teenagers' strengths to ensure individuals have positive perceptions of themselves and self-esteem to carry on with their studies successfully. While the dyslexia label is not widely accepted by those diagnosed, it opens doors to educational resources that can increase students' chances of academic success; however, without a supportive and inclusive educational environment, children's social-emotional development can be negatively impacted, leaving mental scars that persist throughout adulthood (Nalavany et al. 197). Traditional education creates an environment that alienates dyslexics; in contrast, specialised schools accept, understand, and bolster neurodivergent differences to create an inclusive and supportive environment. However, specialised education is not accessible to all families, so adapting the same alternative educational mindset in traditional education is critical to the well-being and success of students.

Based on empirical research dedicated to understanding the impacts that traditional schooling has on the emotional well-being of dyslexic students, researchers Rothman, Damnron-Rodriquez, and Shenassa, found adverse long-term outcomes (Nalavany et al. 192). Specifically, students attending "mainstream schools" (191) faced high chances of bullying and teasing from non-dyslexic peers while navigating an environment that ostracises and stigmatises dyslexic learners (Nalavany et al. 192). Dyslexic adults often felt traumatised by the negative social response they received as children, the challenge in literacy, and the lack of validation and support (Nalavany et al. 197). The neglect and trauma individuals face within traditional schools demonstrate the systemic inequities within the education system. Teachers are consistently unequipped to provide the academic support dyslexic students need to succeed and remain apathetic toward their differences, leaving students emotionally distressed and "humiliated" (Glazzard qt. in Nalavany et al. 192). This was apparent during my years in public high school, where I consistently advocated for my accommodations and witnessed a few of my classmates feel defeated by the classroom structure and lack of common knowledge about learning disabilities; as a result, they struggled greatly in school. To understand the emotional consequences and coping mechanisms of dyslexic students, the research article "Growing up with Dyslexia: Child and parent

perspectives on school struggles, self-esteem, and mental health" used "semi-structured interviews" (Wilmot et al. 43). After 25 interviews with students and parents, many respondents, from ages 7-15, commonly expressed feelings of "embarrassment" (47), "frustration" (47), exhaustion and humiliation due to fast-paced learning, "cognitive overload" (48) and reading difficulties in front of peers (Wilmot et al. 49). The build-up of stress and anxiety during school days resulted in many emotional breakdowns at home away from judgmental and misunderstanding classmates (Wilmot et al. 48). Since the classroom highlights dyslexic difficulties, students are forced to put in "extra work" to keep up with school work by spending hours in tutoring (Wilmot et al. 48). Spending hours in a learning environment to reach a standard created by individuals who fundamentally think and learn differently has lowered dyslexic students" perception of themselves and their abilities– leaving children emotionally unstable and vulnerable. Unlike mainstream schools, where dyslexic students' emotional well-being and self-esteem can be negatively impacted, specialised schools provide a positive alternative. The study Nalavany, Carawin, and Brown conducted entails adult-based surveys and interviews with 250 participants using controlled variables to measure adults' emotional well-being after finishing school (Nalavany et al. 193). The results showed a 26.4 percent higher chance of anxiety and depression among traditional school attendees than in specialist schools (Nalavany et al. 195). Students in specialised educational settings were less likely to experience emotional distress and therefore receive clinical diagnoses of mental illnesses (Nalavany et al. 196). Additionally, teachers in specialised education positively influenced students' emotional well-being. Educators are properly equipped to teach children with learning disabilities while empathising with and supporting students, creating a positive atmosphere (Nalavany et al. 196). Students are more likely to develop coping mechanisms to manage and navigate future work environments, and potential future mental health issues (Nalavany et al. 197). This is due to the confidence fostered by teachers who emphasise dyslexics' strengths. Schools that are solely devoted to teaching students with learning disabilities normalise alternative learning and enable students to learn effectively during school hours without risking their mental health.

During their elementary and secondary school years, students must be mentally secure because early negative experiences can trigger anxiety in post-secondary students, ultimately affecting their studies. Amanda T. Abbott-Jones mentions a theory developed by Hadwin in 2005 who claims anxiety negatively influences academic performance by disrupting three regions of the brain: working memory, central executive, and the phonological loop (Abbott-Jones 253). Specifically, the working memory holds information temporarily in the short-term memory; the central executive processes linguistic and perceptual information, which involves receiving and retrieving information presented in lectures; the Phonological loop (which is a part of the working memory) holds and translates articulatory and visual information: for example, it turns written work into speech (Abbott-Jones 252-253). In the dyslexic brain, individuals face challenges in three areas as their brains struggle to process information at a slower rate, so when anxiety is thrown into the mix, these challenges are amplified, resulting in frequent emotional breakdowns, dissociation

during lectures and feeling paralyzed by school work (Abbott-Jones 255). Anxiety in dyslexic students is a common tendency across academic situations (examinations, deadlines, lectures, etc.) rather than triggered by temporary situations; moreover, Ohman theorised that consistent activation of anxiety around academic competence and performance is most likely rooted in negative learning experiences during elementary school (Abbott-Jones 249-252). I've found that the management of anxiety is rooted in encouragement and educational resources (Grammarly) that counteract specific cognitive challenges. My lived experience is that the building of my self-esteem and confidence in high school has minimised my emotional breakdowns in university. However, learning in an environment that works against my dyslexia leaves an underlying source of anxiety across all disciplines and interferes with the intake, transfer, and retrieval of information when assignments and exams build up, leaving me feeling overwhelmed and panicky. The coping mechanisms I use (meditating and talking through assignments) to minimise my anxiety are only effective when my learning tools and accommodations are available to me; however, universities continue to create educational barriers for myself and others, leaving students emotionally vulnerable.

The Centre for Accessibility at the University of British Columbia (UBC) has access and equity policies, but these policies, combined with inadequate support, have left students emotionally distressed. The Centre provides accommodation based on equitability rather than equality. They supply educational programs that are easily distributable rather than providing up-to-date accessible, and specialised resources to ensure equal opportunities for success. With students' needs being ignored and misunderstood, frustration, stress, and anxieties arise in students whose accommodations have been met primarily with dismissive and ignorant behaviour. These experiences can often bring up negative feelings students haven't experienced since early years in traditional education. The frustrating situations expressed by students on Reddit are widespread and emotionally draining for those involved. The Centre for Accessibility is contributing to the emotional distress of students which is impacting their academic aspirations (*Letter: UBC's Centre for Accessibility and its outdated policies fail students*). Perhaps updating policies and educating advisers about alternative learning would benefit the mental well-being of students, and create a more inclusive educational environment.

The judgement, ignorance, and exclusion dyslexic students face in traditional education are apparent from elementary to post-secondary. From uniformed teachers to inaccessible resources, dyslexic students leave school frustrated and embarrassed. Conversely, teachers in specialised education are adequately trained to support alternative learners and, in turn, increase a student's self-esteem and overall mental well-being. While a diagnosis is critical to educational intervention, it is challenging for individuals to accept and label their differences later in life. Feelings of anxiety do not disappear as students enter university, rather, an intensification of dyslexic challenges occurs, negatively affecting their studies. While labels are beneficial in education and meeting a dyslexic student's needs, mainstream education can negatively affect a student's mental well-being, unlike specialised education which can be post-secondary studies. Education is

the dominant influence on the self-esteem of dyslexic individuals; however, diagnoses and specialised education are not widely accessible. In light of these educational barriers dyslexic students face, does the government have a responsibility to implement early testing and specialised intervention to ensure all neurodivergent students are given the same opportunity as other students?

Works Cited

Abbott-Jones, Amanda T. *Dyslexia in Higher Education: Anxiety and Coping Skills* Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Armstrong, David, and Neil Humphrey. "RESEARCH SECTION: Reactions to diagnosis of dyslexia among students entering further education: development of the 'resistance-accommodation' model." *British Journal of Special Education*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2009, pp. 66-127.

"Definition of Dyslexia." *International Dyslexia Association*, https://dyslexiaida.org/definition-of-dyslexia/.

Knight, Cathryn. "The impact of the dyslexia label on academic outlook and aspirations: An analysis using propensity score matching." *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 91, no. 4, 2021, pp. 1110-1126. *The British Psychological Society.*

"Letter: UBC's Centre for Accessibility and its Outdated Policies Fail Students : r/UBC." Reddit, 29 August 2021, www.reddit.com/r/UBC/comments/pe2rmd/letter_ubcs_centre_for_accessibility_and_its/. Accessed 19 March 2023.

Nalavany, Blace Arthur, et al. "Considering the role of traditional and specialist schools: do school experiences impact the emotional well-being and self-esteem of adults with dyslexia?" *British Journal of Special Education*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2011, pp. 158-216.

Peterson, Robin L., and Bruce F. Pennington. "Developmental Dyslexia." *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2015, pp. 283-307. *Annual Reviews.*

Taylor, Laura Marie, et al. "Labelling and self-esteem: the impact of using specific vs. generic labels." *An International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2010, pp. 191-202.

Wilmot, Adrienne, et al. "Growing up with dyslexia: Child and parent perspectives on school struggles, self-esteem, and mental health." *Dyslexia: An International Journal of Research and Practice*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2023, pp. 40-54. *Wiley Online Library*.

INDVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Analysis of *Danganronpa's* Core Message in Dialogue with its Narrative, Development, and Marketing

— Silis Hui —

What is *Danganronpa*?

Danganronpa is a multimedia franchise with its roots in the visual novel game released in Japan in 2010, known now under the English title *Danganronpa: Trigger Happy Havoc*. The premise of this game and its two successors appears confounding at first: fifteen to sixteen high school students are trapped in a school and forced to play a rule-laden game of kill or be killed. Anyone who can discreetly murder a classmate is rewarded with their freedom at the cost of everyone else's lives, giving their peers a strong motive to uncover the culprit, even when catching them will result in the culprit's (read: former friend's) execution.

Danganronpa markets itself as an excitingly sadistic piece of media; however, beneath the dark narrative and bouts of inaccurate popular psychology is a surprisingly profound and hopeful commentary on the value of human life. This commentary is what I take to be the true intent of *Danganronpa*'s scenario writer Kazutaka Kodaka, the author behind the *Danganronpa* series' storylines. Through analyzing my game of choice, *Danganronpa V3: Killing Harmony*, alongside its corresponding art/develop- ment commentary book, I will outline the way *Danganronpa*'s unique development process, design philosophy, and layered meanings come into being as the games of *Danganronpa*.

Author, reader, and translator

In my search for *Danganronpa*'s 'true meaning,' I aim to subvert Roland Barthes's argument for the 'death of the author' as well as Michel Foucault's understanding of the evolution of the contemporary author. Barthes's "Death of the Author" asserts that the reader captains the ship built by the so-called author, who is deemed irrelevant (147). Meanwhile, Foucault's "author function" is the concept used to categorize and distribute literary work. This limits the reach of the work in itself and in the hands of the reader, while diffusing the concept of an author as a self (208). In this understanding of authorship, the author is an involvement in the produced text and a real individual, whereas the reader is the way by which these texts gain meaning and significance.

My aim in viewing *Danganronpa* in relation to these theories of authorship is to act in the capacity of a third party. I will approach the work as something other than a reader and instead liken my search to that which is done in the field of translation; to be a translator whose job is to deliver meaning, or an intermediary between author and reader seeking and delivering what I deem as truth while remaining bound by the human limits and fallacies of knowledge. Dylan Reilly argues in a case study of the first *Danganronpa* game's localizations that there is a "desire in translation for so-called 'true meaning,'" and "few consumers of Japanese popular media would argue that input from the writers of an origi-

nal text could detract from that 'true meaning,'" affirming the need to involve the author of a work in discussions of its "true meaning" (22).

It may be that the scenario writer, Kodaka, intended for his work to be "translated" in this manner. *Danganronpa V3*'s producer, Yoshinori Terasawa, stated in an interview that "Kodaka might have the answer to [the truth of *Danganronpa V3*'s ending], but I don't think it's something I really need to know...If you need an answer, I'd say what you personally think is what's correct" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 341). Notably, Kodaka once made a tweet in reference to the ending of *Danganronpa V3*, hinting at a section which gains stark relevance on a second playthrough of the game and implicates certain theories surrounding the story as "truer" than others—specifically that a character was lying about the way the sixteen students came to enter the killing game. There may be a definitive answer that exists in Kodaka's narrative, but that answer is not necessarily needed by the consumers of his work. In that sense, Barthes, Foucault, Terasawa, and I are in accord. Where I differ is in the way I approach this gulf between author and reader, and the position from which I do so, not just as a translator in search of definition, but also as a human.

In my search for an 'ultimate meaning,' I embrace human limits of knowledge, differing from the aforementioned critics who recognize it in order to scorn it. Even amidst these limits, I seek a 'truth' supplemented by clues, as one will do when curious. I will be further demonstrating my search on the *Danganronpa* series, particularly within *Danganronpa V3*. I will unravel it according to my personal translation of the commentary on people's perceived valuation of human life.

Danganronpa in Development: INTRIGUE

Danganronpa's sadistic theming is a foil for its author, Kodaka's, ultimate intent: to make hopeful commentary on the value of human life. Often, this intent behind *Danganronpa* goes unacknowledged, if not ignored by the reader and audience. Its dystopian elements and flashy imagery based around "psycho-"prefixed design keywords (i.e., "psycho-pop," "psycho-tropical," "psycho-cool") garner much more attention (Kawabara qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 346). Viewing *Danganronpa* from a distance, it is understandable; these form the basis of the games' marketing and what makes them stand out in the visual novel market.

Interestingly, not even *Danganronpa V3*'s own development team understood the exact meaning of "psycho-cool." As design team member, Satoshi Kawabara stated in an interview:

> We all tried to decipher 'Psycho-cool' on our own, and then we would meet regularly to discuss how it would reflect in our designs. 'Psycho-cool' is a pseudo-term after all, so depending on the person, their definition would also differ. I think the people in each department ended up coming away with their own, different interpretations of what it means. (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 346)

Kawabara's statements reveal that the artwork and design directions that aided *Danganronpa* in its success were built around universally confounding keywords, leading to diverse dir-

ections in development. Since design keywords should unite the development team's perception of how the product will appear, keywords that need to be discussed and deciphered, such as the ones used for the *Danganronpa* games, seem counterproductive from a production standpoint. From a design standpoint, inconvenient as it may be, it may also be equally beneficial, as each team member contributes and coordinates unique ideas formed around a vague idea of something similar. *Danganronpa*'s production is fraught with such odd decisions, varying from innovative to inefficient, to both at once.

In one case brought up in an interview, Kawabara recalled suddenly being "asked to make the colours more like the first and second game right at the end of development, so along came a request to 'change the colour of the staircases into something weird'" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 349). Tatsuya Marutani, another design team member, detailed the amount of work involved in such a late decision, saying "we had to redraw all the backgrounds, cutscene illustrations, and the comics for the Closing Argument [a game mechanic featuring a comic book style]....We had to adjust the schedule and budget thanks to that, so it was quite a pain." Despite that, the suggestion was not dismissed; rather, as Kawabara states, "we wanted to make it happen if it was possible" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 343).

