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KALEIDOSCOPE

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Kilachand Honors College
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Letter from the Editors

We are delighted and honored to launch this inaugural issue of *Kaleidoscope: A Journal of Kilachand Honors College*, filled with the fascinating and insightful work of students in Kilachand Honors College. *Kaleidoscope* is an interdisciplinary journal that features the best student work of any genre produced in Kilachand Honors College classes. Like the optical instrument *and* work of art for which *Kaleidoscope* is named, we seek work that sheds light on many perspectives and angles and reflects the world in all its beauty and terror.

The idea of a Kilachand journal emerged from conversations about changing the culture around grades at the honors college. Many of our faculty have adopted alternative grading systems such as dialogic grading – or grading based on conversation and self-reflection – because we recognize that conventional grading is inimical to our most cherished aspirations for teaching and learning. At Kilachand, we want to encourage intellectual curiosity and risk-taking, foster intrinsic academic motivation, and engage (rather than just evaluate) students' work. Typical grading approaches got in the way of these goals, and so we moved towards a model that was a better match for our KHC pillars of living and learning together: Knowledge, Humanity, and Community. This has been an exciting and transformative shift across our curriculum. But we knew there was still another piece of this puzzle. How could we provide a more meaningful platform for acknowledging extraordinary academic achievement? How could we appropriately incentivize, identify, and celebrate truly exceptional efforts, those projects and essays that explode assignment guidelines because their authors are genuinely engaged, even enthralled, in their work beyond the bounds of course-based expectations?

We would publish them in a brand new journal of course!

But first we needed a title for it: We asked Kilachand students, alumni, and staff members to propose titles. Alumnus Evan Armacost, soon to be invited to join our editorial team, proposed *Kaleidoscope* because he believed that Kilachand brought together many perspectives and students from all disciplines to create a mobile, ever-changing, colorful curriculum and community. We asked faculty to nominate the remarkable work from their classes, and students also nominated their own work. Throughout the summer of 2022, we read this work with immense interest and learned a ton along the way. Students responded to reviews and suggestions from the editorial team, and many drafts later, we have the essays, projects, artwork, and reflections you will enjoy in these pages.

We are tremendously thankful to our Managing Editor and Designer, Megan West Kagstrom, as well as the entire editorial team for all their hard work and good cheer in launching Kilachand Honors College's first journal, *Kaleidoscope*. Happy reading!
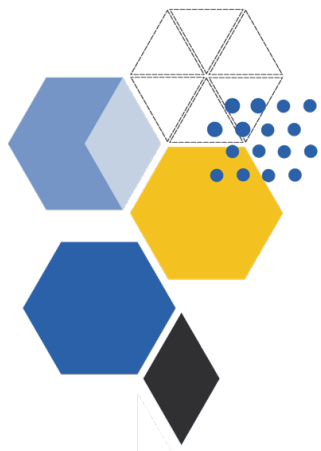
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You might notice that the stylistic conventions are varied across the journal. We opted for an intentional inconsistency in formatting and citation practices to keep intact the interdisciplinary nature of our curriculum, including the publication practices and academic standards recognized across disciplines.

Dante Gonzalez

CFA'24, Theatre Arts

Dante (He/They) is an artist and playwright who explores queerness and nature through a multi-media practice. He honors indigenous Texans and the land which raised him. He contradicts himself.

KATSURA
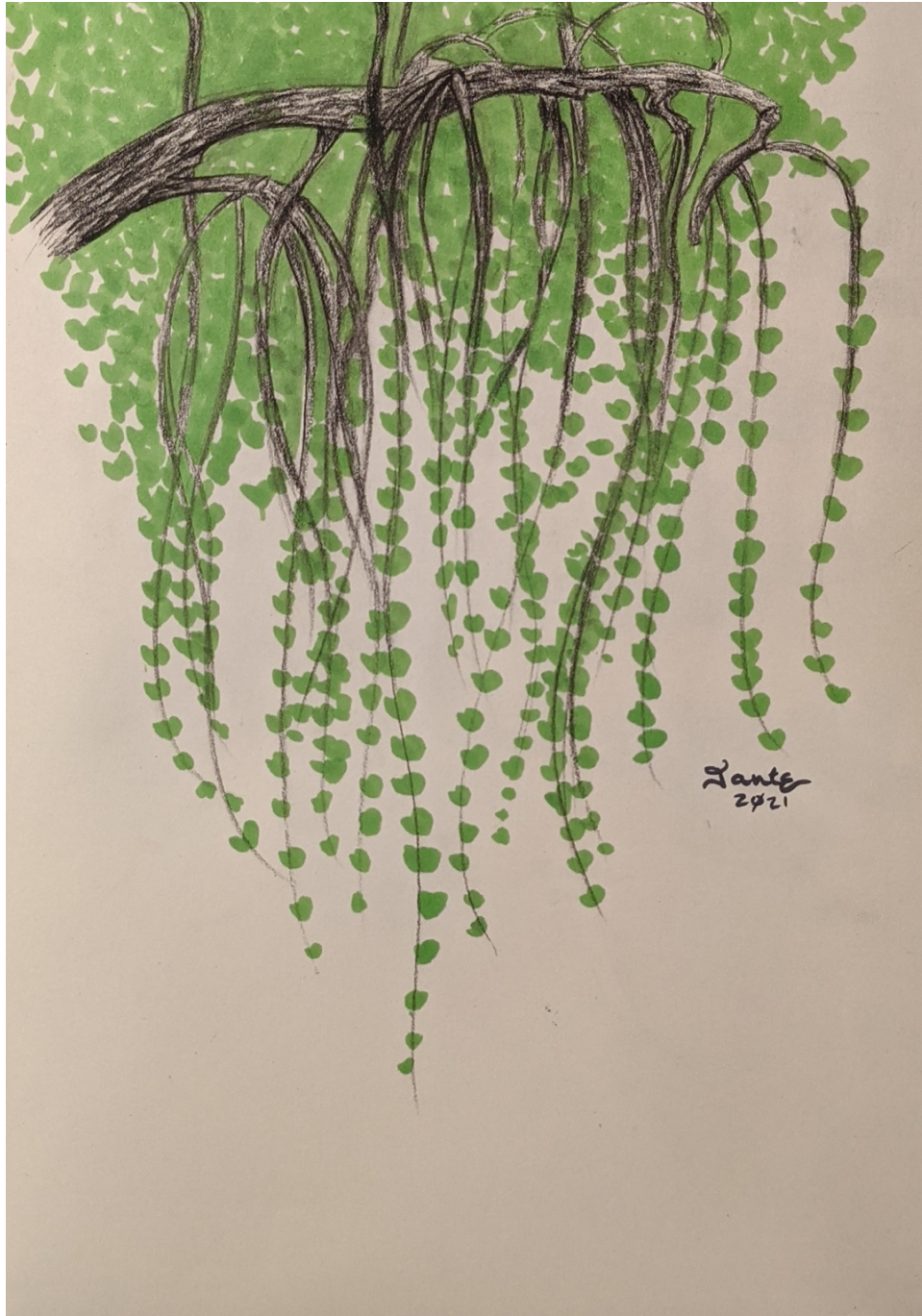
CONIFER

These drawings were inspired by [The Arboretum Experience](#), produced in collaboration with the American Reparatory Theatre and the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. This event was a part of our Fall 2021 Co-Curricular series and the Studio I curriculum.

Alaina Minarik

CAS'25, Chemistry

Alaina is a budding chemist with an interest in inorganic chemistry research. Outside of class, she enjoys studying the differing sociopolitical attitudes and values reflected in American and Italian westerns.

THE THREAT OF THE UNAMERICAN
The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals and its place in the nation's history of vilifying the foreign

Actor Gary Cooper, member of the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals and "friendly witness," testifies before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

What does it mean to be "American"?

A concrete definition is elusive. Since its founding, the United States has been celebrated as a hub of liberty and democracy, a "Great Experiment" created for the people, by the people. Political campaigns praise the Founding Fathers as visionaries and role models. Allies describe the nation as a "beacon of hope." Just as the western frontier once promised boundless

opportunity for Americans on the East Coast, the US today offers promises for migrants worldwide. But on the other side of this glorious narrative is colonization, slavery, xenophobia, and systematic exploitation.

One chapter in American history is particularly relevant when defining Americanism: the decades following the Second World War, when fear of Communism swept the nation. At this time, the US government and conservative citizens labeled leftists as an "Unamerican" threat, a menace to democracy. Hollywood became a battleground as right-wing elements sought to root out disseminators of leftist ideals.

The 40s and 50s saw the powerful wield Americanism as a weapon to vilify minorities. But a common theme in American history is unification against an enemy. For there to be a hero, there must be a villain, so Americans maintain their sense of righteousness and superiority by labeling those who are different as evil. The Red hunting that took place in Hollywood provides a vivid example of how America's greatness and ugliness go together.

INTRODUCTION

In 1944, suspecting that Communists were infiltrating the film industry, a coalition of right-wing Hollywood stars, writers, directors, producers, and personnel formed the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals. In a statement of principles, they outlined their mission:

> We pledge ourselves to fight, with every means at our organized command, any effort of any group or individual, to divert the loyalty of the screen from the free America that give it birth. And to dedicate our work, in the fullest possible measure, to the presentation of the American scene, its standards and its freedoms, its beliefs and its ideals, as we know them and believe in them.[1]

Recognizing the power of film to shape public opinion, members of the Alliance feared that Communists' inclusion of progressive content in film would undermine traditional values and democratic processes.[2] They therefore leveraged America's exalted status to paint leftists as a national enemy, arguing that Communists threatened the beloved American way of life and were wrongfully exploiting film to harm the nation. In doing so, they presented their anti-communism as a heroic crusade to protect the integrity of the country.

But Communists and leftists in Hollywood were primarily interested in social justice and economic equality, not in destroying democracy (as we will see, Hollywood Communists also believed in democracy). This paper argues that, in depicting its disagreement with Communist values as a battle between good and evil, the Alliance participated in the long American tradition of vilifying the unfamiliar and subversive. Like many Americans before and after, members of the Alliance saw people who held different beliefs or led different ways of life to be a hostile force, and they used patriotic rhetoric to justify their treatment of such people.

DEFINING AMERICANISM

Later in 1944, the Alliance invited the House Unamerican Activities Committee to investigate subversion in the film industry.[3] Although little would come of the investigations at this time, the Alliance would support HUAC when it returned to Hollywood a few years later. The Alliance, cooperating fully with HUAC and the FBI, played a key role in the anticommunist network that undermined the careers of countless filmmakers who sympathized with the Communist cause.[4] They defended their actions by claiming that they were fighting to maintain democracy and the American way of life:

> We find ourselves in sharp revolt against a rising tide of communism…and kindred beliefs… groups that have forfeited their right to exist in this country of ours, because they seek to achieve their change by means other than the vested procedure of the ballot and to deny the right of the majority opinion of the people to rule.[1]

In this particular passage of their statement of principles, the Alliance presents Communists as a menace to the vote, something so highly valued that to challenge it is to lose one's right to live in the country. With this statement, the Alliance simultaneously appeals to Americans' love of the ballot and their pride in their country. They also appeal to the protections of the First Amendment when they express appreciation for "the freedom to speak, to think, to live, to worship, to work, and to govern ourselves as individuals."[1] Overall, they base their anti-communist argument heavily on the claim that Communists pose a threat to democracy. They claim that censoring films made by Communists is justified because it prevents the degradation of sacred democratic practices, such as voting and freedom of speech.

However, Hollywood Communists noticed a contradiction in this anti-communist rhetoric: by supporting the censorship of Communist filmmakers, the Alliance was disregarding Americans' right to free speech. In fact, critics of the Alliance referred to it as "The Motion Picture Alliance for the *Prevention* of American Ideals."

Hollywood Communists based their own arguments against HUAC and the Alliance upon concepts of democracy, and they used these arguments to defend the "unfriendly nineteen," a group of left-leaning filmmakers who resisted orders to testify before HUAC. At a "Keep America Free" rally in Los Angeles, supporters of the subpoenaed filmmakers called for "freedom of the screen" and accused conservatives of "thought control." They also countered the Alliance's claim that progressives were a threat to democracy when attorney Bartley Crum, who had been hired by Adrian Scott and Edward Dmytryk, said of the unfriendly nineteen: "each and every man we represent has individually determined he will not yield at any point in upholding the constitutional rights of the American people and of the industry of which he is a part."[2]

Fig. 1. Americans protest HUAC's trials of the Hollywood 10, the ten members of the unfriendly nineteen who would face greater punishment. Note their arguments in defense of the people deemed "Unamerican" by HUAC are based on their own understanding of American values: "Save the Bill of Rights," says one sign.

From Wyoming Public Media.

Thus, each side condemned the other for being "undemocratic," which suggests that democracy was not truly at the heart of the issue. Both the Alliance and progressives in Hollywood equated America with democracy,[6] so their dispute was not solely about the ballot and free speech. Evidently, there was more to the Alliance's definition of Americanism.

A deeper understanding of this definition can be acquired from a guide written by Ayn Rand, a member of the Alliance. *Screen Guide for Americans* warns filmmakers not to "smear the free enterprise system," "deify the 'common man,'" or "smear Industrialists" if they do not want their work to be used as Communist propaganda.[7] According to Rand, the goal of Hollywood Communists is not to openly advertise Communism in film, but to "corrupt our moral premises," indicating that one of the Alliance's complaints about the Communist Party was its social beliefs, specifically its anticapitalism and emphasis on the collective.[7]

Rand's writing adds another layer to the Alliance's agenda: the emphasis on the individual. The Alliance used patriotic rhetoric to justify its attacks on Communism, but it was also afraid of the social changes that would come if Communists gained power. For the MPA, Americanism did not mean strictly democracy and freedom. It meant democracy and freedom for those who supported individualism and punishment for those who believed in collective rule. It established certain people as good and worthy, and others as bad and unworthy.

Thus, the MPA's definition of Americanism is inherently exclusory. The next section will discuss how American films reflect this definition and how exclusion is essential to the broader American identity and culture.

AMERICANISM AND EXCLUSION IN FILM

In his work *The Political Unconscious,* critic and political theorist Frederic Jameson argues that films are inseparable from their political context. This means that all films, in some way, reflect the political ideologies and debates that are circulating at the time of their creation.[8] Consequently, studying film can provide valuable insight into the attitudes and conflicts that were prominent at a given time in American history.

As such, studying the films of the 1940's and 50's can help us understand how people of the US defined "American" and vilified those who were not a part of that exalted class. Classic westerns are particularly interesting to study because they are so integral to America's identity. The promise of the open west, the vigilante justice, and the rugged bravery of the man on horseback are images almost exclusive to the United States. These pictures, therefore, play a central role in defining what is "American." But, aside from horses, guns, and frontiers, a common theme in classic westerns is the "code of the west," which creates a clear distinction between good and bad and dictates that the former must always prevail. Like classic western iconography, this moral code has become synonymous with Americanism. When western filmmakers designate certain groups as heroes and others as villains in their movies, they send a message about what is "American" and acceptable, and what is unacceptable. As a result, Bible-toting, white individualist men have gained the status of patriotic heroes, while those who oppose them are labeled as the enemy. In this way, classic westerns mirror the exclusory definition of Americanism espoused by the MPA.

Fig. 2. Posters for two John Ford films, Rio Grande (1950) and Fort Apache (1948), both starring John Wayne. As members of the Alliance, Ford and Wayne seem to have brought their pro-American, anti-foreign attitudes into their work

In fact, two prominent figures in the domain of classic westerns were director John Ford and actor John Wayne, both members of the Alliance. The values they maintained as a part of this group are reflected in their films. Figure 2 shows posters for two films in which they collaborated: *Rio Grande* (1950) and *Fort Apache* (1948), although there are many more. Both posters feature slogans that speak to the glory of America and Manifest Destiny. *Rio Grande* boasts itself to be "the greatest chapter in the glorious history of the United States Cavalry" while *Fort Apache* is advertised as a "masterpiece of the frontier." In both of these films, Indigenous

people are depicted as the savage enemy standing in the way of white people's progress. In a similar way to how the Alliance demonized Communists in real life, characterizing their progressive beliefs and practices as a threat to America, these films depict another marginalized group as a villain.

Classic westerns are also useful for studying Americanism because they are based in American history. They draw inspiration from the centuries of conflict that have taken place between American settlers and Indigenous people. For example, John Wayne's Colonel Yorke in *Rio Grande* is a fictional representation of the soldiers who did fight "savages" in the name of conquering the West. And with their vicious depictions of "Indians," these films participate in this centuries-old struggle. They reflect not only attitudes that were prevalent at the time they were created, but also attitudes that have existed since before the nation's conception. They remind us that Americans have vilified people deemed "different" since the beginning, that our nation has a long history of vilifying the foreign.

In his work *Red Hunt,* Joel Kovel argues that Americans' abuse of Indigenous people comes from the same mentality that brought Americans to fear and demonize the Communists of the post-war decades. Before Communists were the foreign threat, Indigenous peoples were the enemy.[9] Thus, Classic westerns do not merely draw inspiration from the anticommunism that their creators espoused. Both the bigoted nature of classic westerns and the American fear of Communism come from a tradition that started centuries ago.

Thus, the MPA's exclusory definition of Americanism was nothing new for its time. The central position of classic westerns in American culture tells us that vilification of the foreign is a trend entrenched in this nation's identity and that it has been for a long time.

CHALLENGING TRADITION

Although fear of Communism was widespread following World War II, not everyone believed leftists should be demonized in such an extreme manner, and some recognized and challenged the harmful American trend of labeling certain groups as villains.

One film that provides a cynical view of the trend is worth discussing because it illustrates the processes by which certain people are vilified and others are excused. Henry King's *The Bravados* (1958) offers criticism of the government's Communist witch hunt, and it provides a clever allegorical representation of those complicit in demonizing progressives. Although it does not specifically target the Alliance, it attacks the broader American trend that the Alliance represents. It provides a different perspective on what it means to be American.

Fig. 3. A publicity poster for The Bravados. The slogan on the right reads, "One by one he killed the bravados...for what they had done to his woman!" The advertising is deceptive, because as it turns out, the bravados did nothing to his wife. The film is disguised as a typical revenge western, appealing to tropes such as the man defending his woman, only to reveal the harm of such tropes.

Douglass (Peck) is a hardened widower, in search of the bandits who raped and murdered his wife. He suspects that the culprits are a group of four men, described as "two white men, a half breed, and an Indian" because his neighbor claimed to have seen such a group riding across the US-Mexico border shortly before the killing. When he hears that the Bravados attempted a robbery and are in jail in Rio Arriba, he heads to town to watch their execution. However, when the Bravados escape the prison, Douglass joins the posse that sets out to find them. He tracks down each bandit and brutally kills them, one by one, only to discover that they were not responsible for his wife's death. The real culprit was his neighbor, who wanted his money.[10]

The film turns the classic western on its head, blurring the lines between good and bad and depicting vigilante justice as something morally questionable. It plays upon the audience's biases, coaxing viewers into despising the bravados by employing strategies and rhetoric similar to those used by filmmakers like John Ford. When the bravados are first introduced, they are behind bars. They are dirty, scowling, and slouched. And they are played by actors who were frequently typecast as western "heavies." Immediately the audience equates them with crime and villainy, while Douglass, in his clean cowboy garb, looks like a hero. When it is revealed that the Bravados are innocent, viewers are forced to question their presumptions. They begin to question the black and white rhetoric of classic westerns.

The film sends a powerful message because of its format as a western. As already discussed, classic westerns are a symbol of Americanism, of opportunity, individualism and moral righteousness. When the hero of a western perpetrates injustice, thinking that he is doing the opposite, when he wrongfully kills people in the name of chivalry, audience members realize that there is a dark side to the values they associate with America. *The Bravados* demonstrates how villains are villainous not because they are inherently evil or flawed, but because others project negative assumptions onto them. Indigenous people in classic westerns and in history were only "the enemy" because Americans labeled them as a threat. The Communists in Hollywood only posed a threat to "American" values because the Alliance claimed that they did.

Fig. 4. The "half-breed" Parral (Lee Van Cleef) at the moment he realizes he is about to die. The look of despair on his face garners the audience's sympathy, which is unusual for a villain in a classic western.

Fig. 5. Lee Van Cleef and Gregory Peck in an apparently one-way confrontation in The Bravados.

One particularly striking scene in the film not only unveils the ugly consequences of America's tendency to vilify, but also almost directly mirrors the manner in which the Alliance and HUAC treated suspected Communists in the 1940s and 1950s. When Douglass' character finds the "half-breed" Parral, the latter immediately throws away his gun, apparently terrified. A confrontation then ensues, in which Douglass shows Parral a picture of his wife and asks if he recognizes her. Parral, realizing that he is about to die, pleads with Douglass, insisting that he has never seen her before. But Douglass refuses to believe him because he is already convinced of the Bravados' guilt. Even as Parral begs for his life and says that he has a family, Douglass remains unmoved, and he shoots him in the head.

The clear imbalance of power in this scene resembles a trial and execution. At this point, the audience begins to wonder if Douglass is really a hero and if Parral is truly a villain. The look of despair that flashes across Parral's face when he realizes Douglass is standing over him makes us wonder if we were wrong to vilify him, and the distinctions between good and bad begin to fade.

Significant parallels emerge between Parral's "trial" and the HUAC hearings of the 40s and 50s. Although Douglass questions Parral before killing him, it is clear that he already knows (or thinks he knows) the answers. He has already reached a verdict, and he shows no pity for the man because, in his eyes, the man is a criminal, is evil, and therefore deserves death. Similarly,

when HUAC questioned suspected Communists, it already knew much of the information that its victims surrendered. And many of those who were subpoenaed recognized that HUAC had already deemed them Communists, regardless of what they would say.[2] In the same way that Douglass demonizes the Bravados, members of the Alliance and HUAC assumed the guilt of those who supported Communist ideals.

CONCLUSION

The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals is one player in a long history of vilifying the foreign. Whether a certain person or group adheres to different cultural values, holds different beliefs, or comes from abroad, it is common for Americans to fear them, make assumptions about them or mistreat them, and to use patriotism to justify these actions. As Americans, we tend to hold our country in exalted status, refusing to allow anything to tarnish our perception of the "beacon of hope." And sometimes, we leverage our nation's status to assert power over others who are different or disagree with us.

In order to maintain the perfection of their country, in order to feel superior, Americans have traditionally felt the need to exclude. They have felt the need to defend their country from foreign or unfamiliar influences and to maintain the status quo. But, the United States is flawed, and foreign contributions and novel ways of thinking are necessary to make it a more just place for everyone. Although the Alliance is gone, its mentality has endured, and the challenge of the coming years will be to replace this xenophobic way of thinking with a state of open-mindedness.

Notes

1. "The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals." *Hollywood Renegades Archive.* Cobblestone Entertainment, 2005, http://www.cobbles.com/simpp_archive/huac_alliance.htm.

2. Langdon, Jennifer E. *Caught in the Crossfire: Adrian Scott and the Politics of Americanism in 1940s Hollywood.* Columbia University Press, 2010. https://hdl-handle-net.ezproxy.bu.edu/2027/heb.99024.

3. Ceplair, Larry, and Steven Englund. *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-60.* University of Illinois Press, 2003, pp. 211-215.

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6. Paris, Michael. "Lessons for democracy: American cinema 1942–1945." European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire, 1998, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 85-94, doi:10.1080/13507489808568200

7. Rand, Ayn. "Screen Guide For Americans (USA, 1947)". *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, edited by Scott MacKenzie, University of California Press, 2014, pp. 422-432. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520957411-120.

8. Jameson, Frederic. "On Interpretation: Literature as a Socially Symbolic Act." *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, 1st ed., Cornell University Press, 1981, pp. 17 –102, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt1287f8w.4.

9. Kovel, Joel. *Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anticommunism and the Making of America.* Basic Books, 1994.

10. King, Henry, director. *The Bravados.* 20th Century Fox, 1958.
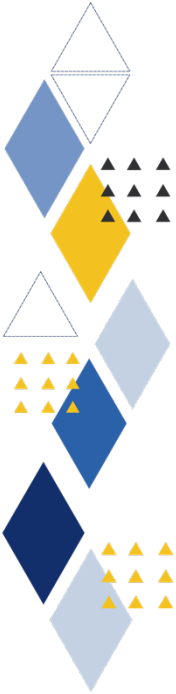
Man Nguyen

Sargent'24, Health Sciences

Man is a nonbinary gay student from Vietnam who spends his time deciding between learning the next board game or cooking for his friends. He aspires to become a socially minded doctor while also working in the public health sector.

Viktoria Popovska

COM'24, Journalism

Viktoria is a Macedonian-American, first-generation university student. With a love of hearing others' experiences and sharing their stories, Viktoria hopes to make an impact through her writing and hands-on work.

Diana Reno

Pardee'24, International Relations

Diana is from Westport, MA. She studies IR, specifically in Africa and the Middle East and International Economics. Diana is passionate about political activism and human rights law.

ADDRESSING ACCOUNTABILITY IN HARARE'S HEALTHCARE FACILITIES TOWARD LGBT PATIENTS BY ADAPTING GALZ'S TARGETED DATA COLLECTION APPROACH WITH UNICEF'S EQUIP VIRTUAL PLATFORM

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, President Robert Mugabe surprised the United Nations General Assembly when, in the middle of his speech, he shouted, "We are not gays!"[1] Mugabe, Zimbabwe's president of almost 30 years, argued that the Western countries needed to stop forcing them to adopt "new" human rights that conflicted with the nation's values. Throughout his time in power, the former president voiced his extreme disapproval of queer people, going so far as to announce that they were "worse than dogs and pigs" and should be put to death.[2]

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[1] Max Fisher, "Why Robert Mugabe just shouted, "We are not gays" in his UN speech," Vox, September 28, 2015, https://www.vox.com/2015/9/28/9411391/why-robert-mugabe-just-shouted-we-are-not-gays-in-his-un-speech.

[2] Tabona Shoko, "'Worse than dogs and pigs?' Attitudes toward homosexual practice in Zimbabwe," *J Homosex* 57, no. 5 (2010): 634-49. doi: 10.1080/00918361003712087. PMID: 20455134.

Mugabe's homophobia permeated his public policy, and as a result, Zimbabwe became a very dangerous place for queer people to live. Many queer people suffered alienation from their communities and a complete lack of resources to meet their basic needs. In 1990, a new organization named Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, or GALZ, was formed to address the resource disparity and to create a community amongst Zimbabwe's LGBT population.[3] With little competition, it quickly became the leading LGBT-focused organization in the country. They built up their services with a special focus on healthcare for queer individuals and worked to engage their participants in dialogue about their experiences in healthcare facilities.[4]

GALZ's most recent Situational Analysis Report outlines a plan which involves using their community dialogue initiative to collect data on what queer people experience in Zimbabwean healthcare facilities and how these experiences can be improved. In order to further this initiative and advance GALZ's vision, our team of Boston University students plans to collaborate with this leading LGBT organization to create a curriculum/guide for the facilitators of these important queer healthcare conversations. We also intend to create a secure website platform that will allow facilitators and healthcare providers to engage with educational materials and collect data on the status of LGBT-targeted healthcare. We hope that creating this platform will streamline GALZ's data collection efforts, ensure the participants' safety from police harassment, and help GALZ reach more of Zimbabwe's rural LGBT population.

BACKGROUND

Barriers to adequate healthcare exist across Zimbabwe for such reasons as low wages for health professionals and an overburdened public health system.[5] However, LGBT Zimbabweans often suffer the most severe disparities. LGBT patients report healthcare workers refusing to touch them or, in some cases, preaching the Bible to them.[6] Even major institutions like the Public Services International (PSI) facility in Harare, received a four out of ten for the quality of LGBT healthcare in a study conducted by GALZ in 2017.[7] LGBT patients reported that the facility has a consistently unreliable supply of medications for sexually transmitted infections, forcing some patients to pay for them out-of-pocket at retail pharmacies, opening them up to

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[3] "GALZ," Wikipedia, accessed July 28, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GALZ. Although GALZ identifies as an organization that serves the entire LGBTI population, their studies focus solely on LGBT subjects. LGBT stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender," and the additional "I" stands for "intersex." We use this acronym to keep our analysis consistent with GALZ's data, which may not fully encompass the scope of their mission.

[4] "GALZ: An Association of LGBT People in Zimbabwe," accessed March 1, 2022, https://galz.org

[5] Lizeth Roets et al, "Accessibility of healthcare in rural Zimbabwe: the perspective of nurses and healthcare users," *African Journal of Primary Health Care and Family Medicine* 12, no. 1 (2020). https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-1eadd78b4a

[6] "Learning for Healthcare Providers: Exploring healthcare provision in Zimbabwe for persons of varied sexual orientation," *Aids Fonds* (2014). ISBN: 978-0-7974-6172-7.

[7] "Perceptions Perspectives: Access to facility-based health services for LGBT people in Harare & Bulawayo," *GALZ* (2017), 20. https://galz.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Zimbabwe-Situational-Analysis-REPORT-redesign_2.pdf.

both financial hardship and potential further discrimination. In another study, a lesbian participant recounted that the hospital staff were afraid to touch her as if they were afraid that she would respond to the touch.[8]

LGBT patients faced structural discrimination through deliberate inaction that has devastating consequences for their health. Despite studies indicating that men who have sex with men, or MSM, in sub-Saharan Africa are four times more likely than the general population to have HIV, Zimbabwe's public health effort does not scale up. Indeed, a cross-sectional study of LGBT people in Harare and Bulawayo demonstrated the consequence of Zimbabwe's infrastructural negligence: a substantial gap between the queer community and the general population in HIV status awareness.[9] This disparity indicates structural barriers that undermine engagement among the LGBT populations in HIV care. Studying these structural barriers by examining how healthcare facilities are meeting or failing to tailor their service to LGBT patients is a first step toward addressing this disparity.

Efforts are already underway. In 2017, GALZ's Situational Analysis Report shows that LGBT people generally report negative experiences trying to access sensitive and comprehensive healthcare. This study found that the healthcare providers overwhelmingly fail to acknowledge their inability to meet LGBT participants' standards of availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, and accountability: the healthcare professionals consistently rate their performance higher as compared to how LGBT patients rate the facilities using the same metrics. Supported by existing researchers on healthcare barriers against LGBT patients, this finding indicates that Zimbabwe was far from achieving an LGBT-friendly healthcare system. Having identified our focus on healthcare equity for LGBT in Zimbabwe, using the impact gaps approach, our student group 1) identified an already existing and outstanding approach from a Zimbabwean LGBT organization, 2) learned about the challenges that prevented the current model from meeting the organization's expectations, and 3) proposed a new model of action to overcome these obstacles.

EXISTING MODEL: FOCUS GROUP STUDY

As the leading LGBT-led organization in Zimbabwe, GALZ seeks to understand and advocate for the queer community in Zimbabwe, including their experiences with healthcare services. To this end, GALZ conducted focus group studies with various stakeholders to assess the quality of healthcare services for the LGBT community in Zimbabwe, specifically those using certain facilities in Harare and Bulawayo. In the current model, the first step of the process includes

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[8] Hunt J, Bristowe K, Chidyamatare S, et al, "'They will be afraid to touch you': LGBT people and sex workers' experiences of accessing healthcare in Zimbabwe—an in-depth qualitative study," *BMJ Global Health* (2017); 2:e000168

[9] Harris, T. G., Wu, Y., Parmley, L. E., Musuka, G., Mapingure, M. P., Chingombe, I., Mugurungi, O., Hakim, A., Gozhora, P., Miller, S. S., Lamb, M. R., Samba, C., & Rogers, J. H. (2022). "HIV care cascade and associated factors among men who have sex with men, transgender women, and genderqueer individuals in Zimbabwe: Findings from a biobehavioural survey using respondent-driven sampling." *The Lancet HIV, 9* (3). https://doi.org/10.1016/s2352-3018(21)00297-6

conversations with senior management at GALZ, conversations with leadership at the Sexual Rights Centre, and interviews with faculty members of various clinics. At least one GALZ member would accompany these sessions to ensure accountability, transparency, and ownership in the process of understanding facility-based healthcare services for LGBT patients.

GALZ conducted focus groups with various stakeholders, including members of the LGBT community and their healthcare providers. In focus groups, participants are separated into groups such as GBT (Gay and bisexual men and trans-women), LBT (Lesbian and bisexual women and trans-men), TW (Transgender men and women), and the healthcare professionals from the facilities being evaluated. GALZ facilitators then engaged participants in each group to discuss their experiences with specific health facilities or allow health facilities to evaluate themselves. Participants in the same group rate a facility from 1 to 10 on five channels– Availability, Accessibility, Affordability, Acceptability, and Accountability– before explaining the score. This presents each group an opportunity to clear up any ambiguity about what a 10 in Accessibility means to them as a group for example and formulate a mutually understood set of criteria to rate the facility with. By providing each group a framework to create a measurement scale based on their experiences, GALZ established a system with clear standards tailored to account for the varied needs or expectations among the stakeholders. Additionally, GALZ can now qualitatively and systematically access how a healthcare facility treats LGBT patients: by either averaging queer participants' numerical ratings on each of the channels or comparing these ratings with the self-evaluation ratings provided by the healthcare provider group.

NEEDS STATEMENT: GALZ'S EXPECTATIONS FOR HOW THE STUDY CAN BE EXPANDED

Given the health inequity facing LGBT populations perpetuated by Zimbabwe's medical infrastructure, there is a need to safely and routinely hold healthcare facilities in Zimbabwe, starting with Harare, accountable for their quality of care toward queer clients according to that community's standards; there is further need to improve the users' and providers' understanding of whether or not the facilities are meeting queer clients' needs. GALZ established a goal at the end of the 2017 report on the earlier study to continue facilitating dialogues in different focus groups (LBT, GBT, TW, and healthcare providers) more routinely to collect 1) qualitative data on the healthcare experience of LGBT people and 2) self-evaluation of healthcare providers on their respective facilities' ability to serve each different group within the LGBT community. More frequent assessment means that GALZ, LGBT patients, and their healthcare providers can observe how different groups' average ratings change or remain static over time. Stakeholders can use the data to identify where a certain healthcare facility needs improvement, how specific groups in the LGBT community are experiencing disparity at a facility, and whether a facility is improving its services since the last evaluation.

However, due to the political persecution against the LGBT community in Zimbabwe, this current model faces challenges that undermine its safety and frequency. Despite GALZ's plan for its continuation, the official website for the organization where the original 2017 report was posted has not published any further reports using this model. The current model which is based on face-to-face meetings presents certain challenges that prevent it from being carried out

more routinely. For instance, GALZ has faced difficulty with police raids, which have disrupted their events and have led to harassment and mistreatment of people attending.[10] This meant that using in-person meetings for data collection can be both unreliable and risky for the physical and emotional well-being of the participants.

Recognizing GALZ's aim to carry out frequent evaluations, the organization can benefit from a safe and streamlined space where they can 1) securely and continuously train people to facilitate these important conversations about LGBT healthcare and 2) allow target populations to safely take routine evaluations on local healthcare facilities without police interruptions and harassment. Building on the amazing work and model that GALZ had accomplished, we hope to improve the current model by introducing it into a virtual platform, using another well-constructed existing model for online communication and assessment.

BUILDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

Our proposed partnership with GALZ will create a virtual space where GALZ can train facilitators to use a standardized evaluation platform whose measurement standards are built on the experiences of queer people in Harare and their healthcare providers. As GALZ wants to carry out routine evaluations, the organization needs a safe space where they can 1) securely and continuously train people to facilitate these important conversations about LGBT healthcare and 2) allow target populations to safely take routine evaluations on local healthcare facilities.

As a starting point for our intervention, we plan to focus on Harare and expand to other parts of the country further on. In their current model, GALZ outlined its method for collecting qualitative data on health service provisions to key communities. The virtual platform and evaluation format established by EQUIP (Ensuring Quality in Psychological Support) can be adapted for GALZ to routinely collect evaluative data on LGBT healthcare experiences by circumventing the risk of meeting in person within their current model. EQUIP is an online platform used to supervise, support, and train psychological support providers. It includes competency assessments, e-learning courses, and a separate trainer support portal.[11] As GALZ is an LGBT-led organization, the employees who play the facilitator roles (in both GALZ's current model and our intervention plan) are also LGBT, allowing them to better understand the queer patients' circumstances. For example, rather than having a non-queer doctor or a gay man facilitating the conversation, having a lesbian facilitator in the lesbian focus groups can maximize empathy, respect, and understanding to encourage an open, considerate, and productive dialogue process.

Our program, in partnership with GALZ, will prepare data collection facilitators to have conversations that provide a holistic understanding of programs and healthcare experiences for

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[10] "Zimbabwe-Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 21 March 2017," Legal Aid Board, Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland) (March 21, 2017), https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1419275/4792_1512549926_143170.pdf.

[11] "EQUIP: Ensuring Quality in Psychological Support," accessed March 1, 2022. https://equipcompetency.org.

LGBT people. Similar to EQUIP's format, we will create a web-based platform that requires users to register and create accounts to be approved by GALZ. Two "portals'' will be coded onto the website, with one of them being for facilitators and the other for focus group participants. In the facilitator portal, we will offer courses for volunteer facilitators to complete before they can receive certification and hold discussions and focus group meetings. Examples of courses that facilitators may have to complete include: "How to Talk to Healthcare Providers about LGBT Individuals'' and "Language to Avoid when Facilitating Discussions with Vulnerable Groups."

Our program will also provide facilitators a space in the website portal to take notes during discussions, record the agreed-upon focus group definition from the initial meetings, and keep track of the focus group members, healthcare providers, and senior management at GALZ that the facilitator has spoken with. The five standards that GALZ hopes to measure are availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, and accountability. As in the original model, participants during the first meeting with the facilitator will establish what each of the standards means to them and what a numerical rating in that standard means. Once completed, the facilitators' notes on the discussion will be submitted, a member of the GALZ leadership board will review them, and the data will be collected and stored for the next steps.

The focus group portal will be where LGBT focus group participants who have completed initial focus group discussions, as well as healthcare providers, will be able to take follow-up assessments in an easy and manageable manner. Like facilitators, the focus group participants will have to register and create user accounts. In contrast to facilitators, focus group participants will be given registration codes and information during initial in-person focus group meetings. In the portal, these participants will have access to a routine survey, the frequency of which will be decided by GALZ. Each participant can select a healthcare facility to evaluate, and the survey will showcase the grading options for each standard. Next to each grading option are the agreed-upon definitions by everyone (10 in availability means always having the medicines required by LGBT for example, while 9 means usually having the medicines demanded, and so on). Ultimately, we plan to focus on the streamlining of facilitator education and conversations with the target and healthcare-providing populations.

To execute our plan of constructing a website for this project, our Boston University student group will work with GALZ to budget for a website builder, domain, apps, and an Extended Validation SSL. The website builder (using Wix as a reference) and apps will together cost approximately $60 per month. The domain name and SSL will incur an additional cost of $215 per year. We will invest approximately $1000 to pay someone to construct the website and approximately $1000 for expenses related to creating educational content. To help cover some of these costs, GALZ can apply for a grant through the Arcus Foundation, which gives funding to initiatives that aim to increase the safety, inclusion, and acceptance of LGBT people globally.[12] Currently, they provide funding for projects on the African continent in South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda. This organization outlines social justice goals that align strongly

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[12]"Social Justice Program Geographic Focus Areas," Arcus Foundation, accessed May 1, 2022, https://www.arcusfoundation.org/our-support/social-justice-lgbt/

with GALZ's and we believe that they will be a good collaborator for our website project. GALZ may also solicit support from nonprofits like "Coding with a Cause" to help construct their website for free.[13]

   With a streamlined approach to data collection, GALZ will be able to assess the health care that LGBT individuals are provided either through GALZ programs or in general clinics. Once the program has taken root in Harare and proves to be effective, our goal is to reach rural regions in Zimbabwe and provide this type of assessment to LGBT people in more remote areas. Further research, testing, and discussions will need to be had to decide how best to take the initial focus group meetings and make them virtual. Finally, by training these facilitators to hold efficient focus groups, GALZ will be able to pinpoint target areas for improvement, advocacy, or create programs to better aid LGBT people in healthcare settings. This will especially benefit LGBT people in those more remote areas who likely face higher ostracization and by collecting this qualitative data, GALZ will have a better understanding of how to help those people moving forward.

   In the future, we hope to expand the model outside of Harare, allowing initial focus group meetings to be held virtually as another measure to combat police raids and harassment. This will be one of the first features we work on once we launch the platform, but it cannot be included in the initial launch because of disparities in technology and video call access in rural as opposed to urban areas. As a result of Zimbabwe's economic crisis, poor rural communities struggle to access the internet in the face of rising inflation and costs. This means that our current intervention would be more applicable at the urban locations where GALZ conducted their 2017 studies, including Harare and Bulawayo.

   Our group also hopes to address concerns regarding data privacy. Part of the reason we hope to partner with GALZ is that, as an organization of LGBT people for LGBT people, they have an inherent interest in protecting and securing data about themselves and others in the community. However, this can put a great burden on GALZ to protect sensitive data. To account for this, our plans need to work concurrently with Zimbabwe's health data security reform efforts. Past research indicates that there is an existing law in Zimbabwe to guarantee people security over their health data and that within Zimbabwe, there is a strong demand to increase data privacy.[14] Advocating for health data privacy for all Zimbabweans systematically will also benefit our focus group participants in Harare, alleviating some of the burdens on GALZ to protect the data themselves.

   To summarize, our proposed intervention, in collaboration with GALZ, will 1) train facilitators to create a respectful and productive discussion about health care expectations among LGBT people in Zimbabwe as well as their healthcare providers (participants), and 2) develop a virtual platform to inform these participants on how to evaluate their healthcare for

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[13] https://codingwithacause.org/

[14] "Perceptions of the Right to Privacy in Zimbabwe A Research & Advocacy Report (Year 2)," The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, accessed April 21, 2022, https://www.opennetafrica.org/?wpfb_dl=3

LGBT people based on GALZ's standardized evaluation model; a virtual platform will avoid police raids and streamline the process. Zimbabwe is facing a healthcare inaccessibility crisis. LGBT Zimbabweans experience restricted access to necessary care and resources, endangering their mental and physical well-being. With our proposal, the well-recognized NGO GALZ will be able to collect data on their constituents' needs and hold healthcare workers accountable for practices that will make their LGBT patients feel safe, heard, respected, and supported.

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Amanda Katchmar

CAS'22, Biology

Amanda is a recent graduate of the Honors College and a current MPH candidate at the School of Public Health. In her free time, she enjoys running and knitting.

MEMORIAL RATIONALE

Philippa Fawcett, a mathematician and advocate for education, is not a widely known figure. When she is recognized, it is often for her performance in the Tripos, an exam that all undergraduate students at the University of Cambridge must obtain honors in to receive their degree. Students are ranked based on their performance, with the highest-scorer receiving the title of "Senior Wrangler."[1] Philippa was one of the few women to sit for the exam, where she placed "above the Senior Wrangler," as women were not yet given ranks.[2] However, Philippa's contributions to the English and South African education systems deserve recognition, as does her perseverance and triumph in an arena dominated by men.[2] To honor her legacy, I propose the construction of a memorial on a central lawn at Newnham College that emphasizes her achievements and encourages younger generations to embody her perseverance and dedication in their own quest for education. This memorial, by highlighting her work to improve the education system for all – a value that is becoming increasingly emphasized during today's conversations about structural barriers to education – emphasizes Philippa's life outside of Cambridge, not just her performance on the Tripos.

The memorial features Philippa Fawcett climbing up progressively-taller pillars, reaching behind her and beckoning a viewer to step up and follow her. She is surrounded by books carved from granite that appear to be precariously stacked, and their increasing height is meant to represent the enlightenment that one reaches from the acquisition of new knowledge. This climb is not impossible, but it is not easy, either. The difficulty that Philippa and the viewer would face in their climb is meant to convey the challenges and opposition that she faced in her journey to obtain an education during a period where women were presumed to be incapable of doing so.[3] Still, Philippa was not alone in this movement and was able to succeed in part due to the work of many activists who came before her. To honor the many faces of this movement, names of activists from and before Philippa's time, such as Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Lydia Becker, and Millicent Fawcett, Philippa's mother, are inscribed onto the spines of the "books," along with short descriptions of their roles and contributions to the women's movement.

Today's audience would likely value Philippa's work of ensuring access to education even more than her achievement in the Tripos, underscoring the need to highlight this work from later in her life. Philippa, stepping onto the tallest tower, is holding a book with her name, the inscription below it reading "pioneer in education and mathematics." Most depictions of Philippa are from young adulthood, when she placed first in the Tripos, but this memorial would envision her in mid-adulthood, the majority of which she spent working at the Normal School in Johannesburg training mathematics teachers and establishing schools. She would later return to London to work at the London City Council as an education administrator, leading schools

there, as well.[2] Though she is climbing upward in the memorial, she is looking back, a hand outstretched, beckoning anybody passing through – male or female, young or old – to follow her and confront the challenges that they face in their quest for an education. This would emphasize the fact that, despite academia having changed since Philippa passed through it over a century ago, there are still challenges faced by women and minority students and in overcoming them they are supported by the work of hundreds of activists who came before them.

As aforementioned, this memorial would be constructed between the Kennedy and Peile halls at Newnham College, a central lawn on the campus, in Cambridge to honor Philippa's legacy at the school. The pillars are facing the heart of Cambridge. Newnham, an all-women's college, is located outside of the heart of Cambridge, which is unsurprising given that women were outsiders to education at the time that the college was founded. Philippa, climbing in the direction of the center of Cambridge, is working towards the heart of the academic institution and striving for recognition as a *Cambridge* academic, not just a *Newnham* academic. The base of the memorial, the pillars, and the books are constructed from marble, complementing the "stately" appearance of the red-brick Newnham buildings, and Philippa is cast in bronze, a traditional choice for memorials because it stands out against the marble. At the foot of the statue is a bronze plaque that outlines Philippa's history as placing "above the Senior Wrangler" at a time when women's education was being strongly opposed, along with her work to advance access to education in South Africa and in England. Below the short biography is a line that asks the viewer to follow in her footsteps and confront their own challenges. The memorial would be placed in a central location at Newnham, and it is expected that a majority of those who would see it would be current Newnham students, who, as women, are likely to still confront challenges to their progress through academia, which is largely still a male-dominated arena.[4] It is hoped that, by reflecting on Philippa's story and work, students would be encouraged to persevere and to not only work towards their own education, but also assist others in doing so.

Upon first glance the memorial may seem to capture the challenges that Philippa faced in her life, rendering them fixed in time. However, upon further reflection on the construction of the memorial – the invitation to follow Philippa, the placement at Newnham, and Philippa carrying her own "book"– the viewer would recognize and acknowledge that the challenges that Philippa faced are not over, and that the work she and many other activists carried out are the foundation for further change. By highlighting Philippa's work in education, this memorial encompasses a greater aspect of her life that was and still is largely under-recognized but should be considered a fundamental aspect of her legacy in a time where increasing attention is being paid to issues of equity and barriers to education.

Climbing Above: A Tribute to Philippa Garrett Fawcett

Philippa, middle to late life, cast in bronze
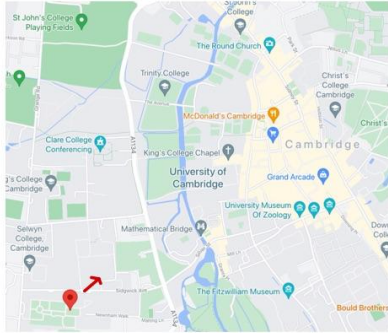
Located at Newnham College, with Philippa climbing toward King's College Chapel

Plaque at base of "steps" describing Philippa's life and asking visitors to follow her lead

Stacks of books with names, sculpted from marble

memorial designed for interaction/ following her steps
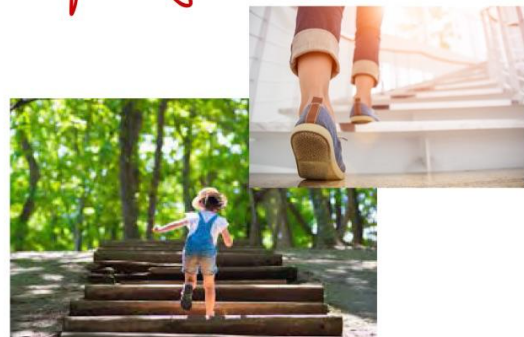
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Marissa Carty

CAS'22, Psychology

Marissa works in the mental health and education fields and writes poetry in her free time. The pieces you will read throughout this journal are selections from her first collection, Somewhere Among the Wildflowers.