The pride of the developers, trust in the team, and the success of the first *Danganronpa* game developed under the same principles led to a cementing of said principles, where the games' developers humour strange or impractical suggestions, often bringing them to life regardless of the costs. That may mean drawing unique animated sprites for use in a minigame too short to justify the work, or, at the scenario writer Kodaka's behest, requesting extra voice lines from voice actors busy recording for the animated series featuring the characters from the previous two games. Kodaka himself says he prefers not to think of how a character might come across to the audience in development, something that seems crucial to making popular characters. His one exception was the foulmouthed character Miu Iruma, whom Kodaka states was written "with the intent to follow the idea of 'let's go for last place in the popularity polls!'" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 339). This almost backward mode of thinking is what gives rise to much of the innovative uniqueness found in *Danganronpa*.

Rebecca Crawford and Yuanyuan Chen quote Kodaka's concerns over innovation in the visual novel game genre to which the *Danganronpa* series belongs: "Kodaka fears that if they do not change—to include things like more gameplay—they will also be fated to be forgotten and not maintain popularity. Thus, visual novels require more flexibility to their form if they are to survive as a video game genre" (2). Visual novels like the *Danganronpa* series need to innovate to stay relevant; otherwise, their audience remains limited and their reach, minimal. With a development team so earnest to create and share their work, it seems only natural that they built an element of intrigue around their ultimate intent. This intrigue takes the form of exciting, difficult themes such as death and dystopia, included for marketing's sake, while the ultimate intent is the simple underlying theme of the significance and value of human life.

Danganronpa is not the only franchise to make use of gruesome stories to draw atten-

tion. Zeqing Liu's paper on dystopian themes in Japanese animated media makes reference to the "aesthetics of violence," or "the exploitation of the formality of gunplay, martial arts action, killings or other violent scenes, and the promotion of the formality to a beautiful and dazzling level; in some cases, directors deliberately use violent and gory scenes or scenarios to create an exciting and unpleasant effect" (105). In a similar vein, Kodaka has said "There have been more works in the death game genre coming out after we made *Danganronpa*. Of course, death games are a provoking subject matter, so it's easy for said projects to be approved, but a lot of them might not be committed to their ending, or just end up being an excuse to murder a bunch of characters" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 340). There is, then, an apparent draw to a story which features death and destruction, though the way Kodaka puts his critique of other death game-centric media shows that his interest lies not in the sadism of the concept, but in the thematic opportunities that arise when writing them.

The importance is not in the characters dying, but in why they die. It hardly matters that the story ends if there is no meaning to the ending. On a lighter note, what point is there in writing a death game without a little lighthearted absurdity along the way? Reilly states, "the juxtaposition of flashy and stylish elements alongside the dark and gruesome murder mystery plot...a mixture of comedy, high-speed dialogue, and vague dread is difficult to take in all at once" (23). Reilly comments on the aesthetics of *Danganronpa* as being unsettling, highlighting the dark themes set against the comedy and flashiness of the game. The sheer absurdity of the death game *Danganronpa* combined with the self-deprecating self-awareness in its dialogue brings attention to the mask it wears. This is not a mask meant to hide identity, but to generate intrigue so that people come closer, close enough to see the genuine face beneath, and for that real face to share an earnest message. This dynamic between *Danganronpa*'s marketed intrigue and its ultimate intent reflects an interesting creative process. Here the two ideas serve specific purposes as they coexist in one narrative, producing a layered work where the message the author intends to impart is engulfed in a marketable wrapper such that many extraneous yet exciting elements exist around it, elements which serve not to further the point, but to facilitate entry into it. Therefore, the characters die for a reason, and the story ends with meaning.

As Liu states, media depicting dystopian worlds such as *Danganronpa* have "two different directions of ending." They may be tragic endings which highlight the powerlessness of the protagonists, or happy endings such as *Danganronpa*'s where the protagonists are able to break free of their dystopia (106). Successful protagonists exhibit what Liu calls "sparkles of humanity," the strength within a human allowing them to shine as a beacon to others. As role models to their in-universe friends and to the viewers outside of their universe, characters in fictional media can, as Liu says, "inspire viewers" through their actions (106). However, *Danganronpa*'s message is not so extreme as one of how to fight the apocalypse, but rather a simple message about self-esteem in a world focused on talent and worth, i.e., a world obsessed with commodities.

Danganronpa in Authorship: INTENT

What I take to be *Danganronpa*'s true meaning is easily summarized as commentary on the value of human life. More specifically, *Danganronpa* takes a deep dive into what makes a life valuable and brings attention to the commodification of human life. Of course, there is a literal trade of lives done within the setting of the killing game, especially seen in the character Kokichi Oma's plans, in which he repeatedly bends his strict moral code of not killing to orchestrate deaths, trading lives off for his attempted internal and structural destruction of the death game in which they are confined. By trading the lives of his friends and, ultimately, his own life as well, he tries to destroy something that is not only threatening the remaining lives confined within it, but also something that threatens to take more lives if not stopped in its tracks, as is discovered in the ending of *Danganronpa V3*. In these actions, he assigns more value to his goals than he assigns to his own life, alongside the lives of others.

These themes of human commodification are also explored with another key element of the *Danganronpa* series: 'Ultimate Talents,' titles assigned to each character which marks them as exceptional compared to other high school student players. The labels attached to a human which may modify their perceived value are taken to an extreme with the 'Ultimate Talents,' literally 'Super High School Level' (talent at a level considered extreme for a high schooler) in the original Japanese, indicating the target of the game's message: high school years, either as a memory or as the present life of the reader. Considering Japanese high school admission is barred by entrance examinations, this message is particularly relevant to Japanese high schoolers, who are facing their first tests of 'talent' in the real world as they take examinations to apply to schools of varying prestige and status. Returning to 'Ultimate Talents,' each *Danganronpa* game features at least one character who strays from the pattern, being comparatively average and feeling inferior to their classmates. However, the climax of each game has these characters come to terms with their lack of so-called 'talent,' having realized that they are still a life, still alive, and even when they doubt their very existence in the world, they are still worth something.

Danganronpa V3 in particular produces a metacommentary on its own genre by investigating the commodification of lives as sources of entertainment. The characters of *Danganronpa V3* stand out against the other characters of the series, as they are not only talentless the way previous protagonists in *Danganronpa* were. In the ending, they are revealed to actually be fictitious identities applied to brainwashed ordinary humans, manufactured by a company whose goal is to use these identities to produce entertainment by placing them in a game of mutual killing to be broadcast around the world—an extreme taken to an extreme, yet somehow bringing their alleged world even closer to ours in that they become the stuff of science fiction rather than fantasy. Still, the characters assert their existence, meaning, and value as human beings despite everything they are told, resisting commodification even as they are reduced to nothing but lies.

Parallel to this, the game's ending is structured on many levels so that the player recognizes simultaneously the fictional nature of the characters and the impact that characters have had on them despite being fictional. In Kodaka's own words, "The player

is hit with the same 'everything in this series was fictional all along.' However, there's a reality, a truth in the experiences they've had, and emotions they've felt up to this point in these games" (qtd. in Matsumaru and Kushida 341). Even lies have meaning. So even if every revelation made in this paper was proven somehow to be mere lies, the act and experience of reading and writing it still holds significance. Even if people feel like they are nothingness, are powerless, or the truth of their existence is a lie, they still mean something. And so, *Danganronpa*'s true intent is to serve as a message to those attempting to commodify themselves or who are being commodified: that even before they have so-called value, they have meaning, they are human, alive, and they matter.

Works Cited

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Image, Music, Text*, translated by Stephen Heath, Hill and Wang, 1977, pp. 142-148.

Crawford, Rebecca, and Yuanyuan Chen. "From Hypertext to Hyperdimension Neptunia: The Future of VR Visual Novels." *2017 23rd International Conference on Virtual System & Multimedia (VSMM)*, 2017 pp. 1-7.

Danganronpa V3: Killing Harmony. Version 1.01 for Windows PC, Spike Chunsoft Co., Ltd. 2017.

Foucault, Michel. "What Is an Author?" *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, edited by James D. Faubion, translated by Robert Hurley et al., New Press, 1998, pp. 205-222. *Vol. 2 of Essential Works of Foucault*, 1954-1984.

Kazutaka kodaka/小高和剛 [@kazkodaka]. "V3クリアした人も増えてますね。 / おまけモードもいいですけど、プロローグをもう一度やり直したりすると、最初とはまた違ったトコに気付いて面白いと思います！色々見つけてください！" Twitter. 16 Jan. 2017, 4:23 p.m. twitter.com/kazkodaka/status/821150880397262848

Liu, Zeqing. "Extreme Conceptions in Dystopian Japanese Animation." *Academic Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*, vol 5, issue 8, 2022 pp. 104-107.

Matsumaru, Akiko, and Kushida, Riko. *Nyū Danganronpa V3 Minna no Koroshiai Shin Gakki Chō Kōkō-Kyū no Kōshiki Settei Shiryōshū [Danganronpa V3: Killing Harmony Ultimate Official Design Works Art Book]*, edited by Saeko Ogawa. Translated by Silis Hui, KADOKAWA Game Linkage Inc., 2022.

Reilly, Dylan. "Transcreation: Intersections of Culture and Commerce in Japanese Translation and Localization." *University of Pittsburgh*, 2016 pp. 14-24.

The Canadian Dream: Promised versus Lived Experiences of International Students in Canada

— Indra Sharma —

The number of international students pursuing post-secondary education in Canada has steadily increased, from just above 100,000 in 2000, to 621,600 in 2021 (Crossman et al.). These students are attracted to Canada for various reasons: better work opportunities, higher salaries, and the alluring prospect of permanent residency after their education. Prior to gaining a permanent work permit, Canada's Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWP) is a temporary worker program that allows international students to stay and work in Canada after graduation. In return, Canada's labour market receives a large boost in its labour force, in addition to the massive tuition fees paid by international students to attend Canadian universities. To put a number on it, international students contribute more than $21 billion to the Canadian economy annually (Thanthong-Knight).

However, these promised benefits for choosing Canada as 'the place' to pursue their higher education do not conform to what is expected by international students based on what is advertised to them. This paper will focus on the financial, social and emotional issues faced by international students, primarily South and East Asian students after they immigrate to Canada to pursue their higher education after being enticed by false promises; specifically, in the case of India, students are recruited by agents with financial ties to colleges in Canada. These issues lead to an increasing amount of concern about the Canadian government's lack of consideration when it comes to the well-being of international students. This essay will primarily utilize qualitative data from studies conducted for journals such as *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology* as well as articles from news agencies like the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). Reports by government agencies like Statistics Canada and the Canadian Ministry of Colleges and Universities will serve as grounded sources of information that will support this admittedly subjective essay topic. The majority of existing news and journal articles outline the Canadian government's push for recruiting more international students, and they additionally outline the laws created to recruit international students as well as showcase the upward trend of international students arriving in Canada (Trilokekar and Masri). I aim to explore the deeper reasons behind this trend and a lack of adherence to policies set by the Canadian government as well as the resulting lived experience of international students, with my primary reference being the documentary *Sold a Lie* from *The Fifth Estate* on CBC.

Centuries of colonization and exploitation faced by the Global East have created a sense of awe in the minds of people living outside North America and Europe. The idea of leading a life adhering to Western norms, values, and ideals is glorified, and Western education is the obvious precondition for living

that life. Students aspiring to study abroad share these aspirations with their families, and the families begin to cut corners, work more, and sell property to earn enough so their children can live the 'Canadian Dream,' with full faith that this investment will not only earn them their money back, but the inevitable success of their children will transform the quality of their lives, not only monetarily, but societally as a whole. Unfortunately, they eventually discover that the assumed inevi-table success of their children is incredibly uncertain after they have already sent their children abroad.

The State of Inequality in India report highlights the average monthly salaries of workers in July to September of 2019. Converted to Canadian dollars, the monthly wages amounted to $230.69 for rural males, $200.48 for rural females, $318.27 for urban males and $249.24 for urban females (Debroy). Putting this into perspective, the average monthly salary of a Canadian worker during the same time period was around $5,588.38, and the average tuition fee for international students in Canada in 2019/2020 was $29,714 (*Statistics Canada*). Using this information, it would take the average rural Indian household with two working members, one male and one female, almost six years of working without any time off to pay one year of tuition at a Canadian university. This is assuming that the families spend no income on themselves, putting their entire wage toward tuition, and does not account for any additional costs like visa application fees, travel, food, housing, etc.

The documentary, *Sold a Lie*, directed by Nazim Baksh and written by Mark Kelley, explores the reality of the students and their families that support them. It begins by telling the audience the story of Gurdeep Singh, a farmer in rural Punjab, a state in northern India. As a farmer, his days consisted of backbreaking manual labour in the fields, and he dreamt of giving his only daughter, Dilpreet, a better life than the one he was leading. He sold two trucks, valued at 28,000 CAD to send Dilpreet to study in Canada. Ideally, Indian families would be making these sacrifices to send their children to reputable universities and colleges which would provide their children with a world-class education and allow them to leave with valuable degrees, however, reality often strays from this ideal outcome. In reality, Dilpreet, unfortunately, met with corrupt recruiters, who largely guided her efforts as an international student applying to colleges abroad. She attempted to name some well-known colleges, but the recruiter dismissed her suggestions and suggested she apply to a 'reputable' school that strangely, she had not heard of before. Alpha College is a private, for-profit career college near Toronto, partnered with St. Lawrence College, a public institute with three campuses across Ontario.

A public-private college partnership entails the public college providing its curriculum to the private career college, with the public college retaining a part of the fees paid by each international student enrolled in the program at the private college, while the private college hires instructors to teach the curriculum and handles operations at the partnership campus. A few examples of public-private college partnerships are Cambrian College at Hanson College, Niagara College at Toronto School of Management, and Georgian College at ILAC, where the former is the public institution and the latter is its private counterpart. The students who graduate from these private colleges

receive credentials issued by the public partner. These partnerships are beneficial to public colleges in smaller communities as international students prefer to study in larger cities. If their private partners have campuses in these large urban centres, it allows the public college to have an additional source of revenue due to the increased enrolment of international stud-ents (*Auditor General* 3). In Ontario, public colleges experienced a 15% decline in domestic enrolment between 2012/2013 and 2020/2021, but a 342% growth in international enrolment, with 62% coming from India in 2020/2021. International fees repre-sented 68% of the public college's tuition fee revenue, with the colleges receiving $1.7 billion as tuition from international students in 2020/2021, even though international students represented only 30% of total student enrolment (1). This sum also exceeds the $1.6 billion total funding received by these colleges from the provincial government. For many of these public colleges, the only thing preventing them from incurring an annual financial deficit was the revenue received from international students via the public-private partnership, with St. Lawrence College, the public partner of Alpha College, being one such college.