VULNERABILITY UNIVERSITY

in college, I majored in softening
my rigid perfectionism
razor-sharp opinions
barbed emotional fences
turned plusher, more malleable

the hardest work
is dismantling
those pervasive, familiar evils
turning up the hard-packed dirt
where rock walls once stood
into supple soil
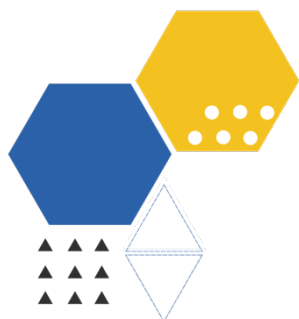
Caitlyn Leonard

Sargent'22, Human Physiology

Caitlyn is a graduate student at BU School of Public Health. She is a Massachusetts native with a fondness for Cape Cod and a soft spot for onion rings.

NAUSET

Author's Note

"Nauset" is a story of farewell and renewal inspired by my childhood memories on Cape Cod. I have spent my summers at Nauset Beach since I was able to waddle my little legs down the boardwalk. The beach was a short walk from my Grandparents' cottage, which was sold when they both passed away.

During my visits to Nauset Beach over the years, I witnessed Mother Nature's kindness and anger, expressed through her competing geological processes of erosion and deposition. These processes have been carving out the Cape Cod shoreline for about 25,000 years.

Many locals may recall the winter of 2018, when Winter Storm Riley devoured nearly eighty feet of thirty-foot tall sand dunes within thirteen hours at Nauset Beach. The powerful storm permanently altered the coastline. When I returned to the beach after the storm, my heart was overwhelmed with a profound sense of loss.

Maurice Sendak, a renowned author and illustrator, shared in his 1986 interview with Terry Gross, "This is a thing that does obsess me – the fragility of moments of childhood – of life." In my story, I also capture this sentiment of our fragility. Regardless of how hard we may try, we cannot hold onto places, people, or moments. Time changes us all.

In his works, Sendak also highlights the vulnerability of childhood and children's inability to exert control over their lives. In my story, I project this belief onto adulthood as well. Just as the wind and the waves tug on the grains of sand on the beach, voices and societal expectations tug on our thoughts and decisions.

Ultimately, this story culminates as my personal acceptance of change, instability, and uncertainty. I find solace in the beauty that these elements impart on our lives, and I hope you will learn to appreciate this beauty too.

The lower photo on page 33 is by Merrily Cassidy from the Cape Cod Times. All other images are original photos from the author.

nauset
by caitlyn leonard

a story of farewell

for my grandfather
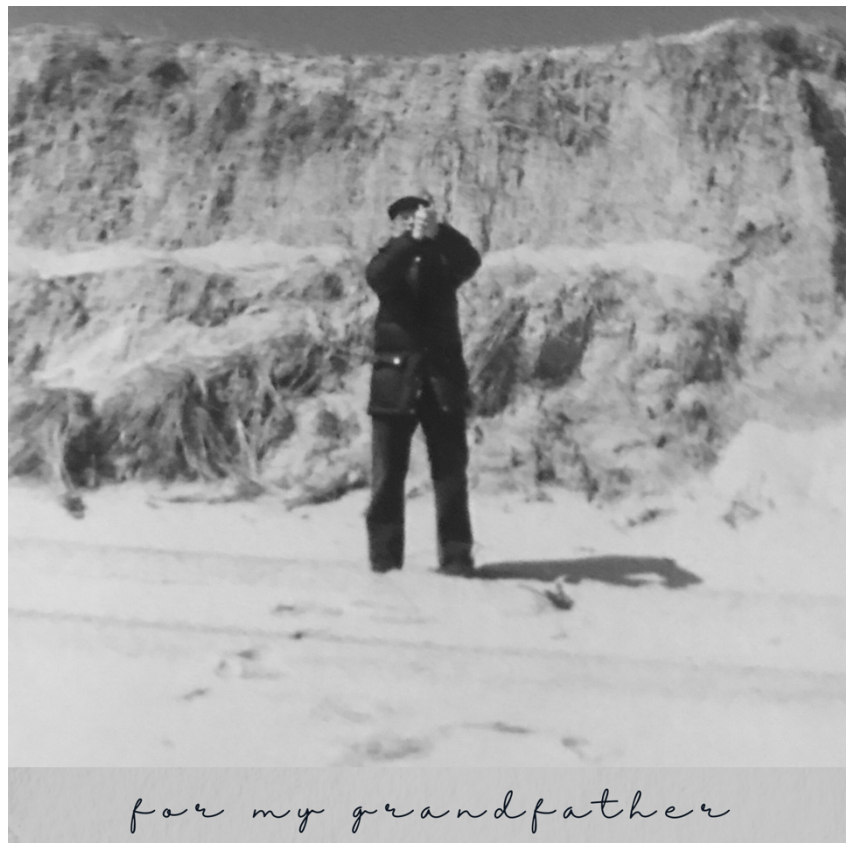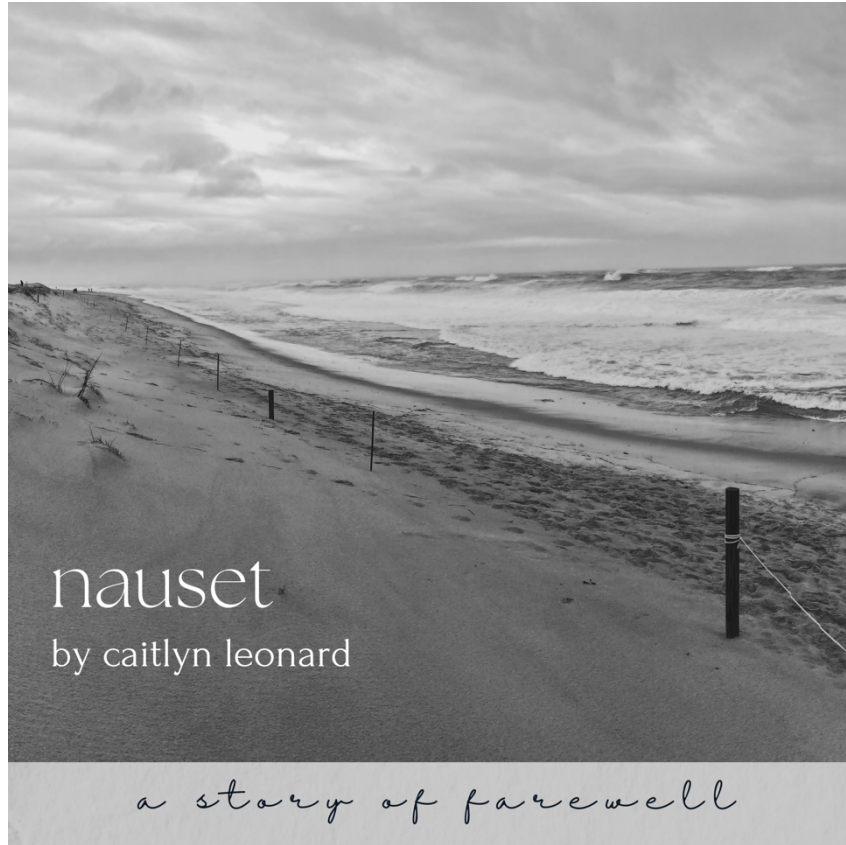
soft sand snuggled my toes,
cold water crashed onto the shoreline,
white foam crested on the horizon,
and i sat entranced in a beautiful paradox

–

chaotic stillness.

each winter's nor'easter brought sudden change;
those sweet sands shifted
underneath swirling currents.
but in 2018, a blustery bomb-cyclone
blew in with such ferocity
that I feared the morning dawn.

when the sun rose, my beach was gone;
still present in form, but absent in heart.
the snack shack of 50 years
teetered on the edge,
and townies wept for summers past.

onion rings and clam chowders
were swallowed up by the sea.
the dunes were worn down
by the waves' brutality.
we all wondered what life would be,
without Liam's clam shack for you and me.

lucky for us, time does heal,
and dune grass rebuilds, yes,
both strength and stability.
but memories still linger of the days before,
when children smiled with ice creams in hand,
and sticky fingers built castles in the sand.

yet through it all,
i have learned that beauty is resilience,
and that change is a fateful inevitable,
not to be feared,
only to be experienced.
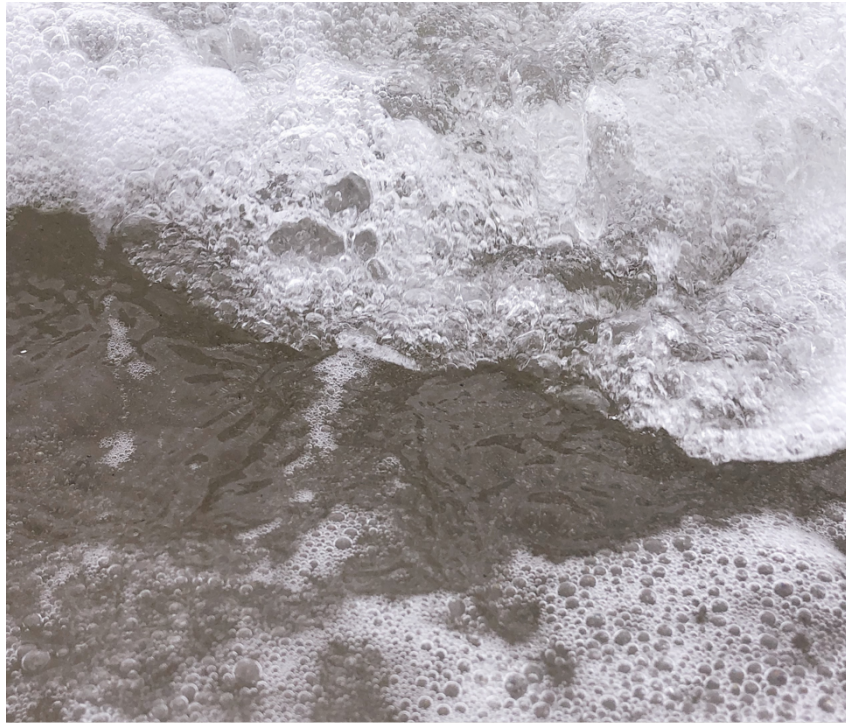
a story of farewell

a story of renewal

Torin Sage Harris

CAS/COM'25, International Relations and Film & TV

Torin Harris grew up in the Boston area and is now a rising sophomore. She plans to pursue a career as a photo and video journalist in crisis zones.

THE SACREDNESS OF MISSING PLACES

Seattle: a moody, hazy, and culturally hesitant city on the west coast of a land that has been renamed as "America". In her essay "White City", Elissa Washuta compares her personal struggles to the geography of this city that is supposedly hers in order to reclaim the agency that was stripped from her ancestors and has impacted her livelihood. This essay is split into sections named after specific locations in Seattle; sites such as Madison Park Beach, Lake Washington, and the mysterious [UNDISCLOSED LOCATION]. Although the headers of [UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS] seem arbitrarily placed, they reveal the presence of indigenous knowledge in Seattle and Washuta's work to preserve these traditions. Washuta uses these headers to protect what remains of these ancient teachings from being taken from future generations as well as to demonstrate how Seattle's indigenous knowledge has become transparent and ghostlike in the city.

Washuta chooses to break the pattern of the essay with titles of [UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS] with the intention of revealing to us the missing pieces of indigenous culture and history that are crucial in understanding Seattle's full narrative. As members of the Cowlitz tribe, Washuta's ancestors were brutalized by outsiders to the point where it was more important to prioritize survival over the continuation of their traditions. This choice is best demonstrated in the repeated speech of Chief Seattle, "And when the last red man shall have perished from the earth and his memory among white men shall have become a myth, these shores shall swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children shall think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway or in the silence of the woods they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night, when the streets of your cities and villages shall be silent, and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land. The white man will never be alone" (Washuta).

Washuta's goal in this essay is to use the title [UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS] to portray the ghost of a location that is no longer there, a people that were eliminated through forced assimilation, and an indigenous name that was either forbidden or forgotten. Chief Seattle's speech demonstrates how the Cowlitz land was split up and heedlessly divided which is also done in this essay with the abrupt introductions of [UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS] to partition Washuta's piece. These headers represent the haunting remains of a history that was erased by colonization. By deliberately interrupting this essay with this title motif, she reinforces Chief Seattle's warning that the ghosts of the indigenous "invisible dead" will never desert the land and culture of White Seattle.

Similarly, the structure of this essay demonstrates a rejection of colonization by using [UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS] to refuse to name the places that are important to Washuta. It is no coincidence that these unnamed places are usually those that have significance to the native people of Seattle and to Washuta's personal life. Considering the history of colonization in this city, this is a conscious effort by Washuta to refrain from giving the white citizens of her home the opportunity to take and perceive these places as their own. She formatted the titles so most have a post-European colonization name; titles such as Madison Street, Ship Canal, and Madison Park, renamed from its indigenous meaning "It Has Skate Fish". These titled sections often contain Washuta's negative experiences of the evolving narrative in Seattle like that of Lake Washington in which she explains, "White men's violent rule over brown bodies built this young nation. By telling stories over and over, we give them life. By enacting narratives over and over, we give them limbs. A white man dominates a Native woman and keeps his world in order" (Washuta). She is insinuating that the repetition of names and stories solidifies them in history, while abstaining from doing so returns these places to their indigenous ancestors.

The use of [UNDISCLOSED LOCATION] serves as a potent reminder of the beauty and the pain of landmarks that have been woven together to create a map of her struggle to maintain indigenous knowledge in Seattle. This fabric is perhaps most clear in the final section of Washuta's essay in which she describes the aftermath of one of her experiences in these secret, spiritual places. "I emerged from the swamp with a body covered in death. The power told me that I had work to do and that I was meant to be porous because my instructions will come in through the microscopic holes I can't open or close or even see. I threw out my boots and washed my skin until I gleamed all over" (Washuta). This quotation comes from one of the sections titled [UNDISCLOSED LOCATION] and is Washuta's declaration of peace and wellbeing despite the colonization that has haunted her homeland and transformed how she lives her life. By refusing to name this place, Washuta uses the headers in this essay to rebuke assimilation and maintain power over herself.

Although abstract at times, this essay focuses on the displacement of indigenous people in this region and how it has subsequently affected the lives of Washuta and her ancestors. By titling each paragraph with the names of places in Seattle, and then breaking this pattern by refusing to do so in personal sections, the author is demonstrating the way in which Seattle has become overrun with Western ideals and how indigenous history has lost its importance to the city's common citizen. Washuta leaves us wondering whether she believes these titles of [UNDISCLOSED LOCATION] mean there is no hope to rebuild this ancient knowledge, or if instead, this is the beginning of a time to construct a deeper understanding of indigenous history in this White City.

Washuta, Elisa. "White City." The Offing, 2 March 2017.

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HOW HEALING IS [UNDISCLOSED]

In "White City," Elissa Washuta often uses the descriptor "[undisclosed]." When I first read the piece, I questioned why Washuta would use this unnecessary label that was disorienting and confusing for a reader. With a closer look at her overall themes, it becomes clear that Washuta's choice to hold back certain pieces of information - and to make her reader aware of this choice - is deliberate. The "[undisclosed]" parts of her narrative are an example of "presence versus absence." Washuta effectively creates a tension between the information the reader expects to see and know, such as locations and names, and the pieces which Washuta chooses not to disclose. By extracting information from her text, Washuta creates a more "empty" narrative with gaps of information. This emptiness forcibly reminds the reader of these "missing" parts to highlight the relevance of loss to her story and the modern story of colonization. Washuta uses "[undisclosed]" in the text to protect both indigenous history and parts of her past. Washuta chooses to label locations and things as "[undisclosed]" to support her theme that the losses caused by colonization are still evident today, and to aid in healing processes for herself and others.

Washuta directly relates her "[undisclosed]" locations to places that are historically sacred but damaged by colonization. In the beginning of the text, Washuta explicitly states that she "won't disclose everything," because she must "protect the unseen from encroachment." By establishing this idea early on, Washuta reveals that there are parts of the text that will not be shared; instead, they will be "extracted" in order to be protected. Washuta continues to connect colonization to more modern occurrences of the destruction of nature. At an "[undisclosed]" location mysteriously labeled "the spot," Washuta shares how a lake was dredged by a golf club, which destroyed a beaver habitat. The beavers represent indigenous people who suffer because of colonization. Like the beavers, sacred spaces of nature and pieces of indigenous culture are lost. Out of respect for this destroyed habitat, Washuta does not disclose its exact location. Instead, she emphasizes its loss by creating a missing piece in the narrative.

Washuta makes the reader sympathetic to her stance on colonization by referencing parts of indigenous culture that have suffered as a result of colonization. She mentions the "[undisclosed] animal spirit [that] lived in and above the water before colonizers drove it away" and asks "people about the [undisclosed] power." Although these references are not the focus of the passages, the "[undisclosed]" in brackets catches the reader's attention and emphasizes the loss of these parts of indigenous history. Extracting information at these points respects indigenous culture, which has historically been taken advantage of. By protecting the name of the undisclosed animal spirit and power, Washuta emphasizes the negative effects of colonization. Washuta acknowledges that she has no right to share the history of indigenous

culture because she lacks a complete understanding of it. The erasure of certain parts of indigenous culture represents both the colonizers' impact and the necessity of protecting what remains.

The use of "[undisclosed]" locations in certain anecdotes reveal that Washuta is also protective of difficult parts of her life. For example, while Washuta names many specific locations throughout her narrative, including Madison Park or Downtown Seattle, some sections are titled "[UNDISCLOSED] APARTMENTS" or "[UNDISCLOSED LOCATION]." These titles often introduce times in her life when she felt broken or sad. Washuta chooses not to reveal the exact location of these scenes because she is particularly vulnerable in these passages. She protects her personal history by being intentionally vague about certain details while trying to be honest about her feelings. At a turning point in her narrative, Washuta describes an "[undisclosed] ceremony that required [her] to be in a set-away place," in which she faces near death but realizes she wants to survive. Washuta does not reveal what the ceremony is, but simply explains how she grew and learned from it. In this way, Washuta is able to highlight a moment where she began her recovery, while protecting the more intimate details of her brokenness. By doing so, Washuta's healing process is shared without exposing the darkest points in her life.

Washuta's technique of using "[undisclosed]" repeatedly throughout her piece allows her to teach about loss and aid in the healing of those who share her experiences. Washuta makes the creative decision to include brackets around "undisclosed" to forcibly remind the reader that the information is extracted. Because colonization historically takes advantage of indigenous culture, Washuta is protective of her own experiences and body. For readers who may be contributors to this modern colonization - in history and of bodies, Washuta's extraction protects certain information. Washuta even implies that these "holes" in her story are necessary to protect the content from being taken falsely or incorrectly. On the other hand, readers who can relate to Washuta's stories of abuse are able to join Washuta in her healing process. Washuta describes that when people share stories of colonizers and abusers, the victims "give them life." In this line, Washuta reveals that her extraction of certain details is a part of her healing process, because she chooses not to "give life" to the violence done to her. Her stories are only shared to the extent that Washuta feels comfortable sharing. The extraction of certain triggering scenes respects victims of abuse and encourages victims to take ownership of their stories. Readers can then follow her example of learning how to heal from this abuse.

Although the "[undisclosed]" parts of Washuta's narrative can make the piece feel "empty," the missing parts of some passages allow for Washuta to teach the reader about the processes of loss and healing. At first, Washuta describes how her abusive boyfriend "lived in [her] skin," and shares her fear that her skin "would become too porous without him filling it." Like Washuta, her narrative is full of holes where information is [undisclosed]. But as she realizes, this lack of "something" does not indicate that *she* is broken or lacking. By the end of the text, Washuta seems to embrace the idea of being "porous," saying that she was "meant to be porous because [her] instructions will come in through the microscopic holes." This description of her

body creates a connection between the way her narrative is structured, and the way Washuta views herself.

Washuta references porosity in order to emphasize her emptiness at some points in her life. This emptiness of the body results from a violation of the body, which parallels colonization's violation of Indigenous lands. However, this emptiness is merely an opportunity for growth and learning. She acknowledges the damage to her body in order to confide in and teach the reader about the process of healing. Washuta describes her writing as a way to "make space for the silence." The literal spaces in her work are the "[undisclosed]" information, while the figurative spaces are the gaps in knowledge that allow the reader to learn and grow. Her writing is both a part of her own healing process and a way for the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the processes of loss and healing. Washuta writes a narrative that is synonymous with her own body; although damaged and missing some pieces, it is complete and whole.

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HOW DO YOU DEFINE RELATIONSHIPS?

I don't hesitate to raise my hand.

"Yes, I can define it:
it's the correlation between two or more things
as measured by r
and it can only be between -1 and +1
with the absolute value of 1 indicating the strongest relationship
and 0 indicating no relationship at all
but the relationship doesn't indicate directionality
because there could be a third variable
and you can't infer causation from correlation."

My professor smiles softly,
Well, you're not wrong, but I meant like friendship.

I sit in the front row alone.
Did she know I'd respond like that?
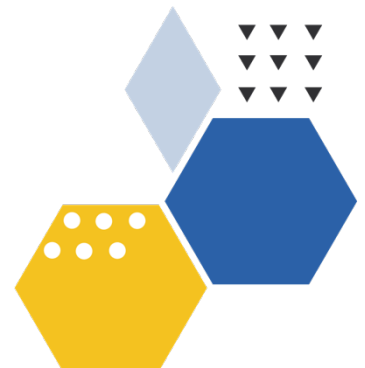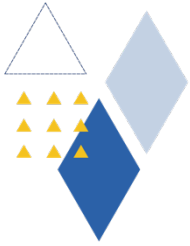
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GAME DEVELOPMENT TO GAMEPLAY:
Women and the Video Game Industry

The video games industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, currently more profitable than sports and movies combined (Williams). Gaming has grown dramatically since its inception in the 1970s and 80s, from a niche pastime to a global entertainment industry. Though gaming is broad in its appeal, the stereotype that gaming is a boy's hobby pervades to this day. There's no better example of this than the 2014 Gamergate phenomenon–a social media harassment campaign perpetuated by communities of alt-right gamers convinced that feminism was ruining the industry (Romano). The campaign targeted prominent women associated with the industry, many of whom dealt with death threats and harassment, both online and off. Some were even harassed in their own homes (Romano). Though this phenomenon made headlines in 2014, women in the industry have faced harassment since the beginning. This harassment, in conjunction with male-centric advertising and a lack of visibility for female game developers, contributes to the stigma against women gamers and game developers. These factors are part of a vicious cycle that undermines the female gamer identity and excludes female voices from the gaming industry.

Although this paper is primarily concerned with the experiences of cisgender women in the gaming industry, trans and non-binary gamers and game developers experience many of the same hardships as female gamers and game developers (Bosworth). In fact, the attitudes of bigoted genderism that target trans and non-binary gamers are also used against women who are successful in the gaming industry since success in the gaming industry is seen as incompatible with gendered norms. For some, these hardships are exacerbated by hostility towards the LGBTQ+ community in the gaming industry and the world at large (Flint, Bosworth). For people of color and double minorities, these hardships are twofold. In recent years, there has been increasing demand for trans and non-binary representation in the video games industry, and while many indie game developers have made progress in this area, mainstream game developers still struggle with inclusive representation (Flint, Contino).

It is often erroneously assumed that video games are, and always have been, "made by boys, for boys." This statement has no basis in reality–the games industry has had prominent female game developers ever since its beginnings, and the same is true of female players. In the 1990s, while polls showed young boys played video games more frequently than young girls, both girls and boys showed equal levels of interest in playing video games (Drenten). Early arcade games like *Pac-Man* and *Donkey Kong* had strong female player bases, and with the advent of home

gaming consoles in the 1980s, girls who played video games were more abundant than ever. Since the early 2000s, polls have consistently shown that women make up at least 40% of players, while some produce numbers as high as 52% (Paaßen).

On the development side, women have been involved in the industry since the Atari days when prominent developers appeared. Carol Shaw, for example, created the vertical scrolling shooter *River Raid* on the Atari 2600 in 1983 (Lien). Dona Bailey developed arcade games for Atari starting in 1981, and others, such as Roberta Williams and Brenda Romero, are also veterans of the industry (Hepler). However, these women were the minority in their professions, and were often undervalued in the workplace. In Jennifer Brandes Hepler's *Women in Game Development: Breaking the Glass Level Cap (2017)*, veterans of the industry describe constantly having to prove themselves, endure sexism, and deal with harassment. Among these women are industry legends such as Rebecca Ann Heineman and Hepler herself.

If women have always played and developed games, why is there a stigma against female players and developers? According to Tracey Lien, it all comes down to marketing. The earliest video games were non-gendered and were marketed to the whole family. *Pong* advertisements, for example, featured a husband and wife competing against each other, while others featured young girls and boys playing the game. This is partly due to the relatively primitive technology companies like Atari and Sierra Entertainment were using—according to game designer Lori Cole, early games were "so simplistic that there was nothing gendered about them" (Lien).

Another factor leading to non-gendered marketing campaigns was a severe lack of information about the industry. In the 70s and 80s, video games were so brand-new that no one knew who was actually buying and playing the games (Lien). So, many studios targeted the whole family. This worked well for early games like *Pong*—however, after the video game recession in 1983, studios had to focus on a narrower target audience. Nintendo was one of the first to do this with the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) by targeting boys under ten years old (Lien). When this proved successful, other companies followed suit. Soon, the kinds of games that were being produced reflected that perceived market, hence the lack of female player models, female characters, and so on (Lien). Nintendo even named a gaming system the Game Boy—arguably the most obvious case of gendered marketing in the 1990s video games industry.

These advertising decisions likely indicate a lack of female voices in leadership positions throughout the industry. Why limit the target audience to young boys instead of young girls? And once the industry recovered from the recession, why not attempt to capitalize on the practically untouched market of female-focused video games? The answer lies behind the scenes. Many women in the industry have described it as a "boys club," wherein they were excluded from social engagements and demeaned in the workplace. For example, Rebecca Ann Heineman—an industry veteran—explains how she had to "grit her teeth and keep silent" due to her colleagues' "frat-house mentality" (Hepler). Heineman is a transgender woman and describes how she was treated differently when she began her gender transition. "My input was ignored. My coding skills were dismissed," she explains (Hepler). "Somehow, by my having a female name, the perception of my IQ had dropped by 40 points overnight" (Hepler). This kind

of homogenous and unwelcoming environment is unlikely to market to anyone but the demographic that best matches themselves–boys and men.

Gender bias in advertising continues to be a problem for modern games. Even for games in which you can choose your character's gender, advertising invariably features the male character model in trailers and gameplay reveals. Just a few examples of this are *Skyrim* (2011), *Mass Effect* (2007) and its sequels (2010, 2012, 2017), and *Dark Souls* (2011). Each of these games were made by a different studio–Bethesda, Bioware, and Bandai Namco respectively–showing that this trend is industry-wide. This is likely due to the incorrect assumption that "women don't sell." This commonly cited axiom is particularly ironic since research has shown the exact opposite to be true. In a 2021 survey, researchers found that only 48% of male players preferred playing as their own gender in video games (Yee). 29% preferred playing female characters, and the rest had no preference (Yee). In contrast, only 9% of women preferred playing a male character, while 76% said they'd rather play as their own gender (Yee). For players who preferred to self-describe their gender, the vast majority said they preferred playing female or non-binary characters, with only 10% saying they preferred playing a male character (Yee). Additionally, a study conducted 20 years earlier produced similar results, so this information should be relatively well-known (Yee). Given that more than half of men prefer playing as female or have no preference, it would actually make more sense from a marketing perspective to provide *only* a female protagonist, since this would appeal to the greatest audience. Despite this, only about 18% of video games featured a female protagonist in 2020, and even less – only 3% – featured a non-binary or gender ambiguous protagonist (Clement). The only logical explanation for this disparity is that game designers develop games based on their perception of what their assumed-to-be-male audience wants. This leads to stereotypically gendered marketing campaigns which, according to a study by Frank Alpert and Kim Saxton, are not as effective as marketers might expect (Drenten).

The consequences of gendered marketing and hypermasculine game design are severe for the women who play and enjoy these games. Women who play mass multiplayer games that are seen as traditionally masculine are treated as "invaders" to the masculine space, and experience harassment because of this (Drenten). Female gamers who experience this kind of harassment will often conceal their gender online by playing with a male avatar and communicating via text channels rather than voice chat (Drenten). Even in single-player games, research has shown that sexist and sexualized representations of women lead to internalized misogyny and body dysmorphia in women as well as non-binary and trans players (Drenten, Bosworth). For men, these same sexist representations lead to a decrease in empathy for victims of sexual violence (Drenten). Knowing these things, we cannot morally justify the kind of hypermasculine game design and marketing that has been the norm for upwards of twenty years.

Due in part to the harassment women face online, women who play games sometimes feel conflicted about the hobby due to the perception that being a woman and being a gamer are mutually exclusive. This is supported by evidence that women are less likely to self-identify as gamers, no matter their gaming habits (Paaßen). Further, female gamers are more likely to underreport how long they play video games by up to three hours (Paaßen). The perceived conflict between the female identity and the gamer identity is likely responsible for these trends,

since being a female gamer is sometimes seen as a source of shame. Some women resolve this conflict by creating their own subculture of gaming, calling themselves "Gamer Girls" or "eGirls" and catering to the male perception of what a female gamer should look and act like. A famous example of this is Belle Delphine, who made headlines in 2019 by selling her used bathwater online as "Gamer Girl Bathwater" (Cooper). Even though very few female gamers associate with the "Gamer Girl" culture, it has become the internet standard for what a female gamer should look and act like. Overall, it is my belief that this trend of self-objectification has harmed the cause of women in games, since the eGirl aesthetic leads male audiences to believe women *want* to be sexualized and fetishized. One could hypothesize that the rise of the Gamer Girl aesthetic is linked to the harassment women face in online gaming forums; however, no significant research has been done in this area.

Though much of the industry produces games under the assumption that the player is male, games made specifically for women do exist–however, they have their own problems. Many games made for women are mobile or online games. These games are often match-three games (i.e. *Candy Crush*), fashion and makeup games (i.e. *Kim Kardashian: Hollywood*), and other games about traditionally feminine activities–cooking, cleaning, beauty, and child-rearing, for example (Chess). Apple and Android play stores are crawling with games like these, some of which are shockingly successful, and most of which are not developed by teams with women in leadership positions (Partis). Note that these kinds of games, built on the assumption of traditional gender roles, are not unique to the mobile platform. Simply type "GirlsGoGames.com" into any browser and you will be bombarded with an almost sickening display of poorly designed games about makeup, dating, princesses, and taking care of babies, almost all of which boast a pink color scheme. Shira Chess elaborates on this phenomenon in her book, *Ready Player Two: Women Gamers and Designed Identity*. Chess shows that games designed for a target audience of women and girls tend to be incredibly homogenous, with simplistic game mechanics and feminized visuals. On the other hand, games made for men are diverse, with a huge variety of genres and playstyles. According to game designer Sheri Graner Ray, this is because "the game industry does not see women as a market. They see women as a genre" (Chess). On the other hand, men are treated "as a market, with lots and lots of different kinds of games" (Chess).

It is my view that any expressly gendered game–whether it is gendered as feminine or masculine–has a polarizing effect on their respective demographics. Hyper-feminine games reinforce the gender binary just as much as hyper-masculine games. While it is great that games made specifically for a female audience exist, these games tend to reinforce traditional gender roles–a reality that is deeply troubling considering the negative impact these stereotypes can have on the young girls who compose the target market for these games. Further, mobile games aren't considered "real" or "hardcore" games by the gaming community, in part *because* of the prevalence of simple, female-oriented games and the perception that mobile gaming is a hobby predominately taken up by women. This means women who enjoy playing mobile games, and who want more diverse gaming experiences, go unseen and unheard. More than anything, games that fall under the "female genre" undermine the female gamer identity by enforcing traditional gender roles and playing into the stereotype that games for women must be simplistic. If the games industry treated women more as a market than a genre, I believe we

would see a greater variety of gender-inclusive games that target a wider market. This would not only allow studios to reap profits from gamers of all genders but would also encourage the acceptance of female gamers into the gaming community. Blockbuster games released in the last few years have made progress in this direction–whether by allowing the player to choose their gender or featuring more female characters in positions of power, the portrayal of women in games is slowly getting better.

Many of the issues I have discussed in this paper can be seen as part of a cycle. Many studies have indicated that video games can provide easier access to technological fields of study, including engineering, math, and software development (Paaßen). In the video games industry, programmers make up 35 to 50 percent of all employees in a given company (Hepler). Further, many aspiring game designers were inspired to join the industry due to positive experiences *playing* video games. It is not hard, then, to see how a lack of young female gamers (in conjunction with other compounding factors, like harassment in the workplace) can lead to a lack of female game developers, which in turn leads to fewer female voices in the game development pipeline, thereby increasing the chance that women will be underrepresented, misrepresented, or ignored entirely in the released game, thereby alienating any potential female player base. The more games that alienate female players, the less women will play these games, and the cycle continues. To break this cycle, action needs to be taken in the industry to create more gender-inclusive video games, to develop a more welcoming and supportive work environment, and to correct harmful marketing campaigns that alienate female audiences.

Some game studios have already taken steps in the right direction. A great example of this is the small Sony-owned studio, Guerrilla Games. Once upon a time, Guerrilla was making a series of first-person shooter games akin to *Call of Duty*. However, in 2011, Guerrilla suddenly started development on a brand new concept for a post-apocalyptic open-world RPG featuring a female huntress named Aloy. After six years of development, the game was finally released in 2017 to critical acclaim and was an unexpected hit on the PlayStation 4. The *Horizon* franchise is now one of Sony's most successful intellectual properties. Aloy has become an icon in the gaming community and the gold standard for female protagonists in video games. While not without flaws, Aloy is a symbol of success for the female video game protagonist–proof that female protagonists *do* sell and sell well. This success is despite Sony's initial doubts that a game with a female protagonist would be commercially successful (Brightman).

This success is impressive, but perhaps more impressive is Guerrilla itself. According to Angie Smets, who has now been with the company for 21 years and worked on *Horizon Zero Dawn* as executive producer, "I never felt I was treated differently in my career because of my gender" (Takahashi). This testimony echoes others from women in the company, who say Guerrilla has cultivated a diverse and friendly environment that encourages and supports women (Wallace). Further, between 2018 and 2019, Guerrilla doubled the number of women in their employ (Barker).

It is perhaps unsurprising that a small studio in Amsterdam is so far ahead of larger studios in terms of gender inclusivity in the workplace. After all, it is much easier to maintain a culture of acceptance when you have a couple hundred employees rather than thousands. However, this

doesn't mean larger studios can't learn from Guerrilla's success. While Guerrilla has been making strides towards inclusivity, many larger studios seem to be defaulting on promises to improve gender equality in the workplace and in the games they develop. Ubisoft, for example, has been embroiled in scandal since 2021 as reports of sexual misconduct, abuse, and manipulation become public (Schreier). According to Jason Schreier's report in Bloomberg, the situation at Ubisoft was an open secret, and the accused are senior executives at Ubisoft (Schreier). Some of these executives were also responsible for rejecting female leads in video games that were initially designed with female protagonists in mind, citing the axiom "women don't sell" (Schreier). These demands by executives affected the development of several games, including several installments in the *Assassin's Creed* franchise (*Syndicate*, 2015; *Origins*, 2017; *Odyssey*, 2018) and *Watch Dogs: Legion* (2020). In particular, *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* was initially designed with a single female protagonist; however, Ubisoft executives told the development team to include a male protagonist, who was subsequently featured on almost all trailers and box art for the game (Schreier). All of this despite Ubisoft's so-called "commitment" to diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

At the end of the day, the gaming industry is still an industry. The end goal is to make as much money as possible, by whatever means necessary. If that means sticking to the tried-and-true method of gendered marketing campaigns and hostile working environments, that is the path game executives will take. If, as I have argued, it is in the industry's best interest to expand its target audience and make games that represent everyone, the industry will change. Whether by supporting game studios like Guerrilla, starting a social media campaign, encouraging women in the industry, or enacting change from within, you and I can do a lot to provoke change in the gaming industry. The goal is not to create "female" games that compete with established "male" games–it's to create video games that everyone can enjoy. It is time to move past gendered gaming. Many studios have already taken steps in the right direction, but it's up to us–the consumers–to demand that the momentum continues.

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INFANTS AND THE DIGITAL WORLD:
How early digital media exposure affects learning

During the early 2000s, the idea of exposing children to digital media became a contentious debate. Worries of children developing screen addictions, social deficits, and attentional deficits arose among parents and caregivers (Barr and Linebarger, 2018). Despite this ongoing dispute, the prevalence of technology in early developing life has grown significantly. The types of digital media have expanded, such as the millions of apps, online videos, phones, tablets, and e-books ("App Development for Kids", 2022). In 2020, The Common Sense Census found that children nationwide between ages two and four spend an average of 2.5 hours of screen time per day. Screen time among children in low-income families is even higher, at an average of almost four hours per day (The Common Sense Census, 2020).

With experiences during the first three to five years of life being crucial predictors of long-term cognitive developmental outcomes, it is essential for parents to understand how to appropriately integrate digital media into their children's early years if they so choose. Parents should have the goal of using digital media to intentionally enhance their young children's cognitive development, but to what extent is this possible?

Early research took an arguably reductionist and oversimplified approach to understanding the effects of early digital media exposure, with claims about associations between longer durations of screen time and reduced academic achievement. This approach is not only correlational in nature but also fails to examine the nuances of digital media, such as its quality and the influence of wider contextual factors. However, current researchers such as Dr. Rachel Barr at the Early Learning Project at Georgetown University, Dr. Laura Zimmermann at the University of Delaware, and many more have pioneered a clearer path toward understanding how digital media interacts with child cognition. Transfer learning, attentional control, and comprehension are some of the methods used to measure learning outcomes in young children and babies.

Current research suggests it is important to consider what early education researcher Lisa Guernsey calls "the three C's" when understanding the role of early digital media exposure in cognitive development: child, context, and content (Barr and Linebarger, 2018). *Child* refers to their age and cognitive capacity to learn from two-dimensional modalities. *Context* refers to parental attitudes toward using media and how parents and children interact while engaging with it. *Content* examines the effects of using digital media for educational or entertainment purposes, interactivity levels, as well as passive versus active engagement.

Throughout this literature review, I utilize current research exploring these three factors to evaluate the extent to which infants and young children can cognitively benefit from early digital media exposure and, ultimately, provide key takeaways about what parents can do to provide optimal digital experiences for their children. Overall, in spite of the complexity of factors, I show that children and infants can effectively learn from digital media.

THE CHILD

How might one operationalize a child's learning outcomes from digital media exposure? One increasingly popular method is transfer learning, which examines the child's capacity to apply their learning between 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional contexts. Transfer learning involves a cognitive skill known as object representation, whereby the child can discriminate between objects or, in the case of dimensional differences, encode knowledge of an object in one modality and apply it to a new modality. Object representational abilities advance with age as a result of our growing cognitive capacity to perceive objects efficiently (Barr, 2010). For instance, adults can easily encode a 2-dimensionally represented object, yet infants typically need a full 360-degree view in a 2-dimensional context to do so. Infants unable to transfer their learning between modalities are said to have a video deficit, resulting in video-based learning being ineffective. Understanding the cognitive capacity of digital transfer learning across ages can tell us the most appropriate age to use digital media for learning purposes (Barr and Linebarger, pg 12).

Barr and Hyne (1999) conducted a cross-sectional study comparing 12, 15, and 18-month-old infants' transfer learning abilities. Divided into two possible conditions, participants were either exposed to a live or videotaped demonstration of a novel three-step task, whereby the experimenter removed a puppet from one hand, shook the bell attached to the puppet, and placed it onto the other hand. During the test phase, participants were given the same puppet and were recorded for ninety seconds to examine how they utilized it. Overall, the frequency of imitation increased between each age group, regardless of the modality of demonstration, yet all participants were significantly less likely to imitate the demonstration when it was conveyed through a video.
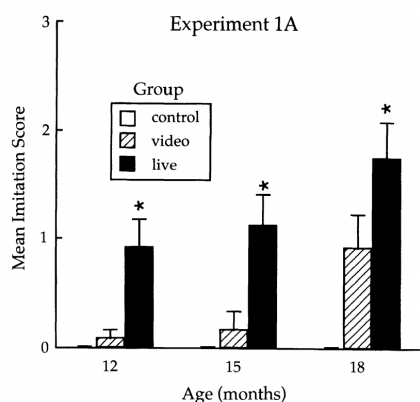

Figure 1: Histogram of mean imitation scores for each age group under the videotaped or live demonstration condition (Barr and Hyne, 1999).

Barr and Hyne (1999) concluded that video deficit was attributed to the children lacking object representation abilities to transfer their encoded observations between modalities. Thus, children at these ages will likely not benefit significantly from using digital media as a basis for real-world learning experiences.

Zack et al. (2009) found that infants more easily imitated a task when the demonstration and test were presented in the same dimension, even in 2-dimensional contexts. 15-month-old infants were either given a touchscreen or a real object with a button, and the experimenter pushed the button repeatedly until the child demonstrated habituation. Subsequently, infants were given the identical object in the same or different modality and were encouraged to imitate the demonstration. The condition that switched dimensions was significantly less likely to imitate the demonstration than those who did not switch, including those with entirely 2-dimensional experiences. Thus, though infants can learn from 2-dimensional modalities, it is the process of applying this knowledge to the 3-dimensional world that poses the greatest challenge.

Tarasuik et al. (2017) further investigated within- and cross-dimensional differences by assessing more complex learning skills beyond imitation, such as solving a puzzle. 49 children ranging from three to six years of age were allocated to three possible conditions that varied in when and how frequently the modality of their puzzle task alternated across four trials. The no-transfer condition only solved the puzzle in 3-dimensional contexts, the transfer condition alternated from 3- to 2-dimensions with each trial, and the no-preexposure condition was only given a 3-dimensional puzzle during the final trial. Participants were timed in each trial to assess how the change in dimension affected their solving efficiency despite repeated puzzle exposure.

The results varied with the extent of transfer and age. The no-transfer condition improved the most: by an average of 4.36 seconds between the first and fourth trial. The runner-up was the transfer condition, with an average improvement of 0.93 seconds, followed by the no-preexposure condition with an average rate of 0.83 seconds. Such results suggest that even though the puzzle task was identical across trials, efficient object representation is essential to accommodate for modality changes. Furthermore, the transfer condition's higher score than the no-preexposure condition suggests that, while cognitive adjustments were needed, repeated exposure to these changing contexts allowed for greater improvement, suggesting that children learned to switch between modalities. In terms of age, children above the age of 4.5 years made significant improvements between the first and last trials across all conditions, while those under 4.5 did not. Overall, it is possible to learn to switch between contexts, yet this demand tends to be beyond the cognitive capacity of children younger than 4.5.

The aforementioned studies reveal important nuances about how children and babies can develop the cognitive capacity to learn across 2- and 3-dimensional contexts. Firstly, as suggested by Barr and Hyde (1999) and Zack et al. (2009), children under the age of 18 months are more challenged by the change in modality when learning to imitate due to lacking object representational abilities, though there was some evidence of imitation across all conditions. Additionally, Tarasuik et al. (2017) found that more complex tasks such as problem-solving

exacerbated these transfer deficits among those under the age of 4.5-years. That said, children were still able to learn from 2-dimensional contexts when the modality stayed consistent across tasks, shown by Zack et al. (2009), and repeated transfer aided in learning from 2-dimensions (Tarasuik et al., 2017). Collectively, the results suggest that age, the complexity of the learning objective, and switches in modality are important contributory factors to a child's ability to benefit from early digital media exposure. However, there are a variety of limitations that prevent the results from reaching a definitive conclusion.

One prominent limitation of transfer learning studies is their cross-sectional method; due to the participant variability it yields, we cannot establish any predictors for changes in transfer ability with age. Additionally, transfer learning solely assesses object representational abilities, only partially revealing how much children learn from digital media. Regarding sample generalizability, the results cannot be applied to neurodiverse children as a result of solely studying neurotypical participants. Furthermore, more literature shows that children also exhibit transfer deficits when using non-digital 2-dimensional media—such as picture books— possibly more so than when using a screen.

Simcock et al. (2011) compared imitation outcomes between picture books and videotaped demonstrations. Though age-based imitation differences were consistent with previous findings, all age groups had higher average imitation scores when watching a videotaped demonstration. That said, imitation discrepancies between the conditions narrowed when the picture book was verbally narrated (Simcock et al., 2011). Thus, although learning to imitate actions from a screen is challenging at certain ages, comparing the screen to other 2-dimensional sources reveals that videos aid in transfer learning between 2D and 3D contexts due to their heavy motion, verbal, and visually realistic cues.

Research using methods besides transfer learning to assess age-based learning outcomes from digital media is only just beginning. Kwok et al. (2016) compared in-person and interactive technology teaching methods to assess learning novel animal facts among preschool- and school-aged children. In the digital curriculum, a cartoon character hosted the lesson and tied novel facts to interactive questions, such as asking participants how many other children they presumed to know each fact. The study used this interactive strategy to evoke a natural learning style. Subsequently, children took a picture-based multiple-choice test where they would point to the appropriate animal to select their answers. The results showed no significant difference in test scores between conditions, suggesting that the children were equally capable of learning in either context (Kwok et al., 2016). Thus, while object representational deficits may be prevalent, other cognitive functions such as comprehension and recall may not be as affected, though more research is needed to understand these variations. On the other hand, the interactivity of the digital medium might have played a role in narrowing recall differences, which is why the quality of digital media exposure is another important factor of study.

CONTEXT

Chiong and Schuler coined the term "passback effect", a habit in which a caregiver passes a phone or tablet to their child sitting in the back of their car, when making dinner, at a restaurant, or any other time a parent wants to keep their child occupied (Barr and Linebarger,

pg 10). While this habit is not in itself detrimental, research has shown that high interactional quality between the caregiver and child greatly enhances a child's ability to learn from digital media, and children should not learn to perceive technology use as an isolating task (Barr and Linebarger, pg 10). Existing research has investigated the role of parent-child interaction in screen-based learning through transfer learning, attention, and comprehension.

Zack and Barr (2016) found that joint media engagement– whereby the child and caregiver are equally invested in the medium of choice– can reduce transfer learning deficits. Fifty 15-month-old participants were exposed to two identical objects with buttons conveyed in both their 3-dimensional form and in a touchscreen. Without demonstrating the action, each mother taught their child about the relationship between the two object presentations to help them successfully press both buttons. To operationalize interactional quality, mothers were assessed on the number of times they attempted to direct their child's attention to the tasks, their verbal cues, shared focus, turn-taking dialogue, and emotional responsiveness to the infant's performance.

Overall, children were 19 times more likely to successfully press both the 2- and 3-dimensional buttons with highly interactive mothers who greatly utilized these interactive qualities compared to those with moderately interactive mothers. Thus, the child was able to override their transfer deficits with the help of quality parent-child interaction, which enhanced their learning.

Fidler et al., (2010) examined how the quality of parent-child interaction, such as attentiveness and responsiveness, enhances screen-based attention among infants as young as six months. The cross-sectional study compared infants at 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 months, showing them a 13-minute Baby Mozart video. Caregivers were filmed as they watched the program with their children and, without knowing the objective of the experiment, were assessed on their frequency and quality of verbalizations directed at the child, including asking questions, labeling objects, and describing the scenarios seen. The study also measured turn-taking dialogue, whereby the child and the parent verbally or nonverbally interacted. Children were assessed on their screen looking time and number of TV glances to measure their attentional levels.

Regardless of age, there was a positive association between high parent-child interaction and looking time. This suggests children were likely being directed by their caregiver to observe central aspects of the program and reflect on what they saw, which focused their attention. Thus, high interactional quality can help infants process information from their digital media exposures more effectively, learn key concepts, and receive more opportunities for vocabulary development resulting from the caregiver's verbalizations.

Additionally, a parent's attitude toward technology strongly influences joint interactional quality and learning outcomes. Lauricella et al. (2014) studied how parental interaction qualities differ between electronic and traditional picture books and how these quality differences, in addition to inherent child comprehension levels, influenced the child's comprehension of and attention toward a given storybook. Using a dependent-measures design, the study videotaped 39 children between the ages of 4 and 4.5 years as their parents read them a story via an e-book and a traditional picture book. The study assessed instances of parent-child interactional quality

such as scaffolding, turn-taking dialogue, gestures, positions of the parent and child, and the location of the house the parent was reading to the child. The number of interactional strategies was indicative of parental engagement levels. Children were observed for attention throughout and tested on comprehension afterward.

Firstly, there were noticeable qualitative differences in the interactional strategies parents used depending on the modality of the book's presentation. For instance, parents used significantly more vocabulary-based verbalizations when reading a traditional book than an e-book. Moreover, the parents generally demonstrated higher engagement when reading the e-book than the traditional book, facilitating more turn-taking and gestures. One plausible reason for these engagement and interactional differences was the parents had a greater interest in the novelty of the e-book's structure and mechanics.

While interactional quality was positively associated with comprehension levels, parental engagement levels were especially significant predictors of reading comprehension for both modalities, with correlation levels of $R = 0.56$ and $R = 0.59$ for traditional and e-books respectively. Regarding the children's attentional differences, children paid ten percent more attention to the e-book relative to the traditional storybook, reflecting the differences in parental engagement. Thus, parental attitudes toward technology can strengthen or weaken joint interactional quality, which can shape how much a child takes away from that interaction.

Overall, many contextual factors contribute to the cognitive benefits digital media provide children and babies. Most notably, parent-child interactions help override transfer deficits, and infants as young as six months pay greater attention to the screen (Fidler et al., 2010). Furthermore, positive parental attitudes toward technology enhance parental engagement and interactional quality, strengthening comprehension outcomes (Lauricella et al., 2014). However, the extent to which parental attitudes toward digital media have long-term effects on a child's ability to learn from the screen compared to a non-digital medium remains to be investigated. A longitudinal, naturalistic study would yield a predictive understanding of how consistent familial media habits and implicit messaging predict the efficacy and efficiency of digital-based learning such as transfer learning and comprehension.

CONTENT

In addition to inherent cognitive capacity and contextual factors, the content of a digital medium plays a significant role in the learning outcomes it provides. Digital content can primarily be categorized into either educational or entertainment purposes, as well as being child- or adult-friendly. Using a naturalistic longitudinal study, Zimmerman and Christakis (2007) investigated the relationship between consuming different television genres and indicators of attentional deficits up to five years later.

Participants began the experiment at either 3, 4, or 5 years of age, and families were controlled for socioeconomic status, the birth order of the children, and cognitive and emotional support the parents provided their children to minimize confounding variables within a naturalistic experiment. During one randomized weekday and weekend of the year, parents completed a 24-hour diary documenting the child's activities throughout the day, including the

types of digital media they consumed. The data categorized the hours each child was exposed to educational, violent, and non-violent adult television. Five years later, the study assessed children on their attentional control using the Behavior Problems Index (BPI).

The study found that for every hour of the annual observation period children were exposed to violent television, their likelihood of developing attentional deficits doubled. Non-violent adult television was also associated with higher BPI scores, while educational television exposure did not influence BPI scores. Due to the diagnostic limitations of the BPI and the complexity of psychopathology, the quality of television exposure did not directly predict the onset of attentional disorders but was associated with poorer attentional control. Therefore, the appropriateness of digital media exposure matters in shaping cognitive outcomes, operationalized by attention, though there were likely many extraneous variables at play beyond what researchers could control.

While parents may not intend to expose their children to adult media content, Schmidt et al. (2018) demonstrate that even passive consumption can have short-term impacts on play. In a sample of fifty 12, 24, and 36-month-old children, participants were placed in a room of toys with varying complexity for one hour. During either the beginning or end half of the hour, a television screen played the game show *Jeopardy!*. The children were videotaped and assessed for their differences in length of playtime across six-minute intervals, television looking time, number of television glances, and focused attention where the child immerses in one task.

Overall, children exhibited a significantly higher number of television glances when it was played during the second half of the hour, likely because it was sudden novel stimuli. Furthermore, during the highest frequencies of television glancing, playtime was most suppressed, by an average of 3.3 seconds per six minutes, and focused attention reduced by an average of 1.14 seconds. However, with time, the number of television glances reduced across six-minute intervals. The results suggest that the television acted as an initial distractor for play across all age groups. While the short-term impacts of passive television exposure are not harmful, parents should prevent distractions during joint playtime to optimize play-based learning.

CONCLUSION

Collectively, the aforementioned studies suggest that with the right circumstances in place, there is great potential for digital media exposure to enhance learning outcomes among infants and young children. Age-based differences in transferring knowledge between the real and digital world were consistent across all studies. However, using digital media to learn new information may make the digital experience more accessible to younger children. Contextual factors such as quality parent-child interactions and positive parental attitudes can improve transfer learning, attention, and comprehension among children as young as six months due to influences of joint attention and scaffolding (Fidler et al. 2010, Zack and Barr, 2016). Furthermore, child-friendly educational television does not appear to influence long-term attentional deficits, and play is enhanced in the absence of digital media distractors (Schmidt et al., 2018). Videos were also found to be more helpful in instructional learning than still images (Simcock et al., 2011).

As research surrounding the impact of digital media exposure on cognitive outcomes expands, many more unknowns remain. Measuring the effects of media use on long-term cognitive development may reveal more sophisticated and complex learning outcomes that can arise. Analyzing the role of utilizing technology in contexts outside the home, such as the classroom, can help guide the future of education. Additionally, the ways neurodivergent children experience and learn from digital media are minimally understood—an impact of current studies lacking sample generalizability. Existing research shows that children with autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder have neurological differences in cognitive flexibility, working memory, and executive functioning (Vaidya et al., 2019). These brain differences may play a role in the strategies needed to optimize a cognitively beneficial digital experience.

Finally, current findings can be used to hold digital platforms and companies accountable for their algorithm policies and faulty standards for child-friendly content. According to the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop, over eighty percent of apps claim to be for children, though many such apps have no independent research to support their claims (Heilweil, 2021). Given the growing accessibility of technology, children are vulnerable to consuming large quantities of media with questionable quality, making it increasingly difficult for parents to monitor what children view online and follow the aforementioned strategies (Bridle). This issue calls for research institutions to partner with digital platforms to adjust the quality and quantity of child-targeted content and consumption strategies.

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SCANDAL:

Determining Factors in Crisis Management

Scandals involving a celebrity elicit tremendous amounts of counteraction on the public's part due to the public nature of the celebrity status. Social media has escalated responses to celebrity scandals with its propagation of social action, cancel culture, and calls for boycotts. Whether a public persona is able to go back to prominence following an impropriety is up to global audiences who act as digital judges, juries, and executioners. The final decision on whether a misdeed is forgiven, ignored, or punished can be traced back to the psychological implications of fandoms. Public perceptions of the celebrity and how celebrities interact with their fans dictate the fans' attachment and motivation towards the celebrity which shape an overarching public sentiment and response to their improprieties. This essay presents how image and talent management play a key role in shaping the development of public reactions and celebrity scandals and ultimately determines why certain celebrity scandals are forgiven or ignored while others are penalized as seen through the Will Smith–Chris Rock incident at the 94th Academy Awards ceremony.

To understand the positioning of this research, one must delineate what constitutes a celebrity. In the book *Celebrity Culture and the American Dream: Stardom and Social Mobility* Sternheimer (2014) opposes earlier definitions of celebrity as a cultural product of the fantasy of elitism and rather suggests that the public is equally complicit in the creation of a celebrity and in choosing to follow this sociological phenomenon. Sternheimer defines celebrity as "anyone who is watched, noticed and known by a critical mass of strangers" (ibid). For the purposes of this research, this definition will be combined with Stever's understanding of celebrity as "transient" and a characteristic rather than a title (Stever, 2018). It should be noted that while these definitions are applied broadly, definitions of celebrity vary under smaller subcultures.

When discussing matters of image management, the scope to which certain terminology is applied is a key factor in measuring and predicting results from an incident. As Maiorescu describes, "personal public relations" gives room for a celebrity to prevent or ward off certain responses that do not fit their marketed image, therefore uncomplicating crisis management (Maiorescu, 2017). The transient aspect of celebrity comes into play as personal public relations plays a key role in preserving an individual's celebrity status. In short, proactive image management is easier to reinforce than reactive, as the latter seeks to change something that is already established while the former simply sustains the status quo.

Public personal relations is then defined as the "constitution, positioning, and promotion of individuals to form a public identity" (Motion, 1999). Motion outlines image and impression management as key to the development of traditional public relations efforts. Image management is defined as a productive effort for the superficial creation of a character (ibid). Impression management is conversely the performative practice used to control the perception of this persona (ibid). Psychological approaches are often used to enhance positive impressions of the celebrity.

The phenomenon of celebrity is rooted in attachment theory, especially following the rise of digital media where individuals face "repeated exposure" to these celebrities and develop a sense of security towards them (Stever, 2011; Maiorescu, 2017). Attachment theory, the psychological concept developed in the 1960s by Mary Ainsworth, proposes that human beings develop a natural attachment to certain figures in their life, whom they perceive as a "secure base" (Bretherton, 1992). The theory describes "how secure attachments develop; how they help people survive temporary bouts of pain, fear, discomfort, and distress; and how they help people emerge from distress and reestablish confidence, hope, optimism, and emotional balance." (Cassidy, 2006). While attachment theory is often linked to children's attachment to their parents during infancy, the concept was later explored and expanded to adulthood following Hazan's (1987) research of romantic attachment. Relying on the intrinsic idea of individuals depending on "attachment figures" for "emotional regulation" (Cassidy, 2006), attachment theory now encompasses platonic relationships, friendships, among other figures that account for that individual's emotional support. Assuming the relationship between individuals and celebrities is founded upon a given variable that fulfills an unmet social or psychological need, emotional attachments to a celebrity are strengthened as the relation progresses.

In exploring the "Parasocial and Social Interaction with Celebrities," Stever (2009) developed nine basic motivations for celebrity attachment: task attraction (attraction to the celebrity's skills and talent), romantic attachment (desiring the celebrity as a romantic partner), identificatory attachment 1 (wanting to be like the celebrity), identificatory attachment 2 (relating to similarities between the individual and the celebrity), filial attachment (perceiving the celebrity as a family member), coworker attachment (desire to work with the celebrity), hero-worship (perceiving the celebrity as a legend—more than an ordinary individual), infantile attachment (where the celebrity fulfills an "unmet need" in the fan's life"), and parental attachment (the individual exhibits protective and nurturing instincts towards the celebrity). For the purposes of this research, task attraction as well as identificatory attachments 1 and 2 will be used to analyze the relationship between image management, fandom cultures, and misconduct forgiveness or disregard as other types of attachment are better analyzed under a case-by-case inspection of the fan-to-celebrity relationship.

Approaching crisis relations requires a close consideration of the overall environment of the incident, including surrounding circumstances and positions. Controllable situations are judged by the public differently than uncontrollable ones. Nam-Hyun Um suggests that attitudes toward brands engaged with celebrity endorsements suffering from improprieties changed based on whether the public held dispositional or situational attribution towards the celebrity (Um 2013). Controllable situations originating from "dispositional factors" yield more negative

judgments and hostility while situations deriving from "situational factors" yield more sympathy (ibid). Celebrity improprieties that entail a lack of control to change the situation at the hands of the celebrity may be less harshly judged by the public as situational factors may be used as justification (ibid). Situational variables in crisis relations have a great potential to alter the final outcome of an event. Tim Coombs and Sherry Holladay's Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) analyzes potential reputational threats by staging different levels of responsibility "attributed to the organization by key publics" (Kelleher, 2018). Based on this theory, accidental events, preventable crisis, and situations where the key figure was victimized generate different public reactions due varying degrees in which the incident broke the public's trust in that individual or brand (ibid). Several correlated factors can be used to analyze and predict the development of public response and the overall consequences of scandals. Therefore, a change in one affects the other. However, it should be pointed out that certain factors may be more or less emphasized in different scenarios. Thus, all factors are important, but overriding factors hold the final say in individual scenarios.

In practice, this form of analysis is often discussed by the reacting public as a primary means for deciding who is to blame in a celebrity scandal. Such an interpretation may be drawn from the public controversy depicted at the 94th Academy Awards ceremony involving Chris Rock, Will Smith, and Jada Pinkett Smith. The Academy Awards is a celebration of the best films of the previous year presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). The incident revolved around Will Smith walking onto the stage and slapping comedian Chris Rock on live television following a joke made by the comedian regarding Will Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith (ABC7, 2022). The predominant interpretation of the public identified Jada Pinkett Smith as a second party to the incident with no control over the joke or the assault on Chris Rock. This correlates to most of the blame being shifted away from her reputation, although she is still involved. Both Chris Rock and Will Smith's actions arose from dispositional factors. Certain spectators were quick to point out that Chris Rock had the ability to avoid the possible incident with a more compassionate approach to his speech. However, he had little control over the assault beyond a preventative stance. In this sense, Will Smith had full control over the public display of violence and the profanities afterward. Lastly, while AMPAS had little control over the assault, they bear certain social responsibility for speeches at the ceremony as a presenter of the awards as well as security of the awards overall, and may be held accountable for their actions in choosing to allow Will Smith to remain at the ceremony and receive an award afterward. These dispositional factors are all accounted for in the mixed public reaction to the Smith–Rock incident that leans towards a negative perception of Smith.

The cultural and ethnic backgrounds of fandoms may also affect public response to improprieties. Koreans are more inclined than Americans to see celebrities as having less control over scandals—whether the crisis is "other-oriented," where the celebrity was associated with another person's impropriety, or "self-oriented crisis, such as drug use" (Maiorescu, 2017). Maiorescu connects this distinction to a higher collectivism mentality in Korea which draws back to a popular public relations tool: Hofstede's (2011) cultural dimensions.

Cultural dimensions serve to help public relations professionals improve communications by analyzing different cultures and nationalities' multiple dimensions of values. The cultural

dimensions developed by Geert Hofstede are: power distance (egalitarianism vs. value of authority), uncertainty avoidance (more vs. less comfortable with uncertainty), individualism-collectivism (value large groups or society vs. immediate relationships), masculinity-femininity (value "care, collaboration, and modesty" vs. "competition, achievement, and material success"), long-term orientation (focus on quick results and value traditions vs. working towards long-term future goals and innovation), and indulgence-restraint (low vs. high happiness index and feeling of control) (Kelleher, 2018; Hofstede 2011). Essentially, the behaviors of a certain public can be traced back to the category they fall into. For example, countries with a high power distance are more likely to fall in line with the point of view of an authority figure in regard to a scandal. These individuals are more likely to rationalize unequal distribution of income, societal hierarchies, and corruption. Scandals in these cultures are also more likely to be covered up (Hofstede 2011). Hence individuals accustomed to high power distance will perceive celebrity improprieties differently than those in places of low power distance who value equality, transparency, and accountability. Fundamentally, this framework should not be looked upon as a yes or no answer for public response. Rather these dimensions need to be rated on a scale that takes into consideration the intensity of attitudes and outside variables.

This accounts for the idea that while a large portion of the respondents to the Oscars crisis shared similar beliefs about Will Smith being more liable than other parties for the incident, many others attribute a larger share of the blame on Chris Rock or the AMPAS. The public's cultural values play a key role in unconsciously guiding the decision-making process and appropriateness of certain actions. This cultural divide is exacerbated by the live audio censorship in the United States following Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations while international broadcasters showed the raw footage of the incident (Bellware, 2022). This disparity molded two different affairs, each generating a different perspective delineated by cultural norms. Countries ranking higher in the individualism dimension may be more likely to be indifferent towards the incident or side with Smith for sake of family values; however, this may be countered by low levels of power distance and high levels of the masculinity, long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence dimensions that lead to a disapproval of Smith's actions.

As the public begins to create a certain image of a celebrity, it becomes more difficult for a scandal to change this character attachment. Negative perceptions are in fact more established than positive ones. This can be traced to retroactive crisis management being more demanding than proactive work, which seeks to maintain a balance of current relationships and reputations rather than attempting to change public perception. Neither negative nor positive images are impossible to change. But once the public has an established way of thinking about the individual, it becomes more difficult to break these mental expectations. The reasons why some celebrities are forgiven or have their scandals ignored lies in the manner in which social media is used within the fandom and by the celebrities themselves. Group mentality within the fandom, along with the degree and intensity of fandom activity on social media, shapes how fans inside the group perceive a certain impropriety. Often, fan groups trust the judgment of their chosen community as fans have established relationships amongst themselves.

In the case of the 2022 Oscars incident, this is illustrated by the quick rise of social media mentions about the incident following the event. While the 15.4 million live viewers (Hsu 2022) were a dominant factor in spreading the news about the scandal, mentions and replies were crucial for the exacerbation of public revolt. Twitter reported that the Academy Awards had the highest engagement in the television or broadcast category during the week of March 21 to 27, 2022. At 32.8 million engagements—measured by "number of favorites, retweets, and mentions" (Klipfolio Inc., n.d.)— the Oscars far outweighed second-placer Netflix's *Bridgerton*, at 295.4 thousand engagements (Dowling, 2022). It is especially important to note the rapid spread of the Oscars controversy which occurred on the closing day of this report. Moreover, the show's millions of mentions, replies, retweets, and likes reportedly reached the "highest overall engagements to date" on Twitter (Dowling, 2022). The constant exposure to the intricacies of the incident and public opinions aggravates and enlarges the situation, pulling in a larger audience. Furthermore, this phenomenon increases the influence and reach of negative opinions over the incident, increasing scrutiny of the celebrities involved based on certain audience group's established point of view of the incident.

Golmohammadi and his research associates found that increased response to complaints on a business's social media page, namely Twitter, creates a "negativity spiral" that "increases public exposure of complaints" and therefore sheds a negative light on a company's online reputation (Golmohammadi, 2021). For this reason, celebrities that heavily rely on platforms like Twitter—or whose fandoms saturate these platforms—are at greater risk for scrutiny due to the way these platforms function. Whether positive or negative, Twitter prioritizes highly popular tweets that spur conversation amongst its users (ibid). Posts with high levels of engagements reach more people via popularity prioritization and algorithm linkage to user interest. This popularity may be measured through engagement—likes, comments, sharing, retweets, etc. Those celebrities with highly active and engaged followers on Twitter who respond to posts about scandals and effectively promote the scandal to a greater audience are under greater scrutiny and hold less control over crisis management (ibid). If the platform effectively reaches people outside of the celebrity's public, attachment theory may be altogether ineffective to resolve the problem at hand—as scandals begin to reach audiences outside the fandom who do not have parasocial attachments to the celebrity— and the strategy to keep the issue quiet until the issue is forgotten becomes less feasible. While this increased publicization may seem solely negative, there are hidden opportunities to reach a larger audience that may have a positive impact on crisis management if an optimistic perception of the celebrity is intensified.

Drawing back on Hofstede's (2011) model for analyzing cultural dimensions, Maiorescu identified that groups with high long-term orientation, that is whose cultures strongly value looking into the future rather than quick results, had more positive perceptions of Amber Herd's accusations of domestic violence inflicted by Johnny Depp (Maiorescu, 2017). Likewise, cultures with moderate to low long-term orientation had more negative perceptions of Depp in the transgression. While Maiorescu (2017) argues Johnny Depp's reputation was not affected by cultural dimensions, "personal public relations practices" and the celebrity's displayed values may have defined the way certain social groups perceived Depp's public communication efforts and attitudes differently.

Negative and positive responses may also be attributed to fan and anti-fan demographics. This idea is outlined by previous research, which shows that involvement in cancel culture can differ according to political affiliation and gender. In his research about psychological predictors of cancel culture, Thomas S. Mueller found that demand for an apology ranks higher among women and those with higher liberal self-identification (Mueller, 2021). While those who identify as male and conservative also believe in the need for apologies following misconduct, research has shown that these demographics lack the motivation to call for such action (ibid). Therefore, a celebrity's fandom or anti-fan group demographics can play an important role in mediating whether scandals are ignored or propelled to a bigger scale. Anti-fan groups pose a fundamental threat to the celebrity's reputation, forming "social action groups or 'hatesites', and can thus be just as organized as their fan counterparts" (Gray, 2003). Therefore, anti-fan demographics are of equal importance in terms of reputation management because they are not indifferent or dispassionate parties, but rather actively "find cause for their dislike in something" (ibid). Celebrities with more female and liberal fans are under higher scrutiny in the long run. Small actions and behaviors considered improper are more likely to be called out at the risk of losing the fan base. To maintain this fanbase the celebrity must maintain a socially progressive and, arguably, a clean and consistent image. That said, when it comes to bigger scandals, celebrities with large liberal and female demographics more prominently benefit from attachment theory coming from their followers. In theory, people will be more likely to doubt the scandal, give the celebrity a second chance, or believe the individual will correct their actions if their image is built around a more compassionate and socially active personality. Furthermore, anti-fan groups composed of males and conservatives will be less likely to confront the scandal and ask for an apology from the celebrity (Mueller, 2021). Meanwhile, celebrities who have the opposite demographics among their fan and anti-fan groups may be more harshly criticized as those more likely to call for an apology, the anti-fans, lack attachment to the individual.

As exemplified in politics, polarization leads to more revelations—or sudden bursts of key information often released by the involved party or their opponent. These revelations develop into scandals but in fact, decrease the "informational value" of reports (Dziuda, 2021). Scandals and improprieties have the potential to benefit or harm the reputation of both political parties depending on the harmony between the two parties' crisis management (ibid). In a polarized climate, the parties' response to the scandals and their audience's current political beliefs play a vital role in whether misdeeds are forgiven, ignored, or punished. Dziuda (2021) developed a model finding that polarization causes parties to suppress the misconduct of their affiliated politicians and falsely accuse opposing politicians. The unstable credibility provided by polarization affects whether the public believes the news is real, how they rank the importance of the scandal, and how involved the party is (ibid). In this form, the public is left to infer what is happening behind the scenes and make judgments. This sometimes leads to these types of scandals benefiting "the implicated politician" as "when only the opposing party alleges misbehavior, the voter may infer that the politician did not misbehave after all, even as she downgrades her assessment of both parties" (ibid).

There are some who believe that transparency is key to surpassing scandals. However, political analysis shows that by highlighting an unstable and polarizing atmosphere, they may be

able to continue to gather support within their public (ibid). Looking back to the Oscars incident, one can discern the occurrence of this phenomenon between groups who strongly side with Will Smith and those firmly defending Chris Rock. The more polarizing the issue at hand becomes, the more defensive individuals get over their point of view. Essentially, confirmation and perception bias— prejudice in favor or against the individual, the former based on existing beliefs and the latter based on skewed assumptions—takes over decision-making. The unstable environment around the altercation provides a breeding ground for an alliance between similar views and mistrust of the opposing group.

While politicians operate at much higher stakes than celebrities due to the added urgency, legitimacy, and direct power over the public, the same method of crisis assessment can be employed for both considering high ranking politicians operate at a celebrity level and attachment polarization can take effect within popular culture. Political parties and fandom cultures fall under the same psychological sphere of group mentality, attachment theory, and identification, but fandom cultures are more inclined to pathological identification and motivation. The conflict between fandoms or between fans and anti-fans displays the same key traces of response to scandals. It is up to the public to analyze the news being received in terms of credibility, importance, and party involvement to make a judgment.

As dictated by attachment theory and in the model presented by Dziuda and Howell, fans who associate with a certain fandom or group are more likely to forgive or ignore an impropriety done by the celebrity they revere, believing the opposing party may distribute fake news, that the scandal is not important in the grand scheme, or returning to the greater values supported by the celebrity. Individuals will selectively pay attention and accept the opinion of others with similar beliefs that align with their previous values and expectations. This phenomenon can be explained by confirmation and perception biases of fans and anti-fans as discussed earlier.

A scandal that goes against the psychographics—psychological data like personality, interests, values, and attitudes—of the celebrity's public (whether fan or anti-fan) may also have a similar effect on different political affiliations and genders. As Chiou describes, there is an underlying connection between people's values and how they perceive certain pieces of information (Chiou, 2020; Maiorescu, 2017). The same can be said about the public and their feelings towards a celebrity scandal. Negative feelings are intensified only when the scandal challenges an audience's ideology. This explains how positive emotions can be present for certain individuals even in scandals surrounding violence if the brain assigns it a "positive valance" (Chiou, 2020). Here the individual may believe that the violent act was excusable, justifiable, or necessary. Fundamentally, "violence becomes less aversive and more acceptable when it fits one's moral convictions" (ibid), thereby decoding why certain individuals rationalize Will Smith's violence. While many online users cited Smith's actions and violence altogether as inexcusable, others defended the celebrity or said the act was justifiable, pointing out the presupposed ill intent in Chris Rock's joke about Jada Pinkett Smith's hairstyle originating from her struggles with Alopecia.

While the previous frameworks analyze public reaction to celebrity improprieties in group settings, Chiou's connection of this effect exemplifies sway factors on the individual and moral

level. This explains certain variability of response within fandoms and social groups as moral principles converge at different levels. While this may be proven difficult to control from an image management standpoint, it is possible for it to be used as a tool for proactive crisis management. By being vocal about socio-political beliefs and moral ideology, celebrities can attract individuals with similar stances on this spectrum (Chiou, 2020; Maiorescu, 2017). Essentially, one may guide the emergence of fan and anti-fan groups as well as steer their perception of the celebrity. Those celebrities are placed in a similar situation as those that attract certain demographics previously discussed. However, it should be noted that celebrities whose marketed image is severely altered from the original individual's character suffer greater risk when the crisis or its management does not align with the created persona (Maiorescu, 2017).

The Will Smith–Chris Rock incident at the 94th Academy Awards ceremony illustrates how personal public relations play a vital role in crisis management and shaping public reactions to celebrity scandals. Image management directly influences psychological factors of fan attachments to celebrities which dictate whether scandals are forgiven, ignored, or penalized. Additionally, demographics, psychographics, and cultural dimensions show strong indicators of responses towards improprieties.

Fan and anti-fan mentality is exacerbated in 'us vs. them' settings of group mentality and polarization in which the individual is left to their own means for assessing credibility which results in conforming to their social group and previously held understandings. While variables in celebrity crises alter public reactions in crisis management, it is possible to create, predict, and avoid undesirable outcomes that challenge the celebrity's reputation through personal public relations and management techniques.

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Marissa Carty

CAS'22, Psychology

SPRING BREAK

We are hiking in Asheville's outskirts after a day of conservation work: digging drain trenches in trails and pulling up Princess Mary trees, using sharp rocks to sever root-knuckles from their invasive grip in the granite.

> I deleted my assignments from my schedule.

We stumble along a river, cyanic-azure and flowing over what must be Super Deluxe sand in any non-remote, remotely touristed area. But here the sand sits for itself. This dirt does not have a magazine ad or commercial. We kneel and bow at the bank. Kiss the river and drink.

> I deleted my schedule from my agenda.

Strip shoes! peel off socks! and ankle-roll our cargo pants! The mountain's tresses caress us up past our calves. We wade through the water, silt tickling our toes.

> I deleted my agenda from my contacts.

On the other side we decide we are too cool for shoes, our ditched hiking boots dangle and click-clack, clapping for us as they hang from our backpacks by looped laces.

> I deleted my contacts from my cell phone.

Barefoot hiking is ridiculous bliss. We dodge and weave, full-foot tiptoeing across broken branches and funky rocks.

> I deleted my cell phone from my hippocampus.

I try to climb a fallen tree, over instead of under just for fun. I fail and my forearms will scar for six months. The rest of the group giggles and hollers, "How ya doin' back there?"

Twigs in my hair and eye-level with the sky, I sigh and smile, hoot back, "Fucking dandy!" and my words ripple around the ravine, high fiving the trees as they echo. And now everyone is giggling, Spencer to Sparrow to Staghorn Sumac.

Richard Boylan

COM'22, Film & Television

A recent Boston University graduate, Richard has interned for companies in Sydney, London, and Los Angeles. At BU he completed "North to Alaska!," his first feature documentary.

DECONSTRUCTING HITCHCOCK

Scan the QR code to view the presentation.

In Kilachand's senior course, HC 501, students analyze the life of a significant historical figure. As a class they use the semester to debate and determine the complexities of what it means to live a "good" life. I would have taken part in these debates too, but when I began HC 501 in the fall of my senior year I was studying abroad in London. Instead, I was given the freedom to choose a famous figure from the UK to better immerse myself in the culture while still meeting the class requirements. As a film & television major, I desired to explore the life of an accomplished British film director, but who? In my research, I soon realized Alfred Hitchcock's London flat was less than a five-minute walk from my own. Each day as I strolled around London, I was retracing his footsteps.

When the average person thinks of Alfred Hitchcock, they think of the prolific director whose films have single-handedly defined filmmaking for the past fifty years. Whose silhouette became an instantly recognizable emblem during the 10-year run of his self-titled *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Who invented entire camera movements and genres. Ultimately, though, looking at Hitchcock as a singular monolithic director is reductive. My goal with this presentation was to peel back the idea of "Alfred Hitchcock" to understand the experiences, influences, and fellow filmmakers who contributed to the success of Hitchcock's movies and image. By removing the mystique around "The Master of Suspense" layer by layer, I hoped to create a more exact picture of not just Hitchcock the director, but Alfred Hitchcock the person.

Maggie Borgen

COM'25, Film & Television

Maggie Borgen is a showrunner, writer, and actor on the upcoming web series "Admitted." She is an actor and writer for BUTV's "Bay State." For more information, visit https://www.maggieborgen.com/.

WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS:
Landscape with the Fall of Icarus and How We Interpret the World Around Us

How do we interpret a world that appears to be constantly falling apart—whether it be due to global warming or political divisions? Some might think it is best to compartmentalize and focus on one's own experiences instead of the barrage of bad news. Yet, that would lead us to ignore the issues in the world around us and not experience the world as a whole. The opposite option is to endlessly scroll on social media reading every piece of bad news, to doomscroll, but that can lead to us ignoring things happening in our own lives. Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* (c. 1560) explores the impact of focusing too much—or not enough—on our own lives and suggests the value of achieving balance.

The world is filled with chaos beyond our lives. *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* shows just that (see above; *Daily Art Magazine*). Although the title of the painting suggests it is about Icarus, the artist does not even have Icarus directly in focus in the painting. By tracking the process by which I examined and interpreted the painting, I recognize how the artwork encourages an appreciation of humanity's unique ability to focus. We must not allow ourselves to become too preoccupied with our own lives to forget to look up and outward, but at the same time, we cannot forget to look at what is right around us.

ORIGINAL OBSERVATIONS

I was first drawn to the red shirt of the man in the middle of the painting because the color is much more saturated than the other colors in the painting. My eyes were drawn to the red color at the center of the painting before looking outward at the image as a whole. This made me wonder whether the red stood out because of contrasting/complementary colors compared to the rest of the painting. Using the Canva Color Wheel to examine the color palette, I determined the shirt's color was #BF2425 (see right). The teal is brighter than what is seen in the painting, but the colors in the painting are generally in the blue/green family, which contrasts with the red.
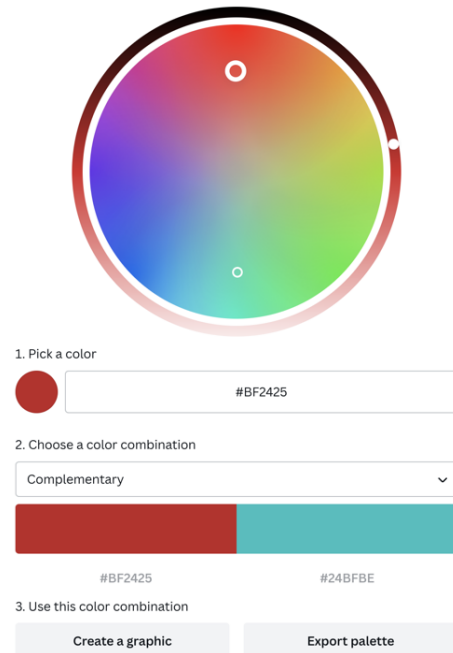
The next thing my eye was drawn to was the brightness of the sky—the grayness compared to the other darker tones in the sky. As mentioned, the tones are darker in other parts of the painting where the sky and light are not reflecting the sun. After focusing on the light of the sky, my eyes naturally moved downward to the right, looking at the ship. Upon further inspection, I realized that legs were sticking out of the water, a man falling or jumping in. I focused on the person in the water. Were they drowning? Only then did I remember the title and figure out that this figure is Icarus falling.

To summarize, my eyes found Icarus after staring at the man in the middle in red, moving up to the light of the sky, then down to the right to the ship, and then further down from the ship where Icarus is falling into the water. It took three eye movements before I found Icarus. Bruegel intended for us to be distracted by the red shirt in the middle because Bruegel wanted us to *feel* the discomfort of realizing the chaos around us that we may have been ignoring.

There are so many worlds within worlds within the painting. In the top left corner is a distant city, another world, that is easily missed. Each world in the painting is of a similar size to the other elements around it. To the top right is the light from the sky and action in the water. In the lower right corner are the ship sailing, the man flailing in the water, and another man with red near the water. In the foreground is the man with the horse. This man is the focus, yet he is doing the least interesting thing in the painting. He represents routine in the midst of chaos, just as we live surrounded by chaos, as we will see if we look outside our bubbles. We live in a bubble within Boston University. Within our hometowns. Even within what side of TikTok we are on or whom we follow on Instagram. We can become focused on the intricacies of our communities while simplifying the ones beyond us because we see them from afar.

Finally, in the midground is a man with his sheep (and sheepdog) looking up at the sky. What is he looking at? Was he looking up at Icarus as he fell from the sky? The painting depicts different worlds and things happening simultaneously that are not related thematically but

merely exist in the same place. Worlds within worlds. Everything is complex when investigated closely, but it can easily seem simple from afar. The painting depicts a coexistence of chaos.

ART IN TRANSLATION

According to Zuzanna Stanska, "The boredom of this everyday life scene can be suffocating. But when we direct the eye to a certain spot in the water, just below the ship, we can see the real, hidden drama - the legs of Icarus, a young man who became the victim of his own hubris." This "Dutch and Flemish Renaissance painting" was inspired by the Greek myth of Icarus, who built wax wings and flew too close to the sun (*Daily Art Magazine*; see also *Hamilton* lyrics). The painting was possibly completed in the 1560s, but the caveat is that it is probably an early copy, not the original painting itself, which was created around 1558 (*Daily Art Magazine*). The painting is in oil (not in tempera, as Bruegel often used) and is of "a relatively weak quality compared to other Bruegels, although this question is complicated by later overpainting" (*Daily Art Magazine*). Determining the quality of the painting is difficult due to the different versions.

Bruegel loved proverbs and used them as inspiration for his paintings (*Daily Art Magazine*). A Flemish proverb is "'And the farmer continued to plough…' (En de boer … hij ploegde voort')," according to Stanska, which could have been Bruegel's inspiration. The farmer in red ignores Icarus's death and fails to see the problems that those around him face.

Stanska's article printed a second version of the painting with brighter teal colors, which was most likely not created by Bruegel (see below; *Daily Art Magazine*). In this version, the water and sky are much closer to the teal which is complementary to the red of the shirt (although this red is slightly brighter too). This means the red stands out even more than in Bruegel's version, heightening the contrasting worlds of the painting.

Landscape with The Fall of Icarus, ca. 1590–95, Circle of P. Bruegel the Elder, Museum van Buuren, Brussels, Belgium

A man is flying in the sky in this version of the painting, whereas there were simply clouds in the other version. At first glance, it could appear to be Daedalus, Icarus's father, especially as the man looks older. Since the man is flying close to the sun, this might be Icarus before he has fallen. The identity of this figure is one of many aspects of the painting that is up to interpretation, especially considering that the other version did not include the flying man. Why was he added to this version but not the other? There are many possible reasons. The painter could have preferred a different version of the scene or could have wanted to distinguish their painting from the original.

I did not see the man in the sky until much later in my examination of the painting. This can be explained by inattentional blindness, a phenomenon that leads to people accidentally ignoring certain things because they are too focused on something else. (For example, if someone told you to look at a red car driving down the street, you might not see a man in a gorilla costume running down the sidewalk because you are too focused on the red car.) This raises the question of whether the painter of this other version could be so focused on the small details that they believed mattered most in *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* that they ended up missing a glaring man in the sky in the center of the painting. Although that is unlikely, it is important to recognize the painting thematizes inattentional blindness. Each character in the painting suffers from inattentional blindness in their own way: by focusing so much on one thing, they miss another. For example, the man in red is so focused on his task that he completely misses Icarus's fall from the sky. Within our own lives, we must be mindful of the trap of inattentional blindness.

The painting is a "parable on human aspiration," according to John Sutherland (the British Library). The article notes Bruegel's love of proverbs. As John Sutherland wrote of the painting's meaning, "Life goes on." The painting has inspired literature, such as W.H. Auden's poem "Musée des Beaux-Arts" (the museum which holds the painting).

POETRY

Analyzing ekphrastic poetry about *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* helps us gain a deeper understanding of the idea of many worlds in one. In W.H. Auden's "Musée des Beaux-Arts" (Emory University, printed here), note the contrast between the lines "a boy falling out of the sky" and "sailed calmly on" (Auden). These lines mirror the contrast between the red of the shirt and the greens/blues of the rest of the painting (yet, what is mundane is what is in a bright color). The poem also made me pause because Auden described green water: Which version of the painting did he see, the one shown at the top of this paper or on page four? The line

Musee des Beaux Arts

W. H. Auden

About suffering they were never wrong,
The old Masters: how well they understood
Its human position: how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
For the miraculous birth, there always must be
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
On a pond at the edge of the wood:
They never forgot
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water, and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

"how everything turns away / Quite leisurely from the disaster" (Auden) is core to the message of the painting. This part of the poem almost sounds like a proverb within itself. We, like the farmer at his ploughing, can turn away from disasters with one click of the remote, we can look away from the news. We get so enraptured by what we are doing that we can forget to see what is happening to those around us.

This brings me to Charles Baudelaire's poem "Lament of an Icarus"/"Les plaintes d'un Icare." Below you can read the original French (from *Les Grandes Classiques*) and English translation (from *All Poetry*) of the poem:

Charles BAUDELAIRE
1821 - 1867

Les plaintes d'un Icare

Les amants des prostituées
Sont heureux, dispos et repus ;
Quant à moi, mes bras sont rompus
Pour avoir étreint des nuées.

C'est grâce aux astres nonpareils,
Qui tout au fond du ciel flamboient,
Que mes yeux consumés ne voient
Que des souvenirs de soleils.

En vain j'ai voulu de l'espace
Trouver la fin et le milieu ;
Sous je ne sais quel oeil de feu
Je sens mon aile qui se casse ;

Et brûlé par l'amour du beau,
Je n'aurai pas l'honneur sublime
De donner mon nom à l'abîme
Qui me servira de tombeau.

Lament Of An Icarus

Lovers of whores don't care,
happy, calm and replete:
But my arms are incomplete,
grasping the empty air.
Thanks to stars, incomparable ones,
that blaze in the depths of the skies,
all my destroyed eyes
see, are the memories of suns.
I look, in vain, for beginning and end
of the heavens' slow revolve:
Under an unknown eye of fire, I ascend
feeling my wings dissolve.
And, scorched by desire for the beautiful,
I will not know the bliss,
of giving my name to that abyss,
that knows my tomb and funeral.

The original French version of the poem is often more evocative than the English translation. For example, the lines "Quant à moi, mes bras sont rompus / Pour avoir étreint des nuées" (Baudelaire, *Les Grandes Classiques*) directly translates to "As for me, my arms are broken / For having hugged clouds." The English translation is simply, "But my arms are incomplete, / grasping the empty air" (*All Poetry*). In the painting, these lines seemed to relate to the bright sky in the top right and the man looking at the sky in the midground with the sheep. Those areas had a sense of emptiness (the sky) and of longing and searching (the man looking to the sky). The differing translations of the poetry represent different worlds of understanding: reading the poem in English or French can give the reader different feelings but reading both can paint a more complete, complicated picture of the story. There are nuances between the two versions which demand attention, even if the original French contains more evocative images than the English translation. The idea of "grasping the empty air" paints a picture of someone grasping at something not there. But the concept of "having hugged clouds" alludes to something more complex: reaching out to a substance that is there but disappears upon touching it. Similar to

translating poetry, there are many ways to interpret a painting—or rather, to translate the imagery we see.

All interpretations of Bruegel's painting are interpretations of a translation, given that the painting in the museum is most likely an early copy, a translation. Just as Baudelaire's poem lost its evocative texture through translation, we are also not getting to interpret Bruegel's original nuances. Even if you are completing a "Paint By Numbers" project, yours will look different than mine. We need to remember that the small details—the texture, the exact color, and the brushstrokes—are interpretations of a translator rather than the original painter.

The painting shows the chaos of the world and how we can each be stuck in our own heads and our own worlds. We walk through our lives making countless interpretations of the things we see around us daily. Each person's interpretation of life's events will differ based on factors such as our upbringing and core beliefs. We may see our interpretation of life's events as the original, with other interpretations as translations of the same event. But that does not mean any idea is more or less worthy of investigation—instead, by combining differing viewpoints, we can find a more complex understanding of the world around us.

In *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, the man in red is focused on his daily work just as many of us may focus just on the immediate events of our own lives. He does not pay attention to the other events depicted in the painting. Perhaps the fall of Icarus would not affect him. But, by not looking up, he does not have a full picture of the world around him. By focusing on the farmer in red, Bruegel implores us to consider how we behave like the farmer and the implications of not looking up at the world around us. The painting is not ultimately about Icarus but rather the farmer in red. The farmer is a stand-in for our inattentional blindness. And while it is not intentional, we need to cultivate a mindset where we notice things outside of ourselves. When in a landscape, do not ignore the fall of Icarus.

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Sujena was born and raised in Portland, Oregon and has been learning Indian classical dance and singing since the age of five. When she is not in school Sujena enjoys dancing, writing, reading and learning new languages. Some of her favorite activities here at BU include working at the Daily Free Press and learning belly dance with BU Belly Dance Society.

BHARATANATYAM AND THE PARADOX OF POSTCOLONIAL CONTINUITY

My path to learning Indian classical dance for twelve years began not with a powerful, instantaneous attraction to the art form, but a vague sense of peer pressure. I still remember the feeling of jealousy that washed over me at age five when I heard that my similarly-aged cousin had begun learning the dance form called Bharatanatyam. I soon found myself attending weekly Bharatanatyam lessons, motivated only by the understanding that for Indian girls, dancing filled one of the many requirements of being respectable, cultured and approved of in my community. This understanding arose from a variety of sources: the look of relieved satisfaction on my relatives' faces when I assured them I was keeping our traditional arts alive, the fact that every other Indian girl I met also danced Bharatanatyam, and the disgust in my dance teacher's voice when she announced to us one day that one of our teammates had quit Bharatanatyam to play the uncultured, uncouth sport of basketball. For my community, Bharatanatyam provided cultural pride, and practicing it remained integral to keeping centuries of rich history alive.

Bharatanatyam originated around 2,000 years ago in the temples of South India (Goyal). This dance form, which combines aesthetic dance movements, facial expressions and dramatic storytelling, holds an intimate connection with the Hindu tradition. In fact, its practitioners almost always perform Bharatanatyam as an act of devotion towards a specific deity, using emotive expressions and mythological retellings to honor God ("From..."). Today, among the menu of qualifications for an ideal young woman, Indian society considers devotion to Indian arts and religion through the practice of Bharatanatyam extremely desirable (Ganesh). This expectation heavily influenced my continuity with the art form. As I devoted myself to the art and attended dance class almost every day, I turned strong and lean by Bharatanatyam's intensity and found another source of motivation. Exerting my body in devotion to my religion forced me to find truth and meaning in something beyond myself, connecting me to the ancient roots of my culture. However, as I developed genuine appreciation for the dance form's significance, I also noticed discrepancies in its perception. If Bharatanatyam represented cultural purity and religious refinement, why had my grandmother and others in her generation been banned from learning it? Who were the mysterious "Devadasis" cited in my Bharatanatyam history textbooks as pre-colonial practitioners of the dance, and why did their ambiguously termed "temple work" cease to exist? This complex dance form has endured for thousands of years through invasions, famines, and the devastating effects of British imperialism. In fact, its impressive historical continuity led public television program Articulate to describe

Bharatanatyam as a dance form that has "survived colonial oppression and today exemplifies Indian identity both at home and abroad ("Bharatanatyam…")." Yet, there seems to be a gaping hole in its history that calls into question its complete invulnerability from colonialism. Although Bharatanatyam has survived colonialism, the dance form's bodily movements and approach to religious devotion have changed drastically. These changes, as well as modern interpretations of Bharatanatyam's history, deliberately attempted to divorce Bharatanatyam from the legacy of the Devadasis, revealing colonial ideals continue to dictate the dance form.

In the ninth century C.E., as India entered the medieval age and began developing robust temple systems, Bharatanatyam became implicated with the Devadasi institution. In this system, young girls were dedicated to Hindu temples and considered married to the temple's deity. They dedicated their lives to the temples, participating in rituals and performing songs and dances devoted to the gods (Reddy 106). As the institution developed into the 12th century, Devadasis emerged as a sub-caste of Indian society operating on rules starkly different from the rest of their society. According to Mytheli Sreenivas, a professor at Ohio State University, these women were often granted their own land to live on, where they established matrifocal households and took on male partners by choice (66). Importantly, the Devadasi system took particular hold in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. From the first to 16th century, prominent Tamil dynasties such as the Cholas, Pallavas and Pandyas directed generous sums of money to temples, supporting the Devadasis there (Mitra 101). During this period, Sreenivas notes that "conjugal practices of temple-dedicated women shaped their sexuality, access to and control over property, and their family status in ways that were distinct from most Hindu women," and they enjoyed considerable wealth and status in society (6). The role of Bharatanatyam in giving these women a social status markedly different from— and in many ways more free than— the typical Hindu woman bound by monogamous marriage, demonstrates its intimate connection with sexual liberation and agency for women. This progressive legacy, however, no longer appears in modern Bharatanatyam's sanitized movements and silence on the topic of Devadasis. But how did this radical shift occur?

Despite Devadasis stewarding the art form and their unique way of life into the 19th century, the advent of British colonialism challenged their livelihoods. Starting in 1858, Britain began a period of direct rule over India called the British Raj. As Britain consolidated economic control of the country throughout the late 19th century, it destroyed the financial resources of the kings and temples propping up the Devadasi system. Patronage became more and more scarce for Devadasis, and they often turned to prostitution to support themselves. At the same time, Victorian ideals of religion and sexuality affected the status of Devadasis as the British began imposing their views on Indian society. From a Western viewpoint, women were only respectable in society as part of a monogamous, heterosexual marriage or when celibate for vocational purposes such as being nuns. Devadasis, and their use of Bharatanatyam not only to express religious devotion in romantic terms but also to wield sexual and economic freedom, became threatening (Sreenivas 67).

A 1930 video held in the archives of British Pathé — a prominent news and film producer during the 20th century — demonstrates the controversial dance of the Devadasis that the British encountered. In the video, two Devadasis are shown dancing an *Alarippu* (British Pathé).

Alarippu is a traditional Bharatanatyam dance piece which showcases intricate, aesthetic body movements as they transition from simple head shakes to complex rhythmic combinations involving the whole body (British Pathé). In the British Pathé film, the Devadasis' movements are loose and flowy. Even though their arms retain the geometric positions typical of Bharatanatyam, the transitions in between arm positions are slow and fluid. Similarly, their footsteps are soft and understated, as the dancers rarely lift their feet or strike loudly on the floor. This gentle, relaxed interpretation of the *Alarippu* demonstrates the previous, less athletic iteration of Bharatanatyam. However, as colonial norms began to affect the dance form, this style of movement would drastically change.