Dilpreet followed the instructions of the recruiter, who boasted prior success with students they had sent to Canada who had built incredibly successful careers. However, after reaching Canada, she realized her post-secondary experience was not going to be what she had hoped. Dilpreet and her family, like many other hopeful families in rural India, had fallen into a trap. To quote her, "Before coming here, it was kind of, in my mind, 'Canada is so beautiful. I'm going to come here, just earn well, live a life, have fun at the weekends,' like we saw in the movies, but when I came here it was different, it was completely different" (*Sold a Lie*). Bringing international students to Canada has become a lucrative business for both countries; with Canada benefitting from the high tuition fees paid by international students and India benefitting from the rise of a new industry devoted to college recruitment. English language schools, college advisors, immigration consultants, and loan lenders in India are able to take advantage of the increasing desire to study abroad and earn handsome sums of money from these hopeful students and their families. However, these college recruitment businesses received money from another source too: the public colleges they convinced these students to attend. The 2021 *Auditor General*'s report found that Ontario public colleges had paid over $114 million to international recruitment agencies even though most of these colleges have no established formal policy to overlook these recruitment agencies, which is an extreme cause for concern since these colleges enroll large percentages of students via recruiters, with Alpha College recruiting 100% of its international students through recruiters (*Auditor General* 33). Out of one hundred recruitment agencies contracted by four such public colleges, seven agencies made false claims like ensuring success in visa attainment, promising high scores on the International English Language Testing System exam and confirming ease in finding employment after graduation (3).

Dilpreet was one of many students who paid the price for listening to the lies told by these unmonitored recruitment agencies. Investigating the corrupt activities of these agencies, *The Fifth Estate* accessed documents

which showed the enrolment statistics of Alpha College; the college had gone from enrolling around 2,000 students prior to the pandemic to 4,900 students, all while its two-storey building on the outskirts of Toronto only had a capacity of 420 individuals. Additionally, the college far exceeded the 2-to-1 international-to-domestic ratio mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges, with a ratio of 4.5-to-1 (Baksh et al.). This culminated in hundreds of international students in Toronto, who had paid upwards of $15,000, being told that their enrolment to Alpha College had been suspended and deferred to a later time, jeopardising their study permits, while students who were still in India and had paid the fees were told that they would not be receiving a letter of enrollment (Brown and Manucdoc). The students protested for several weeks outside the Alpha College building until the college rescinded its decision and let the students enroll and resume their online classes. However, this gives rise to an important question: while the Canadian government acknowledges the need for the enrolment of international students in various colleges, does the government value them?

Through government policies like *Building on Success*, also called the International Education Strategy for the years 2019-2024, the Canadian government recognises international students as ideal immigrants required to address the shortage of skilled labour in Canada as well as the aging population and declining birth rates in the nation. The three key objectives of the International Education Strategy are to encourage Canadian students to gain new skills by working abroad in global markets, todiversify the countries of origin for inter-national students in Canada, and to increase support for Canadian educational institutes to allow them to explore new opportunities abroad (Global Affairs Canada 7). While the strategy addresses the country's need for international students and promotes their immigration to Canada, it almost completely ignores that this immigration is often due to false promises and misleading prospects fed to international students by those luring them into Canada. Every other party in the study-abroad craze wins except for the student, from the illicit recruiters to the colleges in public-private partnerships, to the Canadian government. This disregard for humanity, exhibited through lack of action against malpractice, shows that to the government, international students are just numbers that feed the economy rather than people who want to build real lives for themselves in Canada.

Student visa acquisition has always been a slow process in Canada. Despite the establishment of the Student Direct Stream, which was supposed to allow students who submit applications electronically to access faster visa processing times, there is still an immense backlog of student visas that have not been processed (Tandon). The dream is straightforward: students land in Canada on a student visa in hopes of acquiring their post-graduate work permit which allows them to start logging the employment hours required to apply for permanent residency and eventually, Canadian citizenship. Receiving a student visa was like a blessing to international students and their families, but for some, it ends up being a curse. Joginder Singh Gill from Moga, Punjab was one such man, to which the latter applies. He was delighted to send his son Lovepreet to study at Centennial College in Brampton, Ontario. The delight turned into despair when Lovepreet suicided in 2021. In fact, local fune-

ral homes in Brampton handle about four to five international student deaths a month (Bascaramurty et al.). Asian international students have reported dealing with severe racial micro-aggressions; being excluded and avoided, ridiculed for their accents, having their values disregarded and having their intelligence ascribed to racial stereotypes among others (Houshmand, Spanierman and Tafarodi). Racism in addition to the struggles outlined earlier of false promises and adverse experiences, as well as financial struggle, all culminate to create a hellish experience for international students that drives them to emotional distress, and potentially, suicide.

Canadian for-profit universities pay recruiters in India to lure students to Canada with false promises of success that are worth spending their families' entire life savings on, only for them to arrive in a country that has no space for them, physically, economically, culturally, or socially. This heartbreaking, vicious cycle should have been acknowledged and halted by the Canadian government by now. Prime Minister Trudeau was asked about his plan to address the high tuition costs faced by international students at a town-hall meeting at Dalhousie University in February 2023. Trudeau's response to this crisis? There was no plan. He said the government was focused on making education affordable for all Canadians, for people who presumably grew up in Canada or will contribute to the country for years, and that international students are "gonna have to be the ones who can pay for it." Dilpreet's father paid for it with his trucks, and Joginder Singh Gill paid with his son's life. Trudeau's response makes one think: what exactly is 'it'? I believe that 'it' is the 'Canadian Dream', that all international students pay for, but many never get to live.

Works Cited

Baksh, Nazim, et al. "International Students Enticed to Canada on Dubious Promises of Jobs and Immigration." *CBC News*, 21 Oct. 2022, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/international-students-canada-immigration-ontario-1.6614238.

Bascaramurty, Dakshana et al. "Canada's International Student Recruiting Machine is Broken." *The Globe and Mail*, 4 Nov. 2021, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-india-canada-international-student-recruitment.

Brown, Desmond and Manucdoc, Dale. "Hundreds of international students in limbo after Scarborough, Ontario college suspends spring enrolment." *CBC News*, 22 May 2022, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/international-students-alpha-college-of-business-and-technology-scarborough-1.6462737.

Crossman, Eden, et al. "International Students as a Source of Labour Supply: A Summary of Recent Trends." *Statistics Canada*, Government of Canada, 2022, www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2022003/article/00001-eng.htm.

Debroy, Bibek. *State of Inequality in India* Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, 18 May 2022, https://competitiveness.in/report-on-state-of-inequality-in-india/

Employment, average hourly and weekly earnings (including overtime), and average weekly hours for the industrial aggregate excluding unclassified businesses, monthly, seasonally adjusted. Statistics Canada, 23 Feb. 2023, doi.org/10.25318/1410022201-eng.

Global Affairs Canada. *Building on Success: International Education Strategy 2019-2024*, 2019, www.international.gc.ca/education/assets/pdfs/ies-sei/Building-on-Success-International-Education-Strategy-2019-2024.pdf.

Houshmand, Sara, Lisa B. Spanierman, and Romin W. Tafarodi. "Excluded and Avoided: Racial Microaggressions Targeting Asian International Students in Canada." *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2014, pp. 377-388.

Office of the Auditor General of Ontario. *Value-for-Money Audit: Public Colleges Oversight*, 2021.

Sold a Lie. Directed by Nazim Baksh, written by Mark Kelley. Fifth Estate, 2022. *CBC Player.*

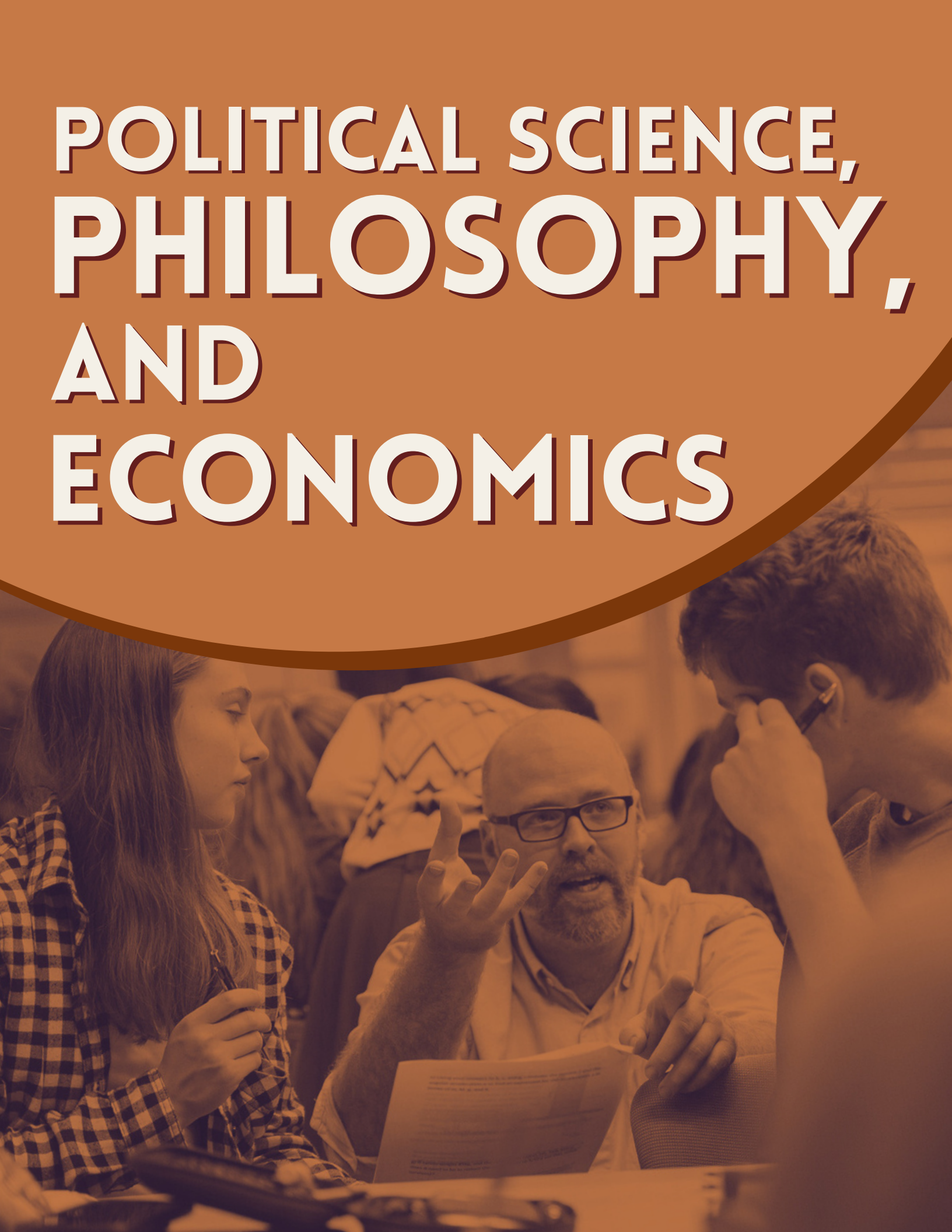
Tandon, Riya. "Canada Visa Delay? Don't lose hope, it's almost there!" *The Economic Times*, 27 Sep. 2022, economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/migrate/canada-visa-delay-dont-lose-hope-its-almost-there/articleshow/94478570.cms.

Thanthong-Knight, Randy. "Foreign students accuse Canada of exploiting them for 'cheap labour.'" *Financial Post*, 1 Nov. 2022, www.financialpost.com/fp-work/foreign-students-accuse-canada-exploiting-cheap-labour

Trilokekar, Rupa Desai and Masri, Amira "'International Students Are…Golden': Canada's Changing Policy Contexts, Approaches and National Peculiarities in Attracting International Students as Future Immigrants." *Outward and Upward Mobilities*, edited by Roopa Desai Trilokekar and Amira El Masri University of Toronto Press, 2019.

Tuition fees for degree programs, 2019/2020. Statistics Canada, 4 Sep. 2019, www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190904/dq190904b-eng.htm.

POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, AND ECONOMICS



Then and Now: Insight into the Relationship between Vancouver's Black Community and the City of Vancouver

— Anna Kouao —

In the early 20th century, Hogan's Alley was Vancouver's only predominately Black neighbourhood. This was a portion of the city where minority populations such as the Black, Chinese, and Indigenous communities could congregate and live relatively safely ("Northeast False Creek Plan"). Around the 1960s and 1970s, however, due to the City of Vancouver's strategic and self-beneficial infrastructural planning, this historic portion of the city was destroyed, and minority populations were forcibly displaced. Detrimental urban redevelopment projects such as those that took place in Hogan's Alley, have created a difficult relationship between the City of Vancouver and its Black community.

In this essay, I will first discuss the City of Vancouver's history of oppression against the Black population; then, I will examine how the Northeast False Creek Plan is a pinnacle point in the mending of relations between the City and the Black population; finally, I will argue that recent collaboration between the Hogan's Alley Society and the City of Vancouver on urban development projects is evidence of improvement in the relationship between the City and minority populations.

In his retro-speculative verse published in 2005, Wade Compton argues that "today, the struggle for the memory of Hogan's Alley feels like just that—a struggle, a fight" (111). Further, in Giuseppe Tolfo's 2021 journal article, he claims that "the promise of reconciliation manifests as an extension of the City of Vancouver's long-standing commitment to livability—a commitment that has historically prioritized the interest of experience-seeking urbanites over those of marginalized groups" (165). Here, Tolfo accuses the City of Vancouver of labelling projects as efforts to create peace with marginalized people, while simultaneously undermining all goals of reconciliation by shaping these projects to benefit the upper class, and by extension the City of Vancouver itself.

Compton's perspective of a perpetual struggle towards remembering Hogan's Alley does not incorporate more recent collaboration between Vancouver's Black community and the City of Vancouver. In his attempt to prove that minimal to no progress has been made between the City of Vancouver and marginalized communities, Tolfo fails to address these same advancements made between the City of Vancouver and the Black population, in False Creek and in Hogan's Alley. In their works, both scholars express the general consensus agreed upon among most Vancouver minorities: the City of Vancouver has a "long-standing" tendency of zoning and building infrastructure in preference of "affluent groups" (Wright). As the City of Vancouver states: "[T]he future of the City of Reconciliation (Vancouver) is to begin strengthening relations through a reconciliation lens with other cultural communities" ("Northeast False Creek Plan").

Through the perspective of race and ethni-

city studies, I argue that the City of Vancouver and the Black population have a history of working against each other, but that this historically difficult relationship is being mended today through collaborative urban development projects in Hogan's Alley and False Creek.