In the early 20th century, the dualist, Victorian ideas about religion and sexuality introduced during the British Raj collided with the growing Indian nationalist movement. Reformers, Indian and non-Indian alike, hoped to create a new national identity and address the nation's gender inequity. According to professor of dance Uttara Asha Coorlawala, "the zealous reformers could neither comprehend the Devadasi, nor her function (to facilitate auspiciousness in the present), nor the sensitive socio-historic system of sponsorship that enabled her to devote herself to perfecting her art. She came to be perceived as exploited" (51). In other words, nationalists adopted the very attitude of their colonizers towards the Devadasis' unique interpretation of devotion and sexuality. The artists were regarded as lowly prostitutes, and their lack of celibacy despite being a part of Hindu temples was interpreted as vulgar behavior. But though the reformers acquired their disdain for the Devadasis from the British, they used this viewpoint for anti-imperial, nationalistic purposes. Reformers saw the stigma placed on Devadasis as motivation to rid India of their exploitation and shameful reputation entirely, in order to work towards a new vision for an independent India. Beyond just branding them as vulgar, reformers portrayed them as victims of a brutal system that needed abolition. Thus, by the end of British rule over India, the term Devadasi had become a dirty word, and in 1947 — the same year India won independence — the Madras Devadasis Act outlawed the Devadasi system ("From…").

Although the disenfranchisement and erasure of the Devadasis threatened the future of Bharatanatyam, the emergence of a newly independent India created new life for the art form. Certain nationalists and reformers trying to reconstruct the country's national identity re-examined Bharatanatyam. Seeing potential for redefinition, they transformed the dance into a symbol of India's continuing rich cultural heritage, devoid of its connection to the Devadasis. Chief among the champions of Bharatanatyam's rebirth emerged dancer Rukmini Devi Arundale, who reconstructed the art form and established the Kalakshetra Foundation to train new Bharatanatyam dancers and remove the stigma associated with the dance. Through the efforts of Arundale and other reformers like her, Bharatanatyam became an esteemed national art form and a proud example of India's cultural resilience in the face of imperialism. The art form's transformation from vulgar to respectable in the eyes of Indian society unfolded drastically. Most importantly, it demanded extensive and intentional modifications of the choreography of the form itself in order to facilitate its modern palatability.

One example of Bharatanatyam's postcolonial evolution is the athletic rendering of its movements which contrasts with earlier, looser iterations. In 2008, Bharatanatyam dancer

Leela Samson performed *Alarippu*, the same dance item as the Devadasis in the 1930 British Pathé archive ("Alaripu…"*)*. Importantly, Leela Samson was a former student and director at Arundale's Kalakshetra Foundation, and Arundale herself choreographed her 2008 *Alarippu*. Samson's rendition awes the viewer with precise movements, rigid postures and extensive muscle control. Although Samson maintains the charm and attitude of ease characteristic of Bharatanatyam, her movements obviously push her body to its physical limits. Where from minutes 9:21 to 9:27 of their colonial-era video the Devadasis execute the fast-paced choreographic sequence loosely and with flowing arm motions, Samson's modern execution of the same sequence, from 2:40 to 2:47, is crisp and athletic. Similarly, at the beginning of the *Alarippu* choreography, where the hands must be outstretched and the shoulder jerks in and out, the Devadasis' hands are lower and relaxed, while Samson's are taut and held perfectly perpendicular to her body. The distinctions between Samson and the Devadasis' execution of the same choreography, therefore, demonstrate the drastic shift in movement style occurring after colonialism.

These choreographic distinctions demonstrate the continued impact of colonialism on Bharatanatyam because of the western ideologies responsible for transforming the art form's movements. For example, reformers such as Arundale introduced rigidity to Bharatanatyam as a deliberate attempt to separate the art form from the Devadasis. Elaborating on the modified movements introduced by Kalakshetra, Coorlawala writes that they involve "austere geometrically precise shapes, and vigorous dynamics" (55). Further, she describes that the pendulum-like hip motions of early forms of Bharatanatyam were purged in favor of a "pure," stable plié-like position*,* thereby eliminating any flirtatious or suggestive movements of the lower body. Coorlawala also explains that Bharatanatyam dancers began introducing faster and more complex rhythmic combinations into their choreography to demonstrate their proficiency in the dance form. This athleticized the dance form by limiting torso movement and demanding precise, rigid arm movements to accommodate the faster rhythm. Because the new model of Bharatanatyam relied primarily on athleticism as a marker of quality, the emotive aspects of the dance that colonial values had disapproved of became subdued. As a result, certain Bharatanatyam exponents felt the faster, rigid look of the dance form better conformed to "middle-class housewifely respectability" (56). Coorlwala concludes that this new model of Bharatanatyam is "still carrying its fear of being contaminated by association with the *devadāsī*, and imposing its (superior) aesthetic values (*samskrīti*) on the body of dance" (56). Because colonial ideologies introduced the original stigma to the work of Devadasis and began outlawing them, modern Bharatanatyam's desire to distance itself from this community through more rigid movements demonstrates its continued adherence to Western ideas of what makes Indian classical dance appropriate.

In addition to making Bharatanatyam's movements more athletic, colonial ideals have also led to the erasure of *sringara,* or romance, from the art form's depiction of religious devotion. Before the onset of colonialism, Indians understood *sringara* as a complex term encompassing love, sensuality, sexuality, and devotion (Bhargav). Within Indian classical dance, *sringara* often manifests itself as the dancer, or heroine, speaking to God as a romantic male partner. She depicts her devotion to him through longing for his embrace or feeling jealousy at the sight of him with another woman. For example, in a 15th century composition by Hindu saint Annamaya

— typical of the songs Devadasis performed to — the female speaker of the poem addresses Hindu deity Lord Venkateswara in the following way: "Some woman has made love to you/Lord of Venkata hill/plundered your body's perfumes/Soon after, you come into my arms/How can I blame you?/ My weariness is gone (Ramanujan 53)." This unique combination of romance and spirituality has been a feature of Indian dance for hundreds of years. Yet, songs such as Annamaya's that express overtly erotic themes have largely been purged from Bharatanatyam repertoires.

In contrast to the direct sensuality expressed in the Annamaya poem, in Vivek Chauhan's documentary *The Journey from Sadir to Bharatanatyam,* Bharatanatyam dancer Navtej Johar notes that in the modern day, exponents of the art form have "coyed" and "coquettish-ized" sensuality, expressing it quietly and indirectly (Chauhan). This transformation occurred deliberately. According to O'Shea, Arundale believed expressing erotic sentiment within Bharatanatyam degraded the art form. For example, speaking of a dance item portraying sexual love, Arundale stated, "to depict such things is unspeakable for me" (47). The solution, Arundale believed, meant replacing *sringara* with an expression of religious devotion entirely devoid of sexual references. The Kalakshetra school, which she founded specifically to, in her own words, promote art "devoid of vulgarity," propagated her view on *sringara* (Ganesh). The erasure of this unique aspect of Bharatanatyam did not proceed without opposition, however. Prominent dancer and descendent of Devadasis Tanjore Balasaraswati believed *sringara* should not be separated from religious devotion and that it remained a legitimate and powerful sentiment. Balasaraswati rejected the dismissal of *sringara* as carnal, instead arguing that the sensuality it expressed communicated sublimity and spirituality. She concluded, therefore, that reformers' attempts to purify Bharatanatyam were entirely erroneous (O'Shea 48). Nevertheless, themes of sensuality have largely been purged from modern Bharatanatyam repertoires. Furthermore, Arundale's views on this aspect of the art form, as well as the debate surrounding it, demonstrate that this erasure deliberately attempted to restore legitimacy to the art form and separate it from the tradition pioneered by Devadasis.

Although Indians may have been behind the decision to separate sexuality from religious devotion, the British decided these two ideas could not coexist in the first place. Victorians viewed all indigenous dances as erotic, branding Devadasis as "superstitious prostitutes" and ignoring the important aspects of love and devotion they intertwined with any sexual themes (O'Shea 55). Thus, *sringara*, which once harmoniously included these three ideas, adopted a narrower, more stringent definition. It came to be seen as inappropriate, and something that should be stripped from religious devotion in order to purify Indian dance and religion. Postcolonial reformers seeking to revive Bharatanatyam, instead of countering this colonial narrative that Indian art forms were unrestrained and inappropriate in their eroticism, adopted the same view and used it to justify a transformation of the art form (Bhargav). Thus, although carried out by Indians, the diminution of *sringara* within modern Bharatanatyam choreography emerged directly from Victorian ideas about dance and spirituality, further demonstrating that the art form continues to conform to colonial norms.

Beyond the choreographic and thematic aspects of Bharatanatyam, present-day representations of its history further reveal the continued impact of colonialism on the dance

form. They also reveal how Indian reformers internalized these colonial norms as they used Victorian ideas about Bharatanatyam to reconfigure the art form and the way its history would be taught. Bharatanatyam has a long and significant history, ranging from its mythical origins to its prominent role in medieval Indian literature. However, when dancers learn this important background, the dance community often downplays the contributions of the Devadasis who stewarded the art form throughout centuries. In Chauhan's documentary, Bharatanatyam dancer Aranyani Bhargav describes her own experience with this phenomenon when learning Bharatanatyam. She states, "no one went into what the Devadasis were or who they were and why it's not performed by the Devadasis anymore" (Chauhan). Professor S. Anandhi lends credence to Bhargav's experience. Anandhi observes that "Bharatanatyam is where the history of Devadasis' connection is somehow... a kind of embarrassed history." She goes on to describe a "willful break" between the story of the Devadasis and the history of Bharatanatyam, elaborating that the school of Bharatanatyam has "consciously worked it out" (Chauhan). The testimonies of Anandhi and Bhargav reveal that the deliberate distance established between the Devadasis and Bharatanatyam extends beyond choreography into the very history being taught. The influence of the Devadasis, and what the British deemed were their impure and erotic ways, has been cleansed not only from the dance form's bodily movements and expressive themes but also from its origin story. Because Indian society's disapproval of these women stems from colonial interpretations of their work, their continued marginalization in Bharatanatyam classrooms and historical narratives reveals yet another way colonialism shapes modern Bharatanatyam.

Despite the dance form's impressive longevity, colonial perspectives and their Indian internalization have undeniably modified the art, all the way from movements of the arms to the very way students learn its history. Of course, over a 2000-year period filled with social, political, and economic upheavals, evolution unfolds inevitably. Ensuring the survival of an art form always requires allowing it to adapt to its cultural context. For this reason, Bharatanatyam's conformity to colonial norms proved beneficial in that it allowed the dance form to translate into a new, post-colonial Indian society. That being said, the parts of Bharatanatyam's story that did not fit into the Victorian mold of sexuality and spirituality should not be lost to history as a result of its new, reformed form. Through their art and unique niche in society, the Devadasis pioneered a model of female sexuality completely at odds with the norms imposed on Indian women today. They demonstrated that a woman could be respectable and successful outside of a traditional, monogamous marriage. Additionally, their immense dedication to Indian art forms, as well as the longevity of these arts, proved their capacity to be stewards of Hindu culture and religion— a role traditionally denied to most women. Most importantly, they danced with the conviction that a woman's sexuality shouldn't be hidden away as a source of shame and impurity, but rather celebrated as a powerful and significant avenue to express sincere religious devotion. Ironically, over a thousand years since the Devadasis began living out these radical ideas, Indian society continues to struggle to accept their model of womanhood. This perhaps illuminates the deep and disturbing scars colonialism has left on the culture. Yet, the survival of Bharatanatyam provides a source of hope. Although it has experienced drastic modification and struggles with the erasure of its own origins, its continued existence provides a powerful opportunity to decolonize the way we think about dance, religion, women, and sexuality.

In 2016, Bharatanatyam dancer Jyotsna Shourie demonstrated this potential of Bharatanatyam through her production *Devadasi- the eternal dancer*. The performance used a traditional Bharatanatyam repertoire to celebrate the unique lives and practices of the Devadasis. Beginning pieces depicted a young Devadasi learning the art from her mother, in order to celebrate these women's rich matrilineal tradition. From there, Shourie used Bharatanatyam choreography to depict a Devadasi being married to her temple's deity, communicating through dance the deep spiritual connection these women felt to their god, and, by extension, their husband. The performance even described the destabilizing impact of colonialism on the dance form through the use of choreography and black costumes. Importantly, it rejected the colonial-reformer binary imposed on Bharatanatyam that separated human sensuality/sexuality from divine devotion. One dance item depicted the growing romance and attraction between a Devadasi and a sculptor, revealing the importance of human romantic relationships within Devadasis' lifestyles ("An…"). Shourie's production carries significance because it worked against the reigning narrative in modern India that the contributions of Devadasis are embarrassing, or something to be hidden away. But beyond just changing attitudes towards these women, her work also dismantled colonial norms that continue to shape Indian society. Confronting the history of the Devadasis dispels the fallacy that the colonial perspectives that most of the world operates on have always existed or are somehow superior. Before the British came to India, Indian society flourished and Devadasis thrived, demonstrating the arbitrary nature of colonial values and their norms of religion and sexuality. Additionally, the Devadasis' story demonstrates that rather than advancing Indian culture, colonialism destroyed indigenous art, religion, and sexuality. Shourie's production demonstrated the central role of Bharatanatyam choreography itself in sharing this story, and the counterargument to colonial hegemony it can provide when celebrating the contributions of Devadasis. Thus, despite the continued impact of colonialism — and its subsequent internalization — on the dance form, Bharatanatyam wields significant power in the fight for decolonization.

I recently practiced Bharatanatyam again after a six-month break forced upon me by being a freshman in college. For some reason, as I executed the steps my body remembered so well, I began to tear up. The familiarity of the movements, the memory of all the years I spent learning them and the deep stillness I felt inside as I focused on the dance overwhelmed me completely. I realized that the intimacy Bharatanatyam holds with my culture's language, religion, and diverse art forms meant I would never be separated from it. My dance was even more moving to me now, after having studied the story of the Devadasis and the trials and triumphs this art form endured before becoming part of my life today. That day, as I felt the good old burn on my quads and danced until exhaustion, I reached an important conclusion: As the body moves in dance, it looks undeniably beautiful. But what makes the movement last centuries is everything it signifies below the visual surface. Researching Devadasis has intensified the significance that I feel, expanding my love for Bharatanatyam.

Video Remediation

Scan the QR code to watch the video.

This video begins by summarizing the history of the Devadasis and the formation of modern Bharatanatyam. I then go on to demonstrate the "willful break" between the Devadasis and Bharatanatyam through an *Alarippu*, which is a traditional Bharatanatyam dance item typically performed at the beginning of dance recitals. The beginning movements are soft and slow to represent the pre-colonial Bharatanatyam, followed by sharp geometric movements to signify the destructive influence of colonialism pervading Indian arts in the 19th and 20th century. Finally, the piece ends with fast, complex steps to represent the newfound athleticism Bharatanatyam adopted to survive societal pressures.

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AN OVERDUE HOMECOMING:

The Case for Repatriating Turkey's Cultural Artifacts

Growing up, my summers were interspersed with visits to ancient cities along the Western and Southern coasts of Turkey. In one such visit to the ancient Lycian city of Xanthos, I asked the caretaker of the site why there were empty lots in-between some of the artifacts. A sullen expression took hold of him, and he simply said, "They have been away from home for a long time." A few years later, when I was visiting the British Museum, I encountered a magnificent structure. I approached the plaque in front of it, only to find out that it was the Nereid Monument – origin: Lycian Xanthos, modern-day south-west Turkey. On its website, the British Museum states that British archaeologist Charles Fellow brought the Nereid Monument and many other artifacts from Turkey "with the full permission of the Ottoman Turkish authorities" (The British Museum).

Motivated by my travels, I will focus this essay on successful and unsuccessful repatriation efforts by the Turkish government and will evaluate the problem of repatriation in the context of Turkey's archeological and national history. The issue of who has the most legitimate claim to a cultural object is too complex to resolve with a plaque, a statement, or a website. It requires a thorough investigation informed by the specific context surrounding that cultural object, an evaluation of the existing repatriation claims to that object, and an analysis of the pros and cons of repatriating the cultural object in question.

But what even is repatriation? The word itself comes from the Latin *repatriao,* which means "to restore someone to their native country" (Oxford English Dictionary). In modern day English, the word also refers to the practice of returning people and cultural objects to their country of origin. As such, the word inherently contains within its meaning a sense of homecoming. However, the international legal framework is concerned more with the definition of cultural heritage than with that of repatriation. There are numerous definitions of cultural heritage, but the most salient one in legal circles is the one given in the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property, which includes a host of objects ranging from fauna and flora to products of archaeological excavations (Collado 3-4). Compared to the definition of cultural heritage included in its predecessor, the Hague Convention, the UNESCO Convention's definition is broader, allowing for more objects to be included in the umbrella of cultural heritage. As such, I will take the UNESCO Convention to be the main legal framework for evaluating repatriation claims, as it is the convention most widely ratified by UN member states and the primary legal ground for countries to put forward repatriation claims.

Even though the UNESCO Convention was ratified by 141 states in 1970, the guidelines of who can request the repatriation of their cultural artifacts from whom is incendiary at worst and unclear at best. Without examining repatriation efforts through the lens of colonialist, nationalist, and imperialist sensibilities, everyone from government officials drafting claims for recovering cultural artifacts to museum officials responding to those claims cannot establish an adequate and definitive definition of repatriation guidelines. Informed by the specific context of Turkey's repatriation efforts, which I will explore thoroughly, I posit that any and all repatriation claims should be given equal consideration and examined with respect to the cultural context of the origin country and of the institution that currently houses the object. Ultimately, the decision to repatriate should account for the care the object will receive in the origin country and the importance of that object to the origin country's cultural heritage. As such, there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to the question of repatriation.

There are two overarching approaches to evaluating repatriation claims: cultural internationalism and cultural nationalism. The former advocates for displaying cultural objects where the highest number of people can view them while the latter argues for the repatriation of all cultural objects to their country of origin regardless of when they were taken out of the country or whether there is enough evidence to prove that the objects belong to the country in the first place (Collado). Turkish government officials advocate cultural nationalism, whereas most encyclopedic museum workers embrace cultural internationalism. Both stakeholders aim to maintain and boost the cultural capital they have by virtue of housing artifacts. The most divided party in this debate is Western academics, with some academics supporting cultural internationalism and some, trained in the postmodernist fashion, advocating for cultural nationalism. This essay examines each side to determine which approach is the most suitable for the interest of the Turkish and international public – who will ultimately be viewing the cultural artifacts. Before proceeding with said examination, it is important to note that the debate about Turkey's repatriation claims will continue indefinitely due to the highly subjective nature of this issue.

Proponents of cultural internationalism, such as Western encyclopedic museums (British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Louvre, etc.) and Western academics, argue that all cultural objects that are housed in encyclopedic museums should remain there because they view the increased accessibility of cultural objects that are in these museums as an irreplaceable benefit of those museums. One such academic is Harvard professor James Cuno, who recounts his experience as a young student seeing a four-thousand-year-old bust in the Louvre. Through the rose-colored lenses of sentimentality, he imagines looking at the statue "as its original owner must have done – and then, not just its original owner but everyone who had seen, admired, and protected it until it came into the museum where it has been preserved for centuries for all to see" (121). Implicit in Cuno's statement is that if it were not for the Louvre, the statue would   not have been imbued with as much value, as he depicts the statue's current place in the Louvre as the natural endpoint of its journey throughout four thousand years of existence. By tethering the statue's cultural value to its accessibility to the Louvre's large audiences, Cuno suggests that cultural objects that are housed in encyclopedic museums are inherently more valuable than those in their origin countries because they accrue value through the sheer number of visitors who perceive them.

Western academics and institutions additionally defend cultural internationalism through depicting the attempts of developing countries to repatriate cultural objects as manifestations of nationalism. For example, Cuno, in the same paper where he gives his anecdote about the Louvre, states that "governments seek fixed national cultures to shore up their hold on their states' identities" (122). Cuno argues that the successful repatriation of cultural objects is used by governments to strengthen their power through bolstering national identity. He views this motive behind repatriation as problematic because it can lead to prioritizing some cultures over others to create the most ideal national identity for the political purposes of the origin country. Cuno's worries are not unwarranted; however, he overlooks that the encyclopedic museums he glorifies so much also value objects from certain civilizations more than others. The reason why the Greek, Roman, and Egyptian wings of encyclopedic museums are much more stacked than those for African and Oceanian art is favoritism. As such, Cuno's concern over nationalism is hypocritical, as encyclopedic museums also play favorites when it comes to deciding which artworks to exhibit and how much space should be allocated to certain civilizations at the expense of others.

Another reason why Cuno's argument about nationalism defeats itself is specific to the case of Turkey – a country whose national identity was established to thwart Western imperialism. Before becoming a republic in 1923, Turkey was known as the Ottoman Empire. The last few centuries of the empire were despicable, as sultan after sultan struggled to catch up to the advancements made in Europe as the Industrial Revolution took hold. As such, the Ottomans were vulnerable to Western powers and tried their best not to interfere with their proceedings. Until the 1884 prohibition of the export of antiquities, any foreign archeologist that received a *firman* (edict) from the sultan could excavate and export their findings (Özdoğan 115). Consequently, entire temples such as the Nereid Monument in the British Museum were exported from the empire to fill up the galleries of nascent encyclopedic museums.

In his detailed account of the history of archeology in Turkey, Turkish academic Mehmet Özdoğan frames this history by providing sociological context on how Ottoman society did not have a reverence for antiquity that fueled excavations as Western nations did, but rather was motivated by 'atavistic patrimony.' (114). Through this history, Özdoğan responds to Western academics' concerns over nationalism by framing the very nationalism Turkey is accused of perpetrating as, in actuality, a Western export the country had to adopt in the wake of building a new republic removed from Ottoman values. By underlining how Ottomans did not ascribe themselves a 'Turkish' identity and that such an identity only emerged when Atatürk, the founder of the republic, had to create a new national identity based on Anatolian civilizations to unite the country against British, French, Italian, and Greek forces, Özdoğan complicates the arguments of Western scholars – such as Cuno – that criticize Turkey for its nationalistic slant. Seen through this historical context, Turkey's desire to create a national identity rooted in the millennia of civilizations that inhabited its lands is redefined as a survival strategy.

In addition to Turkey's complex history with promoting archeology and its motivations for continuously pursuing the repatriation of cultural artifacts, the Turkish government is committed to preserving and caring for ancient artifacts, which strengthens the case for their repatriation. For example, in an article published in the English language government news

outlet TRT World, Karya Naz Balkız details the successful and ongoing repatriation efforts of cultural objects by Turkey while outlining the motivations behind said efforts. She also includes numerous comments from the head of the anti-smuggling department of the Turkish General Directorate for Cultural Heritage and Museums – Zeynep Boz – to outline the Turkish government's perspective on the issue.

To summarize, the Turkish government takes pride in its successful repatriation efforts and decries their ongoing and unsuccessful efforts, with Boz going as far to say that Western countries that do not heed Turkey's calls for repatriation are "accessories to crime" (Balkız) as they indirectly promote the smuggling of cultural objects by continuously purchasing them. Furthermore, Boz also views Western countries' perception that Turkey or other origin countries cannot care for their cultural heritage as "an imperialist way of thinking." (Balkız). Boz's comment uncovers the imperialist and colonialist sensibilities that brought about the formation of encyclopedic museums, forces those institutions to find other claims to preserving their status as cultural institutions, and highlights the Turkish public's interest in seeing their cultural heritage returned.

Finally, Turkey's track record when it comes to repatriation efforts demonstrates that the country truly values its cultural heritage. One specific case is the repatriation of the "Lydian Hoard" from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to the Southeastern city of Uşak. Scholar Kathleen Price examines this case and contrasts the successful diplomatic pressure applied by Turkey on the Metropolitan Museum of Art for sixteen years with that of the unsuccessful and more aggressive demands of Egypt's repatriation efforts to highlight how different repatriation methods can lead to different outcomes. While Turkey exerted diplomatic pressure and conducted investigations into the provenance of the Lydian Hoard, Egypt gave ultimatums to museums to return artifacts despite the poor condition in which they house current cultural artifacts (Price 208). When compared with other countries' repatriation efforts and the conditions in which they care for their cultural heritage, Turkey's case fares better, strengthening the case for the repatriation of cultural artifacts to Turkey.

In conclusion, the question of how and under what conditions cultural objects should be repatriated is still under debate – precisely because the conditions of repatriation change from country to country. The contested nature of repatriation prompted me to address the question of repatriation in the context of my native country, Turkey. A thorough examination of arguments for and against repatriation reveals that the nationalism Turkey is accused of by Western academics is more complex than it first appears and that Turkey is committed to not only going through the long process of repatriation, but also to preserving its cultural heritage. In the end, reconstituting the vacancy of Xanthos with the image I have of the Nereid Monument in the British Museum will never be enough. Until the monument is returned, the disconnect between the empty lots and its surrounding artifacts will remain.

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THE GROUNDHOG DAY I DIDN'T SPEND IN BOSTON

I never expected spring in Copenhagen
(its dark, cold reputation is misleading)
much less in February…
crocuses seem to tease me
but only because I can't quite believe
I don't need my winter coat
to constantly protect my self-esteem
from achievement culture

I don't need my knee high, Snow Grip® boots
to give me some traction on the slippery sidewalks
or status-seeking stairs
(they don't even have those here)
and I can sit in a café on a Wednesday

without being questioned
or labeled "lazy"

I don't shiver here
or lose my breath
in gale-force wind tunnels
that threaten to push me over
when I'm alone and vulnerable
like a bird out of formation

here, songbirds sing love songs
and the usually week-long season
of new leaves
and budding hope
lasts and lasts

I wait
sure that the white-hot judgment is coming
or the icy pressure to isolate myself in the library impends
but it doesn't
and it still doesn't

maybe it's just the glow of a new city
but the cobblestone streets
seem to emit a rosy alchemy of bliss
and how can I resist this enchantment?

here, we're laughing at the table
hours after we said we'd go to sleep
because weeknights in Denmark
mean 2:00am wine and a daily celebration of life

and though I no longer need it
to ground me in wind that doesn't exist
I find, like the swans in Scandinavian lakes
a flying partner

just as the crocuses yawn and unfurl
when the sun finally rises
I open myself to this feeling

of being and doing enough
of investing time in other people

of falling asleep

waking

and afternoon walking

with a small smile sprouting on my lips

of blooming

and staying bloomed

Buettner, D. (2011). *Thrive: Finding happiness the blue zones way*. National Geographic Books.

"Some people say Danes are happy because they have low expectations. Not true. If they don't aspire, on the whole, to accumulate great wealth or to achieve world dominance, what they do expect in terms of education, health care, social interaction, and exposure to the arts far outstrips what Americans expect. The Danish path to happiness, after all, isn't about aspiring to scale peaks but rather about the satisfaction that comes from living at a high plateau. It's about thriving in an environment that nudges them away from superficial pleasures and toward lasting—and sometimes counterintuitive—activities that bring authentic happiness."

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A BROKEN SYSTEM:

The Unaffordable Cost of US Healthcare

In 2017, New Jersey resident Anamaria Markle was diagnosed with stage three ovarian cancer. Weeks after her diagnosis, Markle was laid off from her job as a clerk, ending her health insurance coverage. Despite her efforts to make ends meet, Markle was unable to afford the cost of treatment and decided to stop seeking care in 2018, passing away shortly afterward (Sainato). Markle and her family are not alone in their suffering. According to a recent National Health Interview survey, 1 in 11 US adults, roughly 30 million people, reported delaying or going without healthcare for cost-related reasons (Ortaliza). Despite living in one of the wealthiest countries on the planet, US citizens are often asked to make the costly and deadly choice between healthcare and poverty. The impact of these healthcare costs falls disproportionately onto the uninsured, ruining the lives of people that are already undergoing medical hardships. In order to save lives and ensure proper medical care is delivered, it is necessary to address the systemic issues in the American healthcare system that bar people from receiving treatment.

Most times, expensive healthcare costs can be covered by a person's insurance. If a person does not have private coverage, most developed countries provide them with a public option—a form of health insurance that is run by the government ("What is"). This means that ambulance rides, surgeries, chemotherapy, and other necessary medical treatments are accessible to all (Frayer). However, in the US, no such public option exists for all citizens. Instead, the US government funds Medicaid and Medicare. Medicaid provides coverage for those aged 65 or older or those with disabilities, while Medicare provides coverage for those living below the federal poverty line ("Differences Between"). While both programs cover millions of American citizens, as of 2020, 8.6% of Americans (28 million people) have no healthcare insurance (Kelsler). For these individuals, a medical crisis can quickly become a financial one. 53% of uninsured Americans (as opposed to 20% of those with insurance) report having problems paying their medical bills within the last year (Hamel). Medical debt in the US has continued to rise over the past few years, with half of all Americans holding at least $1,000 in debt (Gordon).

Katherine Baiker, a professor of health economics at the Harvard Chan School, explains how critical insurance can be. According to Baiker, "insurance is not just supposed to get you access to care, it's supposed to keep you from getting evicted from your apartment because you paid your hospital bill instead of your rent" (Powell). Paying off medical debt can have devastating effects on patients' lives. Not only do they have to cope with a possibly long and arduous recovery process, but they must carefully manage their finances to avoid going bankrupt. 72% of US adult patients with medical bills reported having to cut down on clothes, food, or other

necessary household items to pay them off (Hamel). 70% reported having to wipe out all of their savings, and 26% took money out of accounts saving for retirement or college (Hamel). For many, the life that exorbitant medical costs force them to lead is unsustainable. Because of these devastating bills, patients like Markle often choose to avoid treatment. After Markle's passing, her daughter Laura Valderrama explains how her mother "was constantly doing the math of treatment costs while she was on the decline" (Sainato). Valderrama makes it clear that Markle did not choose to discontinue treatment—she was forced to by a system that made healthcare unobtainable for her.

In order to avoid the medical costs associated with her cancer medications, Markle was engaging in cost-related nonadherence (CRNA), defined as "not filling, skipping, or reducing doses" of prescription medications (Nekui). When patients feel as though they cannot afford the cost of medication, they may choose to skip doses, split pills, or forgo fulfilling their prescriptions entirely. While medication nonadherence is also linked to mental and chronic illnesses, an overwhelming majority of patients report not taking medications for cost-related reasons (Nekui). One patient described how "every month I think, 'Should I buy food or should I buy my medication?' … I have cut back on a lot of things. My laundry, I have to wash it in the tub, just so I can get my pills" (Goldsmith). It is unacceptable and inhumane that a sick patient has to hand wash their clothes and eat less food just so that they can afford their medications.

Patients with cancer like Markle are especially likely to engage in CRNA, with 10% of all US cancer patients choosing to delay necessary treatment (Szabo). In 2018, the mean price of cancer treatment in the US was $150,384 per patient, more than 2.4 times the median household income (DeMartino). While insurance can sometimes bring down this price, cancer patients undergoing harsh rounds of chemotherapy and debilitating illness symptoms often struggle to keep their jobs. If they are let go (as Markle was) then they lose their health insurance and are frequently unable to afford the cost of continuing care. Cancer patients file for bankruptcy at 2.7 times the rate of those who have never been diagnosed (Szabo). When former cancer patient Molly MacDonald describes what financial advice she gives to those who have just been diagnosed, she says the first question she asks is "What in your house can you sell?" (Szabo). Delaying or forgoing treatment can be deadly. Many expensive cancer drugs can greatly expand a person's expected lifespan. But when patients can't afford the costs, they have no choice but to not seek treatment.

CRNA is labeled as the cause of death for around 125,000 Americans annually (Boylan). A study by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that patients with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or hypertension engaging in CRNA had 15-22% higher risks of mortality than those who took medications as prescribed (Van Alsten). It costs millions of dollars and thousands of lives to allow CRNA to continue occurring in America. For all involved, eliminating CRNA would be financially beneficial. CRNA is the cause of approximately 10% of hospitalizations in the US, costing the system an estimated $100-$289 billion annually (Brody). Were patients able to afford their medications, much of that cost could be avoided and the hospital resources used for caring for them could be reallocated. In addition, engaging in CRNA can end up costing patients more money in the long run. Patients with serious illnesses that don't take their prescriptions often end up hospitalized. Without insurance to soften the

financial blow, this leaves uninsured patients on the hook for thousands of dollars of hospital care. This only adds to their financial burden, making it even harder to afford the medications they need.

While CRNA typically occurs as a deliberate choice made over a period of time, the costs of healthcare also impact how a patient acts in an emergency. While most countries with a public health insurance option cover the cost of an ambulance, uninsured patients in the US can expect to pay an average of $1,200 for a ride to the hospital (Hudson). In addition, patients cannot always choose which hospital the ambulance takes them to, meaning that even if a patient is insured there is no guarantee the emergency room that treats them will be in-network. One patient explained that after realizing the costs caused by his ambulance taking him to an out-of-network hospital he would have "crawl[ed] to the hospital [him]self" (Bailey). One way people avoid ambulance costs is through ride-sharing apps. A study by the University of Kansas found that on average, US cities where Uber operated had a 7% decrease in per-capita ambulance usage (Moskatel). While certainly not every medical issue requires an ambulance ride to the emergency room, taking a ride share increases the risk for all parties involved. Random drivers suddenly become responsible for medical emergencies they are not equipped to handle, and patients with life-threatening issues are not given the immediate treatment they need.

Even non-emergency treatment is impacted by the cost of healthcare. Lower-income and uninsured patients are much less likely to utilize preventative care services that help catch early signs of disease (Cunningham). This means that these patients are less likely to discover serious health problems in the early and more treatable stages. As of 2018, 75% of insured women ages 50-75 had a mammogram test within the last two years, compared to 39% of uninsured women in the same age group ("Comparing"). Mammograms are key to catching breast cancer early, when treatments have the most chance of being successful. In addition, early cancer treatments are far less damaging to a person's finances ("Early"). Patients whose cancer is caught early spend less time in the hospital and are more likely to be able to continue working, allowing them to recoup some of the medical expenses of treatment ("Early"). Despite this necessary screening process, mammograms can cost an average of $100-$250 for a patient without insurance (Herndon). That's a lot of money to ask a low-income patient to pay for preventative care, which is often viewed as an unaffordable luxury. After receiving an $800 bill for a mammogram, one patient explained how while her family's medical history necessitated annual mammograms, she "can't really afford to keep doing this every year" (Lewis).

Patients who cannot afford preventative care are often forced to handle medical emergencies as they happen rather than ahead of time. One example of this is patients with end-stage renal disease, which requires a three-times-a-week treatment known as hemodialysis (Morfín). Most US patients requiring hemodialysis are covered by Medicare, and thus able to schedule regular appointments covered by insurance (Morfín). However, for patients that are uninsured, the $250 cost per outpatient dialysis treatment is unaffordable (Morfín). This means that uninsured patients are forced to seek treatment in the emergency room, which is required to provide them with care. Not only is this inhumane—patients with end-stage renal disease need regular dialysis to stay alive and waiting until emergency treatment is necessary every couple of days is painful and anxiety-producing for them—but it forces patients deeper into debt. Emergency room

dialysis costs on average $2,000, meaning uninsured patients pay 8 times the price of those with insurance for one dialysis appointment (Morfín). Those without insurance, who are already much more likely to be low-income, are being asked to pay much higher medical bills than their insured counterparts, all without any assistance.

This inherent unfairness is a hallmark of the US healthcare system. Patients who can least afford the bill often end up having to cover the whole cost, sometimes at an extreme markup. In his book, *The Price we Pay: What Broke American Health Care—and how to Fix it*, Dr. Marty Makary describes how he tried to help his friend Dina navigate a health emergency at an out-of-network hospital. Dina was visiting Makary and fell suddenly ill, enough so that she required emergency treatment, and ended up receiving a minor surgery that night. Makary recounts how Dina's bill came out to $60,000, 5 times as much as the hospital charges patients who were in-network despite both groups of patients receiving the exact same operation (Makary). Luckily for Dina, Makary was able to use his connections and knowledge of the healthcare system to advocate on her behalf, dramatically lowering the price she was obligated to pay. However, most uninsured and out-of-network patients don't have the connections or resources that connect them to healthcare advocates. They might not even know that they are allowed to bargain with hospitals to lower their bills as Makary did for Dina, forcing them to pay extremely high prices for procedures that cost far less than what they were charged.

The current American healthcare system unfairly forces the burden of medical costs on those who can least afford it. While there are many facets of the system that need changing, the first step is to provide insurance for all Americans who need it by creating an option available to all citizens. In other countries, a public option (insurance funded by the government that competes with, but does not replace, the private option) is a staple of health care that saves lives. In Britain, the state-funded option (the NHS) provides care for all citizens, funded by national taxes (Frayer). While the NHS is far from a perfect system, with notorious wait times for non-emergency treatment, almost no patient is going to leave a hospital thousands of dollars in debt or go hungry trying to afford cancer treatments (Ham). A patient like Markle would have had her cancer medications fully funded, allowing her to focus her attention on her health. Ambulances are fully funded through the NHS too, meaning that no patient has to make the difficult choice between timely medical treatment or debt (Frayer). In this case, having a public option saves both lives and money. Britain only spends 8% of its GDP on healthcare, almost half as much as the 15% spent by the US (Ham).

Recently, many different plans have been proposed to bring government-funded healthcare to the US. One plan proposed by Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren known as "Medicare for All" suggests a single-payer system, funded by taxes (Tanen). While this system would grant coverage to everyone who needed it, it came under fire for its price tag—it could add as much as $3.4 trillion to the federal deficit annually (Tanen). Regardless of the benefits of Medicare for All, it's not a political reality. Only 41% of Americans support a single-payer system, the vast majority of whom are Democrats (Tanen). This means that for progress to occur politically, a more moderate plan must be developed. During the 2020 election, the Biden campaign released a plan for a public option that would allow every American to opt into government-funded insurance (Yglesias). In addition, the Biden administration explained how

this public option would help lower prices by negotiating with hospitals and providers (Yglesias). This proposed plan also includes a provision that bars hospitals from charging out-of-network rates for patients who have no choice but to receive emergency care in the moment, helping patients like Dina afford necessary immediate care without having to wrangle an extreme bill.

One of the biggest concerns about the public option is the cost. Health insurance is expensive and raising money for a public option is no small feat. While some money for a public option would have to come from taxes, that doesn't mean it isn't cost-effective. Because of its sheer size, a public option could be a powerful negotiator when it comes to lowering prices. This can already be seen with Medicare, which even in its limited scope is able to pay 35-65% less than private insurers for the same treatments (Herzlinger). In addition, opening public insurance to younger people (who are on average healthier than those aged 65+), would decrease the average spending per patient (Herzlinger). The expenses of instituting a public option would be spent on saving human lives. Patients would be able to afford their medications, receive preventative care, and call ambulances, all without fear of the medical debt that might ensue. Not only that, but many patients would be able to afford food, housing, and childcare, all critical for maintaining a high quality of life.

Access to healthcare is a human right, one that is critical for everyone. All it takes is one emergency, diagnosis, or costly medication to turn a person's life upside down with medical bills. For the 28 million Americans who are uninsured, this risk is even higher. Healthcare costs lead millions to delay medications, avoid ambulances, and turn down preventative care. In addition, medical debt bleeds patients of their money, forcing them to decide between their health and food/shelter. Despite the United States being one of the richest countries in the world, patients are refusing life-saving treatments because of the costs. A powerful way to fight this is through the creation of a public option, which would dramatically increase the affordability of care. While healthcare reform won't happen overnight, introducing a public option is a strong first step to helping American patients access the care they desperately need.

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CONSIDERING THE MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF PAIN LATER TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

As famed philosopher and physician Albert Schweitzer once stated, "Pain is a more terrible lord of mankind than death itself." For physicians, the pursuit of relieving pain and suffering in modern times often comes with great uncertainty and potential for more harm. The common practice for treating moderate to severe pain is prescribing opioids such as OxyContin and Vicodin. But by and large these substances are highly addictive and very frequently abused. Even amidst the ongoing opioid epidemic, prescription opioids have not been pulled from the market, due to the lack of other remedies available. Consequently, in an attempt to alleviate pain, doctors rely on the very drugs that are killing millions of Americans per year, for lack of a better option. But what if there was another option—a way to avoid these highly addictive substances? Scientists have long been seeking an answer to this question, and through CRISPR technology they may just have found it.

Researchers at the University of California, San Diego, have experimented with utilizing clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats (CRISPR-Cas9) and zinc finger protein motifs in order to repress the sodium ion channel $Na_V1.7$. The repression of $Na_V1.7$ through mutation leads to insensitivity to pain in humans. This process, dubbed Pain LATER (Long-lasting Analgesia via Targeted in vivo Epigenetic Repression), has tremendous therapeutic potential without the side effects that accompany opioid use (Moreno et al. 2019). After one Pain LATER treatment a patient would be unable to sense pain indefinitely, making it a much more permanent solution than prescription drug use. Clearly, the non-addictive nature of the Pain LATER treatment gives it a leg up in the area where opioids are particularly failing. That, however, is not to say the technology poses no consequences.

A huge debate in the field of biomedical ethics is over treatment versus enhancement, and, in this particular case, the distinction between the two is crucial. A treatment is a therapy used to return someone with a disease, deficiency, or ailment to a "normal" state while an enhancement refers to an intervention which elevates humans beyond natural capacity (Giubilini and Sanyal 2015). While the two are not mutually exclusive, when considering the moral implications of Pain LATER, we must view it as both a potential treatment alternative to opioids and an enhancement which could be wielded to cause harm.

PAIN LATER, OPIOIDS, AND MAXIMIZING UTILITY

The ongoing opioid epidemic is a multifaceted issue that is largely a direct result of the abuse of opioids prescribed for pain management. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, 9.7 million people in the US abused prescription opioids and 62,486 people died from opioid overdose in 2019 alone (USHHS 2021). Increased rates of opioid addiction have also directly led to increased rates of violent crime across the nation. Whether prescribed legally by physicians or obtained illegally on the streets, prescription opioids are wreaking havoc on the American population. Yet they continue to be prescribed out of necessity. Opioids are one of the only viable options for pain management at the moment, and pain management is an essential part of modern medicine. Thus, the current prescribing of opioids is necessary and justifiable under the Utilitarian theory of justice. The Utilitarian theory of justice is interested in maximizing the overall wellbeing and utility of a society. The Utilitarian theory is a consequentialist theory, meaning it takes the consequences of an action into consideration when determining ethical permissibility or lack thereof. Pain lowers the utility of a society; more people in pain makes for a less productive and a less happy society. In the same way, more overdoses and violent crimes lower societal utility. Physicians prescribe opioids to relieve pain, and for the majority of people they are successful in doing so. They can help people cope with chronic pain, recover from surgery, and get back to their normal lives. Only a very small percentage of those prescribed opioids actually become addicted to them. Therefore, when the large number of people who are successfully helped by the pain management of opioids outweighs the small percentage of those who are addicted, the overall utility in society is positive.

On its own, the overall benefit of opioids in society may outweigh the consequences that they cause, but are the consequences still too great to justify prescription treatments over other options? When the utility of the Pain LATER technique is taken into consideration, specifically for treatment purposes, it succeeds in all the ways that opioids fail. Pain LATER would minimize cost; prescriptions are exorbitantly expensive, especially for patients without private healthcare or without healthcare at all. Pain LATER is revered for its cost-effectiveness and would offer a one-time payment instead of multiple prescriptions over time. Paying for medical treatment and prescriptions is becoming harder and is a major contributor to the socioeconomic health disparity in America. Pain LATER would offer more distributive justice with a cost-effective option, specifically benefiting working class Americans, who make up a disproportionately large sector of those with chronic pain. Most importantly, Pain LATER as a treatment also avoids all the side effects, like nausea, vomiting, confusion, itching, and slowed breathing, that accompany its prescription predecessor. It may seem that, within the context of treatment, Pain LATER is tremendously better than prescription opioids though it does have one major downfall. Pain LATER is celebrated for its permanency (or semi-permanency) with effects that can last decades after just one treatment. In the context of terminally ill patients this is an incredible benefit. Terminally ill patients can live out their last days in the protection of a hospital or home without excruciating pain or the personality altering side-effects of severe painkillers like morphine. Conversely, in the context of post-surgical patients or those needing temporary pain management, the long lasting effects of such a technique are glaringly negative. Unlike the short prescriptions for a couple days of relief by Oxycontin after an accident or surgery, the long

standing effects of Pain LATER would make it an inappropriate alternative. Patients would be unable to feel pain for longer than medically necessary. From a biological perspective, feeling no pain when there is no need for pain to be numbed is a very dangerous thing. Pain is often regarded as the fifth vital sign as it alerts our brain when there is tissue damage and threatening stimuli; it tells us when to take our hand off a hot stove before we get burned. Pain is beneficial to survival. In fact, most people born with Congenital Insensitivity (without the ability to feel pain) do not survive to adulthood. Thus, people should be returned to a normal state of pain reception at the earliest possible time following an injury or flare up in order to maximize their health and utility. It seems that in cases of permanent pain or terminal illness, Pain LATER is a better and more ethically acceptable treatment of pain than opioids. However, in cases of temporary pain relief, opioids provide an option that better treats the situation in order to benefit the individual in the future.

POTENTIAL ABUSE OF PAIN LATER

There are significant concerns that Pain LATER could be utilized to inflict harm onto others. As forewarned in many dystopian thrillers, there are harrowing consequences when powerful scientific breakthroughs end up in the wrong hands. In his paper "The Harms of Enhancement and the Conclusive Reasons View," Thomas Douglas, a moral philosopher at the University of Oxford, laid out five ways in which certain biomedical enhancements, like Pain LATER, could cause overall harm. His outlined reasons—deliberate harmful use, competitive effects, contribution to coercive enhancement, undermining harm aversion, and increasing liability to permissible harm—can be utilized as a lens through which to consider a few of the ways in which Pain LATER could be abused (Douglas 2014).

I. Deliberate Harmful Use: In accordance with Douglas's first principle, Pain LATER technology can be wielded for deliberately harmful use, which is defined as an enhancement that would increase the amount of deliberate harm that an enhanced individual or group of enhanced individuals could inflict upon others. If, say, an infantry soldier who frequently engages in combat receives the pain numbing enhancement, doing so would increase his effectiveness in combat. Therefore, he would be inflicting more pain onto the enemy and causing more deliberate harm than before.

II. Competitive Effects: Douglas's second potential harm of enhancement is that it may create an unequal difference in competition between enhanced individuals and unenhanced individuals. If Pain LATER were available as a form of elective enhancement, those who elected to undergo the pain numbing would be given a leg up in various competitions against those who did not elect to or were not given the option. A simple example of this would be a boxing match between one individual who cannot feel pain after having received the Pain LATER enhancement and another who has normal pain sensitivity. The painless individual would be at an unfair competitive advantage and would likely be able to last longer in the ring because their physical ailments would not lead them to suffer. While the bodies of the individuals may become injured at the same time, as the pain-sensing individual slowed down because of wounds, the painless individual could keep fighting.

III. Coerced Enhancement: The third way in which Douglas argues enhancement by some could harm many is its potential contribution to coerced enhancement both indirectly and directly. Indirectly, the enhancement of one individual may strongly encourage another individual to undergo enhancement so as not to be placed at the aforementioned competitive disadvantage. As more and more unenhanced people felt the pressure to meet the same standards as the enhanced, the state of enhancement would become the status quo, with everyone feeling forcibly pressured to meet it. This acts as a form of soft coercion, or an indirect and slight violation of the autonomy of the individuals. Pain LATER enhancement could also be wielded as a much more direct form of enhancement. For example, a military preparing to go to war may employ a state-sponsored pain enhancement of all drafted soldiers. By creating painless "super-soldiers" the military would be able to fight longer and harder than before. Reminiscent of many Marvel plots, coercively enhancing soldiers would be an immense violation to their personal autonomy, not to mention the immense harm it would cause both the soldiers and any opponent that the army may face.