Hogan's Alley, Vancouver's only historically black community, has been a source of extreme controversy and debate within the city of Vancouver over the past several decades. Compton describes early 20th century Hogan's Alley as "a community of blacks, living, working and worshipping together in a section of blocks between Union and Prior Streets, and from Main and Station Streets east past Jackson Avenue" ("Retro-Speculative" 109). Though Black Vancouverites were the primary demography in Hogan's Alley, other working-class minority populations such as Italian, Indigenous, and Chinese communities also resided there "due to the neighbourhood's proximity to the Great Northern Railway station nearby" that employed many men (Compton, "Hogan's Alley"). While many minority populations believed Hogan's Alley to be their home, Chuck Davis asserts that "to the elite of Vancouver (mostly Anglo Europeans), Hogan's Alley was an area of 'squalor, promiscuity, and crime'" (qtd. in Scott). The community of Hogan's Alley flourished for five decades before it was periodically and strategically destroyed through the City of Vancouver's urban redevelopment projects, notably the implementation of the Georgia Viaduct.

In 1950, Leonard Marsh, a social planner at the University of British Columbia released his study *Rebuilding a Neighbourhood: Report on a Demonstration Slum Clearance and Urban Rehabilitation Project in a Key Central Area in Vancouver*, which had the primary goal of eradicating Hogan's Alley and its "blight" (qtd. in Plant 6). Following this same wave of redevelopment and city "improvement," the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts were voted to be relocated to the Strathcona region. Tolfo and Doucet express that the viaducts were originally supposed to be pieces of highway that connected eastern Vancouver to downtown, but that they were "never constructed, due largely to protests and shifting policies when TEAM [The Electors Action Movement] councillors gained a majority on Vancouver City Council that same year" ("Livability" 6). This unfinished project left Hogan's Alley in a state of complete destruction, displacing thousands of residents, while simultaneously stripping the city of a Black neighbourhood. Tolfo and Compton both address the history of Hogan's Alley in their works. It is their views on the legacy of Hogan's Alley and the relationship between the City of Vancouver and minority communities that I oppose.

In his work, Tolfo claims that "planning efforts in and around False Creek, whether motivated by colonialism, modernist planning principles, or the ambiguous promise of livability, have consistently ignored the interest of those on the margins" ("The Progressive Promise" 165). This statement and others similar in nature, completely disregards the current efforts being made in a collaboration between the City of Vancouver and marginalized communities. Specifically in False Creek, the Northeast False Creek Plan (NFCP) incorporates infrastructures and support signed specifically for the Black community and other Vancouver communities who have been caught "on the margins" (Tolfo, "Progressive Prom-

ise" 165). The Northeast False Creek Plan includes standard quantitative information such as construction plans that incorporate the deconstruction and removal of the Georgia Viaduct, as well as

> a new vibrant waterfront destination with amenities including childcare, social housing, artist space, plazas, an ice rink, and a cultural centre. [Furthered with] opportunities for community and social development, including 1,800 units of social housing. ("The Future of Northeast False Creek")

What differentiates this city project from others, however, are sections of the plan dedicated to the commemoration of Hogan's Alley, and reconciliation with all marginalized communities affected by the City of Vancouver's previous destructive actions. As the plan affirms:

> The area holds many stories, from the original Indigenous inhabitants, Chinese and Black communities who called Northeast False Creek home, to the railway and industrial movements that helped shape the landscape. [Honouring their stories] will be achieved by involving the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and the Chinese and Black communities in meaningful dialogue throughout the ongoing development of the area. ("Northeast False Creek Plan")

As this historical commemoration and reconciliation portion of the plan expresses, one of the NFCP's priorities is to work towards changing the relationship between the City of Vancouver and marginalised communities. Not only creating a space that welcomes and celebrates marginalised populations, but involving community members in its creation. This aspect of the Plan challenges Tolfo's argument. Tolfo believes that the City of Vancouver is still working in its own self-interest and that marginalized communities will consistently be ignored. However, the City of Vancouver and marginalized communities are progressively reshaping and improving their relationship by working in tandem on the Northeast False Creek Plan.

Tolfo's belief that the City of Vancouver consistently puts its own agenda over the interests of marginalized communities is echoed by Compton's assertion that "today, the struggle for the memory of Hogan's Alley feels like just that—a struggle, a fight" ("Retro-Speculative" 111). Compton's perspective on Hogan's Alley's focuses on the troubled history of the neighbourhood, and on the seemingly non-existent progress that has been made up until this point. His use of the term "struggle" implies that there is a lot of work being done with little reward or change being made. His use of the term "fight," implies that there is an active conflict where it is one group against another. This, however, is not the case. To this day, the influence the Black community has on the Northeast False Creek Plan, and the substantial milestones achieved from community engagement workshops in collaboration with the City of Vancouver and Hogan's Alley, have not yet resulted in physical changes. Nonetheless, these achievements serve as proof of progress. Though most of the breakthroughs made in the last decade have been ideas, proposals, meetings, approvals, and planning, it is vital that they are recognized as positive advancements towards implementing truly life-changing projects. This renders Compton's 2005 ar-

argument non-applicable to present-day Vancouver.

The Hogan's Alley Society (HAS) is a major sign of positive progress toward giving Vancouver's Black population a voice and a platform. The Hogan's Alley Society's website describes themselves as "[adopting a] research-driven approach to community development that seeks to preserve and promote the historical, cultural, societal and economic contributions made by Black Settlers and their descendants to Vancouver, Greater Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia, the Pacific Northwest and Canada" ("Strategic Priorities"). Though this preservation and promotion of a Black presence is a difficult task in the City of Vancouver where the Black population makes up a mere 1.6% of the total population, this makes the undertaking even more important (Chan). A prime example of the struggle that Black Vancouverites still face is the unexplained reality that the City of Vancouver has yet to apologize for: the destruction of Hogan's Alley over five decades ago (St Denis). It is the HAS's mission to combat these issues and in addition, as their name suggests, advocate for, monitor, and operate within Hogan's Alley. They made substantial progress by advocating for Hogan's Alley during the proposal to remove the Georgia Viaduct, the proposal of the Northeast False Creek Plan, and for its revitalization during the Hogan's Alley workshop with the City of Vancouver.

The Hogan's Alley Society was also present in 2015 when Vancouver councillors voted to remove the Georgia Viaduct ("City Releases First Draft"). This was a huge victory for Vancouver's Black population, as the Georgia Viaduct is what is most often associated with Hogan's Alley's destruction. Though the viaduct has not yet been physically removed, this approval was a step towards re-establishing Hogan's Alley and the value it once held in Vancouver. The approval to remove the Georgia Viaduct allows for more communication between the City of Vancouver and advocates of Hogan's Alley in order to discuss the neighbourhood's past, present, and future.

Thus in 2017, the City of Vancouver and members of the Hogan's Alley Working Group (which was mostly comprised of members of the Hogan's Alley Society), came together for a workshop surrounding Hogan's Alley. It had the goal of commemorating Hogan's Alley's history, discussing the current climate of the neighbourhood, and creating solutions and demands for the "new" Hogan's Alley ("NEFC Sub-Area 6D" 8). Each of these steps were victories for Hogan's Alley and proved that there is hope for the neighbourhood.

Finally, 2018 was a crucial year for Vancouver's Black community. In February, the Northeast False Creek Plan was approved and incorporated many of the demands that were developed during Hogan's Alley workshop with the City of Vancouver in 2017. However, the city deliberated on the NFCP for many years before reaching this point ("Northeast False Creek Plan," *American*). Notably, a portion of the Plan includes a Cultural Centre that would be built in the heart of where Hogan's Alley used to exist. The Centre's address would be 898 Main Street block and would act as "a focal point for the Black Community, with the programming to support community building through food, gathering and celebration, education and empowerment, art, music, dance and research and knowledge of Black Canadian history" ("Cultural Cen-

ter"). The very purpose of this centre would be to bring Black people, life, and spirit back to Hogan's Alley. The Northeast False Creek Plan, and by extension the Cultural Centre will be fully funded by the City of Vancouver while the Hogan's Alley Society will be involved in its promotion. The Centre is a complete partnership between the Black community and the City of Vancouver, putting an end to the "fight" that Compton refers to. This Cultural Centre is the prime opportunity to bring the community back to the neighbourhood in order to commemorate the legacy of Hogan's Alley and celebrate its future. As June Francis, co-chair of the Hogan's Alley Society, states: "The city, to their credit, stepped back [after initially ignoring the concerns of the Black community] and said, we're going back to square one. That was the start of a new, mutual learning process that I think has been exemplary" (qtd. in Barth 21).

I argue that the City of Vancouver and the Black community have had a difficult history, but that their collaboration on recent urban development projects in Hogan's Alley and False Creek is improving their relationship. The Black community and the City of Vancouver have a past riddled with discrimination and conflict. Though there is no fixing the past, both parties have since worked together to achieve many milestones in preserving and celebrating Black people and culture, especially in the historic neighbourhoods of Hogan's Alley and False Creek.

Giuseppe Tolfo believes that the City of of Vancouver always has, and continues to, work for itself, sidelining minority populations. I refute these claims by presenting Vancouver's Northeast False Creek Plan, which was created especially for minority communities who had previously been negatively affected by the City's planning in the region. Similarly, Wayde Compton argues that remembering Hogan's Alley involves nothing but a "struggle" and a "fight." I prove that this statement is inaccurate by shedding light on projects that work towards improving and remembering Hogan's Alley over the past decade. The approved proposal for the Georgia Street Viaduct removal was a major progression towards revitalizing Hogan's Alley and remembering its legacy. The Hogan's Alley Society's participation in the workshop with the City of Vancouver was also a fruitful project, resulting in a Cultural Centre being approved for construction in the heart of Hogan's Alley to continue its legacy. Though these plans have been arranged, it will take several years to finalize and implement all of the approved proposals.

Works Cited

Barth, Brian. "A Plan for Reconciliation." *Planning*, vol. 85, no. 5, 2019, pp. 20-22.

"City Releases First Draft of Plans for Post-Viaduct Vancouver | CBC News." *CBCnews*, CBC/Radio Canada, 6 June 2017. www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british columbia/georgia-viaducts-development-plan-vancouver-1.4147313. Accessed 12 December 2022.

Chan, Kenneth. "Over Half of Metro Vancouver Residents Are Now Part of a Visible Minority: Statistics." *Daily Hive*, 26 Oct. 2022. dailyhive.com/vancouver/metro vancouver-visible-minority-population-residents-statistics. Accessed 6 July 2023.

Compton, Wayde. "Hogan's Alley and Retro-Speculative Verse." *West Coast Line*, vol. 39, no. 2, Fall, 2005, pp. 109-115, 284, 286. *ProQuest*, www.proquest.com/magazines/hogans-alley retro-speculative-verse/docview/214500984/se-2.

Compton, Wayde. "Hogan's Alley." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 14 February 2019, *Historica Canada*. www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hogans-alley. Accessed 27 November 2022.

"Cultural Center." *Hogan's Alley Society*, www.hogansalleysociety.org/cultural-center/. Accessed 10 December 2022.

"NEFC Sub-Area 6D-East Block Hogan's Alley Working Group - Workshop Report." *City of Vancouver*, Perkins + Will, July 2017, pp.1-66. vancouver.ca/files/cov/hogans alley-working-group-charette-report-170721.pdf. Accessed 16 December 2022.

"Northeast False Creek." *Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure,* 28 Oct. 2021, sustainableinfrastructure.org/project-awards/northeast-false creek-renewal-and-development. Accessed 2 December 2022.

"Northeast False Creek Plan." *American Planning Association*, 2019. www.planning.org/awards/2019/falsecreek/#:~:text=Adopted%20by%20the%20V a ncouver%20City,use%20development%20and%20waterfront%20community. Accessed 16 December 2022.

"Northeast False Creek Plan." *City of Vancouver*, February 2018, pp. 1-174. vancouver.ca/files/cov/northeast-false-creek-plan.pdf. Accessed 16 December 2022.

Plant, Byron K. *Vancouver Downtown Eastside Redevelopment Planning*. British Columbia Legislative Library and British Columbia Government eBook Collection, vol. 04, pp.1- 13, 2008.

Scott, Curtis. "The End of Hogan's Alley-Part 1." *Spacing Vancouver,* 2013. spacing.ca/vancouver/2013/08/12/the-end-of-hogans-alley-part-1/. Accessed 10 December 2022.

St Denis, Jen. "Vancouver's Black Community Continues to Call for Civic Redress." *The Tyee*, 18 June 2020, thetyee.ca/News/2020/06/18/Black-Community-Vancouver-Civic-Address/. Accessed 5 July 2023.

"Strategic Priorities." *Hogan's Alley Society*, www.hogansalleysociety.org/about-hogans alley-society/. Accessed 2 December 2022.

"The Future of Northeast False Creek." *City of Vancouver*, vancouver.ca/home-property development/northeast-false creek.aspx#:~:text=The%20final%20plan%20for%20Northeast,1%2C800%20units%20o f %20social%20housing. Accessed 15 December 2022.

Tolfo, Giuseppe, and Brian Doucet. "Livability for Whom?: Planning for Livability and the Gentrification of Memory in Vancouver." *Cities*, vol. 123, 2022, pp. 1-10.

Tolfo, Guiseppe. "The Progressive Promise of Reconciliation in Vancouver's Northeast False Creek." *Urban Cascadia and the Pursuit of Environmental Justice*, edited by Nik Janos and Corina McKendry, University of Washington Press, 2021, pp. 164–82.

Wright, Angela. "Yes, Remnants of Discriminatory Urban Planning Remain." *The Globe and Mail*, 25 May 2021, www.theglobeandmail.com/featured-reports/article-yes-remnants-of-discriminatory-urba n-planning-remain/. Accessed 5 July 2023.

Cleaning Up the Dirt: The Model Minority Myth, the Backgrounding of Asian Labour, and Outsourced Emotional Labour in The Philippines

— Megan Raitt —

This paper investigates how Asian people have found themselves in a unique position within the global racial hierarchy. A shared common history of colonization and imperialism in Asian countries led to mass immigrations to the US, where an established racial hierarchy was formed, creating the model minority myth and painting Asians as unfeeling, efficient workers (Au 187, 191). In the Philippines, this imperialism has had lasting impacts on education and, by extension, the labour culture presently shaping the country (Macas 5-6). This is reaffirmed by philosophical concepts suggesting that people at the bottom of this racial hierarchy are backgrounded into jobs that are necessary but invisible to the privileged (Plumwood 12-13). Now in a new economy, the production of goods and services relies heavily on labourers who are forced to compartmentalise their feelings to efficiently complete emotionally taxing labour, a term coined as emotional labour (Hochschild 10-11). More specifically, in a world of rapid corporate social media expansion and globalisation, where emotional labour takes on a new face, individuals are required to adapt to new demands and expectations. This paper investigates how a history of colonization in the Philippines, the model minority myth, and backgrounding compound to create an unseen emotional labour market in the Global South which is spearheaded by the Western tech industry's biggest corporations. To accomplish this, I analyze the interviews and written submissions by social media content moderators from the documentary, *The Cleaners,* alongside other academic sources, bringing light to the lived experiences of moderators and this hidden market. This paper contributes to research by identifying how factors of colonization, racial stereotypes, and emotional labour have contributed to the incredible expansion and success of social media around the world, especially in America and Europe. First, I will discuss who "the cleaners" are; second, I will explore the colonial history in the Philippines. Third, I will discuss how the existing racial hierarchy perpetuates the cleaners model of labour; fourth, I will examine how the model minority myth hides the cleaners model of labour from sight; finally, I will analyze the tortures and difficulties of being a cleaner.