IV. Harm Aversion: Douglas's fourth potential harm is the ability to undermine harm aversion. The psychological basis behind humans generally not inflicting immense pain on one another is our ability to empathize with each other. When the suffering that we may cause another is held relative to our own suffering, it stops us from causing that harm. But, when an individual has been enhanced to a point of not feeling pain, their ability to empathize and rationalize pain of others becomes distorted. This is the same reason that clinical sociopaths—people who have lower ability or no ability to empathize with others—can cause far more harm to humans without it affecting them in the same way it affects those with empathy. Not knowing the feeling of pain themself, the enhanced human will psychologically be unable to empathize with the pain that their actions may have on others and therefore will not stop themself from causing that harm. Thus, the prevalence of a pain-numbing enhancement in society could undoubtedly lead to more harmful actions.

V. Liability to Permissible Harm: The final harm principle of Douglas's states that enhancement can increase liability to permissible harm. That is to say that the major enhancement undergone by some individuals would create a form of metahumans: people whose altered characteristics make them so physically or cognitively distinct from the normal, unenhanced individuals that the difference leads to a broad range of circumstances in which the unenhanced can face permissible harm. In a world where painless individuals ruled, those who felt pain might be unable to survive. Jobs could require a certain amount of pain tolerance that the unenhanced could not meet, or the formation of a medical system for the painless may exclude those who feel pain. Although a bit more conceptual in nature, this point does articulate that the creation of such a gap between the functionality of human beings in society could create a gap in earnings, governmental participation, and a number of other factors that would significantly harm the unenhanced individuals.

To draw a conclusion on potential harm, there are legitimate causes for concern regarding the overall potential harm that could be caused to other individuals if the Pain LATER technology were abused. Under the basic harm principle of ethics, all of these factors alone should rationalize the exclusion of such a technology from ever being utilized.

CONCLUSION

When being utilized as a pain management technique for those with severe or chronic pain and terminal conditions, Pain LATER is a potentially viable alternative to traditionally prescribed opioids that could help to limit the ongoing opioid epidemic. However, its non-temporary repression of the necessary neurological signaling of pain makes it significantly more dangerous in patients with non-terminal cases which justifies its exclusion from consideration as an ethical alternative to opioids. If made available as an enhancement to those with no severe or chronic pain, the technology could end up causing both the person who has undergone the procedure and those around them to be negatively affected by its implementation. For Pain LATER to be ethically implemented into society as a treatment, there will need to be great restrictions placed to avoid the harrowing consequences of its potential abuse.

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HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE IN THE US AND THE UK:
A Comparative Analysis

With the populations of the United States and United Kingdom surpassing 330 million and 67 million, respectively, the demand for health insurance coverage is vast (The World Bank Group). Despite these nations being successful on many levels, the healthcare systems and insurance programs within them leave much to be desired. Insurance is intended to protect people from unexpected and costly health events and provide greater access to healthcare, but even high-income countries like the US and UK struggle with imperfect and varied systems of coverage for their citizens. Although the nations offer both public and private insurance programs and some comparable coverage options, the UK's approach to health insurance accessibility and coverage is superior to that of the United States on several levels.

Statistics indicating that 91.5% of the US population and 100% of the UK population have health insurance present the first important matter of discussion, namely, the distribution of coverage in these nations, which draws on both the type and accessibility of these programs (Tikkanen et al. 61-214). As implied by these numbers, the UK provides universal health insurance coverage, whereas the United States leaves a substantial part of the population uninsured and left to tackle the healthcare system without the safety of coverage. The type of coverage, however, is similar in both nations. Both public and private insurance are options for citizens of the UK and the US, but the attainability of each type brings up another contrast, as the US is recognized as having one of the largest private health insurance systems, while the UK has one of the largest public health insurance systems. All citizens of the UK are covered under the public health insurance system known as the National Health Service (NHS), while 67% of US citizens are covered by various forms of private health insurance (Tikkanen et al. 61-214). This different distribution of insurance coverage reflects differing national sentiment about whether healthcare is a right or a privilege. Unless one is enrolled in Medicare, eligible for Medicaid, or has access to one of the smaller public insurance programs of the US, individuals must obtain private health insurance coverage through other sources, such as their employers or direct purchase, or opt to remain uninsured, all of which exemplify the predominant view in the US that health insurance is a privilege. On the other hand, the guarantee that any citizen of the UK will receive public health insurance under the NHS and may choose whether or not to supplement it with the addition of private insurance demonstrates one of the key differences between the two nations and highlights the prevalent belief in the UK that health insurance coverage is a human right. Ultimately, while both nations offer public and private forms of health insurance coverage, the levels of accessibility are indicative of the large gap between the types of coverage in the US and the UK.

Specifically comparing the public insurance programs of these nations, the conditions and limitations to coverage within these plans are noteworthy. The UK's NHS as well as Medicare, Medicaid, and other public programs of the United States have some services and sectors of healthcare that require beneficiaries to either contribute to, find other means of paying for, or pay out-of-pocket. Exemplifying this harsh reality, out-of-pocket health expenditures by households accounted for 10% of total health expenditures in the US and 15% in the UK (Tikkanen et al. 61-215). Highlighting this hindrance in the United States further, 16% of Medicare beneficiaries were not able to receive dental, hearing, or vision care in 2019, and they typically struggle to pay for prescription drugs (Freed et al.; Kearney et al.). Similarly, patients in the UK are often required to pay towards the cost of prescriptions, dental care, and eye care, although these costs are considerably lower than the payments that are typically expected in the US ("When you need to pay towards NHS care"). For instance, drugs prescribed in NHS hospitals are free and outpatient prescriptions cost NHS beneficiaries a copayment of 8.80 GBP (12.50 USD) (Tikkanen et al. 61). On the other hand, Medicare beneficiaries who were prescribed the drug Jakafi to treat blood cancer, for example, spent an average out-of-pocket cost of $5,697 in 2019, and even with President Biden's recent proposal to cap out-of-pocket spending on Medicare prescriptions, costs would likely still amount to $2,000 or $3,100 annually for a drug like Jakafi (Cubanski et al.). Addressing another sector of healthcare, the UK's NHS and the US Medicaid program both cover long-term care, but one must be impoverished in the US to qualify for Medicaid and its long-term care coverage, while citizens of the UK do not need to meet financial benchmarks. Coupled with that contrast, the US Medicare program does not cover long-term care, exemplifying another complicated aspect of public insurance programs in these nations. Whether due to gaps in coverage in the US or those seeking more choice and urgent care in the UK, it is not unusual among both populations to seek a second form of coverage to supplement an individual's public insurance coverage plan due to some insufficiency in public coverage. More specifically, 10.5% of UK citizens and 15% of insured US citizens have multiple sources of coverage (Tikkanen et al. 61-214). While there are differences between the public health insurance programs in these nations, similar aspects exist in which both nations fall short.

Considering these comparisons and the imperfect nature of health insurance coverage, the UK seems superior with respect to its achievement of universal health insurance coverage. Since its creation in 1948, the NHS has provided tax-funded, free care to UK citizens that attempts to be comprehensive, as it covers services from ambulances to mental health care to surgery and more (Tikkanen et al. 59). The United States lacks such a program, despite recent efforts through the Affordable Care Act. While the NHS struggles to provide care in a timely manner, with wait times being one of its biggest problems, knowing that a citizen will be provided free care, or at the very most have to pay minimal fees, is a substantial relief for many and a relief that would be similarly welcome and powerful in the United States.

With respect to the United Kingdom's superior approach to healthcare, it may prove beneficial if policymakers in the US focus on the uninsured population and design a system that replicates the funding process utilized by the NHS. Implementing a tax-funded program to finance basic levels of care for uninsured Americans would allow insurance coverage to be universal, even if the program only covered common, fundamental health needs. Scholars cite

that achieving universal healthcare in the US would encourage more preventative care and effective health practices and therefore be economically advantageous in the long-term (Zieff et al. 3). Although universal healthcare in the US could theoretically be achieved with a new program involving all, a recent proposal for Medicare for All quoted that a 7.5% payroll tax and a 4% income tax on Americans would be necessary, in addition to a higher tax for higher-income individuals (Zieff et al. 2). Considering such financial tolls, implementing a program to resemble that of the NHS for just the smaller population of the uninsured, rather than the entirety of the US, could perhaps be a more fiscally feasible step towards universal coverage and alignment with the ideal that healthcare is not a privilege but a right.

While the UK's approach is more effective in many regards, it still has room for reform and improvement. Due to recent underfunding of the NHS, wait times for services that are covered through the NHS have rapidly increased, which, notably, is not a concern that the US healthcare system currently faces. Exemplifying this issue, the existing target for treating cancer patients within 62 days of urgent GP referral in the UK has not been met in the last 5 years (Thorlby et al.). Health economists and organizations suggest that reversing this NHS burden would require an annual spending increase of 5% in the short term, which would be funded by an increase in taxes (Lyu). While tax hikes would financially impact UK citizens, fixing this flaw seems worthwhile, as it would push for more timely universal coverage and allow the NHS to continue fulfilling the ideal that healthcare is a right and is accessible to all.

Health insurance systems in both the US and the UK have some excellent qualities, but they also fall short in other areas, and it is a matter of policy, financial allocations, and cultural attitudes that prevent these systems from reaching their full potential. Ultimately, this numbers-driven comparative essay points towards the imperfect aspects of both healthcare systems, but also highlights the benefits that come with viewing healthcare as a right in the UK, suggesting that the US could also benefit from adopting such an ideal.

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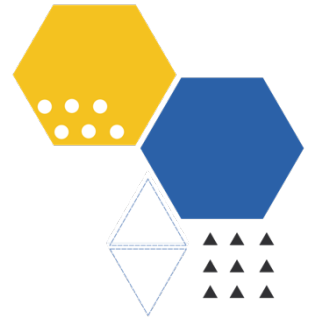
BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Cocooned in an opal enclosure
of my own creation,
I meditate into liquid,
journal through the dissolving process,
and transform into a winged développé.

No one calls caterpillars
lazy or self-absorbed.

I don't want to be prickly anymore.

So I hike through my mind,
untangling distorted beliefs
and newly sprouted leaves,
looking for the meadow path.

In my backyard
I grow a garden of tomatoes and squash,
paint the zucchini blossoms in watercolor,
allowing myself to embrace the smudges.
And I share afternoon after afternoon
over coffee and tea
with old friends and new acquaintances.

In a balletic extension,
my wings sprout from my spine,
multiplying and unfolding.

The caterpillar knows
cocoons are vital
and flight is not a luxury.

How did I never know?
A simple smile,
a thank you message,
or five minutes of genuine listening
can spark an emergent storm,
a kaleidoscopic waterfall

in every direction
of beings
changing patterns
and increasing
in positive
emotional saturation:

I gave my leftover vegetables to
my neighbor of fifteen years
who never waves.
The next day, he invited us all over
for guacamole and game night.

I framed and mailed my watercolor
to my aunt in Florida
who wrote in her thank you note
that she just booked her first plane ticket to visit
since I was in middle school.

I stopped by Jaycee's to gift her jasmine green tea
and lingered, asking authentically, "How are you?"
Three hours later, she's booked
her first therapy appointment
and decided to volunteer at the community garden.

The metamorphosis is collective.

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　　"Specifically, they found that each act of kindness spread throughout a social network, and its impact tripled as it spread. They concluded that 'cooperate behavior cascades in human social networks.'"

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Joseph Teruel

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Joseph is a Honduran American originally from Chelsea, Massachusetts. He currently is employed by Starbucks where he enjoys making latte art and meeting new people and sharing life experiences.

LIVING IN A FOOD DESERT

Scan the QR code to listen to the podcast.

"Food Desert" is a podcast centered around the experiences my sister and I had growing up in an immigrant household in Chelsea, Massachusetts. A food desert is an area where residents have limited access to fresh, affordable, and nutritious food. Although this term is widely used, it has become outdated, and a new term "Food Apartheid" has been generated. The word "desert" suggests that the situation of food deserts is an environmental problem, absolving those at fault for these situations. However, the root of this problem truly lies within intentional racial and economic oppression of specific individuals making the term "Apartheid" more appropriate for this situation. I hope after listening to this podcast you will walk away with a new understanding of what poverty can look like and how much of an impact it can have on those in your community. As someone who did experience the feeling of not knowing where their next meal would come from, I believe in the importance of sharing these stories to raise awareness of the prevalence of food insecurity within marginalized communities and to encourage others to enact change.

Indrani Malhotra

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Indrani is a sophomore from Westchester, NY. Interested in pursuing a career in green policy work, she is involved in several environmental organizations on campus and enjoys spending time outdoors.

A BACKSTEP ON *ROE* IS A MISSTEP TO ENDING POVERTY

Imagine perusing a shoe store of basic human rights. The eye-catching window display of freedom flip-flops, equality espadrilles, and a pair of liberty loafers advertised at a low cost lured you inside. As you browse the aisles, you might try on classy heels fit for a day at a well-paying office job or supportive sneakers to wear on a safe run around your neighborhood. Yet, most shoppers ultimately find themselves in the tucked away clearance section, with an ever-shrinking selection of liberties available to everyone, regardless of gender, race, or class. Access to abortion and a woman's right to choose have just been moved to a pedestal, with a price tag well beyond the budget of the average American.

On June 24th, 2022, the United States Supreme Court made the devastating decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, throwing away almost 50 years of precedent by giving states the freedom to pass legislation restricting abortion services. But outlawing abortion doesn't make it illegal — for the upper class at least. By backtracking on the landmark ruling of Roe, the Supreme Court has disproportionately curtailed the autonomy of poorer women, perpetuating income disparities and reinforcing generational poverty.

In December, oral arguments began for the case of Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which challenged a Mississippi law that bans all abortions after 15 weeks, with very few exceptions. With the Supreme Court's new 6-3 conservative majority — as of Amy Coney Barrett's appointment in 2020 — anti-choice rhetoric festered at the prospect of a verdict that could end the 'Rule of Roe.'

In what is now a post-Roe America, the right to abortion is guaranteed in less than half of the states. For wealthier women, this is more of a hurdle than a barrier, that imposes longer travel times to clinics offering the procedure. Most lower class women, however, cannot afford the transportation costs of crossing state lines to access abortion procedures, plus the additional expenditures of taking time off work, staying overnight, or finding childcare.

Another option largely unavailable to working-class women is purchasing abortion pills online, from international providers. In February, JAMA Network Open published a study analyzing the rise in demand for abortion pills in Texas, following a controversial bill that bans abortion after the first six weeks. Immediately after the law was enacted, researchers observed an increase of over 1000% in orders, which leveled out to 174% increase over the next three months.

While the study does not assess the economic background of buyers, it may be safe to assume that lower class women were underrepresented. Although the pill's steep cost of $110 is considered a requested donation, women in poverty are frequently subject to blatant information deficiency. Lack of online access also poses a restriction; in 2020, almost 15% of Texans did not have a broadband Internet subscription.

Frequent rhetoric pushed by anti-abortion groups argues that any woman willing to go through with the procedure must be heartless and cruel. Yet, this narrative entirely erases the difficulty of making such a decision for pregnant women. For many, the choice to have an abortion is not really a choice at all, but rather a necessity in order to put food on the table for their other children, keep a roof over their head, or save their own life.

The groundbreaking Turnaway Study, conducted between 2008 and 2016, found that 51% of women seeking an abortion already live below the federal poverty line. Moreover, 76% of abortion seekers reported not having enough money to cover living expenses.

The study aimed to disclose the financial hardship of being forced to carry a pregnancy to term. Researchers followed over 1,000 women who sought abortion services and analyzed the economic aftermath for those who received appropriate care versus women "turned away" because they were beyond the clinic's gestational limit.

The results are astounding. After being denied an abortion, women were four times as likely to live below the Federal Poverty Line and three times as likely to be unemployed as compared to women granted the procedure. Additionally, women not permitted to have an abortion experienced lower credit scores, higher debt, and overall financial instability in the following years. The ensuing poverty — that impacted new mothers' ability to pay for food, housing, and transportation — was found to last, at minimum, four years.

If women are forced to bear and raise a child they feel they cannot care for, can they really be expected to provide that child a safe and stable home? Children born to mothers without the means to provide for them will grow up poor and face the everlasting consequences of poverty. The alternative — adoption — is often no better. Children placed in the foster care system bounce from home to home, denied opportunities to build the network of support necessary to excel in school, land a well-paying job, and maintain financial stability. Either way, the generational cycle of poverty continues.

The war on abortion is not about 'saving lives' — it never has been. If conservatives really wanted to save a life or two, they could start by passing legislation to put sturdy shoes on the feet of every American, lifting the poor out of poverty one step at a time.

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Devin is a pre-veterinary student and is also interested in public health. She has enjoyed learning about this subject, as it's outside of her major field and not something she can normally focus on.

REDESIGNING PRIORITIES:

Improving Public Health Through Housing Policy

INTRODUCTION

Upon visiting New York City's Department of Health website, you are greeted with a simple but critical statement regarding the agency's goals: "Every day, we protect and promote the health of 8 million New Yorkers" (Department of Health). Despite these lofty words, residents of New York City face a variety of health issues, with low-income individuals, people of color, and other marginalized groups often facing significant disparities. Over 350,000 of the city's residents, and particularly members of these already vulnerable populations, live in subsidized housing complexes, which are a major vector for health problems (New York City Housing Authority 2). The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed significant cracks in the healthcare system and forced public health officials and policymakers alike to reconsider and reevaluate many assumptions about public health. In order to make both short- and long-term improvements to public health, it is necessary to explore its links to public housing policy.

New York City's public housing system has a long and infamous history, and according to many residents, it has only worsened over time. In the early 20th century, thousands of struggling families lived in substandard tenement buildings throughout the city. Despite early housing reforms, these buildings were dangerous in nearly every aspect; sanitation was especially poor, and residents suffered greatly as a result. In response to these conditions, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) was established in 1934. Despite current public perception, NYCHA did not originally aim to house the lowest-income residents; potential residents were disqualified based on factors as trivial as not owning furniture (Sribnick 25). Nonetheless, residents praised the buildings and their staff, and NYCHA gradually decreased these restrictions. Lower-income individuals were soon able to move into the developments, colloquially known as the Projects. Elaine Walker, a resident of the Queensbridge Houses for over 60 years, described, "In my day, the staff was the best … They did their job, and they were qualified for their job. You'd call, and it would be fixed right away." However, by the 1980s, crime in New York City had climbed to an all-time high, and the Projects became hotspots for robbery and assault. As John Jay College Professor of History Gregory Umbach states, "The 1980s is the first time when you're more at risk of criminal violence on NYCHA property than you are in the surrounding neighborhood" (Ferre-Sadurni). Since that time, NYCHA has faced severe defunding, and the buildings are in extreme disrepair. Living conditions are still notoriously harsh and dangerous due to a lack of funding and resources.

In this article, I will focus on two major threats to public health and their ties to New York City's public housing system: asthma and other nontransmissible respiratory issues, and the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Asthma provides a useful case study because of its extremely high prevalence, both in the general population and in the Projects; there is also a significant amount of literature that ties it to certain living conditions. Likewise, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the pressing need for mitigation. While these illnesses are, of course, not entirely preventable, their severity, prevalence, and transmission would be reduced by systemic changes I will discuss in the following sections. The goal of this research is to propose and draw more attention to potential improvements to NYCHA that could help restrict the seemingly endless growth and spread of these health concerns.

ELEVATED THREATS TO HEALTH IN NYCHA BUILDINGS

It is no secret that living conditions in New York City's 329 public housing complexes are terribly harsh, and despite public outrage, reform measures have been scarce. In a 2018 article published by the independent organization Natural Resources Defense Council, journalist Nicole Greenfield described the life-threatening obstacles residents face: "Sit back for a moment and imagine not being able to breathe in your own home. Imagine waking up in the middle of the night gasping for air… Imagine medications and breathing machines, emergency room visits, hospitalizations – all stemming from a menace in your own home that no one is willing to address" (Greenfield). The aforementioned "menace" refers to the presence of mold in many apartments in the Projects, which causes a variety of respiratory illnesses. Residents in nearly every NYCHA complex have made complaints related to mold, but little has been done. In fact, NYCHA has been known to "fix" mold issues simply by bleaching or painting over walls, which does nothing but visually cover up the damage (Greenfield). According to scientific studies, mold and dampness in the home is a proven cause of asthma and increases overall risk of any respiratory disease by 30-50% (Mudarri and Fisk 227); unsurprisingly, asthma rates are significantly elevated in neighborhoods with the most NYCHA buildings. A Department of Health report from 2003 notes East Harlem as the neighborhood with the highest prevalence of asthma (Garg et al. 16), a figure which has not changed much over the subsequent years (Department of Health). Not-so-coincidentally, this neighborhood has the highest concentration of public housing in all of New York City, and the second highest in the nation (Cass).

In addition to nontransmissible illnesses such as asthma, infectious diseases are often exacerbated by conditions found in public housing developments – both in terms of their spread and their severity. Historically, diseases such as tuberculosis and SARS have spread faster in urban centers than rural areas, largely resulting from overcrowding and poor air circulation (Neiderud 3). These trends have held true during the COVID-19 pandemic, as New York City (the highest density city in the US) became a hotspot for disease transmission in the first months of the crisis. Because the Projects are such large developments with many densely packed apartments, they are particularly risky places to be. According to data provided to media company *Politico* by NYCHA itself, "NYCHA residents constitute about 4 percent of the city's population but made up roughly 7 percent of the city's total deaths from [COVID-19] between March 2020 and June 2021." This percentage amounts to well over 2000 deaths, with the Grant Houses in Harlem being hit the hardest (Kvetenadze and Giambusso). An article published by

Spectrum News journalist Angi Gonzalez details one account of a Bronx River Houses resident named Norma Saunders, who is one of over 500 residents to contract COVID-19. She "considers herself to be very lucky" to have barely beaten the disease, as she knew "about seven [residents] that did pass away from COVID" (Gonzalez).

While overcrowding and skewed age demographics found in many NYCHA developments are certainly major causes for this disparity, ventilation issues pervading many NYCHA buildings have also contributed to the spread of COVID-19. The mechanical ventilation systems found in these buildings are old and outdated, with clogged air ducts and broken equipment. But the most concerning part is that NYCHA was allegedly aware of these issues early in the pandemic and neglected to make any changes. According to an exposé published by independent media company *The City*, NYCHA had hired a private consultant to inspect their air circulation systems, and extensive issues were discovered. Leaked emails from the consultant show that the agency was warned about these systems and their relation to disease transmission: "As we conduct further research we see further evidence suggesting a high risk of COVID19 transmission within families, especially in small under-ventilated spaces such as NYCHA bathrooms… And we see further evidence that this risk can be substantially reduced by increasing exhaust ventilation in these bathrooms" (Smith). And yet NYCHA did not make the recommended changes, leaving their residents even more susceptible to the disease. This is one of many examples demonstrating that the link between public health and public housing is not simply physical, but organizational. In addition to improving living conditions via physical changes to the buildings, NYCHA itself needs some drastic changes. The agency as it exists is not a protector of public health, but a threat to it.

IMPROVING NYCHA VIA FUNDING

While NYCHA requires several organizational changes, the first improvement it needs is more funding. According to the agency itself, there is $31.8 billion of "unmet infrastructural needs" (NYCHA 1). There is a multitude of chronically unfinished projects that NYCHA has promised to complete but cannot do so in a timely manner due to a lack of funding. As mentioned in the previous section, the agency has been known to bleach or paint over mold instead of legitimately removing it; while still inexcusable, this is largely due to a lack of available resources. Similarly, replacing buildings' entire ventilation systems to prevent the spread of COVID-19 would have cost millions of dollars – money which NYCHA in its current state simply does not have. It is vital that NYCHA's funding is increased, and more is specifically directed to maintenance and repair costs.

NYCHA is also in desperate need of more employees to meet the needs of residents instead of letting them pile up. Between the 1960s and 70s, before NYCHA underwent heavy defunding, there were staff members present in every building (Ferre-Sadurni). Yet according to current residents, housing staff are nowhere to be found. According to NYCHA's 2022 budget report, the workforce consists of 12,188 positions, 7,500 of which are maintenance workers and other "frontline staff." The same report notes that there are currently 2,252 buildings in NYCHA developments, meaning there is an average of just over 3 maintenance workers per building – each of which may contain hundreds of apartments – assuming every one of those 7,500

employees is working on a given day. This is a major understaffing issue, and it is no wonder residents can hardly find any NYCHA workers to fix their problems. As of this year, 37% ($1,535,000,000) of NYCHA's funding is used for "Personal Services," which includes salaries and other employment expenses; according to the budget plans for the next 5 years, NYCHA does not plan on increasing this figure at all (Basile 1-6).

Increasing NYCHA's funding would be a rather convoluted process, as it would require cooperation between the federal and city levels of government. Currently, federal subsidies account for approximately 59% of NYCHA's revenue ($2,462,000,000), but again, this figure is set to remain stagnant over the next 5 years. An increase in federal funding for NYCHA and other housing authorities throughout the country would be a great way to increase revenue but would likely be difficult to negotiate. The next largest source of revenue is that of tenant rent payments and makes up about 21% of NYCHA's revenue ($867,000,000). However, NYCHA's rent collection rate as of 2021 was only 71% and is expected to decrease over the next few years (Basile 3). This is a very difficult issue to fix, as the main cause of this low rate is many residents' lack of ability to pay their rent based on their income. A long-term, albeit complex, solution would be to implement community outreach programs targeted towards NYCHA residents to assist them in finding and preparing for jobs that will bring in higher earnings. This process of advocating for a certain housing group is known as venue-based intervention and has been found to be a very effective method of improving quality of life (Hernández). A final route to increase NYCHA's revenue would be to redirect portions of officers' salaries. The agency's officers are paid at a notoriously disproportionate level compared to general employees. General Manager Vito Mustaciuolo was paid $515,000 in 2021, making him New York City's highest-paid employee, with a salary worth more than those of the mayor and governor combined. Similarly, NYCHA CEO Gregory Russ was paid over $400,000 and was the second-highest paid city employee (Smith). It is unacceptable that these two executives, among many others, are paid at such high rates when the agency is in desperate need of any funding it can get. Executive salaries should be decreased to a more reasonable rate, and funding should be redirected to maintenance needs and increased employment.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Aside from funding, there are a few other potential changes that could improve conditions in NYCHA buildings, both short- and long-term. While NYCHA is certainly underfunded, that is not the sole explanation for its shortcomings: there needs to be more transparency in its use of revenue it does receive to ensure its promised repairs are completed. In 2017, New York City Council member Rafael Salamanca Jr. allocated $3 million to NYCHA to construct more secure doors at the Melrose Houses. However, this seemingly simple project is not set to be completed until 2024. In a statement last March, Salamanca said: "I strongly advise my colleagues: if you want a project completed, do not give money to NYCHA from your capital dollars" (Coltin). There is clearly some disconnect: if the allocated funds had been used where they were supposed to, it would not take seven years to put doors on a single development. In 2018, the New York City Council Committee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing to emphasize the complaints of residents and question NYCHA about their negligence. Several resident Presidents of NYCHA buildings stepped forward to talk about their own experiences with the agency and

those of other tenants, as well as suggest possible changes that would benefit them. Douglass Houses resident and President Carmen Quinones suggested the creation of a resident oversight council which NYCHA would report to quarterly, so residents could directly communicate with the agency and ensure their voices are heard (Legislative Research Center 29). This would be especially effective if the information were published, as it would even further increase transparency and allow anyone to accurately see how funding is being used. In current budget reports, NYCHA uses very general language to describe the use of revenue, and it is often difficult to see exactly where funds are allocated. Changing this would ensure that funding which should be used to protect the health of residents via maintenance work is used for the correct purpose within a reasonable amount of time.

As the buildings fall further into disrepair, residents have been joining together to sue NYCHA for their neglect. A *QNS* article by journalist Julia Moro documents one of these lawsuits. Residents of the Queensbridge Houses, organized by the Justice for All Coalition, sued NYCHA in August of 2021 for the hazardous conditions they were forced to endure (Moro). This lawsuit is one of several now, as residents attempt to take charge of their living conditions. Independent organizations such as the Justice for All Coalition are integral to this process, as they provide legal information and support, which residents would not be able to afford on their own. If these lawsuits continue and more are brought to NYCHA in the near future, the agency may one day be forced into taking steps to improve when faced with the risk of losing funding and further collapsing.

In addition to action through the residents themselves, more news outlets should publish testimonials from residents to make the general public aware of the severity of these issues; while it is common knowledge that public housing is not a *good* place to live, many people are unaware of just how brutal the conditions are. Many articles related to this topic have been published in local newspapers, but far fewer articles have recently been published by major, well-known outlets. This is likely because a large percentage of Americans have a very harsh attitude towards people living in poverty: a 2001 NPR poll showed that 52% of respondents believed that lack of motivation or responsibility for one's own circumstances is a major cause of poverty (Population Reference Bureau). This mindset has resulted in a lack of coverage of the public housing crisis by major news networks, as a large portion of their audiences likely hold these damaging preconceived notions. To bring awareness to NYCHA's negligence, it would be beneficial to establish public education campaigns to shift public opinion and amplify residents' voices. COVID-19 has created some opportunity to do this, as many news sources have been reporting on the pandemic's disproportionate impacts on certain vulnerable populations; if this trend were applied more specifically to public housing concerns, it could greatly benefit residents.

CONCLUSION

A clear link exists between public housing policy and public health, and NYCHA buildings are an unfortunate example. Because public housing is home to so many of New York City's most vulnerable citizens, it should be used as a tool to reach these populations rather than put them at any further risk; this touches back to the concept of venue-based intervention. Dr. Diana

Hernández further discusses this idea in a 2019 article published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, and argues that high-density public housing should be used as a tool to help more people advocate for their health. The Projects are home to many low-income individuals and racial minorities; because these groups are also disproportionate victims of poor public health, housing quality should be addressed as a root cause (Hernández). A 2015 study published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* tested this idea by placing community health workers in five NYCHA buildings with high incidences of chronic illness. When residents of these buildings were given access to these resources, nearly all of them reported high rates of satisfaction and significant improvements in their conditions (Lopez et al. 2). These studies demonstrate the capability of public housing to bring people together and improve their health, something which NYCHA should take advantage of. For example, East Harlem is a neighborhood with a particularly high density of public housing; it also has a very large Black population (Furman Center). According to an article published by Pfizer representative Rachel Lutz, "African Americans are generally at higher risk for heart diseases, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS" (Lutz). If public health officials were sent into East Harlem's NYCHA buildings to work directly with Black, low-income residents, these disparities could be reduced. As Dr. Hernandez describes, officials could capitalize on the common traits of these residents, approach their health issues with more cultural sensitivity, and improve overall health.

Let us revisit the New York State Department of Health's official goal: "Every day, we protect and promote the health of 8 million New Yorkers." By leaving NYCHA in its current state and neglecting to prevent these major public health threats, New York City is directly contradicting this statement and putting some of its most vulnerable residents in danger. The existence of such a large public housing system provides opportunity to help many people, and the COVID-19 pandemic has created an opening for these changes to occur by providing obvious and unacceptable examples of NYCHA's neglect. It is imperative that policy changes are implemented as soon as possible to improve unsafe and unsanitary conditions and prevent these New Yorkers from falling ill to preventable threats.

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Shandra Back

COM'25, Journalism

Shandra is a solo traveler and podcaster. This past summer she flew straight from her dorm room to Mexico where she spent 14 weeks backpacking and creating content for her podcast: Sunshine on a Dime.

DON'T COME HOME

This podcast, based on Shandra's Studio II Kilachand research project, takes a closer look at the deterrence policies along the U.S.-Mexico border and seeks to understand why they keep proving ineffective. Through the lens of economic instability and familial ties, Shandra explains the social reasons why migrants continue to attempt the border crossing despite ever-increasing militarization along the border.

Scan the QR code to listen to the podcast.   *Scan the QR code to read the research paper.*

Marissa Carty

CAS'22, Psychology

SCARLET LETTER

She bears burnout proudly
"I'm so busy, haha,
I don't even have time to sleep
or eat more than one meal a day!"
she boasts with her winning smile.

The bruised shadows under his eyes
are *so* in right now.
He competes with his classmates
to see who can drag the hues deeper.

I'm top of my class
in going through the motions.
I blur my months into a whir of exhaustion.
"What's emotion?" I grin,
honored that I've forgotten.

For every A on our chests, we're envied more.
Bloodred Achievement, the cultural trophy
of summiting the mountain of success
whatever it takes.

Why aren't we Ashamed?
of our
scorched relationships,
crackling health, or
ashy, smoke-clouded presence.

We wear scarlet letters
as a badge of honor
for an Arid, Accomplished life.

Marissa Carty

CAS'22, Psychology

FINE ARTS HOMEWORK

we cannot engage art
from conception to creation to discovery
without performing the Real Work

analyzing space, time, and energy
necessarily requires social intelligence,
awareness of bodies
their languages and moods:

> the defeated C-curve
> of the modern dancers' spines,
> the poetic image of a white egret
> lamenting the end of his life at the cliff,
> the patience of homemade glaze
> on hand-carved vases

shape, color, and form
call on our empathy,
our ability to recognize
the state of mind of other beings:

> the upstage character who watches
> but never speaks, unable to touch her companions,
> the disorientation of oil-on-canvas smoke
> engulfing a half-disappeared train,
> the brave viola solo belting out
> in an exalted, harmonized string orchestra
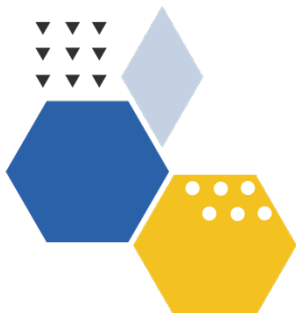
Emma S. Obregon Dominguez

CAS'25, History

Proud Guatemalan, Miami raised. Avid documentary watcher and history enthusiast. Always striving to create safe spaces for others to grow and bring about change by authentically sharing my immigrant experience.

"SI SE PUEDE":

From Grapevines Strikes to Running for Office

INTRODUCTION: A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

There was a bridge between the food on the tables and the fertile soil of Southern California in the 1960s, there was a bridge between the Kennedy campaign and his California primary victory in 1968, and there is a bridge between the 1970s grapevines strikes in Delano, California, and Alex Padilla's 2021 historic senate seat swear in. That bridge is full of dreamers, *los inmigrantes*, turning houses into *hogares*, working hard and paying taxes, turning *huelgas* into *causas*, learning to fall and then recover. This is the story pertaining to 18% of the current United States population, and how, in the 1960s, the political "sleeping giant" started to awaken and pave the path for multitudes of Latinos who call the US *su nación*. This is the story that, against all odds, "*Si Se Puede*".

In the early 1960s, it was evident that two United States were being forged parallel to each other. Though a growing number of the US population identifies themselves as Latino or of Latino descent today, in the 1960s, the community extended to a diminutive and forgotten 6.7 million (Passel & Tienda). Thus, while the white-identifying majority saw Wall Street rise, chain stores open, franchises bloom, and big businesses soar, the Latino community who fed the United States was dying, discriminated against, and brutally overworked in fields (Carnagie et al.).

The country's ambivalence stemmed from the prejudices and a long-standing history of discrimination that infected the United States from its creation. An infection that all non-white people felt but were unable to combat. Despite a series of social reforms and an increased public interest in human rights, Latinos were subjected to the white male political leaders' judgment for a long time. Until everyday heroes or *guerreros* began mobilizing the community through Latino group consciousness and crafting political alliances with prominent white male politicians to create long-lasting change.

"Rosita (Si Se Puede)" Art Print by Robert Valadez

1962: EL JEFE AND THE UNSUNG HEROINE

El Jefe

In 1962, a Chicano farmworker and activist named Cesar Chavez started the National Farm Workers Association alongside Dolores Huerta. The young activist had experience mobilizing people from his time as statewide director at the Community Service Organization (Gale, 2002). Early in his activism efforts, he emphasized the importance of "belonging" to the Latino community in the United States. Thus, through voter registration, welfare-related assistance, and unionization efforts, he successfully brought together a large community that existed disassembled across the country (Gale 2002). Chavez's arduous work to empower his growing community still resonates today, as millions of Latinos gather every election season to vote for the candidate who offers a better future.

The Unsung Heroine

Nevertheless, as written by Jean Murphy for the LA Times as early as 1970, "If Cesar Chavez is the hero of the farm worker's movement, Dolores Huerta is its unheralded heroine."

Huerta was indeed the movement's beating heart and soul. Huerta would eventually become vice president and second in command of the UFW, but her journey begins as a former farmworker turned activist earning 5 dollars a week that met Chavez in 1962 (Murphy, 1970). Together they joined their mobilization efforts to bring national coverage to the injustices farm workers were suffering at the time. As Huerta herself mentioned to Jean Murphy, these human rights violations resulted in making "the average lifespan of a worker" 49 years due to sanitation and working violations from the farm owners.

Different from Chavez, however, as director of negotiations, she had a heavily administrative role that was crucial to the success of *el movimiento*. Huerta was deeply involved in security measures, strike development, union negotiations, among other managerial tasks. In a 2006 interview with Milagros Aledo and Maria Alvarado, Huerta reflects on her "organizer" role in both the social and political sphere. She specifically recounts when her mobilization efforts "gathered women from different women's centers" and were able to "get about a hundred women to run for office." She then discusses how the pressure from "female Democrats running for office" forced Republicans to place women on the ballot, eventually leading to many women and minorities being elected from both parties.

Today, her influence is still heavily felt in the country's political sphere as the numbers of Latinx women-identifying members of Congress rise. Without the seeds planted by Dolores Huerta in the 1960s, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's historic win as the youngest elected congresswoman would have been deemed out of reach. However, though *la comunidad* was starving for social change at every huelga organized by Huerta, her gender played a role in becoming the "unsung hero" as penned by Jean Murphy. Despite her being Chavez's support, the young activist found herself advocating for a community she did not share with El Jefe; women. Thus, she dedicated part of her activist career to becoming an advocate for women farmers, like herself, and women everywhere as stated by the Dolores Huerta Foundation. It was there that Huerta became a symbol for the UFW and women everywhere, to the extent that she "found a supportive voice with other feminists" like Gloria Steinem, who kickstarted the fight against gender discrimination in the 1970s (Dolores Huerta Foundation).

Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta join other UFW board members at event. AP Images

GRAPEVINES OF FREEDOM: DEVELOPING GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS IN HUELGAS

Nowadays, *la comunidad* Latina is stronger than ever, but it was through Chavez's nonviolent mobilization and Huerta's bold message of persistence that the Latino community began to develop their group consciousness. In his 2006 Political Research Quarterly article, Gabriel Sanchez claims that the public opinion and mobilization of Latinos is an "understudied area within the political science literature" and provides context to the political behavior of the community. Sanchez claims that "group consciousness" is what moves the community to collective political action. Though Sanchez's research did not expand further into historical instances in which this behavior of "group consciousness" was prevalent at the time of mobilizing for change, the observed trend is heavily reflected in the UFW actions in the mid-1960s.
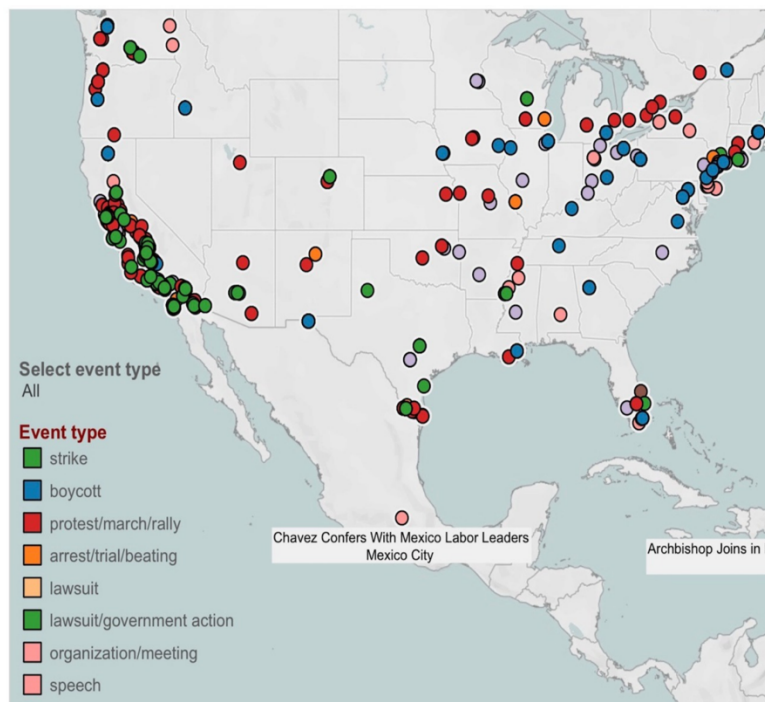
UFW strikes, boycotts, and other farm worker actions 1965-1975.

In Kern County, at the 900-dollar property Chavez invested in back in 1962, the NFWA's Delano Headquarters stood tall as the movement grew with time. From 1962 to 1965, Chavez and the NFWA had "organized a union with a membership of 1,700" (Gale 2015). In September 1965, Chavez's NFWA joined forces with AWOC, a Filipino-worker-led union, together becoming what it is today known as the United Farm Workers of America or UFW (Gale 2015). With the newly acquired national interest and a growing Latino "group consciousness," the strikes or *huelgas* became more prominent, but so did the violent opposition. However, the Latino population did not deter from fighting the good fight through nonviolence; rather *la comunidad* collectively grew closer to create substantial social and political change, thus confirming the findings of Sanchez's 2006 study.

As stated by the UFW, in the early stages of what would become the five-year-long grape strike and boycott, Chavez insisted on collective bargaining "from both Latino and Filipino strikers" by "sharing the same picket lines, strike kitchens, and union hall." After three years of creating bridges between dispersed communities of Latino workers in the United States, three years of shaping the public opinion, and three years of arduous mobilization efforts, *la comunidad* answered with action. Through increased group consciousness, the Latino community showed "unprecedented support from outside the Central Valley, from other unions, church activists, students, Latinos, other minorities, and civil rights groups," all purposely joining *la causa* to better the community (UFW.org). Chavez noticed the unprecedented support from *la raza*, but also from white Americans, other minority groups, and people from all walks of life, and decided to welcome their efforts as depicted in an excerpt of his speech "We Shall Overcome" below:

> As our strike has grown, workers have matured and now know why and how to fight for their rights. As the strike has grown into a movement for justice by the lowest paid workers in America, friends of farm workers have begun to rally in support of LA CAUSA. Civil rights, church, student and union groups help with food and money.

> We believe that this is the beginning of a significant drive to achieve equal rights for agricultural workers. In order to enlist your full support and to explain our work to you, I would like to bring some of our pickets and meet with you.

> VIVA LA CAUSA Y VIVA LA HUELGA

For the members of UFW, it was about moving towards collective nonviolent justice; it was about working for *la causa*. It was fulfilling a promise that "we shall overcome," but we shall do it together.

By 1968, the miscellaneous strikes had become "immortalized as *la Huelga*," and armed by the immense support from all over the country; the UFW "began a nationwide boycott of table grapes" in which millions of Americans participated (National Archives). *La causa* acquired the engagement of essential allies, one of them being former Attorney General and New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy. In Kennedy, Chavez and Huerta found an unlikely friendship and alliance that, though it ended tragically, unified the movement and the country to demand justice.

1968: UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIPS AND NATIONAL MOURNING

The Kennedy family was diligently involved in politics in the 1960s; however, the person at the epicenter of the family's success was Robert F. Kennedy. From early in his brothers' political careers, he served as confidant and administrative support, though at times his willingness to uphold the law placed him in reproachable situations, Kennedy showcased a capacity for change (Bobby Kennedy for President). As written by Patricia Sullivan, Bobby Kennedy was "not perfect, yet…he was a remarkable human being who was engaged with his times, and that struggle we continue to struggle with today."

After his brother's assassination, the younger Kennedy's political campaign shifted in focus, and as Sullivan depicts in her book, the last years of his political life showcased RFK's "own personal growth as a leader focused on civil rights."

By 1968, Robert Kennedy was not only New York's senator but the American people's senator, and due to his various trips to underserved and neglected parts of the world and the United States, he met people willing to create change. Among the people Senator Kennedy met along the way were two Chicano former farmworkers and activists, Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez.

Robert Kennedy understood the plight that many workers found themselves in, not having any job opportunities but being stripped of their intrinsic human rights. He heard the continuous freedom cry from farmworkers in Delano, "*Not for just Delano, but for all of us*," and decided to employ his inherent white male privilege to create a space for Latino voices to reach the public and their elected officials (Bobby Kennedy for President). Amid the grape strike, Kennedy's team met with Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez to convince the Congressional Agriculture Committee to hold a hearing in Delano, one in which Senator Kennedy participated. From then on, the unlikely friendship between the three of them grew, and when Chavez went through his hunger strike, Kennedy agreed to break bread with him to put an end to the strike.

For the first time in political history, the Latino population had a dependable political ally willing to support the community through policy and highlighting their voices. Thus, as depicted in Gabriel Sanchez's research, the Latino "group consciousness" once again weighed heavily on the mobilization of the community, but this time it was employed to win Kennedy the presidency. *La comunidad* felt so supported that, as written by Joseph A. Palermo, "Chavez temporarily suspended the UFW's strike and national grape boycott, thereby freeing his unionists to dedicate their time and energy to the Kennedy campaign." The community-building foundation that Chavez had set as a young activist in 1962 had now become a politically active and vital entity to American politics. Long gone were the days when Latinos remained overlooked, cornered into the remote fields of the country; now, the streets were filled with chants of "*Viva Kennedy*." In June, 1968, those efforts bore fruits, and Robert Kennedy was announced as the winner of the California presidential primaries. That win was equally important for the Kennedy campaign as for the 95% of Latinos who voted for him, as stated by Palermo, "Cesar Chavez proved invaluable after unleashing his small army of organizers, canvassers, and get-out-to-vote activists for Kennedy." Without Latino support, the outcome would have been different.

However, at the same time that Senator Kennedy was supposed to have a victory celebration with an arranged mariachi band, he was assassinated. As Dolores Huerta regretfully recounts, "His assassination was the death of our future...civil rights would have been at the forefront of his agenda." The Latino community indeed lost years of political gain as the three shots were fired in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel, but Senator Kennedy's influence is still relevant today. Even though he might not have been the Civil Rights president, nor the one to change the social standing of Latinos in the US, his legacy is that through his humility and awareness of injustices, he allowed for an oppressed group of people to finally belong, to finally unite, to finally speak up. His death lit a fire in the mourning hearts of many and set a promise that an equitable, just, and diverse America will come, maybe not today, but in the future. That message of resilience and recovery is ingrained in Dolores Huerta's "*Si Se Puede*," a message that today has become a symbol of a community looking to create a better future.

SI SE PUEDE

New York Times writer Dick Meister reported the fallout and retribution due to Kennedy's death for the United Farm Workers Movement in 1968. As Meister details, the focus shifted from "*la huelga*" or organized strikes, like the one that once brought national attention to the unconventional friendship of Kennedy, Chavez, and Huerta, to "*la causa*." The Latino community knew that without the Bostonian's support, their resilience and hunger for justice would have to be greater than the disrespect from the authorities, and the Latino mobilization would have to include other communities officially. The potent force the UFW had become in 1965 when Larry Itliong's Filipino coalition joined Chavez's Latino union bore fruits in 1970. As stated by Adam Janos, by 1970, the farmworkers "won a contract promising better pay and benefits." Furthermore, in 1975 the collective group consciousness created among farmworkers bore fruits again when California passed the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, "which established collective bargaining power for farmworkers statewide" (Janos, 2021). This is a very

early narrative of significant strikes and an increase in Latino-led activism that was evoked from seeing themselves without an influential political ally.

However, though the political legacy of *la causa* is worth noting, the spirit of revolution and the sense of ownership of a country *la comunidad Latina* fed, nurtured, and contributed to in many ways also began taking flight. Latinos in the United States stopped letting their elected officials treat them as second-class citizens, an afterthought, or perhaps a box to check during election time. By the 1970s, *la comunidad* had heroes whose steps they knew to follow; among those figures was Dolores Huerta. The "Unsung Heroine" became one of the first people to walk the bridge between proudly being part of the Latino community while embracing the pieces of America that belong to *la comunidad*.

Dolores Huerta's narrative and legacy continue to serve as a guide today for the 18% percent of Americans who understand the complexities of exploring the duality of their identities. In an interview for NPR News, Maria Godoy talked to a now older Dolores Huerta about her personal experience with the strikes and grape boycotts after 1968. Huerta discussed the violent approach of authorities towards the workers and the terrible conditions they were subjected to in the field. She mentioned the surge in violence and the loss of media coverage attributed to Kennedy's devastating death. However, she also proudly disclosed the birth of her famous phrase; amid an Arizona boycott, she spoke "*Si Se Puede*" into existence as an act of resistance to the status quo. From then on, her words, as well as herself, have become a symbol of resilience. A symbol that despite external political and social pressures, if *la comunidad* remains together, "we shall overcome," as Chavez said in the 60s, but we shall overcome together.

YES WE CAN: LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Forty years after Robert Kennedy's 1968 campaign, America prepared itself for another historical presidential election. However, this time Barack Obama, a young Illinois senator, was the one that promised a better America. Nevertheless, it wasn't until Obama said, "*Yes We Can*," the English translation of "*Si Se Puede*," to a group of fired-up enthusiastic voters in Nashua, New Hampshire, that it became clear *la comunidad* had once again gained a major political ally willing to show up for them. Barack Obama promised hope through resilience, promised better days for the nation, and through this message, his charisma, and 67% of the Latino vote, the underdog candidate became president of the United States.

Years of political mobilization by *la comunidad* flourished under his presidency; by 2016, America had celebrated the first Latina woman in the Supreme Court, Dolores Huerta's Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the institution of the National Hispanic Heritage Month (CWA-AFA, 2021). However, the administration fell short as it could not permanently protect all Latino community members against conservative immigration policy, leaving *la comunidad* in danger when Donald Trump became president. Nevertheless, despite its shortcomings, the diversity and acceptance fostered by the Obama administration gave space for Latinos to join politics and public service. In fact, it was mostly Latinos in Congress, particularly Latinx women of color, who were responsible for the resistance against President Trump's heinous racist attacks that threatened the country's progress since the 1960s (Iati, 2019).

In the years to come, the congressional representation of Latinos will continue to grow, and Latinos' social and political standing will no longer be out of the community's control. Finally, after so many years of victories and heartbreak, arduous efforts of mobilization and nonviolent activism, and loyalty to *la causa*, the Latino community can now enjoy the American Dream they helped build.

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THE DANGERS OF "DON'T SAY GAY":
Analysis and Implications of Anti-Gay Curriculum Legislation

Florida H.B. 1557, better known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, aims to ban classroom conversations about sexual orientation and gender identity in Florida public schools. The bill is officially titled "Parental Rights in Education," and it bases its validity in the need to protect children from conversations that are inappropriate for their age level and to allow parents to decide if their children should be exposed to LGBTQ+ content. Bills to this effect are nothing new, but Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill goes even further than exclusion. The original bill required schools to disclose students' sexual orientations to their families if a counselor or teacher becomes aware the child is not heterosexual or chooses to go by a different name or pronouns at school, unless there is suspicion that disclosing this information could result in abuse or neglect. This provision has since been removed; schools are now required to disclose a student's sexual orientation regardless of how this would affect the student's safety at home.

Anti-gay curriculum laws have a long history in many states. According to the Columbia Law Review, anti-gay curriculum laws in the US originated in the Oklahoma state legislature in 1978. The Oklahoma law was introduced by two conservative state legislators, who were influenced by prominent gay rights opposition leader Anita Bryant. When Miami-Dade County put into place an ordinance to prevent discrimination based on "sexual preference," Bryant spearheaded a movement to have the ordinance repealed. Concerned with the hiring of homosexual teachers, Bryant pressed that they would be "dangerous role models" who should "not have the right to influence our children to choose their way of life." Bryant's movement—called "Save Our Children"—was successful; the ordinance was repealed just six months after it was put into place (Rosky, 2017). Advocates in favor of anti-gay curriculum legislation often rally support by presenting their cause as a fight to protect children's innocence and preserve the "normalcy" of their futures. According to a 2017 study by Child and Family Studies scholar Hannah Dyer, childhood is a "locus of anxiety for homophobic culture because on it rests the reproduction of a heteronormative future" (291). This leads to the question: what is the child's role in queer theory? How does support for the Don't Say Gay bill and other anti-gay curriculum measures position childhood in relation to queerness, and what are the implications of this positioning? It is crucial to examine the Don't Say Gay bill and its supporting arguments through the lenses of queer theory and educational frameworks because this examination reveals how anti-gay curriculum legislation contributes to a heterosexist school culture and suggests possible

methods for combatting it while uplifting the voices of queer youth of color rather than marginalizing them further.

Support for the Don't Say Gay bill and other legislation of a similar nature comes from flawed and contradictory understandings of childhood and queerness. The first basis upon which anti-gay curriculum efforts rest is the protection of childhood innocence. According to sociologist Kerry Robinson, in most discourse surrounding childhood, "Children are constructed as the asexual, naive and innocent 'other' and perceived to be vulnerable and in need of protection." But this childhood innocence, like all other perceptions of children based on traditional linear developmental models, "is a constructed social and moral concept" and can therefore be easily altered and bended to justify the moral hesitations of adults; as Robinson states, "Any challenge to the sacrosanct concept of childhood innocence generally leads to a heightened level of concern in society." (Robinson, 2008). This innocence argument is employed frequently in explanations of the necessity of the Don't Say Gay bill. The language of the bill itself uses the phrase "developmentally inappropriate" in its criteria for why LGBTQ+ conversations should be banned, remaining vague enough for the restrictions the bill imposes to be implemented far beyond primary education. The bill's supporters echo this language. For example, Florida governor Ron DeSantis expressed his support for the bill by presenting it as protecting children from conversations about sex. DeSantis said, "How many parents want their kids to have transgenderism or something injected into classroom discussion? It's basically saying for our younger students, do you really want them being taught about sex?" (CBS). Popular conservative political commentator Ben Shapiro referred to the bill as "Left-wing indoctrination on sexual mores" (The Ben Shapiro Show). Overall, many supporters of this bill and legislation like it argue that the sexual nature of LGBTQ+ conversations is inappropriate and it is necessary to prevent these discussions in order to preserve childhood innocence.

Another argument in support of the anti-gay curriculum laws is the idea that inclusion of literature or conversations concerning LGBTQ+ people would cause children to become homosexual, a causal relationship which rests on the presumption that children are inherently heterosexual, or what Dyer (2017) describes as "proto-heterosexual." According to gender and childhood scholar Karin Martin, most parents raise their children to be heterosexual, or at least under the assumption that they are heterosexual. After conducting a survey of mothers regarding what they choose to say or omit from conversations about sexuality and sexuality education, Martin found that "heteronormative assumptions, talk, and strategies" are often employed in conversations about sexuality (Martin, 2009). The heteronormative parenting that Martin describes is often not malicious or intentional; rather, it is the product of a heteronormative society at large. While they may be well-meaning, presuming that children are inherently straight and parenting and educating them as such can be detrimental. In this instance, inherent heterosexuality is used as a premise for the argument that discussion of LGBTQ+ people and issues would be a corrupting influence, leading children to become homosexual or transgender.

Combining these two arguments, the logic behind support for the Don't Say Gay bill and other measures to classify LGBTQ+ content as inappropriate is flawed because it relies on mutually exclusive explanations of sexuality and childhood being simultaneously true. The

preservation of innocence argument rests on the idea that children are inherently non-sexual, while the argument that LGBTQ+ content would lead children to homosexuality rests on the idea that children are inherently heterosexual. According to queer theorist Kathryn Bond Stockton, a queer childhood often involves growing in a way that does not follow the same linear milestones as a "straight" childhood, a process that Stockton describes as "growing sideways" rather than growing up (Stockton, 2009). Stockton applies the phrase "growing sideways" to childhood development in a variety of areas, but in the context of sexuality, she expresses that children are not all developing the same way, and they are certainly not all developing to be heterosexual by default. The Florida legislation and other bills like it—those which aim to "preserve" children's heterosexuality to secure a heteronormative future on a societal level—are most prominently supported from the angle that places children as potential victims of exposure to content that is deemed "developmentally inappropriate." From a rhetorical standpoint, the focus on development rather than age prevents necessitating a definitive age at which LGBTQ+ content becomes appropriate, allowing virtually unlimited expansion of how far into a student's educational career the Don't Say Gay bill can apply. The proponents of the Don't Say Gay bill and other legislation apply this same logic in their determinations of what literature is considered dangerous or subversive; a story about a prince and his princess is appropriate, but the same storyline about two princes is not, because it brings up conversations about sexuality. However, according to Lin, "Nearly all literature has sexuality embedded in it; when that sexuality is hetero, its assumed normalcy renders it invisible" (Lin 2017). Aside from literature, this also applies to classroom discussion and conversation in general; a teacher's mention of her wife or a student's reference to their two fathers is not any more sexual than mentions of a family involving a straight relationship. In summary, the premises of the arguments in support of anti-gay curriculum are contradictory, disingenuous, and harmful to queer youth.

Because the Don't Say Gay bill has officially been passed and has sparked similar legislation in other states, it is crucial to understand how this bill fits into the larger context of how LGBTQ+ content is presented in the elementary classroom. Education scholar Cammie Kim Lin (2017) proposes four sexual diversity frameworks that can be used in the classroom: homophobic/heterosexist frameworks, tolerance/visibility frameworks, social justice frameworks, and queer frameworks. Queer-inclusive education—defined as "teaching that demonstrates a commitment to acknowledging sexual and gender identities other than those present in traditional classrooms and curriculum (the heteronormative, gender-normative status quo)"—is most productive when it disrupts heteronormativity through a queer framework rather than simply teaching acceptance and tolerance through a tolerance/visibility framework (2). The ideal model, according to Lin, is the queer framework, which counteracts the idea that heterosexuality is the only normal or default identity and encourages students to begin "challenging homophobia and heterosexism not only on the grounds that they are hurtful and unjust, but also because they are based on heteronormative understandings of sexual identity" (9). The queer framework, upon implementation in the elementary classroom, would provide all students with an understanding and respect of others' identities, as well as encouragement and support in being themselves.

On the opposite end of the spectrum lies the homophobia/heterosexist framework, which is the most common in the United States public education system, especially in primary and

elementary schools. According to Lin, this framework teaches that heterosexuality is the only normal, acceptable sexual orientation and the feminine female and masculine male are the only normal, acceptable gender identities. In addition to being wholly exclusionary of same sex couples, literature in this category often reinforces traditional gender roles (Lin, 2017). Implementation of this framework contributes to a harmful environment for LGBTQ+ students. In her study on school culture, education scholar Olivia Murray discusses how this harmful environment, which she refers to as "heterosexist school culture" leads students to perceive homosexuality as "wrong, objectionable, and perverse" (Murray, 2011). This is the framework that the Don't Say Gay bill advocates for in the most extreme possible form.

This heterosexist school culture does not always go unrecognized or unaddressed; there have been many movements and programs like Gay Straight Alliance clubs established to combat it. However, for a discipline that tends to criticize the linear development models of Piaget for rigidity and lack of inclusivity, contemporary queer theory often overlooks voices of color. Navigating queerness and the possibility of a queer future as a child of color is vastly different than it is for White children. This leads Dyer to wonder "if and how thought surrounding childhood might be sufficiently queered so that it resists being constrained by normative developmentalism and productively challenges how national, racial, classed, and gendered affiliations and identifications impact the distribution of rights and administration of education to children" (Dyer, 2017). There is a massive disparity in homelessness and mental illness suffered by White queer youth and queer youth of color. For instance, approximately "42 percent of homeless youth are queer; however, 65 percent of queer homeless youth are racial minorities" (Love, 2019). This disconnect is especially present—and especially harmful—in some attempts by well-meaning LGBTQ+ celebrities and activists to provide support and encouragement for LGBTQ+ children.

Many of the efforts and movements created to comfort and empower queer youth who are struggling with being bullied in school are created for White gay men—especially those who are middle-class or wealthy. The most prominent example of this is the It Gets Better social media campaign, which originated with a video posted to YouTube by author Dan Savage and his partner Terry Miller. The goal of the video was to encourage LGBTQ+ youth to remain strong throughout the bullying they face at school, with the promise of "going off to college, leaving bullies behind, or moving away from their small, homophobic town to the diverse, gay-friendly big city" (Love, 2019). The campaign generated massive celebrity support, as well as widespread criticism. Beyond the critique that the campaign uses a "pull yourself up by the bootstraps" mentality and expresses the idea that homophobia ends after high school graduation, the concept of queerness used by the campaign was heavily Whitewashed. In her book *We Want to Do More Than Survive*, prominent Black queer educator Bettina Love suggests that perhaps for wealthy White gay men, it does get better, but for many others with overlapping marginalized identities, it may not. As Love wrote, "It Gets Better's aspirational claims that queer life gets better were solely for White, young, gay men who are middle class to wealthy" (Love, 2019). People of color rarely appeared in It Gets Better videos and the language used by the campaign largely neglected the experiences of queer people of color, providing hope for only a small sliver of the community of queer youth.

In conclusion, the premises used to justify implementation of the "Don't Say Gay" bill and similar measures are flawed and contradictory. Children are strategically positioned at the forefront of homophobic and transphobic rhetoric, despite a substantial body of queer theory and education research suggesting that this positioning misunderstands children developmentally and intellectually. Even attempts to mitigate the effects of heterosexist school cultures, however, have been exclusionary and inapplicable to queer students of color. Taken together, what does this indicate about possible solutions? Beyond repealing anti-gay curriculum legislation—if not through the legislature then through the courts—the answer could lie in Lin's frameworks of sexuality education. Educators and policymakers must remove the homophobic/heterosexist framework from the elementary classroom, but what then?

The tolerance/visibility framework appears promising on the surface, but teaching children to be "tolerant" of LGBTQ+ peers is not enough. As Lin asserts, by implementing the queer framework, educators can disrupt heteronormativity at its roots and mitigate the effects of heterosexist school culture (Lin, 2017). However, there is a place for the social justice framework as well. Learning about struggles faced by queer people is crucial to understanding, empathy, and acceptance. The social justice framework calls for active education about challenges and inequalities that are faced today as well as a history of LGBTQ+ rights and activism, and this is absolutely necessary in order to foster a generation that is knowledgeable enough to promote and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and equality measures in the future, but this alone is not enough. Educators must employ the queer framework as well by, for example, teaching content with LGBTQ+ characters where their identity is not the focus of the work and their conflicts are unrelated to their queerness. Also, discussions of LGBTQ+ struggles are incomplete if they are not intersectional. An issue that frequently arises is that well-meaning conversations focus on White queer activists and overlook the unique difficulties of queer people of color, becoming as neglectful of voices of color as surface level promises that "it gets better" for White gay men are. When learning about queer history or activist movements, for example, the pivotal role of Black transgender women cannot be overlooked. If carefully employed, the queer and social justice frameworks in tandem could make an enormous difference in reducing the heterosexist school culture that is so pervasive and detrimental for the mental wellbeing and development of queer students.

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Liam's paper dissects 4chan's /pol/ and alt-right political violence. He hopes to research alt-lite radicalization among teen boys through hypermasculine, "gym bro" style social media content in the future.

EXTREMISM ON /POL/ AND THE ONLINE RADICALIZATION NETWORK:
How 4chan's Structure and Culture Encourage Alt-Right Terrorism and Political Violence

ABSTRACT

The alt-right has taken the political world by storm in recent years. With technological innovations like the Internet and social media, alt-right political operatives can radicalize new members at unprecedented rates. One social networking site, 4chan, brainwashes swathes of socially isolated individuals with neo-Nazi, white nationalist disinformation. Through the site's anonymity and rapid content deletion, innately bigoted subculture, and "provocative" humor, 4chan serves as a powerful propaganda platform for the alt-right. At their most severe, 4chan and its sister sites have encouraged some of the most horrific hate crimes in recent memory, including the 2014 Isla Vista killings, the 2015 Charleston church shooting, and the 2019 Christchurch mosque shootings. By assessing 4chan's role in online radicalization through the frameworks of social isolation theory, the echo chamber effect, and confirmation bias, researchers can develop policy solutions that could slow or even stop the rise of alt-right extremist violence.

Keywords: 4chan, alt-right, /pol/, online radicalization, terrorism

CONTENT WARNING

Please be advised that much of the content on 4chan's /pol/ can be considered hate speech. This research paper will address issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, ableism, and many other forms of bigotry present on 4chan. This incendiary, violent platform notoriously promotes alt-right viewpoints and encourages violence toward marginalized groups.

This analysis of 4chan includes only what are necessary examples to highlight the reactionary views of 4chan's /pol/ users. There are no threads present in their entirety in this paper, and some words have been retroactively censored to avoid unintentional harm. Though this may impact the "weight" of the primary source material, the context provided within the paper proves 4chan's connection to the alt-right without deliberately including slurs or other harmful imagery. When the consequences of incorporating unnecessary stereotypes could result in moral and post-moral disengagement ([Tillman et al., 2018](#)), or the process of separating the immorality of an act (i.e., seeking out, reading, and engaging with racist 4chan posts) from the act itself, there is no academic reason to include copious examples of bigotry. When repeatedly encountering hateful rhetoric online, researchers and readers alike should take care to avoid desensitization; viewers must avoid "normalizing" this content at all costs.

Those wishing to view the source material as initially presented on 4chan can find it in the reference section. Readers should only search for this content if they have a robust social support network.

In the past 30 years, social networks like 4chan have fundamentally altered how people interact with the political landscape. Founded in 2003 by fifteen-year-old free speech extremist Christopher Poole, 4chan brands itself as an anonymous forum with 76 distinct "boards," or subcommunities, built around a specific theme. Once on a board, users can post a thread consisting of a title, image, and additional comment; reply to existing threads that other users have already posted; or browse through existing posts without interacting. Though 4chan initially gained popularity through its more innocuous boards and its status as a meme trendsetter (Dewey, 2014; Jemielniak & Przegalinska, 2020), the site currently has a prominent not-safe-for-work (NSFW) section with various kinds of pornography and, notably, a political board labeled "Politically Incorrect" (/pol/). 4chan's /pol/ is rife with anti-BIPOC disinformation; "junk news," meaning sensationalist articles, overt propaganda, or conspiracy theories specifically engineered to radicalize users, makes up 36% of the site's news content (Burton & Koehorst, 2020). Poole and others initially developed /pol/ as a "containment board," or a subcommunity designed to pull hateful content away from apolitical boards and centralize them in one location (Hine et al., 2017). However, this strategy fails to address the core issue of radicalization on 4chan; instead, it concentrates that bigotry, steeping users in hateful content and isolating them from healthier political influences. 4chan propagates online far-right radicalization and real-world violence through a sitewide veil of anonymity and ephemerality, distinctive cultural markers, and vitriolic bigotry posed as provocative humor—three features designed to isolate users from existing, healthier social communities.

Researchers must first understand the broader online radicalization process to understand why 4chan is such a powerful political radicalizer. The Internet has revolutionized the way the public interprets politics; over 80% of Americans get their news online (Shearer, 2021), and social networking sites are often the first point of contact between users and political information. Although the rise of social media theoretically affords people of varying political opinions greater contact with each other and new ideas than ever before, it can also have the inverse effect—pushing people toward increasingly radical viewpoints they would never have learned about without the Internet. This move toward more extremist political perspectives constitutes the process of online radicalization. The Internet, therefore, poses a novel challenge for researchers trying to stop radicalization; ease of publishability, relative anonymity, exposure to millions, and widespread diffusion of messaging all make the Internet an ideal medium for extremists to transmit incendiary rhetoric (Correa & Sureka, 2013). Don Black, a Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard and founder of Stormfront, the first prominent neo-Nazi/Holocaust denial website, said online radicalization revolutionized the way he recruited new members:

> It's been a tremendous boon for us... That's why I dedicate most of my time to this. I feel like I've accomplished more on the Web than in my 25 years of political activism. Whereas before, we could reach only people with pamphlets or holding rallies with no more than a few hundred people, now we can reach potentially millions.

Through a stream of anti-BIPOC propaganda filling the white male user's "psychological needs such as belongingness, status, recognition, and power," white nationalist organizers recruit

vulnerable, socially isolated populations through 4chan to join their cause (Woolf & Hulsizer, 2004, p. 40).

Social isolation underpins the entire online radicalization process. Humans are social creatures; solitude inflicts distinct health drawbacks like poorer sleep quality and lower inflammation control (Cacioppo et al., 2011), justifying people's extreme measures to prevent social isolation. People who feel exiled from real-life communities seek membership in a potentially dangerous, more accessible online community like 4chan to avoid the pain of rejection (Hug, 2013). Adolescent white men, in particular, turn to online forums because they lack positive relationships with group members in their real-life communities (Barker, 2009). These men, those most susceptible to the alt-right's radicalization toolbox, latch onto 4chan's "junk" news, putting rationality aside in their search for any available community. When coupled with a general frustration about society, 4chan's false conspiracy theories easily radicalize lonely white men with propaganda that validates their worldview.

However, social isolation has a second downside, as isolated individuals also tend to remove themselves from existing social communities like families or friends (Hug, 2013). By cutting off their relationships with existing groups, isolated people sever their lifeline to society and, by extension, those who could rationally assess content on the site. Instead, the socially isolated dive into 4chan's propaganda and believe it. By scapegoating minoritized groups, alt-right propagandists validate their white male users' complaints about society and encourage them to spread those conspiracy theories, perpetuating the cycle of radicalization.

Paradoxically, 4chan's structure can also cause intense social isolation for its members. When users define themselves and their self-worth based on their relationship to the platform, severe identity crises where users dissociate and feel like their entire identities exist on 4chan are common. Additionally, because users cannot message each other without sharing other forms of identification, it is almost impossible to form one-on-one, deep personal relationships using the platform. Users will likely never feel truly connected to individual community members, even if they visit the site daily. The alt-right exploits these structural dynamics on 4chan, leaving users grasping hopelessly for relationships to stave off the loneliness they first joined 4chan to alleviate while pledging their allegiance to an anonymous collective.

On 4chan, anonymity reigns supreme; over 90% of 4chan posts have no identifying information (Bernstein et al., 2021). Unlike a well-defined Facebook group or a loosely bound YouTube community, 4chan users belong to a highly decentralized network where members do not even operate accounts. There are no usernames or passwords on the site and no way to create a personal profile. Since there are no post histories, there is no way to accrue social credit or build a viewable identity on the platform (Knuttila, 2011). Users relate to one another through this shared shroud of anonymity, and "anons" fiercely defend and take pride in their shapelessness. By encouraging anonymity with randomly generated ID codes as usernames, 4chan either allows users to post openly hateful content freely without fearing the social moderation of a platform like Twitter (Basak et al., 2019) or forces them to exist in relative obscurity (Curlew, 2019), depending on the user's perspective. In yet another social paradox, the community at large often berates "namef*gs," or users who attach a pseudonym or tripkey to

their posts, for refusing to conform to namelessness in an act of social moderation (Ludemann, 2018). By removing identity, 4chan users essentially radicalize each other, promoting more and more devious misinformation and vile rhetoric to personally validate their role in the community and feel "in on" the secret truth of white nationalism while further exposing themselves to confirmation bias-inducing conspiracy theories.

Additionally, the forum's general ephemerality might embolden 4chan users to post more aggressively anti-BIPOC comments and promote dangerous conspiracies. 4chan boasts a massive stream of content; most threads on /b/, 4chan's general board, spend less than five seconds on the first page before being replaced by newer posts (Bernstein et al., 2021), and over 113,000 new posts appear every day on /pol/ (Papasavva et al., 2020). Once a /pol/ post stops receiving replies, it is archived, then automatically deleted in less than a week (Papasavva et al., 2020). The influx of content and the rapid deletion of that content creates an aura of impermanence on the platform. Users post without fearing repercussions because they know the system will delete their posts almost immediately. This endlessly replenishing content stream fuels the dopamine addiction that keeps many social media users glued to their screens (Macit et al., 2018). The platform's size also makes the user feel like they are part of a large community, one so large they cannot possibly interact with everything in time. If the hateful post miraculously succeeds by remaining on the front page and receiving replies, the user feels popular among the crowd and is more likely to continue posting similar content; if it does not, the post is rapidly deleted, absolving the user from lingering fears that their contributions are invalid and thoughts that their comment may be found by (and induce criticism from) real-world contacts.

Users must be fluent in the forum's coded language to post successfully on 4chan and assimilate into the group. While most social media platforms have recognizable influencers that function as celebrities and drive the discourse of the platform (Enke & Borchers, 2019), 4chan's anonymity removes the possibility of identifiable human influencers. This distinction, along with 4chan's history as a meme trendsetter, helps contextualize why 4chan has such a robust and intense array of cultural markers. Terms like "anons," those who post anonymously to the site; "redpilling," a Matrix reference meaning to "expand a user's mind" to the realities of a conspiracy theory; and "femoid," a portmanteau of female and android meant to denote subservience, are commonplace on /pol/. Aside from the site's uniquely hateful dictionary, 4chan's /pol/ users also employ non-linguistic cues like enveloping words in three sets of parentheses, such as (((banks))), to denote that the enclosed term is controlled by or innately Jewish (Tuters & Hagen, 2019). Even numbers can have secretly bigoted undertones; 1488, for example, references the 14 Words white power slogan ("We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children") and the phrase "Heil Hitler" (H is the eighth letter of the English alphabet). Users employ these words, techniques, and numbers as a pseudo-badge of honor; if the poster can recognize and replicate the site's jargon, they directly contribute to the social dynamic of the platform and validate themselves as part of 4chan's "in-group" of radicalized /pol/ users (Tolerance.org, 2002, as cited in Woolf & Hulsizer, 2004).

Figure 1: Various iterations of the "Pepe the Frog" meme. Note: Some images have been altered to redact text including expletives, slurs, or calls to violence.

Images also play an essential role in the social dynamic and community bonding of 4chan. Because 4chan does not have traditional influencers like other social media platforms, images of popular characters act as pseudo-influencers, concisely and directly contributing to the malicious intention of the poster by combining a culturally recognizable symbol with anti-BIPOC rhetoric. For example, Pepe the Frog, once a standard internet meme on 4chan, has been co-opted and hijacked by white supremacists on the site. After its adoption and incorporation into the rhetoric of 4chan's /pol/, the meme became such a powerful hallmark of the alt-right that the Anti-Defamation league branded it a hate symbol (Figure 1). The character has many different iterations on the platform (with some depictions, called "rare Pepes," even being bought and sold online). Some of its more overtly white nationalist uses include Pepe drinking out of a swastika mug, Pepe as an SS officer, and, most commonly, Pepe as Donald Trump (Glitsos & Hall, 2020). Though other recognizable images like the Happy Merchant also exist on the platform, Pepe the Frog has achieved an almost cult-like status on 4chan, combining a recognizable cultural marker with variations designed to push bigoted rhetoric. Pepe the Frog serves three purposes on 4chan: a political purpose since conspiracy theorists can mold Pepe into a vessel for their message; a community purpose where 4chan users bond over their shared cultural icon; and a humorous purpose as users laugh at the images and reply to them, ensuring others will see the bigoted content.

Although politically incorrect "dark humor" can be a valuable coping mechanism for those consistently exposed to traumatic situations (Maxwell, 2003), 4chan users push past dark humor and engage in "ironic" shitposting, or creating offensive posts designed to provoke an intended response, to virtue signal their radical beliefs at the expense of minority groups. On 4chan, humor either exists as memes with existing undertones of bigotry accompanied by text insinuating violence or promoting hateful stereotypes (Askanius, 2021) or in a structure called a "greentext" where users share a story that culminates in an "mfw" (my face when) final line

directing users toward an image (Figure 2). Though they are often termed ironic on the site, a more accurate term would be "provocative" since users who post threats of violence push the boundaries of socially acceptable speech while creating deniability about the legitimacy of those threats.

Figure 2: Greentexts demonstrating provocative shitposting and racial stereotypes.
Note: Both images are variations of the "Pepe the Frog" meme shown in Figure 1.

4chan users seek to one-up each other with these provocative posts, becoming more and more reactionary and pushing boundaries further until, finally, a user foregoes subtlety in the name of direct calls to violence. These calls reverberate around the forum, gaining strength with each echo and linking the rhetoric of violence with a socially isolated user's positive conceptions about and loyalty to the platform's community. Alt-right thought leaders trying to avoid legal action argue that these posts should not be taken seriously and are designed to be provocative instead of a genuine threat of violence against minorities. However, online irony is "a linguistic trust fall" ([McCullough, 2019, para. 9](#)), so it can be nearly impossible to tell what threats are credible and which ones exist to prove a user's loyalty to the group. This doubt creates problems for law enforcement; when officers already face ethical quandaries about tracking down anonymous users for exercising their free speech, however heinous their speech may be, adding another dimension of uncertainty about the legitimacy of threats on 4chan makes it nearly impossible to predict and prevent terror attacks promoted on the platform.

When users view alt-right content that is not just provocative but explicitly inaccurate, they do not consider that their beliefs may be pure propaganda. Instead, users try to rationalize the inaccurate content while maintaining their alt-right perspectives. In one example of overt propaganda, user fN8hW21A posted a thread titled [(((THEM)))](#) with a picture of text falsely claiming that 78% of American enslavers were ethnically Jewish (Figure 3).

Figure 3: One user's post falsely claiming that 78% of American enslavers were ethnic Jews

fN8hW21A then posted a graphic video of a man's head exploding after being shot multiple times with the caption "A minor redpill for newf*gs." Other openly anti-Semitic users quickly pointed out the bogus statistics:

> ID XP9qXIAa: "I dislike jews as much as you do, but posting made up facts doesnt help our course. I tried to red pill some friends with this fact but I couldnt find anything to back it up. be better than this!"

> ID NnIJWsiF: "But the figures aren't accurate. I say this as a jew-hating Nazi. This is intentionally wrong so that it can be easily defeated. It is a strawman or [sic] sorts."

Yet the post appeared near the top of the catalog, circulating widely on the platform and exposing thousands (if not more) of other users to the false statistics. Additional comments included various racial slurs and negatively referenced America's relationship with Israel until the system archived the post about two hours later.

When presented with obviously false anti-Semitic propaganda, both users still identified themselves with the Nazi ideology of the post, and NnIJWsiF even assumed that left-wing operatives created the statistic to delegitimize the alt-right. Forums like /pol/ so deeply steep users in the neo-Nazi rhetoric of the platform that, rather than reckoning with the idea that their political ideology might be invalid, they either ignore the truth or propose an unlikely explanation to validate the user's worldview. This bogus 78% statistic has been a focal point of the alt-right's illogical anti-Semitism for years, meaning many 4chan users could have been radicalized by the same "facts" they now protest.

Some volatile users internalize these statistics and become so entrenched in their alt-right viewpoints that they respond violently and illogically against propagandistic conspiracy theories. Edgar Maddison Welch, the man responsible for the Pizzagate shooting, read about the conspiracy theory online and felt compelled to act. Believing he was exacting justice on members of the "deep state," an allegedly pedophilic union of Democratic politicians and social elites who ran a Satanic murder-sex ring in the basement of Washington, D.C. pizza shops (Haag & Salam, 2017), he fired an assault rifle inside a pizzeria. Without echo chambers like 4chan incessantly parroting the conspiracy theory, Welch would never have been incited to act. Other conspiracy theories, including adrenochrome, 5G, "Stop The Steal," and QAnon frequently appear on 4chan threads. 4chan, in particular, has a unique ability to promote conspiracy theories and disinformation— by foregoing moderation in the name of "free speech extremism," fake news strangles legitimate public discourse on the platform and incites users to act violently (Lamoreaux & Harrison, 2021).

4chan users have also lashed out against democracy in instances of political violence. In the most notable example, proponents of the "Stop the Steal" conspiracy theory stormed the U.S. Capitol building on January 6, 2021, resulting in the deaths of four crowd members and five Capitol police officers. Despite being backed by no evidence, the conspiracy proliferated widely on 4chan; most crowd members learned about the storming through social networking sites, and the idea of storming the capitol with fellow "Boogaloo boys," gun enthusiasts prepared for a second Civil War, had existed since at least 2019 on 4chan. These insurgents avoided law enforcement detection by branding themselves and their movement as "playful" (Tuters, 2021), similar to how 4chan users treat the site's provocative humor. On 4chan, the "Stop the Steal" conspiracy theory operated in conjunction with QAnon, one of the site's most widespread conspiracies that a cabal of Satanists has infiltrated world governments and controls media institutions, banks, and academia. According to the theory, Donald Trump works with Q to stop the Satanists. QAnon is such a powerful motivator toward violence that the Department of Homeland Security issued its first-ever terrorist bulletin focused on domestic extremism in the weeks after the Capitol riot (Department of Homeland Security, 2021). Despite being labeled a terror group, QAnon has already and will continue to command a strong foothold in American politics; 36 people, including several incumbents, are affiliated with QAnon and running for U.S. congressional seats (Zitser & Ankel, 2021).

At its most severe, 4chan and its sister forums have been responsible for some of the most horrific hate crimes in recent history. Through memes that promote "cyberfascism," or the virtualization of fascist thought, 4chan users express the notion that immediate violence and acts of terror against BIPOC groups are necessary and justified to secure white supremacist ideals (Thorleifsonn, 2021). Historically, 4chan is one of the least violent "chan-style" message boards; alternatives like 8chan, Endchan, and Neinchan all host even more prevalent calls to violence, and many mass murderers have uploaded their manifestos and calls to action on these sister sites (Baele et al., 2021). However, many of those sites have been relegated to the dark web; after Brenton Tarrant posted his 87-page Islamophobic manifesto to 8chan before killing 51 people and injuring 40 in the New Zealand Christchurch mosque shootings, the site was removed from the Surface Web (Barnes, 2019). Because of the platform's ability to encourage violence while being a structurally unfriendly place to post extensive manifestos, 4chan's /pol/

thrives on the Surface Web, opening the possibility of alt-right radicalization to anyone with Google and an Internet connection.

4chan also acts as a disinformation source that mass murderers like Elliot Rodger, Patrick Crusius, and Dylann Roof have used to justify their violence. In the case of the Charleston church massacre, Roof wrote in his manifesto that Googling the Trayvon Martin case began his descent down the alt-right pipeline (Robles, 2015; Siegel, 2017). 4chan was central to the online villainization of Trayvon Martin; user Klanklannon hacked Martin's social media accounts and posted screenshots presenting Martin through the anti-Black stereotypes of a drug dealer and a criminal (Tepperman, 2013). Without 4chan as an intermediary to peddle alt-right disinformation, it would have been more difficult for Roof and other mass murderers to find misleading or incorrect news supporting the neo-Nazi agenda. 4chan's power as an entry-level radicalizer is enormous; as a hate crime-encouraging agenda-setter for the alt-right, it has compelled radicalized individuals to commit national tragedy-level atrocities.

4chan's /pol/ employs anonymity and ephemerality, bigotry-loaded language and imagery, and racist "humor" to isolate users from social communities, brainwash them into irrationally supporting online alt-right propaganda, and, in severe cases, commit horrific acts of violence. Despite these tools, there is still hope for political scientists aiming to stop the spread of online radicalization and political terrorism. The key to stifling online radicalization is delegitimizing the conspiracies and proactively countering them in the real world. By working to dismantle the broader "systems of meaning" that underpin extremist narratives, anti-extremist researchers can potentially destroy the propagandistic links between racial minorities and society's failures (Ingram, 2016). Historic efforts to separately categorize the online and offline radicalization spheres are ineffective—only by assessing 4chan together with offline manifestations of the alt-right, instead of apart from those manifestations, can policymakers develop strategies to counter the proliferation of conspiracy theories, bigotry, and hate crimes caused by 4chan (Winter et al., 2021). Finally, all policymakers should take a proactive stance against conspiracy theories promoted on the platform. When political thought leaders like Donald Trump refer to QAnon as "people that love our country," the group becomes ingrained in public discourse. If policymakers took a proactive stance against the proliferation of conspiracy theories rather than meekly hoping they abate naturally or pandering to their voter base, alt-right-inspired violence and hatred would be more likely to subside (Bleakley, 2021). Though the immediate outlook appears bleak, concerted efforts to stifle 4chan's online radicalization will allow the global political landscape to progress.

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ENDANGERED BEHAVIORS

full-length albums, multi-chapter stories, recipes from scratch,
conversations in paragraphs,

strolls through the neighborhood,

a full pot of home-brewed coffee,

handwritten letters,

wishing the cashier a good day

having a hometown

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THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES:
Quality of Care Improvement

Nations all around the world share a common interest in improving the quality of medical care for their citizens. The quality of care improvement implemented in the United Kingdom and the United States has been the center of political, cultural, and economic debates over the past years. The two nations have similar approaches when improving the quality of medical care for their citizens; the differences lie in the execution of their methods. These differences assemble each nation's distinct healthcare structure, care delivery, and outcomes, which ultimately present learning opportunities for how the UK and U.S. can unify their methods to improve the quality of their healthcare systems.

Comparing the UK and U.S. healthcare systems requires an explicit definition of the quality of care improvement to assess the effectiveness of their reformation methods. Stephen Campbell's article *"Defining the Quality of Care"* in the Social Science & Medicine journal defines the quality of care for a population as "the ability to access effective care on an efficient and equitable basis for the optimization of health benefit/well-being for the whole population" (Campbell 1622). Nations across the world use the Donabedian framework, which surrounds itself with the principles of structure, process, and outcomes, to assess the means of care quality. These elements can be applied to evaluate the efficacy of reformation strategies the UK and U.S. healthcare systems have adopted to improve the quality of medical care.[1]

STRUCTURE

The structure of a healthcare system refers to the organizational factors of its network. These factors consist of physical characteristics – resources, management, organization of resources – and staff characteristics – skill diversity and teamwork. The quality of care improvement is structured around the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK. Implemented in 1948 after the Second World War, the NHS serves as a public institution that provides universal healthcare coverage, offers free care at the point of delivery, and makes the basis for care a medical need instead of an individual's ability to pay.[2] Similarly, the United States has accountable care organizations (ACOs). These organizations consist of a network of healthcare providers with contractual responsibilities to deliver care that meets quality targets for defined populations.[3] Since their enactment in 2012, ACOs have targeted care coordination by implementing management for high-need/high-cost patients, medication management, and prevention strategies for emergency visits and hospital readmissions. Both nations offer services and organizations that are designed for quality of care improvement to enhance the quality of

medical care. Examples include the UK's Care Quality and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service. However, the differences between the two nations' methods are seen in the process and outcomes of their strategies.

PROCESS

Donabedian's framework defines process as the way care is delivered in healthcare systems. Campbell identifies that process can be split into two domains: technical interventions and interpersonal interactions.[4] The application of interpersonal interactions is most dominant in the United Kingdom's NHS, while the United States healthcare system emphasizes care delivery quality through technical interventions.

The NHS is widely known for its emphasis on patient-centered care. The phrase "no decision about me without me" is commonly used to describe the UK's vision to hear and prioritize patient voices. The very constitution of the NHS is built on respect, dignity, and the equity of patient care.[5] It is also important to distinguish that in the United Kingdom, healthcare is seen as a responsibility of the government rather than the privileged distribution in the U.S. where healthcare is oftentimes mistaken as a consumer good and leaves lower socioeconomic communities and minorities with limited access to healthcare services. The Commonwealth Fund's "Mirror, Mirror 2017" report assessed healthcare internationally, and results revealed that the UK ranked first in overall healthcare performance.

	AUS	CAN	FRA	GER	NETH	NZ	NOR	SWE	SWIZ	UK	US
OVERALL RANKING	**2**	**9**	**10**	**8**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**6**	**6**	**1**	**11**
Care Process +	2	6	9	8	4	3	10	11	7	1	5
Access +	4	10	9	2	1	7	5	6	8	3	11
Administrative Efficiency +	1	6	11	6	9	2	4	5	8	3	10
Equity +	7	9	10	6	2	8	5	3	4	1	11
Health Care Outcomes +	1	9	5	8	6	7	3	2	4	10	11

Contrary to the UK, the United States was ranked the poorest performing healthcare system when compared to 10 other high-income countries as shown in Figure 1. While the U.S. strives for a patient-centered system, they fall short due to issues surrounding care disparity, equity, and accessibility as seen in the rankings of access and equity. However, the article "How Does the Quality of Care Compare In Five Countries?" reported that the survival rates of cancer patients in the United States were higher than in England.[7] This success could correspond with the preventive care implanted in the U.S. healthcare system through cancer screenings as the report also shows that the United States had higher breast and cervical cancer screening rates than England.

Outcome or process indicator	Standardized scores					Value of indicator for country with score of 100
	AUS	CAN	Engl	NZ	US	
Survival rates (outcome)						
Breast cancer	107	104	100	106	114	75[a] (H)
Cervical cancer	111	106	100	105	108	70[a] (H)
Colorectal cancer	116	113	100	123	108	53[a] (H)
Childhood leukemia, ages 0–15	100	118	109[b]	102	110	67[a] (H)
Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma	116	107	100	115	109	58[a] (H)
Kidney transplant	106	113	104	104	100	83[c] (H)
Liver transplant	110[d]	123	100	–[d]	102	71[c] (H)
AMI, ages 20–84	134	100	NA	121	NA	11[e] (L)
Ischemic stroke, ages 20–84	120	124	NA	100	NA	12[e] (L)
Avoidable events (outcome)						
Suicide, all ages	112	114	155	100	120	13[f] (L)
Suicide, ages 15–19	162	151	187	100	165	25[f] (L)
Suicide, ages 20–29	140	149	171	100	154	29[f] (L)
Asthma mortality, ages 5–39[g]	144	NA	122	100	130	0.7[f] (L)
Pertussis	100	135	196	NA	191	31[f] (L)
Measles	187	198	100	160	199	5[f] (L)
Hepatitis B	167	133	168	167	100	6[f] (L)
Smoking rate	111	115	100	106	115	27[h] (L)
Process indicators						
Breast cancer screening rate	117	116	106	100	111	63[h] (H)
Cervical cancer screening rate	119	115	100	116	140	67[h] (H)
Influenza vaccination rate, age 65+	125	114	115	100	112	59[h] (H)
Polio vaccination rate, age 2	113	106	116	100	110	82[h] (H)

SOURCE: Commonweath Fund International Working Group on Quality Indicators.

NOTES: Specifications, years, and technical notes for each indicator are in endnotes accompanying the descriptive text. 100 is the worst result; higher numbers indicate better results (in all but "Value of indicator" column). Whether higher or lower rates are considered more desirable, the standardized scores displayed across countries always show how much "better" one country is (in percentage terms) than the index case (that is, the "worst" country, which is automatically assigned a score of 100). The scores are derived as follows. For cases where higher rates are better (indicated with an H), the score is simply 100 times the ratio of the better country's rate to the index country's rate. For example, since breast cancer survival in the United States is 85.5 percent, its score is 100 x .855/.75 = 114. In cases where lower rates are better (indicated with an L), the score is determined by calculating the ratio of the better country's rate to the index country's rate, substracting that result from two, and, finally, multiplying that by 100. So, for example, the U.S. score for smoking is 100 x [2−(.23/.27)] = 115. AMI is acute myocardial infarction. NA is not available.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes of a system are the consequences of care. Outcomes regarding the UK and U.S. healthcare systems can be evaluated using a study published by the Commonwealth Fund regarding asthma mortality rates.
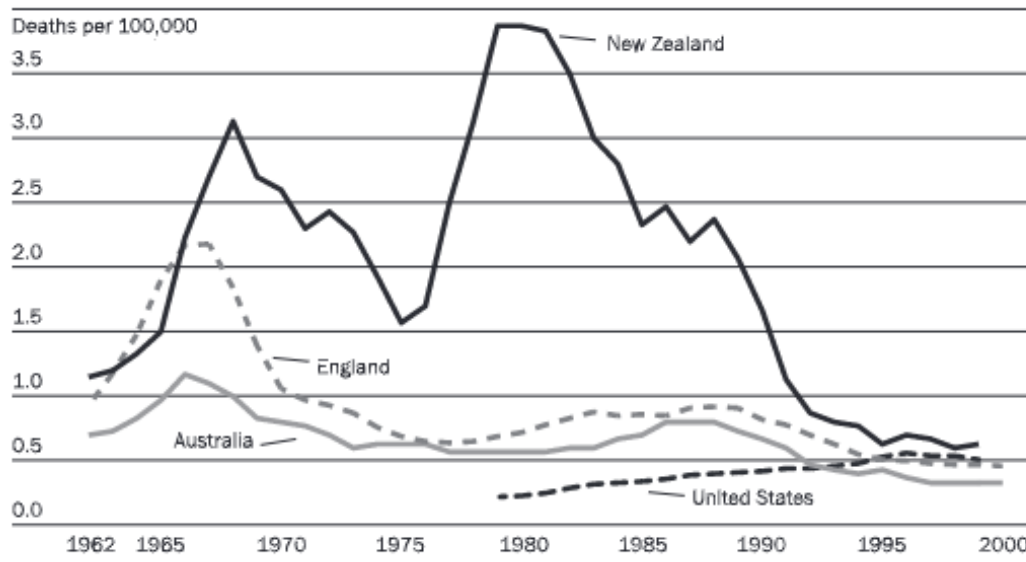
Death caused by asthma is seen as a preventable event if a patient's condition is managed effectively. Despite the spike in deaths between 1965 and 1970, England's rates declined over the years, reflecting that action was taken to improve the quality of asthma care. However, the U.S. started with the lowest rates in 1980 but escalated over the years, eventually surpassing the UK. This could reflect that the U.S. quality of asthma care had declined or that effective care to lower mortality rates caused by asthma was not being taken.

Despite their poor management of asthma care, figure 2 shows that the U.S. had a higher avoidable smoking rate when compared to the UK. While a healthcare system cannot control an individual's choice to smoke, it can provide preventative advice and treatment. The results of this study bring to light the idea that the United States executed extensive preventive measures to improve the quality of care in its healthcare system.

CONCLUSION

A healthcare system is an object of medical care improvement that is subject to variation. No two nations have the same approach to improving the quality of care for their citizens. However, this ambiguity that encompasses the concept of quality of care improvement allows countries worldwide to learn from one another. For example, in their differences, the humanity and accessibility of the United Kingdom's NHS and the preventive measures and innovation of cancer treatment present in the United States healthcare system can help both countries improve the quality of medical care.

Figure 2 shows that survival rates of cancer patients in England were the lowest along with breast and cervical cancer screening rates. Considering the United States' approach to cancer prevention, the UK could consider more intensive preventative health promotion and screening for their patients.[8] On the contrary, the U.S. ranked lowest in equity and accessibility in the 2017 "Mirror, Mirror" report. Extending the ACOs' responsibilities to all residents of a community, similarly to the UK's universal healthcare coverage, would create incentives for medical care

providers to work alongside local organizations.[9] This collaboration can lead to better accessibility and perhaps even improve public health.

The quality of care improvement is a main driver behind the constant reformation of healthcare systems around the world. Such innovations and reformation strategies have implemented certain strengths and weaknesses in the United Kingdom and the United States healthcare systems. Overall, the UK performs significantly better than the U.S. in health care delivery due to its humanistic and patient-centered approach to improving care. However, its system risks burning out if they continue to underuse helpful procedures. According to several reports, the United States system works below average and requires government intervention to ensure its citizens' social welfare. While they lack accessibility, socioeconomic equity, and desirable healthcare performance rankings, certain organizations in the U.S. system do show potential for quality of care improvement. For example, the 5 Million Lives Campaign and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) are organizations that prioritize care quality measures to improve the delivery of medical care. The 5 Million Lives Campaign strives to reduce mortality and morbidity (e.g. surgical complications or adverse drug events) rates. The IOM offers an analytic framework for care quality measures that includes six aims of healthcare – safe, effective, timely, patient-centered, efficient, and equitable health care.[10] Both nations require means of reformation in their current systems but have the resources and incentives to make proactive strides in improving the quality of care in the coming years.