"The cleaners" are social media content moderators. Moderators act as the maids of the internet, hence the term "cleaners." They are responsible for removing unsightly posts from the social media platforms that people around the globe use every day. The content they moderate has been outsourced to the Philippines by large social media corporations like Facebook (*The Cleaners* 00:28). As stated by one written submission in *The Cleaners*, "there are smaller units in other countries, but the Philippines is the biggest one" (00:41). Thus, most social media moderation occurs in

the Philippines. Their work involves skimming through huge amounts of reported or flagged posts which may violate platform guidelines, the vast majority of which contain graphic images of sexual assault, graphic imagery of minors, violence, terrorism, cyberbullying, exploitation, and more. The increasingly globalised nature of our society, in part because of the effects of colonization and, more recently, a boom in technology, has resulted in the creation of a hidden emotional labour market in the Global South. I argue that this market operates due to a history of colonization in the Philippines by both Spanish and American forces. The Philippines gained its independence in 1946, but the colonial culture created deep roots in the form of a lasting racial hierarchy and the implementation of Western beliefs into Philippines culture.

In Mark Maca's paper, "American colonial education policy and Filipino labour migration to the US (1900 - 1935)," he argues that the impact of standardised Western education in the Philippines following American colonization has a direct modern impact on immigration trends from the Philippines into America (5-6). However, I will argue that the education instilled in Filipino workers also has a lasting impact on the nature of labour in the post-colonial Philippines. Maca makes sure to point out that colonial education was purposefully assimilatory: "Mass schooling ensured a steady supply of workers who were fluent in the language of the colonial masters," citing a conscious effort to "Americanize" the population through language culture and lifestyle (Maca 5). To justify the act of colonialism, which was receiving domestic opposition, the American government made strong efforts to differentiate their empire-building from European efforts by demonstrating the superiority of American "ethical and material culture." In other words, the American government sought to "portray their new colonial possession as a land of inferior race and culture with a population impoverished both materially and spiritually" (Maca 5). This was, of course, in spite of the fact that many Filipino people at the time were already heavily Westernized and mostly Catholic from roughly 400 years of Spanish rule. A key factor of mass public education in the Philippines was English as the medium of instruction. As contained in a letter by President McKinley in 1900, English was to be the language of business, government, and education (Maca 6). This policy set a lasting legacy whereby generations of Filipino people were instructed solely in English and were taught American ideals of benevolence. While Maca argues that this is an important factor for the high frequency of Filipino immigration to English-speaking nations, I push to argue that this also creates a strong framework through which the cleaners can operate. By creating an education system heavily dependent on American language and values, model workers were also created for jobs that primarily centred around upholding those same values on Western social media feeds. Simultaneously, the systematic suppression of the Filipino language and culture in pursuit of Western standards, which are strongly upheld to this day, was dominant.

Building off the knowledge of an existing racial hierarchy in the Philippines, Val Plumwood's work, *The Concept of a Cultural Landscape: Nature, Culture and Agency of the Land,* is relevant in producing the philosophical framing through which Asian labour and back-grounding coincide. Her work ana-

lyzes how a disavowal of work done by subordinated groups. In the scope of this essay, the subordinated group is the Filipino content moderators. Plumwood states that backgrounding occurs when the dominant social group begins to believe they are fundamentally different and superior to the subordinated "Other," leading to the denial or devaluing of their contributions (13). Colonization cannot happen without some aspect of domination by the colonizers. In the case of the Philippines, because the colonizers were white, encompassing both Europeans and Americans, race was the primary divider between the dominant and subordinated groups. Therefore, the racial dominance of Westerners that was established in the colonial Philippines sets the groundwork for modern-day backgrounding to occur. The content moderators quite literally operate in the background of society. Their job is purposefully and effectively hidden from the public by Western corporations that employ them. Many interviewees claim to feel that they are unrecognized and under-appreciated for their work (*The Cleaners*). The work that they do is absolutely essential to the success of social media in the West, since the companies who outsource the moderator jobs to the East know that users would not want to use their platforms if they were filled with graphic and illegal content. Additionally, moderators acknowledge that many people are made to believe that moderation is done by AI or algorithms, but the work requires human eyes and judgment, and thus cannot be automated (*The Cleaners*). The benefit that Westerners have derived from the labour of Asian moderators in the tech industry is typical of the reliance on subordinated groups, as explained by Plumwood (13). The hidden nature of their labour is seen as a necessary mechanism for the growth of social media and viewed publicly as evidence of the amazing technology of the West, despite the public being unaware of the human labour that goes into a guideline-friendly social media feed.

Wayne Au's description of the model minority myth in *Asian American Racialization, Racial Capitalism, and the Threat of the Model Minority* hinges on two main factors. The first is the homogenization and assimilation of Asian communities: the undistinguishable lived experience and cultural expectations that have allegedly helped Asians achieve high academic and workplace success (191). The second is the existence of a racial hierarchy in America; Au attributes a shared history of colonization in Asia to where Asian workers fall within an American racial hierarchy (187). He asserts that these factors can explain why Asians are stereotypically successful but rarely seen in positions of leadership, falling into the background. Despite acknowledging the impact of colonization, Au does not broaden his research to include the Asian workers who never left their home countries and continue to live and work in Asia post-colonization. This paper uses the factors of the model minority myth as prescribed by Au to examine the impacts of racial stereotyping on the content moderators of the Philippines. In the context of *The Cleaners*, their jobs are outsourced to them by American companies like Facebook. So, the American racial stereotypes in Au's essay hold true to those imposed on workers in the Philippines. Stereotypes of efficiency and lack of empathy would make Asian workers the ideal candidates to sift through hours' worth of Western posts filled with disturbing content. Simultaneously, the lasting results of

colonization in the Philippines, like imposed Western religion and racial hierarchies, act as an internal force that maintains the factors of the model minority myth in the Philippines. With the Philippines being a predominately Catholic country, we see that many workers are heavily religious before starting their job and have very limited sex education (18:50-21:00). When they are onboarded, they are taught slang from American pornography and sex (21:05-21:25). Workers are expected to have a deep knowledge of Western politics, values, and rights because the majority of content is posted and viewed in America and Europe (00:28). The cleaners also have to have an in-depth knowledge of anti-western terrorist groups: "There's a list of 37 terrorist organizations we have to ban; that list comes from Homeland Security US. You must memorize everything about the terrorist groups…and you moderate it" (25:49). American rights to freedom of speech are also maintained, even if the content is hateful (1:03:00-1:04:00).

Content moderating jobs are highly undesirable. These positions are not only mentally draining but physically exhausting. Moderators have up to 8 seconds to decide on a picture and an average daily quota of 25,000 posts (05:32-5:40). With the knowledge of America's racial stereotyping, it might stand to answer why these jobs have to be outsourced to Asia in the first place. Despite the Philippines now being independent, the foothold that colonization had on their culture, alongside the influx of Western beliefs through media, has permanently altered the labour experience of workers there. Under Au's description of the model minority myth, its impacts reach much farther than American borders (202). Assimilation and Western racial hierarchy are continuously placed on workers living in the Philippines, thereby perpetuating the model minority myth.

Arlie Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* emphasizes the importance of emotional labour in a service-based economy and how the work involved can become incredibly taxing to those made to perform it. Hochschild explores two types of emotional labour: one where emotions are put at the forefront of the job, creating accommodating consumer experiences; and the second, the branch of emotional labour based on hiding or compartmentalising emotion to increase efficiency, where this form of labour is seldom acknowledged or compensated. I will specifically focus on the latter. In an increasingly globalised economy, emotional labour is becoming inseparable from the efficiency of a firm (Hochschild 11). Despite the importance of the work they do, many moderators are not offered the same mental health care available to emotional labourers in the West. In one statement, a moderator says, "We are just like policemen. Our main goal is to make the platform as healthy as possible. Someone needs to guard it, just like the real world" (*The Cleaners* 03:25-03:43).

Moderators carry a sense of duty to the labour they provide and see their emotions as a willing sacrifice for the benefit of the greater community; they are protectors just like police officers. But unlike police, who are offered tools to tackle straining tasks, moderators have none. They do not have emotional riot gear to help them traverse emotionally dangerous environments. Due to the nature of content moderation, many workers are emotionally taxed. The content that moderators are made to endure can be traumatizing, with prolonged exposure to intense images and vid-

eos of violence, sexual assault, crime, and hate. One woman explains the recurring images of child pornography that she has seen which cause her mental strain: "It is really unforgivable for me to see…so I went to my team leader and said, 'I can't do this, I can't look at the child,' but then he told me that I should do it because it is my job and I signed the contract" (11:20-11:40). This account is especially telling of the downward pressure applied to workers in mental distress to force them to continue their work. Additionally, the moderators are not allowed to discuss their work with anyone, "you're not allowed to disclose anything" (04:20). Content moderation is high-stakes, and workers feel like their mistakes could potentially "trigger violence, war, bullying, or suicide" (26:29). To cope with the stress of the job, many workers are forced to compartmentalise their emotions to execute their tasks efficiently and objectively. There seem to be two main themes that result from this compartmentalization: the workers would fail to truly separate themselves from their work and would begin to carry the trauma into their personal lives, like the woman who said she would dream of genitalia and sex, something that only began after taking the moderation job. Workers would also become desensitized to the violence they witnessed every day (Hochschild 4)."The job damages your brain—making you think that violence is normal. You see things like somebody who got bombed and the limb is everywhere and the head and the leg is flying everywhere" (1:12:00). Social media moderators are dealing with traumatic content at an unprecedented rate, without the ability to talk to someone about it because of the confidentiality or criminal quality of the content they moderate. This, compounded with the backgrounded nature of their job, results in large-scale emotional labour that pushes the limits of anything proposed by Hochschild.

The complex history of colonization in the Philippines created lasting socioeconomic changes, including the perpetuation of Western labour stereotypes and the model minority myth onto workers like in *The Cleaners.* A culmination of the racial hierarchy, stereotypes of Asian labour, and forced assimilation through colonization have bred a new form of psychologically devastating emotional labour which is being utilized for the gain of the tech industry. The existence of such hidden jobs in a market as massive as the tech industry is evidence of racial backgrounding, where Westerners do not even know the full scope of their reliance on social media moderators. These workers are in part responsible for the massive success of social media in the Americas and Europe by ensuring the safety of all its users. As one moderator states at the beginning of the film, "the world should know that we [the moderators] are here" (02:25-02:30). Just because they have been operating behind the closed doors of Silicon Valley, does not mean that they have to continue being unsupported and unrecognized. The next step is to bring light to the work that moderators do and guarantee them the emotional support needed to complete the necessary role. If Western ideals of race, rights, and religion can be imposed on moderators, then so too can Western labour standards, including mental health support.

Works Cited

Au, Wayne. "Asian American Racialization, Racial Capitalism, and the Threat of the Model Minority." *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, vol. 44, no. 3, 27 May 2022, pp. 185-209.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2012.

Maca, Mark. "American Colonial Education Policy and Filipino Labour Migration to the US (1900–1935)." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2017, pp. 310-328.

Plumwood, Val. "The Concept of a Cultural Landscape: Nature, Culture and Agency of the Land." *Ethics & the Environment*, vol. 11, no. 2, Sept. 2006, pp. 115-150.

The Cleaners. Rieseweick, Moritz, et al., Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion, 2018.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Community Engaged Learning Review: Media Studies

— Mackenzie Bjarnason —

As a student enrolled in the Media Studies stream this year, my cohort was given the opportunity to attend six different community talks as a part of our Community Engaged Learning (CEL). The media stream focused primarily on a presentation from Barbara Lee, the president of the Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF). She spoke about Asian Representation in Media, encouraging students to learn more about the ethics of media production and to attend the 26th annual VAFF to engage with an international community of film-makers.

Many of the theories and conclusions that are made in the classroom setting can seem abstract without real-world implementation. CEL helps students bridge the gap between their studies and real-life. Through the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP), students had the chance to attend talks with members of the community, delving into real-world issues that are relevant to UBC, Vancouver, BC, and Canada. CEL is beneficial as it helps students to visualize the impact of their work in reality, reducing feelings of detachment from their studies. (Sweet et al.).

For my CEL work, I had the privilege of seeing Crystal Kwok's film *Blurring the Color Line* at the VAFF. Her work raised pertinent questions about the representation of non-Black minority groups in the USA. Often, American media portrays a black-and-white story. How do other minority groups fit into this apparently binary American culture? Kwok mentions that originally, her film was going to be titled "Unruly Chinese Women" and focus on her grandmother's story as a Chinese immigrant in the South. However, the political reality of the 2020s shifted her focus. Movements like Black Lives Matter drew her attention to the racial tensions in the US, and the growing anti-Asian hate movement that spawned from the COVID-19 pandemic had her questioning how Asian Americans fit into the greater American culture (Kwok and Ivanov 0:50-1:59).

In the early stages of the pandemic, the news media frequently used terms such as "Chinese virus" or other derogatory names to describe the coronavirus. This representation of COVID-19 as an export of Asia had disastrous consequences. In March 2020, anti-Asian hate crimes spiked (Han et al. 3513). While Asian Americans are often labelled as the "model minority," they are nonetheless treated as "perpetual foreigners" (Xu and Lee 1364). Perpetual foreigners, comprising ethnic minority individuals, are forever relegated to the status of the "other" within the "White Anglo-Saxon dominant society of the United States" (Huynh et al. 133). Hence, even if born and raised in America, the perpetual foreigner will never truly be considered American. In addition to escalating geopolitical tensions between China and the USA (Bala), this situation fostered a sense of paranoia within certain groups of Americans, leading them to unfairly attribute responsibility for the pandemic to all Asians (Han et al. 3513). The media coverage of coronavirus was focused largely on its alleged origin in China. This was irresponsible and ultimately harmful to Asian communities across the US and Can-

ada.

Despite the political happenings of the 2020s, there has been a recent influx of Asian media in popular culture, with Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* taking home the academy award for Best Picture in 2020. Since then, with the rising popularity of K-pop internationally, as well as the commercial success of shows such as *Squid Game*, it can seem easy to dismiss concerns about Asian representation. However, the inundation of anti-Asian hate during the pandemic was a shocking display of the intolerance still lurking beneath the surface of Western society. After watching *Blurring the Color Line* and hearing about Kwok and Lee's own experiences as Asian Americans, I felt prompted to reflect on my own internal biases. Being able to engage with the Asian film scene through CEL provided me with valuable insight into why representation matters. I took those lessons with me into my studies and personal life, making time to research the groups I am studying and the media I am consuming. *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022), an independent film following the zany hijinks of a Chinese immigrant who was thrust into a multiversal war, won the hearts of many—including my own. It also took home seven Academy Awards in 2023, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Actress. The unparalleled success of this film has shown the world that there is a market for stories that deviate from the Eurocentric norm. I hope, as a future media creator, that I will have the privilege of bringing stories from all across the world to life as the global media industry begins to look outside of Hollywood for its entertainment.