Notes

1. Look at pages 1612-1614 (Campbell) for a figure that explains the aspects of the Donabedian's framework in more depth. There are also sections written for each category of the framework.
2. View the other National Health Service principles and the rest of the NHS constitution on "The NHS Constitution for England".
3. The Commonwealth Fund provides a full profile on the United States healthcare system with sections covering the quality of care and improvement.
4. Technical interventions are "the application of clinical medicine to a personal health problem" (Campbell 1613). Interpersonal interactions are "the interaction of health care professionals and users or their careers" (ibid).
5. The UK government provides public access to the NHS constitution, where more details about the principles and responsibilities of patients and staff can be found.
6. More information on performance variation, causes of poor performance, lessons, and performance ranking methods can be found in The Commonwealth Fund's "Mirror, Mirror 2017" report.
7. The article "How Does the Quality of Care Compare In Five Countries?" also provides further analysis on the comparison of five countries by using other studies. It was published by the *Health Affairs* journal and written by Peter S. Hussey, Gerard F. Anderson, Robin Osborn, Colin Feek, Vivienne McLaughlin, John Millar, and Arnold Epstein.
8. Reformative and more innovative approaches to improving the quality of care improvement in the United Kingdom healthcare system are available on the Commonwealth Fund international profiles.
9. The Commonwealth Fund "Mirror, Mirror" 2017 report also offers extensive lessons to improve the quality of care improvement in the U.S. healthcare system.
10. The Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality's "Organizing Quality Measures by Domains of Health Care Quality" article offers further explanations of the IOM's six domains of healthcare quality.

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THE EFFECT OF RACIAL PREJUDICE ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF U.S. WOMEN SUFFERING FROM CERVICAL CANCER

INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer is the 4th leading cause of death among women worldwide and the 14th most common cancer among women in the United States. With the advent of preventative treatments such as the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines and improvements in cervical cancer screening, the cervical cancer death rate has decreased significantly over the past few decades ("OBGYN"). Based on 2015 to 2019 data, the cervical cancer mortality rate in the U.S. was 2.2 per 100,000 women, less than half of the 5.6 per 100,000 rate in 1975 ("Cancer facts & figures 2019"). Unfortunately, BIPOC women have not fully benefited from these improvements. Within the same time frame, for every 100,000 white women in the U.S., 2.1 died of cervical cancer, whereas 2.5 Hispanic women died of cervical cancer for every 100,000 Hispanic women and 3.2 African American (AA) women died of cervical cancer for every 100,000 AA women ("Cancer of the cervix uteri - cancer stat facts"). Despite the overall reduction in cervical cancer mortality rates, racial disparities persist in cervical cancer stage diagnosis and survival outcomes largely as a result of racism in medical professionals, unequal access to doctors, BIPOC women's mistrust of the healthcare system, and inequities in the screening and treatment of BIPOC women. This is proven by the higher risk of death and lower utilization of preventive treatments among BIPOC women compared to whites ("OBGYN").

The rate of cervical cancer has been declining in the last few decades in the U.S., and yet racial inequities in quality cancer care are prevalent in the healthcare system, as proven by higher risks of death and worse disease-specific survival outcomes among BIPOC women. BIPOC women are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced stages of cervical cancer than white women. Thus, they are less likely to be presented with the recommended treatment for earlier stages of removing tumors and are instead recommended harmful treatments like chemotherapy as a last resort. In addition to the racial disparities in cervical cancer stage diagnosis, BIPOC women are less inclined to access preventive treatments like pap smears due to experiencing racial discrimination in their everyday lives and personal barriers to screening, as well as a lack of trust in the healthcare system bred by a long history of medical racism. The effects of advanced stage diagnosis and lower utilization of preventive treatments are exacerbated by geographical location, as BIPOC women in rural areas experience the highest incidence rates of later stages of cervical cancer. To address the systemic racism plaguing our

healthcare system, it's imperative that we increase BIPOC women's accessibility and opportunity for early screening procedures. Providing BIPOC women regular routine screening and resources for potential follow-ups or interventions will lead to better survival outcomes and increase their quality of life (Adedimeji et al.).

A HISTORY OF MISTRUST IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The extensive history of medical racism in the U.S is a significant contributor to BIPOC women's skepticism about the intentions and ethics of their healthcare providers. Recent and well-documented cases include the disregard of BIPOC men's livelihoods in the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, the unethical use and collection of Henrietta Lacks' cancer cells by researchers without the family's knowledge or consent, and forced sterilization policies that disproportionately targeted BIPOC women. Although these are only a few examples of the medical racism BIPOC patients have experienced, they represent particularly dark moments in the history of BIPOC reproductive health and have led to a deep mistrust among BIPOC women in the healthcare system ("America's Forgotten History of Forced Sterilization").

The story of Henrietta Lacks illustrates how the racial inequities plaguing the U.S research and healthcare systems adversely impact cancer outcomes for BIPOC women. On February 1, 1951, the young African American mother of five and tobacco farmer in southern Virginia visited the Johns Hopkins Hospital. She had been suffering from bloody vaginal discharge and a painful "knot" in her womb (Khan). During an examination, gynecologist Dr. Howard Jones discovered a large, malignant tumor on her cervix. After Dr. Jones diagnosed her with cervical cancer, Lacks continued going to the hospital to undergo radium treatment for her cancer. Without her knowledge, a surgeon took a sample of her tumor before applying radium to her cervix and sent them to cell biologist George Gey's nearby tissue laboratory for further examination (Miller). To Gey's surprise, the cells kept dividing indefinitely, which no cell line had ever done before. While other cells he sampled died within a few days at most in a laboratory environment, Lacks' cells doubled every 20 to 24 hours (Butanis). These cells, dubbed "HeLa" cells, became the first documented immortalized cell lines. Showing up in more than 110,000 scientific publications, HeLa cells would go on to become one of the most widely used human cell lines in biomedical research (Miller).

Although Lacks ultimately passed away on October 4, 1951, at the age of 31, her cells continue to impact the world (Butanis). HeLa cells have been used to further researchers' understanding of cancer biology and cancers including their cell growth, differentiation, and death. In 1985, scientists used HeLa cells to discover how the presence of the human papillomavirus (HPV), the most common sexually-transmitted infection in the world, can lead to certain types of cervical cancer. This research laid the groundwork for the HPV vaccine to be developed, which has been effective in reducing the incidence of cervical cancer. Researchers during this time also used the drug camptothecin to slow the growth of cancerous HeLa cells. This finding supported future research that later confirmed this drug limits uncontrollable growth in various types of cancer cells. With FDA approval, camptothecin was soon out on the market as a viable treatment for certain types of ovarian, lung, and cervical cancers (Starkman).

Despite the HeLa cells' impressive contribution to the advancements in medicine, the story of Henrietta Lacks illustrates medical racism and the racial inequities embedded in the American healthcare system. During the 1950s, The Johns Hopkins Hospital was one of the few hospitals in her area to treat AA patients. Lacks' family did not receive any compensation from any of the biotechnology or other companies that profited from her cells ("Henrietta Lacks: science must right a historical wrong"). Thermo Fisher Scientific knowingly mass-produced and sold the HeLa cells that the doctors at Johns Hopkins retrieved from Lacks without consent from her or her family (Kunzelman). Doctors and scientists continue to disrespect Lacks and her family even decades after her death by revealing Lacks' name publicly, giving her medical records to the media, and even publishing her cells' genome online without asking for the family's consent ("Henrietta Lacks: science must right a historical wrong").

The collection and use of HeLa cells in research is a prominent example of medical racism and the unethical practice of withholding information from a patient. Low-income AA men during the Tuskegee Study were also victims of this practice and became a symbol of mistreatment and neglect by the medical establishment. Conducted by the U.S Public Health Service and the Tuskegee Institute, the syphilis experiment in Alabama is one of the most infamous cases of medical racism and abuse in American history. Syphilis, a sexually transmitted infection, was incurable at the time and due to white supremacist thinking, it was also believed to have different effects on AA bodies than on white bodies. In 1932, 600 AA men in Macon County, Alabama – 399 who had syphilis and 201 who did not – were used to investigate the natural course of syphilis. Researchers told them they were being treated for having "bad blood," a local term to describe syphilis, anemia, and fatigue. Most of the men had never seen a doctor before and were encouraged to participate in the study by the promise of free transportation, medical exams, meals, and burial insurance. Although in 1947 penicillin became widely available as a treatment for syphilis, it was not offered to the participants of the study. They were not made aware that doctors were withholding better treatment options or that they were spreading syphilis to their sexual partners. The well-being and safety of these men were disregarded so that researchers could examine the long-term effects and evolution of the deadly disease on AA subjects. The horrors experienced by AA men and their families in Macon County reveal how white supremacy and racial injustices are embedded in our healthcare system with life and death consequences (Parenthood). To this day, minority communities' experiences and pain are too often dismissed or ignored by doctors and other health care providers. Along with the historical dehumanization of minority communities, medical racism contributes to significant disparities in health outcomes and minority groups' deep mistrust of the healthcare system (Prather et al.).

BIPOC women's fear of discriminatory treatment by doctors, a potentially significant contributing factor to the disparity in the number of Pap smears, can be attributed to historical and ongoing discrimination. Throughout the 20th century, nearly 70,000 people, consisting mainly of working-class women of color were forcibly sterilized in over 30 states. Latina women, AA women, and Native American women were specifically targeted. From the 1930s to the 1970s, roughly one-third of the women in Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, were coerced into sterilization when government officials claimed that reducing Puerto Rico's population would

benefit its economy. Sterilization became so commonplace that it became known as "The Operation" among Puerto Ricans.

Forced sterilization campaigns also disproportionately stripped AA women of their reproductive rights. In North Carolina, AA women from 1950 to 1966 were sterilized at more than three times the rate of white women and more than 12 times the rate of white men. With integration threatening to break down Jim Crow laws in the mid-1950s, white supremacists wanted to reassert control over the racial hierarchy by preventing AA reproduction and future AA lives via sterilization. The tripled rate of sterilization of AA women reflected the idea that they were not capable of being good parents and should be managed with reproductive constraints ("Forced Sterilization Policies in the US Targeted Minorities and Those with Disabilities – and Lasted into the 21st Century"). One AA woman who was subjected to a forced hysterectomy during this period was Fannie Lou Hamer, a renowned civil rights activist. Hamer recounted how involuntary sterilizations of working-class AA women deemed unfit to reproduce in the South were so common that they were colloquially known as a "Mississippi appendectomy."

Many Native American women were also sterilized against their will. According to a report by historian Jane Lawrence, the Indian Health Service was accused of sterilizing nearly 25% of Indigenous women during the 1960s and 1970s. The Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision to ensure reproductive rights for all American women did not seem to extend to Indigenous women, as thousands of them were forcibly sterilized. These racially motivated forced sterilization policies were dehumanizing, influenced by the white supremacist ideology that particular subsets of the population are less worthy of reproduction and family formation. It is racially influenced policies such as these that contribute to BIPOC women's lack of confidence in the healthcare system to provide them equal treatment for cervical cancer.

ROLE OF RACE IN RISK OF DEATH FOR CERVICAL CANCER

Race and ethnicity are leading risk factors for BIPOC women's worse survival outcomes compared to white women, as exemplified by their later cervical cancer diagnoses. A study analyzing a population consisting of 6,257 New York City (NYC) residents diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer between 1995 and 2006 conducted a logistic regression analysis of stages at diagnosis. Stages of cervical cancer were categorized into the following: localized (no sign of spread outside the cervix), regional (spread beyond the cervix to nearby lymph nodes), and distant (spread to nearby organs or distant parts of the body). Odds ratios (ORs) were used to estimate late-stage diagnosis, specifically women's odds of being diagnosed with regional or distant cancer compared to localized disease. This study found that AA and Puerto Rican women were less likely to be diagnosed at the localized stage, and more likely to be diagnosed with regional and distant disease than whites. After adjusting for confounding variables such as neighborhood, age, poverty, marital status, and diagnosis year, AA women (OR = 1.34) were found to be 34% more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage than white women (OR = 1.00). Puerto Rican women (OR = 1.55) were 55% more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage than whites. These odds ratios show that Puerto Ricans were more likely to be diagnosed with late-stage disease than whites. The risk of death by ethnicity and race was then estimated using

hazard ratios (HRs). After adjusting for neighborhood poverty, stage diagnosis, age, and marital status, the risk of death among AA women was 7% higher than among whites (HR = 1.07), while the risk of death among Puerto Ricans was 31% higher than among whites (HR = 1.31). This study's findings help support that BIPOC women's late stage of diagnosis is associated with their greater risk of death than whites (McCarthy, Anne Marie, et al.).

Significant racial disparities in cervical cancer survival over time continue to exist between AA and white women. The study used Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program data from 1985 to 2009 to evaluate differences in survival between AA and white women. Of the 23,368 women in the study sample, 16.6% were AA and 83.4% were white. The study found that AA women were less likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer at a localized stage. Between 1985 to 1989, 53.5% of white women were diagnosed during the localized stage, whereas only 38% of AA women were diagnosed during the localized stage. Although the racial disparities in the stage of diagnosis have narrowed throughout the years, the gap is still there. Between 2005 to 2009, 50.6% of white women were diagnosed at the localized stage whereas only 44.3% of AA women were diagnosed at the localized stage. The lower rates of localized stage diagnosis of cervical cancer among AA women compared to white women validates the finding that between the years 1985 to 2009, AA women did not receive as much cancer-directed surgery (32% AA versus 46% white), and instead received more radiotherapy (36.3% AA versus 26.4% white). Because there are lower rates of localized tumors among AA women, a lower proportion of them compared to white women have direct surgery that is able to effectively remove these tumors in earlier stages of diagnosis. Instead, AA women are recommended harmful treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy that target both healthy cells and cervical cancer cells that have spread to remote or unreachable areas in their body, which is a result of their later-stage diagnosis compared to their white counterparts. The later-stage diagnosis of cervical cancer among AA women correlates with their worse disease-specific survival outcomes. AA women are 1.41 times more likely to die, having a hazard ratio of 1.41 of cervical cancer mortality compared with whites ("Racial disparities in cervical cancer survival over time").

HOW RACE IMPACTS UTILIZATION OF PREVENTIVE TREATMENTS

Cervical cancer screening disparities are driven by inequities beyond the health system. BIPOC women encounter racial discrimination in their everyday lives, dissuading them from accessing preventative care for cervical cancer. One study, conducted by Dr. Charles P. Mouton, analyzes the impact of perceived racial discrimination on pap screening in AA women. The study was restricted to 47,228 AA women who completed a 1997 questionnaire. Researchers used these AA women's responses to examine the association of perceived discrimination with the lack of utilization of cervical screening methods in AA women such as pap smears. Pap smears are used to check for precancerous cells in the cervix. Respondents were asked how frequently they experienced the following five items of everyday discrimination: *poorer service in stores and restaurants than other people, people act as if you are not intelligent, people act as if they're afraid of you, people act as if you're dishonest, and people act as if they're better than you*. The questionnaire also asks about the respondents' experiences with the three categories of major discrimination: discrimination by housing, by police, and in the workplace. Possible responses when asked about the frequency of everyday racial discrimination for the five

different domains included: *Never*, *A few times a year*, *Once a month*, *Once a week*, *and Almost every day*. The analysis measures the strength of association between everyday or major discrimination and the lack of utilization of pap smears among AA women using odds ratios (ORs). When analyzing the relationship of everyday discrimination to the lack of utilization of Pap smears, the study found that the ORs were generally greater than 1.0 as the frequency increased in each domain. This demonstrates that as the exposure to everyday discrimination increases, the use of Pap smear screening decreases. When analyzing the relationship between major discrimination and Pap-smear non-use, the study found that the OR increased as the number of domains in which there was major discrimination increased. The ORs ranged from 1.01 to 1.10 for *yes* to one and *yes* to all three domains of racial discrimination, respectively, relative to *no* to all. This means that participants who faced more forms of major racial discrimination experience a barrier to cervical cancer screening. These findings support the claim that perceived discrimination is associated with poorer utilization of Pap smears among AA women. This study sheds light on how specific everyday and major forms of racial discrimination present a barrier to AA women for accessing preventative treatments for cervical cancer, as it influences this specific demographic's lower utilization of pap screening (Mouton et al.).

Despite the continuous decline in cervical cancer incidence and mortality in the U.S. due to the increased use of preventive measures like Pap tests, disparities in Pap test utilization exist due to personal barriers. A study examined predictors of these cervical cancer screening barriers among low-income uninsured women. The study provided 524 women from 17 different counties in Texas grant-funded cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services over a span of 33 months. 433 women participated and responded to surveys administered during the first clinic visit. The surveys assessed demographics – such as race and ethnicity – and barriers associated with receiving a Pap test – fear of getting cancer, lack of knowledge, language barriers, and male physicians. Using multivariate analyses for survey respondents who provided complete data (a sample of 396 women), the study explored socio-demographic factors of variation in barriers to cervical cancer screening. Compared to whites, Hispanics had increased odds of identifying fear of getting cancer (OR = 1.56), language barriers (OR = 4.72), and male physicians (OR= 2.16) as barriers. Hispanics (OR = 1.99) and AA women (OR=2.06) had roughly a two-fold increase in odds of perceiving the lack of knowledge as a barrier (Akinlotan, Marvellous, et al.). Data from the 2000 National Health Interview Survey, sampling 314 Hispanic women, revealed that Hispanics who were less proficient in the English language were two times less likely to obtain physician recommendations for Pap smears (De Alba, Sweningson). These results suggest that there is a strong correlation between personal barriers and poor screening compliance among BIPOC women. BIPOC women are less inclined overall to get screened because they believe the opportunity will present challenges. In their perspectives, it's not worth facing harassment, racial prejudice, or cultural stigma attached to pap smears just to potentially reap the benefits of early detection for cervical cancer (Akinlotan, Marvellous, et al.).

ROLE OF GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION VS. RACE ON CERVICAL CANCER STAGE DIAGNOSIS DISPARITIES

Although geographical location plays a role in the disparities in cervical cancer stage at diagnosis, these disparities are racially influenced. There are higher incidence rates of more advanced stages at diagnosis among urban BIPOC women than rural white women, according to a study published by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC). The study analyzed 59,432 incident cases of cancer reported from 2010 through 2014 through the CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries and the National Cancer Institute's Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program. The goal of the study was to investigate the correlation between cervical cancer stage at diagnosis and racial and geographical background. After comparing cervical cancer frequency and incidence for each stage by county-level rurality and race/ethnicity, it was found that rural counties had higher rates of localized, regional, and distant-stage cervical cancer than urban counties across all racial groups. However, even in rural counties, both Hispanic women and non-Hispanic AA women had a higher incidence of regional and distant stage cervical cancer compared with non-Hispanic white women. While non-Hispanic white women had an incidence rate of 3.9 and 1.5 for regional and distant stages, respectively, Hispanic women had incidence rates of 4.6 and 2.0, whereas non-Hispanic AA women had incidence rates of 6.2 and 2.5. The incidence rates among urban BIPOC women were still higher than incidence rates among rural non-Hispanic white women for regional and distant stages of cervical cancer – even with the potential advantage of increased accessibility to quality care and opportunities for screening associated with living in an urban area, BIPOC women still experience poorer cervical cancer outcomes than rural non-Hispanic white women. In addition, no significant difference was found in localized, regional, or distant stage disease between rural and urban Hispanic women. Because the higher rates for the more advanced stages of cervical cancer among urban and rural BIPOC women were found to be comparable in the study, rurality is less of a factor than race in the disparities in late-stage diagnosis ("Rural–Urban and racial/ethnic disparities in invasive cervical cancer incidence in the United States, 2010–2014").

CONCLUSION

Despite medical advancements that have led to an uptake in cervical cancer screening and improvements in mortality rates, there are racial and ethnic disparities that have yet to be addressed. BIPOC women continue to experience worse overall survival outcomes and higher risks of death. Their later stage diagnosis and lower utilization of cervical cancer screening and preventive measures as compared to white patients are symptoms of the chronic disease of racism plaguing the U.S. healthcare system. This pattern today is a result of the long history of medical racism that stripped people of color's reproductive rights. Prominent examples include the forced sterilizations of BIPOC women throughout the 20th century and the withholding of available treatments to men with syphilis in the 1932 Tuskegee Study. To eliminate the racial disparity in cervical cancer screening and care, we must increase access to adequate cervical screening and preventative care for BIPOC women. New cervical cancer screening guidelines from major health organizations like the American Cancer Society must account for a diverse screening population and a wide range of socioeconomic barriers. OBGYNs and other healthcare providers must continue advocating for all cervical cancer screening options for patients of different races and ethnic backgrounds. Increasing cervical cancer screening options will ensure that women with different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds receive adequate protection against the preventable disease (Mathews).

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Key's youth, traveling the world with their military father, drives them to understand the diverse cultural and circumstantial backgrounds of individuals to find solutions that work for everyone.

THE MORAL INTERFACE OF MINOR BODILY AUTONOMY AND PARENTAL DUTY

In modern-day medicine, the concept of minor bodily autonomy is an extremely controversial debate that struggles to reconcile the needs and personhood of a child with the concerns of parents, guardians, and professional adults. This conflict arises mainly due to doubt surrounding a minor's ability to make informed choices because of the perceived short-sightedness of youth, lack of cognitive development and lack of life experience.

In an attempt to bring some order to this debate, I argue that neither the child's bodily autonomy nor the guardian's autonomy and decision-making responsibility are absolute. While a child's bodily autonomy is limited, their moral right to bodily integrity is second only to their right to life (or their moral right to stay alive), which is a guardian's primary responsibility to uphold. I shall explore the interaction of these moral rights and responsibilities in the following cases: When is it a minor's choice? When can a parent give consent? And when can a parent overrule all other opinions on a procedure including that of the medical professional?

The unresolved social and political tension between parental duty and a minor's individual autonomy can cause alarming and undue stress and trauma to those affected. Questions of bodily autonomy have huge ramifications in almost every medical debate: abortion, gender-affirming surgeries, medical "deformity/disability" intervention, cosmetic procedures, and conflicts between religion and life-saving medical interventions are just a few of these. However, there is a glaring lack of productive discussion about situations involving minors. In many cases it is taken for granted that the guardian of a child—and thus the decision maker—makes choices that are "right" and beneficial for their charge and are not biased or skewed by false information. Creating a thorough framework of ethics and policy for both physicians and society to reference and adhere to when facing these emotionally charged scenarios and possibly life-altering decisions involving children is key to increasing right decisions.

For the clarity of both my argument and this paper several terms must first be defined in their usage throughout. Any reference to rights, responsibilities, and duties are in regard to their moral not legal contexts. I also establish the definition of "autonomy" to be the capacity to make informed and meaningful decisions and act on them with intentionality, understanding and freedom from controlling forces. Bodily autonomy follows the previous definition. Bodily integrity can be defined as a moral right of protection and preservation of a child's body which will grant them the greatest possible range of choices once the point of bodily autonomy is reached.

To evaluate the ethical dilemma that is minor bodily autonomy, I will be considering three philosophies:

> **The mature minor doctrine**: a slightly modified legal term which concedes control over bodily autonomy from a child's guardian to the affected minor. This only applies to minors displaying high levels of maturity before the age of majority in extenuating medical circumstances.

> **The best-interest conception**: "an intervention in [a] child's body infringes on [their moral] right to bodily integrity [when] the intervention substantially deviates from what is in the child's best interests" (Mazor 454).

> **The encroachment conception**: "An intervention in the body of a child constitutes an infringement of [their moral] right to bodily integrity [when] it constitutes a physically serious bodily encroachment. Physically serious being any substantial alteration, irreversibility, damage to healthy tissue or loss of bodily function" (Mazor 453).

The scope of this paper does not include scenarios in which the right to life of one minor is weighed against the right to bodily integrity of another. The age range of consideration is from post-natal to the age of majority—at which point the mature minor doctrine may be assumed to be automatically applicable—thus all decisions made by parents or guardians before the individual's birth fall outside the scope of this paper and will not be discussed.

Unlike Mazor, I believe the encroachment conception to be the most consistent and relevant approach to analyzing cases of a child's bodily integrity and consider his circular application of the best-interest theory to rely on forced logic. I maintain that any procedure undertaken to improve social acceptance, normality or cohesion can only be considered a cosmetic procedure and cannot be justified under best interest or as a medical necessity. My application and definition of the mature minor doctrine comes from a combined understanding of the arguments and frameworks laid out in the law reviews of Rosato and Benston.[1]

WHEN IS IT A MINOR'S CHOICE?

We have all seen the most common and seemingly innocuous case of a child's possible bodily integrity violation in everyday life. In fact, many of us have undergone it or enabled it without

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[1] The mature minor doctrine was originally a policy used in American courts that allows minors to make all medical decisions for themselves if they can prove a certain level of maturity and understanding of their situation to the judges. However, the policy has very little precedent and, as Benston asserts, "is only consistent in its inconsistency." I have adopted this policy into my framework in acknowledgement of the intangible difference in maturity of those hugging either side of the border of adulthood and breadth of variation in maturity rates between individuals. This idea is shared by both Benston and Rosato in their examinations of the legal policy; both call for revision and a firmer precedent to be established to protect the autonomy of older teens as we would younger adults. I recommend their law reviews for a more in-depth review of the doctrine, its precedent and the legal side of the mature minor bodily autonomy debate.

grasping its implications. That case concerns ear piercings for baby girls. While the scenario may seem small and forgivable, how one approaches it sets a tone for what decisions children get to make about their presentation and the decisions adults make concerning their children's bodies.

In all cases of cosmetic or non-urgent procedures—procedures performed with the primary intention of changing the appearance rather than the function of a physical attribute—the protection of a child's right to bodily integrity takes absolute precedent. These procedures should be postponed until the individual has the autonomy to consent. To explain this, I will start with the piercing example and proceed to more dire cases.

The minors involved in the piercing scenario are—being babies—in the pre-autonomous stage of their life, so it seems like a decision parents should be able to make. Lobe piercings are a low-risk procedure. There is a chance of infection, but in today's medically advanced world that is of little concern. However, a close look at the interaction of bodily integrity and bodily autonomy reveals why this procedure's moral implications are problematic. As defined before, the idea of bodily integrity exists to protect an individual's eventual bodily autonomy. A piercing damages healthy tissue and leaves behind scar tissue if removed. Because the piercing is not a necessity, it takes away a later autonomous choice and the encroachment is unjustifiable. With this in mind, let us apply this to a more complex issue.

A child is born with a cleft lip that is minor enough not to impair the functionality of the child's mouth. The recovery and success of the cosmetic procedure to rectify the cleave costs significantly more as the child ages, but once done reduces flexibility in the surrounding area of the face and is irreversible. Mazor argues that this circumstance is an obvious case of permissibility as society does not look kindly on cleft lips, therefore, the child will be better off without one. However, I strongly disagree with this position. Until autonomy is reached, societal pressures and norms should *never* be considered a valid argument for surgery and cannot be assumed in the individual's best interest. The minor could grow up to embrace and value their unique feature and disregard what society may or may not say about it at that point. Societal norms change constantly and today's reality sports an increasing trend of bodily acceptance. According to the encroachment conception, there is also no justification as the procedure is a substantial alteration of the child's facial features, irreversible, damages healthy tissue and limits the functionality of the tissue surrounding the mouth which is important for speech and expression.

The final scenario concerns intersex bodies and normalization surgeries. Intersex bodies manifest in a wide variety of unique physical characteristics where a child is born with ambiguous sex indicators. This could mean a contradiction between chromosomes and physicality, an extra chromosome, or ambiguous genitalia. Regardless of the specifics of the condition, the current common practice is for the doctor to recommend an assigned sex for the baby to the guardians and perform a normalization surgery. Normalization surgeries are a subclass of cosmetic procedures, preformed on intersex children, which are particularly invasive and whose only aim is to make a baby's genitalia conform to the societal expectation of their assigned sex.

Medically necessary treatments are those deemed necessary by a medical professional for continuing or establishing a baseline of healthy bodily function to prevent or slow deterioration and death. There are aspects of the procedures performed on intersex babies that fall within this definition. Urinary tracts are often obstructed, entrances may be sealed, and there is an increased risk of gonad malignancy. However, in most cases procedures go beyond medical necessity and into the realm of cosmetic. These procedures have a high likelihood of complication due to the relatively low rate of intersex babies and resultant lack of trial and research groups. On top of this, assigned sex has a 25% failure rate in intersex children regardless of which sex physicians recommend (Manson). This means that an astounding number of intersex individuals are assigned and surgically conformed to the incorrect sex. Once these procedures are undergone, they are almost always irreversible. The sex chosen for the child will affect the way they are raised, perceive themselves and experience pleasure and reproduction in their adulthood—a decision that should only be made by the individual. The lack of early indicators for an accurate assignment of sex makes this a highly risky decision for a high stakes' situation. The consequences of well-intentioned choices made on the behalf of the child are life altering and both best-interest and encroachment conceptions agree that normalization surgeries are impermissible. According to best-interest theory, it goes against the best interest of the minor to perform painful and highly invasive surgeries with high risk and little reward. In the encroachment conception, because there is no risk to life outweighing all four physically serious encroachments, the child's bodily autonomy is being infringed and the procedures are thus impermissible until the minor reaches a level of development where they can voice their opinions and preferences with the support of their guardian or gain autonomy past the age of majority.

Though the previous cases involved babies or small children, the moral logic continues to be applicable all the way through adolescence. Additionally, bodily integrity works as a moral protection from the guardian consenting to cosmetic procedures *against* the child's wishes but does *not* grant moral grounds for a child to undergo cosmetic procedures without the guardians' consent.

Now that we have established a minor's eventual autonomy or a guardian's lack of absolute authority over cosmetic procedures, let us consider how these factors interact in situations of medical necessity.

WHEN CAN A PARENT SAY YES?

Best-Interest and encroachment conceptions both hold that cases of medical necessity automatically overrule a child's right to bodily integrity, even if the right can be considered infringed because the child's right to life always takes precedence over the child's right to bodily Integrity. In light of and because of this, in cases of medical necessity, a guardian or physician's duty/responsibility to A) keep the child alive, and B) provide the child the best chance for life overrules a child's bodily integrity. In this situation, it is difficult to argue that the child would rather suffer chronic complications, pain and/or death rather than lose a choice once full autonomy is reached or granted through the mature minor doctrine.

Guardians have not only the freedom to, but moral responsibility to approve medically necessary procedures for the previously mentioned intersex complications such as gonad malignancy and sealed urinary tracts and openings. However, though relatively straightforward in cases where the minor is young, and fully reliant on the guardian's autonomy for medical decisions regarding medical necessity, a special case is found in life-or-death scenarios where the application of bodily integrity and bodily autonomy for minors approaching majority lies outside the previous point and hinges on a case-by-case basis of the mature minor doctrine until reaching the age of majority.

As a minor nears the age of majority bodily integrity begins to give way fully to bodily autonomy. Individuals mature at different rates. When given a fatal prognosis, however, that timeline shortens dramatically. It's in these situations, the mature minor doctrine carries the most weight. If a minor falls under the umbrella of the mature minor doctrine, then it becomes a serious breach of their personhood and autonomy to take extreme medical decisions away from them. Best-Interest and encroachment conceptions no longer apply in these cases of established maturity. The minors in question have almost identical capacities to weigh the consequences of their decisions now, as they will once they reach their majority. In a situation where everything is on a collision course, taking away the little control the minor has over their own life or death—in the form of approving or refusing treatment—can have dehumanizing and long-term psychological consequences.

Ben, a minor, had been receiving treatment for kidney failure for years (Rosato). He had undergone multiple painful and arduous failed kidney transplants already and had been informed that his latest was also failing. Ben decided he did not want to undergo another treatment, which had a high likelihood of failure and would only extend his pain and suffering. He was fully aware that not receiving treatment would lead to death. It was determined through his decision-making process that he demonstrated all prerequisites for autonomy and a threshold of maturity to fall under the mature minor doctrine. Would it be ethical at this point for doctors or parents to force treatment on the patient? Ben decided autonomously that he would rather enjoy a shorter life   relatively free of pain than live in constant recovery from continuous surgeries. Because of the severity of his medical issues, the surgeries could not be postponed until Ben reached the age of majority to make a decision. A more hedonic approach would say he is justified in his decision because forcing Ben through treatment causes him harm and greatly restricts his ability to attain enjoyability or pleasure from his life. Thus, forced treatment is a moral wrong.

Parents' duty to keep their child alive and provide them the best outcome allows them to have the absolute moral ability to approve medically necessary procedures, except for in the special case where the mature minor doctrine applies in a life-or-death scenario as the minor approaches their majority.

WHEN CAN A PARENT SAY NO?

It has been established that guardians have a moral responsibility to approve medically necessary treatments. In situations where the parent or guardian wishes to deny this treatment—whether on the basis of religion, risk or on behalf of their child's wishes—there are

several new factors that need to be examined. The most important factor is the establishment of the guardians' own autonomy.

In circumstances where a guardian wishes to refuse recommended medically necessary treatments on behalf of their child, they must first fulfill three prerequisites that prove their autonomy, and they cannot be in direct conflict with wishes protected under the mature minor doctrine (if applicable). The prerequisites for autonomy are intentionality, understanding and freedom from controlling forces. Once these conditions are met, the parent is eligible to assume the surrogate autonomy of their child.

This situation often arises in the context of chemotherapy treatments for leukemia. The process is torturous but statistically lifesaving. Cases like this that lack information or involve misinformation must be resolved between the minor's parent and the physician recommending treatment. However, if the guardians refuse to take the steps to fill the prerequisites to make an autonomous decision, they are no longer eligible for stewardship of their child's bodily autonomy. In many cases this responsibility falls to the hospital, or child protective services.

FINAL FRAMEWORK

My intended purpose for my research was to establish a framework for the consideration of a minor's bodily autonomy within medical scenarios, clarifying the influence of ethics in who gets the final say in these situations. The framework I believe to have the fewest moral ambiguities and that best reconciles the needs and personhood of a child and the concerns of adult parties is as follows:

> **In all cases of cosmetic or non-urgent procedures**, the protection of a child's moral right to bodily integrity takes precedent.

> **In cases of medical necessity**, a guardian or physician's duty/responsibility to A) keep the child alive, and B) provides the child the best chance for life overrules a child's bodily integrity and autonomy.

> **In life-or-death scenarios**, the application of bodily integrity or bodily autonomy for minors approaching majority lies outside the previous point and hinges on a case-by-case basis of the mature minor doctrine until majority where it is automatically assumed.

> **In circumstances where a guardian wishes to refuse recommended treatments on behalf of their child**, they must first fulfill the prerequisites for their own autonomy and must not be in direct conflict with wishes protected under the mature minor doctrine (if applicable), before being eligible to assume the surrogate autonomy of their child.

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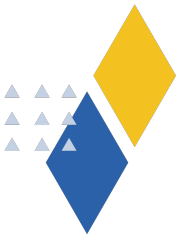
Marissa Carty

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SUNDAY BY THE LAKE

overcast
with an autumn brick-and-vine nostalgia

fog like watercolor blurs the pine peaks
to layered values of evergreen

cool nights must have speckled
an otherwise juniper bush
scarlet in some places

gritty goldenrod turns to bright
amber chalk in my fingers

invisible mist offends me
poking my forehead relentlessly
I try to forgive it

I try to observe and document
it's for an assignment, I tell myself
I can't help but hear
thoughts of intellectual garbage
thread through my cortex
piercing themselves in the gray matter
stitching every gyrus and sulcus
with knotted, waxy trails of hatch marks

elitist, academic, restless Boston
don't get me wrong, I adore you
but I needed a break and your badgering
followed me here anyway

I miss the days when we collected acorns
in five-gallon buckets
before the tires could crush them
into terracotta crumbs

when I could listen, uninterrupted
to the hoot of mourning doves

Maximilian Dittgen

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Max is a NYC native studying bioengineering and public health. He loves hip-hop and activism, catching concerts by artists like J. Cole, Saba, Denzel Curry, and JPEGMafia this past summer.

AFRICA'S HIP HOP PARLIAMENTS:
Hip Hop Music as a Medium of Political Participation in African Urban Youth

Hours before Uganda's January 2021 presidential election, armored tanks, trucks, and soldiers rolled through the night to occupy the streets and voting booths of Kampala.[1] These units were ordered by incumbent president Yoweri Museveni, who has faced accusations of voter fraud during every national election since he first rose to power in 1986.[2] Days before the election, Museveni had cut Ugandans' access to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, preventing millions of young citizens from accessing political campaigns and Election Day information.[3] Months before the election, Museveni closed Uganda's voter registration portal, preventing a million young first-time voters from casting a ballot. Not coincidentally, Museveni aimed all three of these voter suppression techniques at Uganda's youth, who make up over two-thirds of the country's population.[4] These young Ugandans' champion was Bobi Wine, a popular opposition candidate who launched a campaign to topple Museveni's violent militaristic rule during the years preceding the 2021 election. As a final measure to rig the election in his favor, Museveni arrested Bobi Wine at a protest outside Kampala a month before Election Day.[5]

Unlike Museveni's previous opponents, Bobi Wine did not start his career in politics or the military. Rather, Wine accrued social clout among Uganda's youth through influential afrobeats and dancehall ballads he wrote as a rapper and producer in the 1990s.[6] Wine's songs became increasingly political during the 21st century, with lyrics starting to criticize everyday life under

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[1] "Uganda Military Leaves Barracks, Massively Deploys on Streets," *Taarifa* (Kigali, Rwanda), January 13, 2021, accessed April 24, 2022, https://taarifa.rw/.

[2] Bill Chappell, "Uganda Election: President Yoweri Museveni Declared Winner as Bobi Wine Alleges Fraud," *NPR* (Washington, DC), January 16, 2021, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.npr.org/.

[3] Abdi Latif Dahir, "Uganda Blocks Facebook Ahead of Contentious Election," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), January 13, 2021, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/.

[4] The CIA World Factbook, "Uganda," CIA, last modified April 19, 2022, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.cia.gov/.

[5] Rodney Muhumuza, "Uganda's Bobi Wine Arrested While Protesting in the Capital," *Associated Press* (New York, NY), March 15, 2021, accessed April 24, 2022, https://apnews.com/.

[6] Jolly Rop, "The Rise of Bobi Wine: How a Rapper from the Slums Is Igniting a Revolution in Uganda," *Harvard International Review* 42, no. 1 (Winter 2021), ProQuest Social Science Journals (2581554697).

Museveni's repressive dictatorship. The politicization of Wine's music follows the two major demographic shifts currently occurring throughout Uganda and Africa. First, Africa is getting younger––70% of the continent's citizens are already under 30 years old. Second, Africa is rapidly urbanizing––the World Economic Forum projects Africa's population to double by 2050, with 80% of the population growth occurring in cities.[7] Through rap, Wine could communicate with Uganda's young, urbanizing population in a way previous politicians could not. Prior to the 2021 election, Uganda's youth exhibited extreme political disengagement for three reasons. First, young people feel that they cannot dictate the outcomes of elections, having lived under Museveni's rule for their entire lives. Second, youth do not feel represented in Uganda's government, citing the lack of young leaders and new ideologies in parliament. Third, Uganda's youth feels disconnected from their leadership, lacking channels of political communication and engagement.[8] Bobi Wine overcomes all three of these barriers to political engagement by providing empowerment, representation, and communication to Uganda's youth. Although Bobi Wine lost the corruption and suppression-fraught 2021 presidential election, his successful use of hip hop music to attract and educate young voters suggests that hip hop can revive youth engagement in East African politics. This article will first identify the traits of the hip hop music genre that allows it to transmit political messages to young people, then use Kenya's Hip Hop Parliament youth initiative and Senegalese rapper Didier Awadi's discography as case studies of hip hop's role in the future of African political identity. Museveni is just one of many African strongman rulers who have maintained their power since the decolonization era. Together, these geriatric leaders have induced a democratic decline that has left more Africans living under Authoritarianism than ever before.[9] Thus, hip hop music's rising popularity amongst East-African urban youth makes it a powerful medium to spread a critical political consciousness to a new generation of resilient postcolonial activists.

Bobi Wine leverages hip hop's fundamental "street consciousness" in the same way that the genre's American forefathers did. Igor Johannsen defines hip hop's street consciousness as a "firm rooting in local, social, political, and cultural spheres of a community."[10] Hip hop music's grounding in the authentic realities of a certain community allows it to disseminate the community's unspoken issues and needs––thus, hip hop is an incredibly historicizing cultural art form.[11] In the same way that Grammy Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning rapper Kendrick Lamar uses his album *good kid, m.A.A.d city* to deliver a social, cultural, and personal

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[7] Robert Muggah and Katie Hill, "African Cities Will Double in Population by 2050. Here Are 4 Ways to Make Sure They Thrive," World Economic Forum, last modified June 27, 2018, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.weforum.org/.

[8] Paige Bollen, "Why Ugandan Youth Don't Vote," *MIT GOV/LAB* (Cambridge, MA), March 2016, accessed April 24, 2022, https://mitgovlab.org/.

[9] John Campbell and Nolan Quinn, "What's Happening to Democracy in Africa?," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 26, 2021, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.cfr.org/.

[10] Igor Johannsen, "Configurations of Space and Identity in Hip Hop: Performing 'Global South,'" in "If I Ruled the World: Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas," special issue, *Journal of Hip Hop Studies* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2019): 186, https://doi.org/10.34718/tbfs-v626.

[11] J. Griffith Rollefson, *Flip the Script: European Hip Hop and the Politics of Postcoloniality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 2.

ethnography of his Compton, California home, Global South musicians like Bobi Wine use hip hop to communicate the violence, displacement, and marginality specific to their own communities.[12] J. Griffith Rollefson argues that hip hop "demands a place at the table by sounding histories and experiences that do not bear hear-ing among polite company across the political spectrum." In Kendrick Lamar's case, *good kid, m.A.A.d city*'s Grammy nomination forced the American public to understand the ways Compton's black youth battled racialized gang violence and police brutality.[13] Similarly, Ugandan broadcasters played Bobi Wine's album *Kyarenga* (meaning "It is too much/It is unbearable") on national television and government-owned radio, confronting their youth audiences with Wine's critiques of Uganda's socio-economic conditions.[14] In both the United States and Uganda, hip hop allows marginalized communities to broadcast previously internalized struggles and histories to broader audiences.

Beyond providing a platform to broadcast messages to broader audiences, hip hop is a powerful political medium because it fosters communication within marginalized communities. The term "communication" suggests two-way dialogue. Not only can leaders like Wine use rap music to convey information to the youth, but young people can use hip hop to communicate their sentiments back to leaders. After Museveni's regime arrested Bobi Wine in 2018, Ugandan recording artist Pallaso released the single, "Free Bobi Wine," which quickly became the namesake for anti-Museveni protests in Uganda, Canada, Britain, and the Netherlands.[15] The "Free Bobi Wine" hip hop activist movement that initially sprouted in Uganda following Bobi Wine's arrest soon inspired copycat youth activist movements in neighboring countries. The same Week Bobi Wine was detained in Kampala, "#FreeBobiWine" was trending on Kenyan and Rwandan Twitter posts fighting for the release of Diane Rwigara, who was arrested for being an outspoken critic of Paul Kagame.[16] Following the Free Bobi Wine movement, hip hop quickly became the second most popular music genre in Africa, after gospel.[17] Hip hop's rising popularity as a medium of political conversation and activism in Africa gives it the power to influence the continent's future political identity.

As mentioned earlier in this article, hip hop's growing African popularity coincides with a massive demographic shift: Africa is urbanizing and getting younger. Amaka Anku and Tochi

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[12] James B. Haile, III, "Good kid, m.A.A.d city : Kendrick Lamar's Autoethnographic Method," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 32, no. 3 (2018): 488, https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.bu.edu/article/704677/pdf; Johannsen, "Configurations of Space," 189.

[13] Haile, "Good kid," 494.

[14] Julian Friesinger, "Patronage, Repression, and Co-Optation: Bobi Wine and the Political Economy of Activist Musicians in Uganda," *Africa Spectrum* 56, no. 2 (June 28, 2021): 136, https://doi.org/10.1177/00020397211025986.

[15] "Free Bobi Wine," on *Pallaso - Singles*, performed by Pallaso, Team Good Music, 2018, MP3; *Free Bobi Wine Protests Held in Canada, Britain and Netherlands*, produced by NTV Uganda, aired August 23, 2018, on NTV Uganda, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lA3WD1Wcgmg.

[16] Chad Kitundu, "#FreeBobbyWine: Kenyans Now Turn Guns on Strongman Kagame," *Nairobi News* (Nairobi, Kenya), August 24, 2019, accessed April 24, 2022, https://nairobinews.nation.africa/.

[17] Frankline Kibuacha, "Africa's Musical: A Survey Report on Music in Africa," GeoPoll, last modified October 9, 2019, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.geopoll.com/.

Eni-Kalu project that by 2040, the majority of Africans will be under 25 years old and living in cities. Anku and Eni-Kalu argue that this demographic shift is not unsustainable––however, it will require aging government officials to invest in better social services like sanitation, transportation, and education.[18] Kenya's "Hip Hop Parliament" youth initiative epitomizes the future of grassroots activism in a younger and urbanizing Africa. The Hip Hop Parliament is an open initiative that provides young MCs and artists a platform to rap about political issues. The movement was founded in the aftermath of Kenya's 2007-2008 Post-Election Crisis in which ethnic conflict killed 1,000 Kenyans and displaced 350,000 more.[19] While local Kenyan radio stations spurred ethnic violence by broadcasting polarizing hate narratives, the Hip Hop Parliament broadcasted rap performances promoting "peace, unity, and collaboration."[20] According to the initiative's declaration, the Hip Hop Parliament is a "collective conscious movement" that aims to "campaign through our dope skills in MCing, be a forum for artists to perform and recount what they witness, [and be] the one stop shop for information regarding the youth in grass root levels."[21] When the Hip Hop Parliament gives young lyricists the opportunity to perform for UN representatives during visits to Kenya, it turns rap music into a way for marginalized urban youth to express grievances, challenge political structures, and fight for change.[22] As a symbol of unity, the Hip Hop Parliament writes songs in "Sheng," a linguistic melting pot of English, Swahili, and tribal slang that makes it impossible to determine the ethnic and cultural background of a speaker.[23] Angel, a radio MC and member of the Hip Hop Parliament, explains, "When you speak in English I can tell where you come from, what education you have. The same in Swahili. In Sheng there's no way to tell if you're from the slum, or where you are from."[24] The informal nature of Sheng not only makes it an ideal language for making rhymes and freestyles, but it also smooths over the ethnic divides responsible for much of Kenya's violent history. By fighting for political change through music––"the one and only language we are fluent in"––the Hip Hop Parliament creates a unified youth coalition resistant to the tribalism of Kenya's previous generation.[25] Frantz Fanon theorizes that a community that "has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language [...]

[18] Amaka Anku and Tochi Eni-Kalu, "Africa's Slums Aren't Harbingers of Anarchy—They're Engines of Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, December 16, 2019, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/.

[19] Jennifer Cooke, "Background on the Post-Election Crisis in Kenya," Center for Strategic & International Studies, last modified August 6, 2009, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.csis.org/; Charity Marsh and Sheila Petty, "Globalization, Identity, and Youth Resistance: Kenya's Hip Hop Parliament," *MUSICultures* 38, no. 1 (2011): 133, https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/MC/article/view/20206.

[20] Marsh and Petty, "Globalization, Identity," 134.

[21] Ghetto Radio, "Declaration on the Position of the Youth during the Post Election Violence in Kenya" (conference session at Hip Hop Parliament Declaration, Nairobi, Kenya, February 2, 2008), 1.

[22] Marsh and Petty, "Globalization, Identity," 133.

[23] Marsh and Petty, "Globalization, Identity," 139.

[24] Daniel Howden, "Kenya's Hip Hop Parliament: Where the MCs Challenge MPs," *The Independent* (London, UK), February 18, 2009, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.independent.co.uk/.

[25] Ghetto Radio, "Declaration on the Position," 2.

Mastery of language affords remarkable power."[26] By creating a shared language in Sheng, the African hip hop community claims possession of the neglected urban spaces they share and wields power over the young metropolises that they rap about.