As media students, we must be mindful of the messages we may unintentionally convey. While it's important to have diverse representations in popular culture, as Barbara Lee said: it must be *good* representation. Lee emphasized that the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes and caricatures of certain groups of people has real impacts on them. Ultimately, the media we consume shapes our view of the world. For those living in areas that may have low contact with others, their entire idea of how certain people act and how certain cultures function will be shaped by the representations they see in media, Lee mentioned. Tokenization is a pitfall many out-of-touch producers fall into. Lee spoke to the tropes that befall many Asian characters, including the hyper-sexualization of Asian women and the demasculinization of Asian men. It is the duty of film producers to ensure that every character they create is thoughtfully developed and does not perpetuate harmful or false narratives about marginalized communities.

While representation is essential in film, it is important to extend this consideration to other mediums as well. All individuals deserve to see themselves represented across every ind-ustry; they should be able to find relatable and relevant content not just on the big screen, but in print and online. Still, all media must be produced with ethics in mind. Journalists should be aware of their own internal biases when writing stories on particular groups that they do not belong to; photographers should consider how their images may be misconstrued; social media personalities should take into account how their messages could impact particular groups that they do not belong to; photographers should consider how their images may be misconstrued. It's easy to take a piece of media out of context online—it's the responsibility of creators to do as much as they can to minimize harm.

The media we consume informs the way that we see and interact with the world. When certain peoples are represented in a misleading

or harmful way, we internalize those beliefs (Entman 349). No group of people is a monolith; each individual fits into their local, national, and ethnic cultures in unique and complex ways. The intersection of a given character's identity should be exp]ored in creative media to create dynamic, multi-faceted characters that don't feel like a caricature. News media must strive to provide accurate portrayals of their subjects. As aspiring media creators, we must remain informed to combat harmful stereotypes and disinformation, and I believe that the best way to educate oneself on specific communities is by engaging with them directly.

Allowing students to venture beyond campus and attend the Vancouver Asian Film Festival provided a valuable opportunity to engage with the city itself, not just the university. Reflecting on CAP's CEL initiatives, I began contemplating ways to shift these engagements toward a media-oriented perspective. One idea is a university-sponsored photography competition, allowing students to showcase their unique perspectives on the city. Perhaps there could be a theme such as "Vancouver From Your Eyes" to help students get excited about the city and learn how to engage with it from a media standpoint. Another possibility is encouraging students students to engage in an online forum, facilitating discussions on community-related subjects, student-to-student. The CAP coordinators could host this on Discord, prompting the students to communicate online and learn how to use social media in more intentional ways. There are numerous opportunities for media students to gain a practical under-standing of the mediums they study. I find it valuable for students to explore new avenues of community engagement and connection.

Overall, I believe CEL is a useful program that grants students valuable insights into the practical implications of the topics they learn. I personally enjoyed the opportunity to engage with film from an angle I previously had not given much consideration and focus on Asian representation. During Barbara Lee's speech about Asian Representation in Media, she raised pertinent issues regarding the ethical and responsible portrayal of diverse ethnic communities in film. As a prospective media creator, I recognize the significance of extrapolating on those concepts and staying knowledgeable about detrimental narratives that I may inadvertently perpetuate–in all media sectors.

Works Cited

Bala, Sumathi. "U.S.-China Relations Are Going Downhill with 'No Trust' on Either Side, Stephen Roach Says." *CNBC*, 28 Mar. 2023, https://www.cnbc.com/2023/03/28/us-china-ties-on-dangerous-path-with-no-trust-on-both-sides-roach-cohen.html. Accessed 12 June 2023.

Entman, Robert M. "How the Media Affect What People Think: An Information Processing Approach." *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 51, no. 2, May 1989, pp. 347–370.

Han, Sungil, et al. "Anti-Asian American Hate Crimes Spike during the Early Stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 3–4, 3 June 2022, pp. 3513–3533.

Huynh, Que-Lam, et al. “Perpetual Foreigner in One’s Own Land: Potential Implications for Identity and Psychological Adjustment.” *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2011, pp. 133–162.

Kwok, Crystal, and Phillip Ivanov. '*Blurring the Color Line’: A Discussion*. *Asia Society*, YouTube, 25 May 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CduMSAruofQ&ab_channel=AsiaSociety. Accessed 12 June 2023.

Sweet, Castel, et al. “Virtual and In-Person Community-Engaged Learning: Is Student Learning Virtually the Same?” *Journal of Experiential Education*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2022, pp. 80–98.

Xu, Jun, and Jennifer C. Lee. “The Marginalized ‘Model’ Minority: An Empirical Examination of the Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans.” *Social Forces*, vol. 91, no. 4, 3 June 2013, pp. 1363–1397.

Community Engaged Learning Review: Black Cultures in Vancouver

—Kathleen Mutoro—

I attended a Community Engaged Learning (CEL) talk on "Black Cultures in Vancouver" held by Maya Preshyon, founder of the Vancouver Black Library, and Krystal Paraboo, who has made it her mission to create a space for Black artists in the city. They first gave an introduction of what Black lives look like to them from their own experiences growing up in Vancouver. These experiences were mainly connoted with feelings in comparison to their white counterparts and an overall lack of acceptance in this city. Additionally, they gave insight into the amalgamation of the Black culture present in Vancouver highlighted by the patterns of Black migration through following our Black descendants.

Ultimately, this CEL talk mainly considered the importance of representation due to the stereotyped perception of Blackness that has kept Black people oppressed. The exposure of this misrepresentation really resonated with me as having moved to Vancouver eight months ago, I picked up on the covert racism present which is often dismissed by claims of Canadians being friendly in comparison to the US which makes Canada seem like the better option. Coming to Canada and especially Vancouver I was often told of the friendly nature of the people who reside here, however, from experience, I noted their aloof nature, and extremes where I experienced overt racism. This made me seek spaces where I could just exist and feel at home and I believe communities like the Black Student Union attempt to offer a space like this. Racism has been and continues to be prevalent in Canada denoted by the history of Hogan's Alley where the community and especially the City of Vancouver considered it to be a ghetto due to its majority Black population. To me, this ties into the misrepresentation of the Black community as there is little to no discourse of places like Black Strathcona which was a beautiful affluent Black Community. I believe that the lack of information on the rich Black Strathcona is attributed to the City of Vancouver's avid avoidance of paying the former residents their reparations by simply rejecting this history and the histories of other Black communities in Vancouver which allowed them to take credit for Black-built institutions and facilities. There have only recently been discussions on how the City of Vancouver can honour the Black residents who were expelled from Hogan's Alley by creating safe spaces for the current and especially the Black residents which was brought up in our Arts Studies (ASTU) class discussions. Though the City of Vancouver cannot fully right the wrongs of the past there have been efforts to uplift the Hogan's Alley community.

Moreover, this racism is also exposed in the restrictions placed on Black people from Africa and the Caribbean to Canada and I personally experienced this as the visa wait to get a study permit is long and hectic. These restrictions include going above and beyond to show financial capabilities and health qua-lity to prove worthy of a study permit without the

assurance that it will be granted. In fact, many international students have been forced and continue to have to take gap years due to the tumultuous visa wait.

I believe that what Preshyon and Paraboo are doing for the Black community is very important as they are supporting Black agency which has been lacking due to structural poverty. An example of this is Paraboo's work whereby she provides space for Black artists to showcase their work which is a means for their livelihood as well as other work opportunities. Similarly, Preshyon provides a platform through the Vancouver Black Library for Black residents and the greater community to gather for music, poetry and overall enjoyment evidenced by the various events the library has held. Hence, through their work, Preshyon and Paraboo provide Black agency to the Black community in Vancouver which is otherwise not available due to structural poverty. This also involves decolonial practices like dismantling professionalism and supporting Black mediocrity which allows Black people not to constantly feel the need to prove themselves and just exist. I really resonated with the need to maintain an image of professionalism especially after moving to Vancouver and going to school at a predominantly white institution, I sometimes constantly feel pressured to perform at my best or prove that I deserve to be here often beating myself up over not achieving this. Hence listening to Preshyon and Paraboo talking about "baby days" when they simply allow themselves to exist, I took notes on ideas I would like to implement in my own student life. I was personally inspired and felt that my experiences as a Black person living in Vancouver were validated through this CEL I was able to tie this very well into our ASTU class discussions on Hogan's Alley where we discussed the history of this Black space and how the government orchestrated the eviction of Black people who lived in this area putting them at risk of high levels of poverty with them being subjected to places with low-quality housing and security. We especially did this through the MRAi assignment, an ASTU project that involves summarizing an article and then turning this into an infographic. We worked in teams and my group got to learn more about the history of Vancity kicking out Black CEOs and attempting to make up for this by supporting Black projects. I am convinced that this only creates a power disparity against Black people as they are constantly subordinate to white project managers. Also, I learnt a lot more on other areas where the City of Vancouver has worked hard to bury histories of Black oppression. An example of this is Black Strathcona which was an affluent Black community that disappeared around the same time as Hogan's Alley to make way for the Georgia and Dunsmuir street viaducts. This fact was hidden by the City of Vancouver which we learned from both class discussions as well as the CEL talk. This brings into question what happened to those resources and whether the residents of that community ever considered or compensated.

All in all, I was inspired to take up space and make my community more visible as an inspiration for future generations to take up space just as I was galvanized by Preshyon and Paraboo.

Similarly, another CEL talk on exploring refugee support in Canada highlights the lack of accountability by the Canadian government in the role they play in international affairs. The panel agreed that the word 'refugee' is an exploited word and it is genuinely a privilege to be defining this term. There are distinctions between the different refugees each having different needs. The panel leading this talk, in-

cluding Wilfred Thariki, Loren Balisky and Nathalie Lozano-Neira, all work at Kinbrace which is an organization that helps refugees coming into the country to settle down. Further, one of the panel members, Thariki, in his contribution opened up on how Kinbrace helped him and continues to assist many other refugees to find a safe space in Canada.

The panel highlighted the detriment of the small number of refugees being taken up by Canada and the harm being done by the loopholes being used to avoid this responsibility. One of these is the lack of active conversations and relationships with Indigenous people who often help refugees to settle or provide asylum when people are at risk of being deported. Lozano-Neira, one of the panel speakers, pointed out how the state helped her to get to Canada and how Indigenous people helped her to settle but the former allowed her people in Colombia who could not seek refuge, including her family, to be killed. Likewise, she pointed out Canada's direct involvement in detrimental affairs like the mining corporations they own which Colombians have to pay for. Another loophole being exploited is the Canadian government not accepting individuals seeking refugee status in Canada from the US if they have studied there or they make it strenuous to establish this status. This discrimination is harmful as it affects individuals who are genuinely in need of aid regardless of how low this number of refugees may be as a way for the Canadian government to avoid taking in more refugees. Another element considered by the panel, which was called into attention by Lozano-Neira, was the media portrayal of the different categories of refugees, which commodifies their stories in ways that are traumatic and violent. She pointed out that this goes hand in hand with the people in academia who profit from refugees' work but do not want them taking up space beyond this, recounting an incident whereby a refugee student was advised to share her work by a professor who later refused to endorse her Master's recommendation. As a new member of academia, I was saddened to hear this story as it left me wondering how many refugee stories are commodified or exploited. I believe that the protection of refugees must safeguard them from being used by academia.

Thariki, a panel member, stressed the importance of building and developing relationships with refugees by being cognizant of the fact that they have had their trust abused. Hence, the tactics implemented by the Canada Border Services Agency by asking questions to test the credibility of refugees' stories affect them as they start their interactions from a point of mistrust. He provides a solution to this which is being vulnerable ourselves to create a safe space for a similar interaction. I understood this to mean that if we offer people a space in which we would also feel comfortable opening up, it alleviates the abused trust that most if not all refugees have gone through.

All in all, this CEL talk tied into our ASTU discussions on borders and the exploitation by the state of Indigenous people. Our ASTU discussions mainly involved conversations about physical borders through Mercedes Eng's book, *Prison Industrial Complex Explodes,* and Angela Davis's *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*, which both delve into the state of the prison sector and how it works to alienate. Both authors explicitly and implicitly support the abolition of the prison system and the adoption of a more rehabilitative system. Lastly, *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi, similarly shared this idea of borders as it focused on the protagonist's life from how she

viewed Iran as a child and the effects of the war. The connecting themes of these books is the need for freedom evidenced by Davis and Eng exposing the non-rehabilitative state of the prison system, in both Davis's personal experience as well as in *Persepolis* where Satrapi's development leads to her rebelling against the repressive regime around her. To me, the war in *Persepolis* is almost like a sequel of the former two books highlighting the eventual fate of the lack of human rights acknowledgement. This awareness pushes me to advocate for equal rights to be acknowledged in a society like the one we live in here in Vancouver.

In conclusion, I believe that the Canadian state has gotten away with hiding behind the US as a better alternative masking its inadequacies, and refugee relations in Canada evince this. This leads to the need for organizations like Kinbrace which offer support to take up space and carry out the work that ideally would be governmental. I have come to this conclusion through multiple discourses including the Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice class offered by CAP as most refugees, international students or overall people who come into Canada from their home countries end up facing similar experiences, as evidenced by a presentation by Marianne El-Mikati who discussed liminality; how Canada can be portrayed as the US's 'younger sister' who is just as iniquitous, as she highlighted the resource disparity and inequalities between Indigenous people and white Canadians. From my own experience moving to Canada at the age of 18 and facing being a minority race for the first time in my life, especially in Vancouver, I have realized how difficult it is to settle in this society and call it home. I can only imagine how much worse this is for refugees.

Community Engaged Learning Review: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics

— Xavier Largo —

It is unfortunately common for first-year scholars not to get many opportunities to visualize the depth and meaning of their research. This year however, the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) Stream offered this very opportunity through the Vancouver City Walk, as part of the 'Field Study' module of Dr. Anne Stewart's Art Studies (ASTU) course in the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP). During the walk, students traversed points through Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), going through the physical locations to observe the politics of the city's public spaces. This field study allowed me to apply my learnings in class to a real-world context and showed me why learning, writing, and reading were necessary to help improve one's view of the world.

My walk was done on November 10th, 2022, with a few classmates from my own ASTU class. The walk consisted of going first to the Vancouver Public Library, then to Wendy Poole Park, and finally to a simple public fountain in the heart of Vancouver's DTES. Despite the implication of the term 'field study,' for its connotation with tedious or rigorous testing, the city walk was presented as more of a scavenger hunt and was quite a memorable research experience. This was because the findings manifested not in the given locations but in the walk I took to get there. On my walk from Wendy Poole Park to the public fountain, I witnessed the city's homelessness crisis, drug abuse, and gentrification all in tandem. I saw the tent cities, I smelled the acrid scent of cannabis and other substances, and I felt how cramped it was around the crowded sidewalks. I also saw political conflict, such as people spreading their dissatisfaction with the city government through public spaces, like the protest-oriented graffiti in Wendy Poole Park. I still remember the graffiti on that wall, as it read, "A home is the one human right the poor can't think dreaming of when only the rich can truly afford to waste what we see as a luxury." While this was a direct reply to the housing crisis, the placement of it in the public sphere spoke to the ongoing political discourse happening within Vancouver's city streets. These sights would not only be the driving force for writing my final ASTU paper but forever embed themselves in my view of Vancouver.

After what I saw, I started observing the public spaces of Vancouver through a political frame, which became prominent in my final paper. This hidden conflict became more and more exposed as the politics of Vancouver started manifesting in the public spaces of the city. For my research, I focused on the graffiti I saw around the city, which lead to my learning about the city government's beautification project for Vancouver, like its support for the Vancouver Mural Festival (VMF). In this research, I read through various peer-reviewed journals and articles on the same topic, looked through the City of Vancouver's website and official graffiti and mural database as well as the VMF's homepage, which I incorporated with the observations I had made during the city walk. These connections allowed the final paper to discuss the political tension between

the city's government and populations like the unhoused. It also tied in the messaging behind the protest-oriented graffiti—such as why graffiti was so prevalent in an area like the DTES. My key findings were that murals meant to enrich culture and expression became weapons to silence and censor important messaging within such a vulnerable area. The research I conducted transformed from soft theories with a possible connection to tangible definitions made with personal observation, providing another explanation of the situation in the DTES. This level of connection would not have been possible if I was confined and limited to the classroom. Therefore, the City Walk brought a newfound significance to 'Community Engaged Learning,' as instead of learning indirectly through given information, we learned first-hand through what we observed that day.

Before this walk, I had an excellent outlook on Vancouver. The city's outward beauty, efficiency, and novelty left me with a strong sense of thankfulness because I was studying in one of the most famous cities in the world. While in some ways I still see Vancouver through my original, more positive, view, this field study became my reminder to temporarily remove the rose-tinted glasses I had for certain people, things, or places, like Vancouver. It allowed me to question further how certain systems, like beautification—the improvement of a city's outward appearance, often leading to increased real estate value and by proxy gentrification—definitively affected marginalized communities and intensified inequalities within our society. No matter the person, a certain amount of skepticism and questioning must be taken to find gaps in the systems of our world. This skepticism is important in improving social structures for the benefit of all, not just for those already wielding power. Vancouver is still a remarkably efficient and beautiful city, however, it has its problems and flaws, such as the housing crisis, that should be addressed if its government wishes to provide an opportunity for all of its residents to live and flourish within the city's public spaces. I would not have come to this conclusion if not for my experience through this field study.

In my personal experience, the city walk was a way of learning that brought about a level of engagement that was unmatched in terms of significance for the rest of my first year at UBC. It transformed my perceptions of Vancouver and taught me an important lesson about looking at everyday things with a much more critical lens, at least in academic settings. The experience alone solidified ASTU 101 as one of the most essential classes in terms of adapting my thinking for university writing, in addition to fundamentally affecting how I went about my research. This shift was not only in terms of method and technique but what purpose research and writing can serve in improving the society we live in today.

CAPCON 2023 Review: The Hidden Individuals Behind Stories

— Cedric Lin —

Behind every concept is a human life, a unique experience, and a remarkable character, but in every story, word, and concept we discuss, we almost always forget this. We generalize the populations behind our conversations with blatant disregard for the individual.

The Coordinated Arts Program Conference (CAPCON) is an academic conference for students of CAP. At CAPCON 2023, young scholars brought meaning to words by shining the spotlight on the experiences of individuals behind every story—from cultural differences to national identities to issues of the present and future. Many scholars' arguments pointed in the same direction: where concepts intersect, stories are told, but individuals are hidden—individuals who must speak out about their experiences.

In the age of increasing globalization, different cultures are crossing paths, but these intersections have repeatedly been hostile. Governments seem to be accepting of foreign cultures in the name of diversity, however, the people belonging to the dominant culture of a land are acting in opposition. This population often creates stereotypes, or a story, to portray a foreign culture in a negative sense. Whatever their end goal may be, the individual in each story is taken away and generalized as a 'people.' In the presentation "How the BC Human Rights Tribunal fails to protect their female migrant farmworkers," Ava Hamid Nejad discusses the sexual discrimination and harassment that migrant workers face. By describing the Tribunal's duties to uphold human rights and make efforts for safety, Nejad emphasizes their failure in fulfilling these responsibilities and that this failure is fuelled by cultural discrimination. Nejad illustrates this point by describing how movies, news outlets, and media in general will portray the vulnerability of migrant workers and completely disregard the individuals and their authentic experiences. These stories most certainly do not contribute to the celebration of diversity. In light of this, Nejad urges not only for the Tribunal to make good on its mandate in protecting individuals regardless of their cultural background but more significantly urges impacted individuals to continue to come forward to tell their stories. We need these individual experiences to pinpoint our progress—or lack thereof—in protecting marginalized populations and to bring the spotlight—especially in media—back to the individual.

The loss of the individual in stories is not only limited to 'foreign' cultures of a land in a general sense, but also in describing one culture that still persists greatly in North America—Asians. In the presentation "From Yellow Peril to the Model Minority: A Vicious Cycle of Asian American Discrimination," Keiko Koizumi first brings attention to a stereotype—a story—representing Asian Americans: 'Yellow Peril.' The 'Yellow Peril' stereotype originated with resentment of Chinese railroad workers in North America, and lives on as Westerners blamed Asian Americans for the subsequent economic failures in North America. Koizumi is a first-hand victim of this discrimination today. Koizumi sums up

their experience as "don't make waves," meaning they have felt pressured to suppress their identity, not be a problem, and follow the crowd. By sharing their experience, Koizumi brings the individual experience back into play without the stereotype taking over the conversations. According to the stereotype, a good Asian is one that is quiet, well-behaved, and a follower. Koizumi and other Asian North Americans are never given the chance to break down this story—to change the narrative through their individual experiences. Governments have tried to use quantitative statistics to pinpoint progress, but Koizumi urges that 'Yellow Peril' moves beyond numbers. Koizumi, like Nejad, calls on other long-serving captives of these stories to tell their experiences, speak out, and break down the stereotype. While Nejad focuses on 'foreign' cultures in a more general sense and Koizumi focuses on Asian cultures and communities within North America, both Koizumi and Nejad pinpoint the cultural discrimination enforced by the dominant, hegemonic, or 'native' culture of a land. Both scholars then reveal that the individuals are constantly masked behind a generalized representation of their respective cultures. In response, Koizumi and Nejad emphasize that only when victims tell their experiences can we show that each and every individual matters more than the story.

Culture is not the only concept that is crossing sturdy borders—nations are also at war in regions like Eastern Europe. In news outlets, media, and movies, nations are seen as a group of ideals, weapons, and land, but the individuals who embody these groups can be ignored or forgotten. In the presentation "Changes in Russian and Ukrainian Relations since 1991," Ben Chinnik discusses the historical domination of Russia over former Soviet Union countries including Ukraine, which has continued to leave power in Russia to deny possibilities for independence. Russia sees Ukraine and Russia as one identity, disregarding the entire culture that Ukraine and its peoples embody. Chinnik describes that when Ukraine attempted to better align with NATO and powers within Western Europe, Russia feared that Ukraine would gain more independent influence over their political, geographical, and economic means. The big risk at play is the stripping of values and the Ukrainian identity from Ukrainian individuals. In response, Chinnik urges that education is the key to giving Ukrainians back their individuality because education spreads knowledge and knowledge is something that cannot be easily erased. For Ukraine, education about its culture, conflicts, and independence must be told, and individuals must share their experiences behind their home nation.

While Eastern Europe may seem quite a distance from Vancouver, another loss of national identity and individuality is not so far away from us—Indigenous nations and peoples. In "Reflections on Vancouver: Alternative Looks Into Wreck Beach and Deer Lake," Aidan Cheung and Peter Lu explore key attractions in Vancouver and the history behind them. These two young scholars take the audience on a journey through a podcast format, where they uncover the stories of Indigenous peoples and the spaces where age-old Indigenous traditions were practiced before Europeans settled in the land now so-called 'Canada.' Cheung and Lu move beyond simply Wreck Beach and Deer Lake, but they also discuss "The Lost Island" and heritage houses scattered around Vancouver—though these sites and stories are less well known. In the present colonization of Canada, stories about

the history and individuality of the Indigenous peoples are downplayed. Rather, colonizers emphasize the prosperity and the history of colonization, stripping away the individuals and stories of the Indigenous peoples. Cheung and Lu are trying to bring the focus of conversations back upon the ongoing settler colonization of Indigenous land. Cheung and Lu draw on the works of other scholars such as Jennifer Kramer and Greg Younging to re-emphasize their observations of the now-colonized lands. Kramer asserts that the repatriation of original objects to the Indigenous peoples is insufficient and simply perpetuates a sense of ownership, while Younging embraces—and urges others to embrace—the Indigenous voice behind now-colonized spaces. In response, Cheung and Lu call on everyone to continue searching for other spaces where the individuality and identity of the Indigenous Peoples have been stripped away. We must find where and what stories are told to hide the Indigenous stories, and we must listen to their texts, voices, and traditions within those spaces to bring the Indigenous individuals back into the spotlight.

Even after scholars and citizens have made efforts to urge the government to protect Indigenous individuals and history and make amends for past wrongdoings, the present looking into the future—in the eyes of some authors—still seems bleak, especially for Indigenous peoples. In the presentation "Neologisms in Science Fiction: Eden Robinson's 'Terminal Avenue,'" Kiran Bassi discusses the invention of a new word, "peace officers," in Robinson's short story where human bodies blend with a machine's lack of humanity. Bassi emphasizes that the creation of a new word is only reflective of the current world that we live in and an insight into the future—a world where Indigenous individuals are seemingly not encouraged to exist. Bassi explains: the mission of peace officers is to strip Indigenous identity from individuals and force them to adjust to a Western world. Bassi then brings the spotlight back to the individual by describing the conversations about reconciliation for Indigenous Peoples, where we often overlook the individuals impacted and simply see them only as a group. If we heard more stories and more experiences of these impacted persons, would we empathize with them more and urge for stronger change? Would we actually make strides in protecting Indigenous identity and individuality? Bassi offers a bleak point of view, hoping that positive change will still be made for the Indigenous Peoples in the present and in the future, but that this is most likely to only happen within a settler society.

Hope for future change has not only been focused on Indigenous peoples but also on the presence of capitalism and the emergence of artificial intelligence. In the presentation "The Fractured Metropolis: AI and Inequality in the age of Neoliberalism," Henry Rankin discusses the incompatibility between capitalism in the present and artificial intelligence (AI) in the future. While capitalism emphasizes minimal government intervention, social programs, and free will, these values have at least partially led to widespread inequality. In this presentation, Rankin focuses on the illusion of free will among individuals. Rankin uses cyberpunk, a subgenre of science fiction that envisions a lifestyle of "low life but high tech," to illustrate his case. AI and its advancing technology will someday replace human labour—one question is what forms of human labour will remain for humans, and for the forms to be replaced, how will we deal with the persistence and exacerbation of the subsequent economic inequality? Rankin offers universal basic income as a solution, though Rankin admits that this is far

from perfect. Yet, the question of what other solutions we have is at the same time too difficult to answer. In discussing this conundrum between AI and human labour, we have only considered the individuals impacted by this issue as simply words, disregarding their individuality and experiences. This is where Rankin further drives the spotlight back onto the individuals. Free will is about individuals choosing what they want. Rankin demonstrates that free will seems to be just an illusion of capitalism that is further perpetuated and exacerbated by AI because if AI really replaces many forms of human labour, many individuals will have no choice but whatever AI has chosen for them. What will 'free will' be in the future then? Rankin, like many other scholars, cannot offer a definite answer, but with individuals likely losing agency over their lives, the least we can do is consider the impacted individuals as more than concepts but as humans with invaluable experiences.

CAPCON 2023 ended with closing statements by its organizers. The Chair of CAP, Moberley Luger, closed off with a simple description of the conference as "an investment in visibility and invisibility." Throughout CAPCON 2023, young scholars made strides in uncovering the unique individuals and their authentic experiences behind the words and concepts presented. From discussions over historical landmarks in Vancouver to the war between Russia and Ukraine in Eastern Europe to the future of AI, student scholars have advocated for individuals and experiences to be told and to be held first. CAPCON has a home in CAP, and Luger, like many others in the program, hopes that the audience will come again because it is the audience who make these conversations meaningful.

Bridging Theory and Practice: Community Engage Learning Review through the Globalization, Power, and Society Lens

— Bimo Sulistyo Wibowo —

The Coordinated Arts Program's (CAP) Globalization, Power, and Society (GPS) stream adopts a global perspective on hot-button issues like social equality through representation, the significance of the connection between identity and the environment, and the experiences of refugees as part of the migration process. In order to sharpen the focus on the topic of discussion, CAP integrates a discussion panel focused on Community Engaged Learning (CEL) as a stepping stone in deepening connections between global issues and course material studied in class. It creates an environment where society has an impact on learning and learning has an impact on society. CAP provides students with invaluable opportunities to bridge theory and practice, allowing them to develop a comprehensive understanding of both theoretical concepts and their practical applications in real-life scenarios. This review examines the significance and impact of the CEL talks, focusing on the exploration of the intricate relationship between global themes and course content through the GPS lens.

This discussion panel serves as a platform for academic discourse and experiential learning that is eye-opening, thought-provoking, and open-minded to the course content. These CEL talks provide fertile ground for interdisciplinary exploration jin areas such as Arts Studies (ASTU), sociology, political science, geography, and linguistics in the GPS stream. This approach aids and allows students to recognise the interconnectedness of different fields of study by guiding them to see a topic not only from one point of view but also to analyse it from another point of view, which also strengthens their ability to tackle complex problems with the critical thinking they process.

Throughout the academic year, CAP organized a total of six CEL talks. These engaging sessions featured expert speakers who possessed qualifications, were knowledgeable, and had firsthand experience navigating the intricacies of their respective fields. The overarching theme of these talks was to foster a more profound comprehension of various subjects within the realm of learning. Out of the six CEL talks, the initial session was an Introduction to CEL conducted as a Panel discussion featuring Dr. Evan Mauro as the Law and Society ASTU Instructor and Marianne El-Mikati as the CEL Fellow. The second talk focused on Asian representation in the media, with Barbara Lee and Eleanor Wong from the Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF) as speakers. Following that, there was a discussion on Water, Identity, and the City with Audrey Siegl, a Musqueam Water Keeper and community activist. We then investigated the topic of Black Cultures in Vancouver, featuring speakers Maya Preshyon from the Vancouver Black Library and Krystal Paraboo from the Black Strathcona Resurgence Project. Another talk explored Refugee Support, where speakers included Wilfred Thariki from the African Union Commission, Loren Balisky from the Kinbrace

Society, and Nathalie Lozano-Neira from LEVEL. Finally, there was a session titled "Imagining Our Futures—Working Towards Them," with speakers Sam Fenn from the podcast *Crackdown*, Janelle LaPointe from the David Suzuki Foundation, and Norm Leech from the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre. All discussed topics are inextricably linked with course content, especially with materials covered in ASTU 100.

Some themes of the literature that we studied during ASTU 100 included *How to Pronounce Knife* by Souvankham Thammavongsa, *The Best We Could Do* by Thi Bui, and *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid, intersects with those of the CEL talks. For example, one piece of literature that has a lot of conn-ections with CEL talks is *The Best We Could Do*. Thi Bui's graphic memoir depicts the real story of her life as a refugee from her war-torn native Vietnam who fled to seek a new life in the US. This graphic memoir tells the complexity of stories about refugees, particularly Thi Bui as a Vietnamese refugee, her relationship with her family, especially her parents, her relationship with past memories, intergenerational trauma, counter-narrative, and her identity. Keywords such as refugee, relationship, and identity have a strong connection to the CEL talks about refugee support, which explored the situations that create refugees, and what they need to be able to survive in life. In addition, this graphic memoir was used by the professor of our class as a means to facilitate discussions of Asian representation, as this topic was alluded to by Barbara Lee from the Vancouver Asian Film Festival in her discussion in the CEL talk entitled "Asian Representation in the Media," which emphasized that representation matters, and more specifically discussed the importance of representing Asia in the media without the harmful stereotypes that exist and calls for more work to be done fighting anti-Asian racism.

An interesting aspect of our ASTU 100 class with Dr. Luger as the professor, was that students could write responses related to the talk on their respective blogs after the CEL talk. This strategy is highly effective in articulating thoughts and ideas about the discussions, thereby enhancing creative thinking skills. Typically, after the CEL talk is over, there is a debrief event that briefly discusses the themes in the talk and is a discussion between fellow students so that students can practice critical thinking and understand new perspectives from the opinions of other students.

The final assignment in the ASTU 100 G01 class is a Special Edition CEL Blog assignment, which aims to reflect on what knowledge is obtained and learned in the ASTU class that can and has been implemented in society, and how this is related to the CEL talks that have been held. To phrase it differently, GPS students attempted to connect academic content with media and other representations of culture and society. Some of the concepts from the subjects discussed in the CEL Blog from a GPS lens include the theme of visibility of immigrants, analyzing songs, the responsibility of analyzing news and TV shows, intergenerational trauma in music, Asian representations from video games and films, as well as counternarratives from films. Therefore, this blog serves as an eye-opener to the fact that what is shown in the media does not accurately reflect the entirety of the culture that is represented. Hence, as readers, it is essential for us to adopt a discerning stance.

It needs to be stressed that the most signifi-

cant thing my professor addressed with our class, as students and attendees of the CEL talks, was the need to understand the importance of bringing content from outside the university into the classroom and recognize that the knowledge we gain in the classroom can be applied outside the university (Luger). Through these interaction challenges, students gain a sophisticated grasp of the myriad ways in which globalization affects society.

In conclusion, after reflecting on what CEL talks are, what their impacts are, and on the examples above, some of them simultaneously become concrete evidence to strengthen the foundation of community engagement, especially for the GPS Stream. A number of students from the GPS Stream also contributed to CAPCON, which is an annual academic student conference that gives CAP students the opportunity to present their research and engage more with the community. By facilitating interdisciplinary discussions, incorporating local and global perspectives, and fostering dedication to community engagement and academic excellence, both CAPCON and the CEL series empower students to become critically engaged global citizens who not only understand theories but see their practical relevance in the world.

Work Cited

Luger, Moberley. "Special Edition CEL Blog." Arts Studies (ASTU) 1st Year CAP Seminar. University of British Columbia. Vancouver. 3 April 2023. Lecture.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Author Biographies

Morris Hayes

Morris Hayes was born and raised in Oakland, California. He wrote the analysis of *Home Fire* for Dr. Husain's Arts Studies 100 course, in the Media Studies stream. An interest in journalism is what initially attracted Morris to Media Studies, where he studied literature, visual art, films, and journalism. The most memorable moment from Media Studies was a combined lecture in which different art professors gave their individual spiels on how they interpreted a museum exhibit on campus; he was impressed by how they were able to turn their impressions into analysis, and how different their understandings are as a result of their different areas of study. While Media Studies was fun, Morris will pursue a degree in sociology, hoping to better understand the world and the people in it.

Maile Kilen

Maile Kilen is an undergraduate student who enrolled in the Media Studies stream in her first year. She wrote the paper "Manifestations of Indigenous Trauma and Possible Reconciliation in Eden Robinson's "Terminal Avenue" in Arts Studies (ASTU) 100, taught by Dr. Connor Byrne. She grew up in Denver, Colorado, and after graduating high school, took a year off education to backpack and solo travel Europe, Ecuador, and Colombia which gave her the experiences to greatly impact her education and intended pathways for the future. She has decided on a major in anthropology with a minor in sociology, with hopes to educate herself about culture and communities across the world and find a way to combine her love of travel with her education. According to her, CAP was a great experience, and she will never forget the amazing community it created within the Media Studies stream, which allowed for the building of great relationships despite UBC being such a large a university.

Chantal Lee

Chantal Lee was part of last year's Globalization, Power, and Society stream and wrote this paper for Dr. Erin Glanville's Arts Studies 100 course. She was born and raised in Hong Kong but moved to Canada with her family in grade 10 and now calls Richmond her home city. In high school, she enrolled in the IB diploma programme and became interested in history. She hopes to complete her Bachelor of Arts with Honours in history with international relations. Her most memorable moment in CAP was having a one-on-one chat with her undergraduate teaching assistant, Emma, now the Arts Undergraduate Society president, about campus life and choosing programs. Here are a few fun facts about Chantal:

1. She listens to true crime podcasts over lunch.
2. She was both a Model UN and Debate kid in high school.
3. She LOVES tteokbokki and Korean food in general.
4. She enjoys photography, especially taking candid shots at events
5. She is part of a Christian organization on campus called Power to Change!

Laurel Schroeder

Laurel Schroeder just completed her first year at UBC in the Globalization, Power, and Society stream. She wrote her paper for her Geography 122 class about globalization and modern societies, taught by Dr. Trevor Barnes and Rachel Bok. Although she grew up in Toronto, Ontario, Laurel has enjoyed being on the West Coast by the ocean as she is passionate about the outdoors. She loves writing in many forms, including poetry, and has aspirations to one day publish a book. Laurel found one of the highlights of her CAP program to be the Community Engaged Learning panels in her Arts Studies 100 class, such as Randall Cohn's talk on refugee law that sparked her interest in similar careers. She plans to complete her Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in sociology and hopes to go on to work within the field of public policy or law.

Zoe Bishop

Zoe is a first-year undergraduate student in the Law and Society stream. They wrote their paper for Dr. Emily Fedoruk's Art Studies 100 class and plan to continue writing on interdisciplinary topics related to race, gender, and education. They are considering a major in sociology, and are excited to explore a broad range of classes before formally declaring a major. Zoe was born and raised in California, and moved to Vancouver in 2022. In their free time, Zoe likes to rock climb, make impulsive decisions with their friends, see live music, and play guitar. Zoe takes great pride in their relationships with friends and family and is continually learning the value of community and citizenship after moving to a new country. There are two moments tied for most memorable and valuable in the CAP for Zoe. The first was the Community Engaged Learning panel "Black Cultures in Vancouver" with panelists Krystal Paraboo and Maya Preshyon. The second was guest lecturer Caitlin Shane from Pivot Legal Society who talked about harm reduction in homelessness, sex work, and drug policy.

Assia Malapanis

Assia Malapanis was a part of the Law and Society stream during her first year at UBC and wrote her paper that appears in *The Capsule* for Dr. Emily Fedoruk's Arts Studies class. Assia was born in Australia and moved to Canada at the age of four with her family. She developed a passion for the performing arts and activism in high school, which she carried into university. During her early educational years, Assia struggled to read and write due to her dyslexia; however, she eventually developed study skills that suited her and her learning disability. Going forward, she hopes to advocate and teach students with dyslexia so children and teenagers receive the support and guidance they need to thrive in both academic and real-world settings. To achieve her goals, Assia plans to pursue a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Management double degree. Furthermore, Assia's most memorable moments in the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP) involved studying and writing essays with CAP classmates in collegia and finishing final exams.

Silis Hui

Silis Hui, formerly in the Individual and Society stream of the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP), was born and raised on the land we call Vancouver. As a result, being able to attend UBC has been both a convenience and a major opportunity for him. Despite his plans to study psychology, he calls himself a creative at heart and loves to draw and write alongside his studies and his gaming activities. In the future, he wants to become a therapist or a game developer—only time will tell, but he wants to produce his own game at some point regardless. Being in CAP has helped him settle into his first year at university, and he'll always remember the amazing professors he met; in particular, Dr. Fedoruk, whom he held up at the end of class for questions and literary discussions...perhaps a few too many times! Another lasting memory he made was presenting this paper at CAPCON and connecting with other visual novel fans in the audience. To all the students of CAP's 2022-23 year: all the best!

Indra Sharma

Indra Sharma is an undergraduate student who was a part of the Individual and Society stream, and submitted her Arts Studies 100 final paper to *The Capsule*. She is an international student from India, with a strong passion for the social sciences and their practical applications when studied in an interdisciplinary manner. She hopes to pursue a major in economics or sociology, with a minor in the other. In her free time, you can find her struggling to play guitar, watching nostalgic media from her childhood or listening to 2000s pop-punk music. For her, the most iconic moment from the CAP was Professor Emily Fedoruk distributing stationery on the last day of classes, where she acquired a sick dinosaur eraser.

Anna Kouao

Anna Kouao was part of the Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE) stream. She wrote her paper for her Arts Studies course with Dr. Anne Stewart. Anna grew up in a small bilingual farming town in Eastern Ontario called Vankleek Hill, where she was raised fluently in English and French and went through all her schooling in French Immersion. She moved to British Columbia this past year with her family and has been loving the natural beauty of Vancouver and UBC. She has always considered herself to be a big reader, who enjoys public speaking, but is just venturing into writing now that she is in university. She hopes to major in political science with a minor in international relations while at UBC, which would prepare her for her career plan in law. For her future, she plans to continue into international law at the University of Ottawa where she can study bilingually in English and French. Her most memorable CAP moments were the breaks taken during Dr. Cheryl Fu's Economics 101 classes, where students would choose to do karaoke or Just Dance during our brain breaks.

Megan Raitt

Megan was a part of the Politics, Philosophy and Economics stream. She wrote this paper as part of her Arts Studies 101 class, taught by Dr. Evan Mauro. Megan is a third generation Chinese immigrant and credits her blend of western and eastern lived experiences to her intersectional views of writing and academia. She hopes to find a career in the non-profit sector, working to bring her passions for people, environment, and culture together. Megan's time in CAP was fulfilling and memorable but two instances that stands out were reading excerpts from Robin Wall Kimmerer's book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, and the dance breaks in her 9:00 a.m. Economics 101 lectures.

Mackenzie Bjarnason

Mackenzie Bjarnson joined the Media Studies stream of the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP) last year, and reviewed their experiences responding to Barbara Lee's CEL talk about Asian Representation in Media.

Kathleen Mutoro

Kathleen Mutoro was part of the Law and Society stream of the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP) and she wrote this piece based on two Community Engaged Learning sessions that she attended. These were namely the "Black Lives in Vancouver" and "Refugee Support in Canada" talks which she resonated with. Kathleen was born and bred in Nairobi, Kenya and moved to Canada in 2022 as an international student to pursue her university education. She hopes to double major in international relations and psychology hoping to eventually join law school. One of Kathleen's major life goals is to set up a stable law firm in her home country which can handle pro bono cases for citizens who cannot afford quality legal representation. Kathleen is passionate about art and content creation often taking on creative projects as a form of downtime. Her most memorable CAP experience was the Arts Studies class discussions she attended and participated in with Dr. Evan Mauro and especially delving into Angela Davis's autobiography.

Xavier Largo

Xavier is an incoming second-year student who found his home in the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics stream, and after taking Dr. Anne Stewart's Art Studies (ASTU) course, heads the stream's review of the Community Engaged Learning section of this year's *Capsule*, on that very same topic. He was born in Mandaluyong City, part of the National Capital Region of the Philippines. He spent most of his life in the Philippines, growing up both in Pasig City and Antipolo City, until he eventually came to Vancouver to pursue a Bachelor of Arts at UBC. He is currently seeking an integrated program with a double major in Political Science and International Relations, with a focus on immigration between Canada and South-East Asia. His most memorable moment was CAPCON 2023, where along with his peers, he presented the essays written throughout the year as a reflection and acknowledgment of the research made during their first year at UBC. For Xavier, CAP was a must-have experience for first-year students who look not only to improve themselves as researchers, but make wonderful and meaningful friendships that define UBC for them.

Cedric Lin

Meet Cedric, a member of *The Capsule's* editorial board and reviewer and moderator for CAPCON 2022. In his first year in the Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics stream, Cedric penned the paper "The City of Vancouver's Actions for the 2010 Olympics and its Long-Term Impact on Vancouver's Homeless Youth." This work made its debut in the first edition of *The Capsule* and was presented by Cedric himself at CAPCON 2021. For the latest edition of *The Capsule*, he wrote a review on CAPCON 2022, showcasing this year's insightful and well-spoken presentations. Currently in his third year in the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Management Dual Degree program, Cedric is pursuing a major in international relations and a minor in health and society. Afterwards, he plans to continue his studies for a Juris Doctor degree before serving in the public sector. His unforgettable experiences in CAP stem not only from the many academic opportunities available but from the cherished memories he created with many friends through CAP. Every step of his academic journey has been guided by his professors and their dedication, and in particular, Dr. Stewart who has only provided him with unwavering support. With his endless curiosity and passion for academics, Cedric eagerly waits for the next steps of his journey in the CAP Program, at UBC, and beyond.

Bimo Sulistyo Wibowo

Bimo Sulistyo Wibowo, an Indonesian native, is currently in his second year of studies at UBC. He enrolled in the Globalization, Power, and Society stream of the Coordinated Arts Program (CAP) due to his strong interest in geography. Consequently, he pursued a major in environment and sustainability, complemented by a minor in geographic information science and geographical computation, along with a Certificate in Climate Studies and Action. Bimo's decision to continue his geography studies at UBC was supported by a full scholarship from Indonesia, recognizing his impressive achievements in the field of geography within his home country. UBC's reputation as one of the world's best campuses, particularly renowned for geography and environmental subjects, played a significant role in his choice. Engaging with CAP at UBC has been a gratifying experience for Bimo, given his passion for the environment, geography, and community-related activities. One of the standout moments during his time in CAP was working on a term paper for Geography 122. The paper explored the geography of COVID-19 and its profound impact on globalization and the world. Looking ahead, Bimo aspires to utilise his geographic expertise to make valuable contributions, particularly on an international scale. His dedication to the field, combined with his remarkable experiences, instils in him a sense of hope for a meaningful future in geography.