Seeing that hip hop has the power to unify youth despite ethnic divisions, Pan-African activists hope to use hip hop to develop a shared critical consciousness among African youth. As an ideology, the Pan-Africanism movement seeks to "unify and uplift" African people by acknowledging their shared experiences of imperialism, oppression, racism, and violence following the Atlantic slave trade.[27] In the past, ethnicity has been a major barrier in forming Pan-African unity. Crystal Holmes explains, "If groups of people are to be motivated to unite across national, ethnic, religious, and geographic lines, they must possess some common characteristic interest which can be viewed as outweighing all of these distinctions."[28] The shared stories expressed through African hip hop have the potential to be the common characteristic interests that outweigh national and ethnic lines. Thus, influential Pan-African rappers, such as Senegal's Didier Awadi, use their music to tell the stories of Malcolm X, Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah, and Nelson Mandela––shared historical revolutionaries that all Africans can relate to.[29] Dominant narratives of history paper over many shared Pan-African resistance stories––thus, rappers like Awadi use their lyrics to share previously erased stories of Africans who resisted colonialism.[30] In his song, "Oser Inventer L'Avenir (Honoring Thomas Sankara)," Awadi samples a celebrated speech from Marxist revolutionary and Burkina Faso president Thomas Sankara at the United Nations General Assembly (translated from French):

> We chose to risk new paths to be happier. We chose to apply new techniques. We chose to look for forms or organization: Better suited to our civilization, Refusing to accept a state of survival, easing the pressures, liberating our countryside from medieval stagnation or even regression, democratizing our society, opening minds to a world of collective responsibility in order to dare to invent the future. [31]

[26] Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, "Hip-Hop and the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form," *Daedalus* 140, no. 2 (April 2011): 192, https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00086; Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London, UK: Pluto Press, 1986), 18, originally published as *Peau noire, masques blancs* (n.p.: Editions de Seuil, 1952).

[27] Joanna D. Da Sylva, "Reclaiming Our Subjugated Truths—Using Hip Hop as a Form of Decolonizing Public Pedagogy: The Case of Didier Awadi," in "If I Ruled the World: Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas," special issue, *Journal of Hip Hop Studies* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2019): 126, https://doi.org/10.34718/jy7v-7s64.

[28] Crystal Holmes, *An Assessment of the Plausibility of Pan-Africanism from Various Perspectives*, African Diaspora Independent Study Projects (Brattleboro, VT: School for International Training, 2002), 18.

[29] Da Sylva, "Reclaiming Our Subjugated," 133.

[30] Bagele Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2012), 146; Da Sylva, "Reclaiming Our Subjugated," 135.

[31] "Oser Inventer L'Avenir," on *Présidents d'Afrique*, by Didier Awadi, Mr Bongo Records, 2010, https://music.apple.com/us/album/présidents-dafrique/683814760.

In a later interview, Awadi stated that he wrote "Oser Inventer L'Avenir," "with the objective to educate" Senegalese youth who never learned African history in school.[32] Awadi seamlessly layers Sankara's speech into the plucked synths and chopped high hats of "Oser Inventer L'Avenir," giving the illusion that Sankara is rapping alongside Awadi in the studio. Thus, Sankara's speech is featured on the track not as a historical artifact but as a history lesson to Senegalese youth about West Africa's revolutionary leaders. Later on the track, Awadi writes his own verse:

> My Africa, it's not just huts / She is far from the images we can see in your stupid, outdated movies / My Africa is at ease in this millennium, Here we speak web, we speak net, and we speak about cell phones / My Africa has age-old foundations / But the future will be revolutionary / It's not that I'm idealizing / I am a missionary, son of Sankara, I have the eyes of a visionary / My Africa, it's not war, it's not famine / My mines are full of gold, diamonds and uranium. [33]

Awadi's verse exhibits Africa's changing demographics as something to be proud of. Awadi sees urbanization as a product of technological progress ("My Africa, it's not just huts […] Here we speak web"), and Africa's growing youth as a sign of a prosperous future ("far from the images we can see in your stupid, outdated movies […] the future will be revolutionary"). Furthermore, Awadi repeats the term "My Africa" throughout his verse, claiming ownership over the technological progress Africa has made since escaping European colonialism. He specifically cultivates a Pan-African consciousness by rapping about "Africa" instead of his native Senegal. When African youth sing along with Awadi's catchy, popular lyrics, they too claim ownership over Africa's revolutionary history. Thus, Awadi's songs are the musical corollary to a classroom read aloud, in which he guides his young listeners to unify themselves under a Pan-African consciousness. African hip hop combats the Eurocentrentric epistemological perspectives taught in classrooms by exposing youth to stories removed from history books.[34] Beyond fostering political engagement, Awadi demonstrates how hip hop music can also foster critical engagement.

   Although American hip hop culture gave birth to East African rap music, African hip hop's spiking popularity should not be viewed as a form of hegemonic Western cultural imposition. Rather, East African hip hop actively reshapes American hip hop culture to reflect local stories of colonial domination and postcolonial revolutions.[35] In 1947, Fernando Ortiz invented the term "transculturation" to describe an idea's "process of transition from one culture to another,

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[32] Da Sylva, "Reclaiming Our Subjugated," 138.

[33] "Oser Inventer."

[34] Ramón Grosfoguel, "Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political-Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality," *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1, no. 1 (May 13, 2011): 6, https://doi.org/10.5070/T411000004.

[35] Mwenda Ntarangwi, "Hip-hop, Westernisation and Gender in East Africa," in *Songs and Politics in Eastern Africa*, ed. Kimani Njogu and Herve Maupeu (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2007), 274.

and its manifold social repercussions."[36] To negate the power biases of studying cultural exchanges between states and their colonies, Ortiz defined "transculturation" in opposition to "acculturation" to emphasize the element that is being exchanged rather than the power or "civility" imbalance between the exchanging cultures.[37] Music scholars intentionally use the term transculturation, rather than acculturation, to describe the exchange of musical elements between cultures––Margaret Kartomi explains that "invoicing" the parent culture of a musical element rather than analyzing the receiving culture's usage of that musical element, "would be missing the point of the whole process that brought this music into being."[38] Kartomi argues that the first stage of musical transculturation mirrors linguistic syncretism, in which the receiving culture mimics the language and ideas of the parent culture.[39] For example, early African hip hop culture mimicked American hip hop culture's narrative of accumulating excess wealth. In the same way Kanye West and Jay-Z rap about their flashy jewelry and expensive cars, Ugandan rappers like Atlas da African also flex designer clothing and rare liquors in their songs.[40] However, in the second stage of musical transculturation, Kartomi argues that the receiving culture selectively adopts certain traits from the parent culture while rejecting the traits learned to be incompatible with the recipient culture's traditional preferences.[41] For example, although African hip hop adopts narratives of capital accumulation from American hip hop, it rejects American hip hop's financial individualism. In the United States, rappers show off their money to flex their individual success in climbing the capitalist social ladder. In contrast, images of excess wealth in African hip hop showcase a community's success in overcoming colonial structures. Following Kenya's independence in 1963, president Jomo Kenyatta envisioned that Africa's postcolonial future would be built on a foundation of strong capitalist ethics and free-market policies.[42] Initially, Kenya's militaristic one-party system made it hard for anybody but the government to accumulate capital. Once Kenya democratized in the 1990s, however, young Kenyans could finally purchase televisions, name-brand clothing, and pop-culture posters.[43] Thus, when Atlas da African flaunts, "Champagne flowing like water go ahead and order / Dressed in Versace these haters can't stop me / Already blew 1000 a day what can you say," he is celebrating the economic progress Uganda has made since its independence that

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[36] Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet De Onis (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 98, originally published 1940 as *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*.

[37] Margaret J. Kartomi, "The Processes and Results of Musical Culture Contact: A Discussion of Terminology and Concepts," *Ethnomusicology* 25, no. 2 (May 1981): 233, accessed April 24, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/851273.

[38] Kartomi, "The Processes," 233.

[39] Kartomi, "The Processes," 242.

[40] Simran Singh, "The Ugandan Hip-hop Image: The Uses of Activism and Excess in Fragile Sites," *Popular Music* 39, nos. 3-4 (December 2020):, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143020000446.

[41] Kartomi, "The Processes," 244.

[42] Ntarangwi, "Hip-hop, Westernisation," 275.

[43] Ntarangwi, "Hip-hop, Westernisation," 278.

enabled him to accumulate such wealth.[44] Because African rappers can selectively choose which aspects of hip hop to adopt from America, they avoid the imposing nature of cultural colonialism. According to Kartomi, the two-stage process of musical transculturation creates "a new, independent genre that is accepted in its own right by the relevant group of people as being representative of their own musical identity."[45] Thus, East African hip hop is not an example of hegemonic cultural imposition but an independent art form that can tell local stories and advocate for change.

　　Because African hip hop has developed into an independent genre from American hip hop, it has the power to criticize the capitalist and exploitative foundations of American hip hop. When rapping about accumulating wealth, a core narrative in American hip hop, Ugandan rappers Gasuza and Babaluku acknowledge that Western capital accumulation is what keeps Africa poor:

> This is our home, got gold, diamonds, got coffee, got tea, got rubber / Our iron makes steel so why are we broke / Cus' robbers been taking it free / Time to start taxin' them / And chargin' them a fee. [46]

To Gasuza and Babaluku, Western wealth can only exist in parasitic opposition to African wealth. The capitalist ideals that underlie American hip hop have fueled the colonial exploitation of Africa––thus, African rappers opt to repurpose and appropriate Western hip hop culture rather than adopt it one-to-one.[47] Because African rappers have the agency to select the parts of Western hip hop to adopt and to criticize, African hip hop is unlikely to fall prey to foreign capital or ideologies. This resilience to co-option and an ability to criticize deep-rooted colonial ideologies make hip hop an especially powerful activist tool.

　　Hip hop music's deep-rooted ties to the social, political, and cultural spheres of a community make it an ideal medium for marginalized groups to voice their needs and concerns both to each other and to broader audiences. After developing in young American urban enclaves in the 1970s, hip hop culture reached East Africa through the process of "musical transculturation," in which artists selectively synthesized cultural influences from American hip hop with existing African political and cultural movements (like Pan-Africanism) to create a new medium of activist communication. Similar to how Kendrick Lamar uses hip hop to raise youth awareness against racialized violence in Compton, California, African artists like The Hip Hop Parliament and Didier Awadi use transcultural forms of hip hop to raise youth awareness against violent political and neocolonial structures in African urban centers. This article's analysis of rapper Bobi Wine's political campaign in Uganda and The Hip Hop Parliament's response to Kenya's 2008 post-election crisis emphasizes the urban youth's power over Africa's

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[44] Ntarangwi, "Hip-hop, Westernisation," 278; Atlas da African, *Ahh Ahh Ahh (feat. Chameleone)*, DEG, 2014, https://music.apple.com/ca/album/ahh-ahh-ahh-feat-chameleone-single/832640082.

[45] Kartomi, "The Processes," 245.

[46] Gasuza, *INSURGENCY (feat. Mugabe and Babaluku)*, 2013, https://soundcloud.com/gasuza/insurgency-gasuza-feat-mugabe.

[47] Singh, "The Ugandan".

future political identity. As authoritarian strongman leaders like Yoweri Museveni and Paul Kagame get older, hip hop offers a "shared language" for young political activists to organize resistance and change.

Website Remediation

The Pan-African Hip Hop Project is a multimedia website containing historical, musical, and graphic material created to accompany this article. The website can be accessed on computer or tablet at https://mdittgen.editorx.io/pan-african-hip-hop, or scan the QR code to view.

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BUYING HAPPINESS:

Consumerism and Women's Self-Help Literature

Few literary critics hold self-help literature to be a particularly impactful or artistically valuable genre. Most frequently seen at airport bookstores, self-help books are a pervasive element of American culture that run the gambit from cliche to inspiring to manipulative. Wendy Simonds considers self-help literature to be "a distinctly American phenomenon, which has grown out of seventeenth-century Puritan notions about self-improvement, Christian goodness, and otherworldly rewards" (Simonds 4). While initially targeted toward men, as much of self-help literature was economic in nature, this distinctly American literary form has a feminine side which emerged during the latter half of the twentieth century. Self-help literature for women is usually written by, written for, and marketed toward white, middle to upper-middle-class women. Through an examination of one representative self-help book each from the mid-twentieth century, late twentieth century, and early twenty-first century respectively, one can track the development of these women's roles in American economic life. Though the content of women's self-help literature has evolved alongside women's conceptions of self-identity and femininity, the underlying message remains that a woman's primary role in a capitalistic society is that of the consumer who must purchase to prevail.

Self-help as an independent genre did not emerge in its present form until the 1950s, though economic advice books now categorized as self-help were in circulation long before the advent of modern self-help literature. As success became increasingly equated with wealth and leisure following World War II, the culture of "industry and effort" based in Protestant values gradually gave way to rising consumerism and a new culture of "leisure and ease" (Effing 125). Economic prosperity enabled children to remain enrolled in school for longer periods of time rather than dropping out to provide financial support for their families, and the median years of education rose from 8.6 years in 1940 to 12 years by 1960 ("National Assessment of Adult Literacy"). As literacy rates rose, new and distinct genres emerged to satisfy the appetites of the growing readership. Self-help appeared as a distinct category in *New York Times* articles listing the 'books of the week' starting in the mid-1950s ("Other Books of the Week"). Though such lists categorize many self-help books—both in the 1950s and today—as "unisex", self-help literature written for (though not always by) women should be taken as an altogether distinct genre, one born out of the prosperity of the 1950s but transformed by the entry of women into the workforce.

SELFLESS: HOUSEWIVES AND THE POSTWAR BOOM

The rise of the self-help book as a popular genre in the late 1950s was possible in part due to the introduction of affordable mass-market paperbacks in the 1930s (Simonds 98). Often printed on low-quality paper, these books were designed for large print runs with the expectation that not all copies would sell. While hard-cover books were costly to print and limited in supply, booksellers could easily dispose of those mass-market paperbacks that did not sell, tearing off covers and burning excess copies. Much like the popular magazines of the era, books became disposable commodities, making them more affordable to produce and quicker to move off the shelves. Publishing could be a matter of popular outreach rather than limiting itself solely to artistic production. The decision-making, marketing, and advertising of these new paperback books reflected rising consumerism and the desire for a larger quantity of goods, especially those which provided entertainment and fostered a culture of leisure (ibid 8).

While lifestyle magazines and television programs dominated when it came to dictating trends and values to the typical suburban housewife of the 1950s, self-improvement books steadily grew in popularity. These books do not fit into the modern conception of spiritual or personality-based self-help literature, but publishers marketed guides to homemaking and beauty as solutions to dissatisfaction and insecurity. One such book published in the early 1960s, entitled *Happy Living!: A Guidebook for Brides*, included recipes and charts detailing differences in interior decoration styles, but it also included assertions about what adherence to such standards said about the reader as a person and as a wife. A woman should learn to cook not only to provide food for herself and her family but because "a gracious hostess can be the greatest asset a man has, not only in his personal life but in his business career" (Enright and Seranne 233). Media of the time cast the middle-class husband as the producer and the wife as the consumer. *Happy Living!* reflects this divide between the rational, masculine producer and the feminine, emotional consumer, remarking that "it *is* a man's prerogative to show disdain for shopping, even though he may secretly enjoy it" (Enright and Seranne 143, emphasis original). Self-improvement books marketed toward women at this time advertised tableware, furniture, makeup, and more, all with the implicit message that the woman's role in society was to display her husband's wealth by consuming products meant to beautify herself and her home.

A staged photograph of an "ideal kitchen" in Happy Living!: A Guidebook for Brides.

Most critics would hardly classify such beauty and home-making guides as self-help literature. Typical definitions of the self-help book, including that of sociologist Micki McGee, focus solely on behavioral, spiritual, or economic improvement**.** According to this definition, a book that focuses on maintaining the physical appearance of oneself and one's home would not be considered an example of self-help literature. McGee excludes books on physical appearance from her examination of the self-help genre, though she also limits her study to those books published after 1973, by which time alternate self-help books for women had become available. Notwithstanding McGee's categorization, home-focused manuals of the 1950s can be interpreted as the true precursors to modern women's self-help literature, as they do indeed focus on the improvement of the feminine self according to period definitions of its role.

The woman's job was not to embark on a spiritual quest of self-discovery or become "self-made" but to enable the self-discovery of those men around her. The idea of the "self-made man" is "patriarchal in its assumptions of how individuals come into being and self-congratulatory in its tone" (McGee 16). Masculine and allegedly "unisex" self-help books conceive of the self-made person as wholly independent and self-reliant, while ignoring the impact of women in the upbringing and continued care of men. Indeed, the very idea of self-mastery is dependent upon the mastery of subordinates such as women and enslaved persons to support the "self-made" man's quest for improvement through their uncredited labor (ibid 7). Women were not allowed time to invent themselves for "these women [were] engaged in the work of inventing and nurturing others," and they were unable to rely on other women's feminine labor which made possible the Renaissance man (ibid 7). Far from being "self-made", the midcentury corporate conformist "relied to a great extent on his domestic partner," and his reliance contributed to what McGee refers to as the "ghettoization" of educated, middle-class women (ibid 37). By proving a gallant hostess and apt homemaker, an educated wife contributed to the economic advancement of her husband, which also fueled her own consumption.

SELF-RELIANT: WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

The entry of women into the workforce radically transformed the women's self-help genre into the personality-focused font of inspiration and advice recognizable in bookstores today. The idea that women could pursue their own economic advancement at an individual level outside of the home, rather than simply supporting their husbands' advancement through domestic duties, began to take hold in the early 1960s (ibid 39). The entry of middle-class women into the workforce in the 1970s increased the percentage of women employed by over eight percent in just ten years (ibid 81). Some publishers and retailers categorize Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*—one of the seminal texts of the second-wave feminist movement which inspired this rapid shift away from the domestic—as a feminist self-help book. In inspiring women to reexamine their roles within the home and their emotional and intellectual needs, *The Feminine Mystique* "paved the way for the burgeoning genre of self-help geared for women" (Simonds 82). The resulting transfer from the home to the workplace disoriented some middle-class women accustomed to a life of domesticity, and there were few role models to show what it meant to be a woman in a professional workplace. Simonds proposes that in a corporate world dominated by men, women desperately longed for professional and economic advice that took

their gender into account; that advice appeared in the form of a wave of women's self-help books (ibid 113).

This new wave of women's self-help books was part of a larger self-help craze that struck the nation in the last quarter of the twentieth century as rapid social change paired with economic anxiety. The consolidation of the publishing industry made the control and promotion of trends possible on a larger scale than ever before. Records show that "between 1960 and 1989, about 578 mergers and acquisitions occurred in the U.S. book industry," reducing the number of independent publishers and promoting homogeneity as a means of corporate survival. The invention of the commercial microprocessor in the 1970s transformed the typing, formatting, and design process, making the production of print books faster and cheaper. There were more books available than ever before, and publishers had to offer innovations attractive to consumers to propel continued sales. As the role of digital media grew, publishers began to offer books on CDs, perfect for a woman on the go ("History of Books"). To own a book on CD indicated a sort of technological savvy and economic success that many women entering the workforce believed to correlate to their personal happiness, as material success continued to stand for overall satisfaction in self-help literature.

The narrators of women's self-help books during this period capitalized on the feeling of solidarity that came with working as one of a few women in male-dominated spaces, where women bonded over facing sexism and balancing their families with their professional lives. These narrators "*invite* readers to listen; they pepper their writing with questions, admonitions, assignments, and advice" (Simonds 126, emphasis original). With such titles as *Having It All* and *Go For It!*, the self-help books of the late twentieth century advocated for a transformation of womanhood. Therefore, the successful woman must reject the aesthetic and emotional supporting role she occupied during the period of post-World War II economic expansion and become masculine, individualistic, and capitalistic. The new self, the white, middle-class "modern woman" of the late twentieth century, was primarily concerned with economic and individual success. While women had heretofore been subservient to the husband in pursuit of the increased economic success of the family as a whole, self-help literature now called upon the working woman to abandon any familial or romantic connections that may undermine her economic success.

Self-help author Robin Norwood outlines the consequences of continued and unreasonable attachment to the husband and the familial unit that refuses to allow for independent work in her 1985 book *Women Who Love Too Much,* remarking that "whatever the apparent cause of death, I want to reiterate that loving too much can kill you" (Norwood 218). "Codependency" became a self-help buzzword synonymous with oppression and antiquated definitions of feminine identity. Rather than depending on men to support their consumption, Norwood encouraged women to "learn to give to [themselves].... making a commitment to buy yourself something every day can be a real lesson in self-love. The gifts can be inexpensive, but frankly the less practical and more frivolous, the better" (ibid 185).
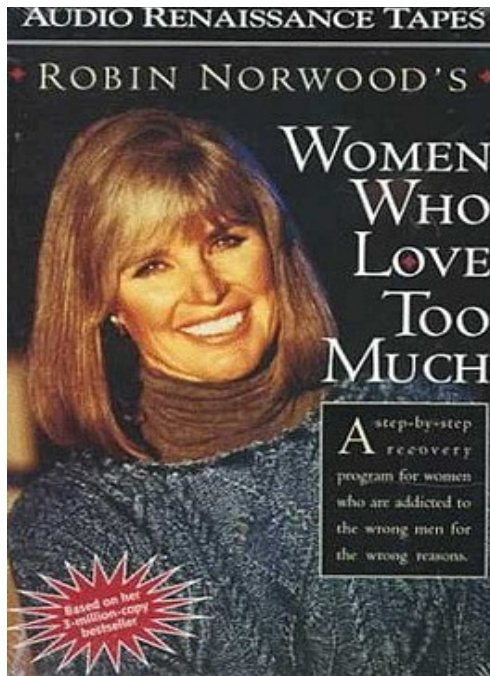
An audio tape cover for Robin Norwood's best-selling book, Women Who Love Too Much.

Self-help literature did not limit this rejection of "codependency" to the marital relationship. Rather, this rejection of dependence on the husband for protection manifested itself not only in economic interactions but in images of the ideal female body. The fitness craze of the 1980s promoted "the image of the toned, muscular (and masculinized) body" over the feminine body of past decades, as America associated the masculine appearance and personality with vigor and economic independence (McGee 86). The winning woman of the late twentieth century was powerful in her rejection of femininity and her capitalistic approach to social interaction (ibid 82). All social interactions, from the familial to the platonic, became business transactions measured by the accumulation of social debt. To become a "successful" woman and avoid such debt, one had to isolate herself entirely from the support of others and "[avoid] the costly and time-consuming demands of childrearing" by outsourcing the labor of child-rearing to domestic workers (ibid 87). Success was still a matter of consumption, but women in the late twentieth century were now producers as well as consumers.

SELF-CARE: "TREATING YOURSELF" IN THE 2010S

By the 2010s, women in the United States had been fully integrated into the workforce, and self-help books' new focus became reclaiming one's femininity and emotions while under stress in the corporate world. The "girlboss" of the 2010s (the term made popular by Sophia Amoruso's self-help book/memoir, #GIRLBOSS) had to balance family life with work, and this balancing act led to the emergence of a new movement: self-care. Though the term "self-care" has political origins dating back to the 1950s and activist Audre Lorde, "self-care" in its current, commercial sense entered the literary scene in the 2010s. While largely an online phenomenon, with over eighteen million posts tagged on Instagram as of August 2019, self-care also impacted both the content and aesthetic of printed self-help books. The new marketing aesthetic for self-help

books drew from self-care, whose "wellness branding is often minimalist, sans-serif and streamlined" (Carraway).

The authors of self-help books no longer presented the books to publishers; instead, they took the initiative "to market themselves along with—or even before—their submissions were made" (Simonds 111). In an age where the internet allowed for the rapid dissemination of information and the formation of a captive audience, authors needed to accumulate a fanbase to convince publishing houses that a book was worthy of a print run. The quickest and most popular way of securing this potential consumer market was cultivating a social media presence that both intrigued readers and inspired envy within them. Selling self-help books meant selling a lifestyle, an intimate look into the life of the author and how exactly she maintains such a perfect life.

Authors created this sense of intimacy through direct appeals to the reader; lifestyle guru Rachel Hollis opens her book *Girl, Wash Your Face* with an introduction entitled "Hey Girl, Hey!" and promises to draw back the curtain to "talk about it all: struggles in my marriage, postpartum depression, and feeling jealous" (Hollis xiii). The self-help book had become a confessional, and all those women who read those books became sisters, let in on the secret. While the self-help of yesteryear "involved a top-down, rules-based wellness orthodoxy," self-care targeted "women on a heroine's journey with their bodies and feelings" (Carraway). The woman of the 2010s was a "goddess" or a "queen" intent on discovering herself while simultaneously imitating the lifestyles of other women due to her sense of intimate attachment to authors and lifestyle gurus.
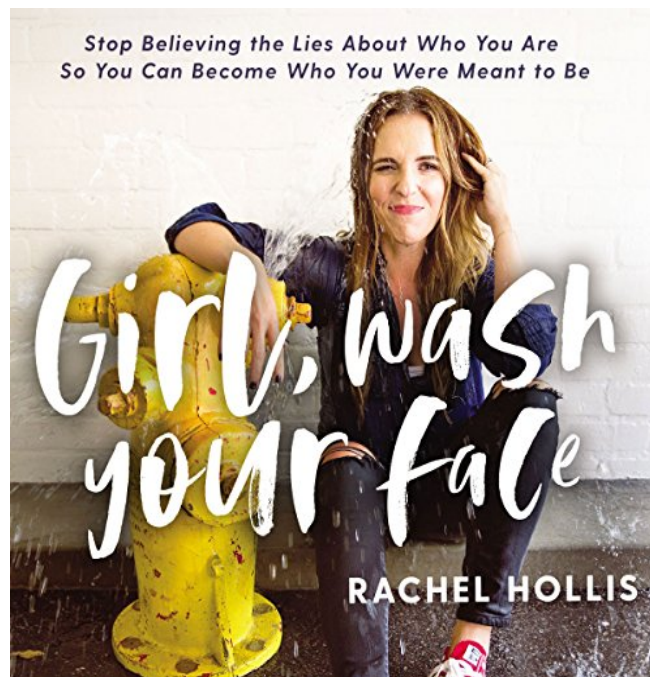
The cover of Girl, Wash Your Face shows a disheveled Hollis looking directly at the reader.

In the age of social media, women's approaches to self-identity veered toward the aesthetic, conceiving of the self as a work of art to be curated and improved, but "this aesthetic self

[operated] according to the principles of the marketplace" (McGee 20). The images of the self that women authors promoted in their books, as well as through blogs and social media posts, were intentionally marketable. Despite assertions that "the self of established, self-improving, self-help seeks to conquer" and "the self of the newer, kinder, weirder self-care seeks nourishment," women were still involved in the act of conquest—the focus had simply shifted from the workplace to their own bodies and habits (Carraway). In *Girl, Wash Your Face,* author Rachel Hollis tells readers: "You should be the very first of your priorities!" (31). The self-care popularized by authors and influencers was a form of empowerment, but it was an expensive one. Self-care meant buying new clothes, going to the spa, and dedicating time to yoga routines or wellness retreats. In one anecdote about setting goals, Hollis recounts her obsession with buying a thousand-dollar Louis Vuitton bag, which she later purchases after receiving her first consulting check (138). Hollis' bag is a measure of her success and happiness because the purchase is Hollis' way of treating herself, and owning a luxury item reflects the kind of woman she wants to become. While the self-help authors and lifestyle gurus of the 2010s rejected preoccupation with economic stressors that dominated the self-help literature of the 1970s and 1980s, they also promoted and consumed products at an unprecedented level. As McGee puts it, "while money doesn't matter, consumerism is central" (102). Once women entered and mastered the workplace, they turned toward an even greater level of consumption to demonstrate their self-love and mitigate the stress of balancing work and family.

If the self-help literature of today is to be believed, all a woman needs to succeed is hard work, a blasé attitude, and possibly a juice cleanse. This analysis of the relationships between self-help literature, the feminine self, and consumer culture is limited by the demographic focus of the self-help literature discussed. The only women who read self-help books are those who can afford to do so, whether that means having disposable incomes to buy copies or free time to read for pleasure, rather than focusing on work or familial obligations. While no demographic data exists tracking the race and socioeconomic status of individual consumers of self-help books, the economic demands of such purchases demonstrate that the audience for women's self-help literature remains middle-class women.

Nearly twenty-one million women were living in poverty according to the 2020 census, and the percentage of Black and Hispanic women living in poverty was seven to ten percent higher than that of white and Asian women (U.S. Census Bureau). While women living in poverty have limited or no access to self-help books, the success of the genre points to larger relationships between self-worth and consumerism. Self-help authors often emphasize the value of hard work and taking time to relax while ignoring the difficulty of social advancement or relaxation for lower-class women and women of color. As self-help literature naturally promotes consumerism, those women who cannot afford the products promoted as necessary to self-improvement or self-care are left out. The risk of being left out of such a culture of self-improvement is that "changing economic circumstances… have created a context in which one of the only reliable insurances against economic insecurity seems to be self-improvement" (Effing 135)*.

Even that literature which seemingly focuses on the personal over the economic portrays self-improvement as the path to social advancement, rather than the result of leisure time

available to those who already occupy stable economic positions. If the self is a product to be improved through the achievement of economic independence and the purchase of objects, self-improvement must be impossible for those without means (Simonds 114).

Even if self-help literature did offer practical advice for those women facing obstacles of class and race, it is unlikely such literature would reach these women on a large scale. While online blog posts and articles have become more popular, making self-help strategies more accessible, the dissemination of physical copies of self-help books makes the practice of self-help an issue not only of information but of class. Even if a woman can access self-improvement advice, she may not have leisure time to read about and pursue the proposed strategies (McGee 106). While not all women read self-help books, self-help culture creates real biases that affect all women, biases that consider consumerism as a measure of self-worth.

Consumers may buy products symbolic of mastery or success to enhance their own self-concepts and reinforce their perceptions of their own identities. While this retail therapy works in some cases, a psychological study that measured feelings of self-worth in consumers after buying a particular product found that the potential for self-repair through consumption can be "undermined by particular marketing tactics (slogans, tag lines, brand names) that explicitly make the connection between the threatened or insecure aspects of self-concept and the symbolic nature of the product" (Rustagi and Shum). It is impossible for any book expressly marketed as self-help literature to not draw this explicit connection, as the entire marketing hook for self-help literature is that such literature will help the consumer to strengthen or reconstruct the damaged or inadequate self. Without the implication of damage to or inadequacy of the consumer, both of which contribute to the formation of negative self-concepts, self-help books would not sell. Women who cannot afford to purchase and read self-help books then remain permanently damaged or inferior to those women who can afford to "fix" their lives through the consumption of self-help literature and other products.

CONCLUSION

The content of self-help literature adapted to fit with and promote changing definitions of women's approach to the self as the United States moved from the era of the domestic housewife to women's liberation to the self-care movement. Despite the change in approach to the feminine self, self-help literature maintained that a woman's role as a consumer is vital to both achieving and showcasing her success and self-improvement. Self-help authors promote consumption because of its necessity to allow authors to profit from self-help books and lifestyle brands. By linking a woman's understanding of her value to the value of those products which she possesses, self-help literature encourages economic and social competition in the form of purchase. Instead of encouraging women to work as a communal group to address larger issues of sexism and systemic disparities affecting women of color, these books encourage individual pursuit of economic and personal success. Self-help books may not be considered significant from a literary perspective, but the underlying message of individualistic consumerism shapes the minds of all those women who pick up a book looking for answers and find those answers presented with price tags attached.

Visual Art Remediation
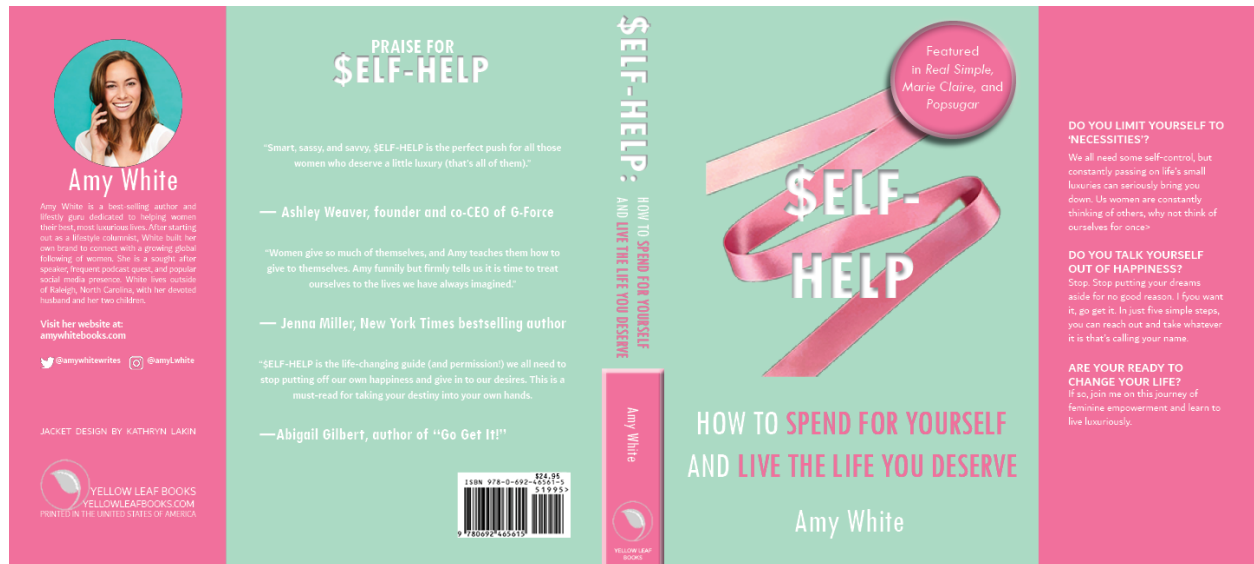
    $ELF-HELP is an imagined women's self-help book based on the guiding stylistic and thematic principles common to women's self-help literature since the 1950s. The book cover and its accompanying promotional materials, which includes a title information sheet, are meant to translate historical conventions of the genre to a theoretical modern product and reveal the demographic target of that product.

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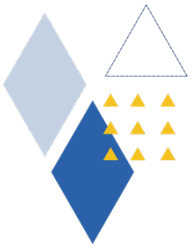
Audrey McMillion

CAS'22, Mathematics

Audrey McMillion, born and raised in Appalachia, is a recent graduate of Boston University and is currently working as a Data Scientist in the Washington, D.C. metro area.

A LOVE LETTER TO THE APPALACHIAN* DIALECT

App-Uh-Latch-Un

I was born in Louisville, Kentucky.

No, I was born in Loovul, Kintucky.

Part I: The "Big City"

I was raised in Charleston, West Virginia. I never thought much about it when I was real liddle. Well, we had a movie theater, a mall, a big ol' capitol building, a library downtown. And, of course, we had mountins. As far as the eye cud see, we had mountins. No beaches. But my gramma and grampa would take me to Myrtle e'ry summer, so it made no difference to me.

Jus fifteen minutes drive outside my city, we had the hollers. The folks that lived out there were rednecks, hillbillies, country folk, or sum combinatin of all three. I, though, was a city girl, born in Loovul, Kintucky. Raised in the capidul city of West by God Virginia. I got nuthin in commin with them out there, cept maybe those mountins.

I member my teachers in grade school tellin us to talk proper. Don't use ain't (cuz that ain't a word), and usin y'all makes y'all sound country. So I tried to teach myself to talk from the tube. Cuz that's where they talked proper; that's where they talked like city folk.

Part II: The Country

In middle school, I was startin to become aware of my spatial and therefur socul positionin in this great big country. No one like me was ever on the TV. I dint know any grown-ups that studied at those fancy schools like Harvard or Yale. Fact, many of the grown-ups I came in contact with dint go ta college. Evun in my great big city, I cudn't go to a Broadway show or ride a train round downtown. E'rythin I ever heard about Appuhlatchuh was an insult, and since those smart, proper folks from up North or out West were the ones sayin it, it must be true.

So, even though I lived fifteen minutes from the hollers, that don't matter to those educated folks. I'm Appuhlatchun all the same. Destined to be a dum hillbilly that'll amount to nuthin and be ignored by ev'ryone important in this world. But I dint wanna be that. I cudn't let myself be that.

And so those mountins became suffuhcatin, and I made it my life's mission to git outta there befur it was too late. I was so shamed to be from West Virginia and to be sociated with e'ryone there. So I tried to git out the only way I knew how, by studyin and bein smart. Maybe then I cud git into sum far away college and break free a-bein Appalatchun fur gud.

Part III: The Escape

My senior year of high school. I got my SATs and ACTs sorted out, with my appluhcatins summitted to those big fancy colleges no one e'er goesta round here. My parents kept yellin at me, askin me why I needta go so far away when e'erythin I've e'er known been real close by. But I told them ain't nuthin for me round here, and these mountins won't hold me back any longer.

By Febuary I was in good shape. Got a few ceptances, and it was certin that I cud finely leave this place behind. To me, there was nuthin round there that benefitted me in any way. I made the most of what I had, but it was nuthin compared to what those New York City folks had access to in a single second of a single day. But finely, finely, I could git outta there, and sumhow end up in the same place as those kids that had what I thought was e'erythin.

But in that same montha Febuary, sum amazin things done started happenin. Alla my teachers went on strike, and my liddle state got sum national attensun. And not cus we were dum hillbillies, but cus e'ry teacher in the state was a-fightin for their dignity aginst the state gover'ment that had been treatin them horribly for quite sum time. Their fight started a nashnul wave of teacher's strikes, and in just a few short months I'd learn that this was not an isolated event for my home of Appuhlatchuh.

Then, right befur I was pert-near leavin' Charleston in August, I took my best frien Amy and my sister up in the hills to a spot we could park the car and sit for ahrs to watch the sun set over the town. Up til then, I had felt nuthin but relief to finely be gittin outta there. But assa sat there and watched the highways intertwine buhtween the mountins, the orange sun kiss the Chase buildin downtown, and the waves of the braght green leaves stretchin down to where the Kanawha and Elk rivers merged, I, fur the first time, thanked Charleston fur raisin me. I thanked that town fur my famly, fur my friends, fur my teachers that always believed I would

amount to somethin, fur the deer I drove past e'ryday on the way down the hill, fur the local shops dottin Capitol Street, fur the hardworkin' folks that wud always drop anythin at any time to help their neighbors, and fur my gramma and grampa, that fur all these years left their door unlocked while e'eryone in e'ery other place in this country bolted theirs shut. I thought to myself, maybe these parts ain't all so bad.

Part IV: The Big City

Boston University. Boston. I made it. The real big city.

I remember my high school classmate telling me that I would "stick out like a sore thumb" because I'm from West Virginia—everyone at this city school would be shocked to meet someone from Appalachia (pronounced Appa-lay-shuh here, to my dismay), more than they would be to meet someone from a foreign country. I thought certainly that couldn't be true. West Virginia can't be that obscure.

My classmate was right. I cannot count on both hands the number of people I've told, "I'm from West Virginia" and they've replied, "Oh! I've been to [Virginia/Richmond/Roanoke]!"

I'll reply, "Yep—nice areas. Though I'm from West Virginia, not Virginia."

They'll look confused, "Ohhh, West Virginia? Like Country Roads? Wow! Boston must be such a BIG change!"

I'll awkwardly laugh in that polite way, "Yep, Country Roads. Great song."

Conversations like these made me realize that my preconceived notions of "up North" were deeply flawed. Sure, up here there are fancy schools that teach ten-year-olds Greek philosophy, but still somehow people didn't know West Virginia was one of the fifty states. There are universities with some of the best history departments in the world, but not a single class that focuses on the Appalachian labor movements throughout the twentieth century, all of which shaped the labor protections this country has to this day. There are climate change classes that are supposed to motivate the new generation to enact humanity-saving measures, but completely ignore the Appalachians that have survived off of the coal industry for decades and who powered big cities across America through their strenuous manual labor. Instead, Appalachians are written off as people that are "conservative," "anti-science," or another way of calling them "backwards rednecks" without actually calling them "backwards rednecks." To translate, people worth forgetting about. People that don't deserve to be saved.

After just a semester of studying in this big city, I learned that my teenage shame was completely unnecessary. I was never a dumb hillbilly, and neither were the people living in the hollers just fifteen minutes from my hometown. Every negative idea I had of my home was not a result of my direct experiences living there, but a result of growing up in a region that, according to Appalachian historian Ronald Eller, carries the burden of "exist[ing] because we need it to

define what we are not. It is the 'other America' because the very idea of Appalachia convinces us of the righteousness of our own lives."[1]

My second semester of freshman year, I had the opportunity to do a research project on any topic I wanted. It was the perfect chance to finally learn about the important and widely ignored history of the people of Appalachia, the people from the place I was once ashamed to call home. Therefore, for my research topic, I chose the decline of the coal industry in Appalachia, with a specific focus on the families in southern West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky that have been directly impacted by this decline. I distinctly remember speaking to my kind and well-meaning professor about my idea but walking away from the conversation with a strange churning in my stomach. When I had proposed my idea to her, she had responded, "Oh, you want to write about Appa-lay-shuh? Have you read *Hillbilly Elegy*?"

Hillbilly Elegy. The book about a man who escaped the backwards-thinking trap of Appalachia by attending Yale Law School to become a successful lawyer. The man who had broken free of the curse of being a no-good hillbilly by pulling himself up by his own bootstraps, spitting on the "helpless" community that raised him in the process.

Funny, that was almost me. But I couldn't let myself be that.

Part V: The Mountains, My Home

When I go back home to Charleston during breaks, I can feel myself slowly slippin back into mountin-speak. I never quite had a real Appuhlatchun accent, but I can hear myself losin my "g"s, sayin "y'all," and speakin a bit slower. But I ain't ashamed to talk like that no more. Fact, it's perfictly natral.

My famly always asks me what it's like up North, what my fancy school is like. Was I learnin anythin good?

I uzely just placate them with em'ty words, "Yeah, I'm up there studying mathematics."

"Guess yur real smart. I cud never understand that stuff."

And maybe I am smart in the traditional definitin of the word. But as I stand amongst those mountins, I feel the presence of the folks that have bin thru more hardship than I'll e'er have in my entire life, and I certinly don't feel as smart as e'eryone's sayin.

Y'all Appuhlatchuns with your hunny smooth accent. Y'all built this country. Y'all were bombed, shot, and done burned uhlive so that the rest of the country could progress forward without even so much as acknowledgin you exist. Y'all cin play that fiddle in unhearda ways, weavin yur tunes with tales of moonshine and mountin livin. Y'all can live with almost nothin, in some of the worst conditins and pov'rty in this country, but still drop e'erythin to help out

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[1] Luu, Chi. "The Legendary Language of the Appalachian 'Holler.'" JSTOR Daily, August 8, 2018. https://daily.jstor.org/the-legendary-language-of-the-appalachian-holler/.

sumone y'all don't evun know. Y'all were exploited by big coal, big pharma, big chemicals, n' yur gov'rnment itself, but y'all're still standin. Y'all are smarter and stronger than I'll e'er be, cuz I'm just sum girl that studies mathematics in sum big city. But I got sumthin those other big city folks don't have, cuz I wuz raised by y'all. I done got y'all's blood.

Appalachia, thank you for raising me and thank you for teaching me your beautiful hillbilly words. No matter how far yonder I wander, I'm certain I'll always make my way back somehow. See y'all soon.
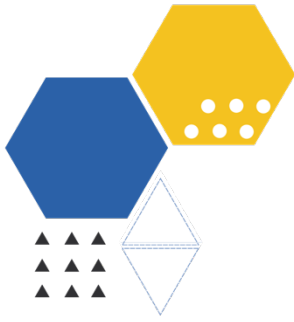
Yongyuan (Steve) Huang

CAS/GRS'22, Mathematics

Yongyuan (Steve) graduated from Boston University in May and is now a PhD student in mathematics at the University of California San Diego. He will miss walking around the streets of Boston, and especially walking along the Charles River Esplanade on a sunny day. Perhaps he will also miss the snow in New England during winter times.

MY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE:
A Journey of Continued Self-Discovery

Two Fridays ago, I officially accepted my offer for UC San Diego's PhD program in mathematics; this past Friday, I became 99% sure that I had contracted Covid-19 at last; this coming Friday, I will be defending my undergraduate thesis; and in less than a month from now, I will have already graduated from Boston University. I have been looking forward to moving on to the next stage of my life for quite a while now, yet when the end has actually become so within my reach, it is difficult to process how fast everything is actually unwinding, with both the expected and unexpected sequences of events. Realizing that I may be seeing many of my peers for the last time in my life soon, the old saying "all good things come to an end" cannot seem any truer. In the grand scheme of things, these four years in college account for only a small fraction of one's life, yet at the same time, these four formative years have left me with quite a lot to ponder for a lifetime.

Ever since I started receiving education, I remember my mother telling me about college. Occasionally she would recount her experience at college, the good and the bad. Despite the fact that her current profession has nothing to do with her major in college, which was history, she frequently speaks of the importance and value of receiving a college education, most of which was along the line of increasing one's job prospects and enabling one's upward mobility in society. Growing up in China, the extremely high stakes and stress of the college entrance exam, known as "GaoKao," is made aware to every person at a very young age. Hence, since my childhood, going to college has become synonymous with making it possible for me to support myself, and I knew that I must work extremely hard in order to get into a reputable college. I am fortunate and privileged to have my mother supporting my education in the US since ninth grade. I was lucky enough to have escaped the excruciating experience of "GaoKao," which gave me time to pursue my other interests in high school, such as piano. Nevertheless, because of the economic and societal circumstances that we live in, this fundamental idea of studying something in order to make a living has not really changed at its core, regardless of where I am receiving my education.

I would like to think of college as a time to search for the answer to the following two questions: who am I, and what is my place in this society? I entered college quite clueless of what I wanted to do in the future. I considered math, computer science, and economics as my potential major(s), and this decision was driven by two main factors: first, I seemed to have

done fine in all my math classes in high school, and second, my parents held a firm belief that a STEM degree leads to better job prospects. I will never forget the question my math faculty advisor Prof. Jared Weinstein asked me during our first meeting: "Why do you want to study math? There are so many other things you could be doing." Unsurprisingly I was unable to give an answer to this question back then, and I still do not think I have an answer right now. I became interested in what people like to call "pure" math through a sequence of algebra/number theory related courses and a summer program in mathematics called PROMYS. Over the summer after my first year, I worked with a graduate student in number theory who gave me many interesting problems to think about, one of which I recall was to determine which integers can be expressed as a sum of two perfect squares (numbers such as 1, 4, 9, 16, 25, …). The satisfaction that I got from being able to understand something after feeling completely clueless about it over that summer was what drove me to apply to graduate schools for math. I took most of the courses that are considered "foundational knowledge" for people going into my field, some of which I enjoyed a lot, and others not so much. The application process to graduate schools was very much reminiscent of my experience applying to college. It was marked by its tremendous surprises and unpredictability, but I am convincing myself to follow the same motto that guided me four years ago – "everything happens for a reason."

Going back to Jared's question of "why I study math," I must admit that without any success thus far, I constantly try to reconcile the seeming irrelevance of theoretical math with the greater goal of creating a better world. In other words, I have not been able to envision how I would fit in society. I used to feel determined to pursue a career in academia, but lately I have been wondering whether my skills can be better used elsewhere, given how difficult it is to find an academic job these days. I also wonder if research done in the private sector has a more direct impact, as opposed to doing research and writing papers for the sake of racking up publications for a job promotion. In short, I do not feel any more certain of what my future holds than several years ago, but I hope I will find an answer to Jared's question while I am in graduate school.

The year-long interdisciplinary perspectives on global challenges course sequence offered by the Kilachand Honors College exposed me to how academia contributes to solving concrete and intractable societal problems, as well as where purely academic solutions fall short. While I have already forgotten many of the mathematical concepts that I learned, the lessons of hope, resilience, and solidarity that I took away from the global challenges courses have already been ingrained in my mind. I will also never forget this quote from Garrett Hardin's *The Tragedy of the Commons,* "Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons." How can we use our knowledge to fight against the gravitational force that drags us towards self-destruction driven by self-serving goals? Focusing on myself, I feel that my own goals and aspirations in life are becoming less grandiose and more realistic with the passage of time since I started college. Thinking back to the question of "what makes a meaningful life" that we were asked in the People in Process course, in large part because of the tremendous burden of making a living, I am now complacent about finding a well-paying job that I like and being surrounded by people that I love as the primary pursuits of my life. But is this not precisely the ruinous self-centered viewpoint that Hardin has warned us against?

The domestic and global settings of these past four years have played a significant role in defining my college experience and shaking my perception of the world. When I walked by the UN headquarters in NYC last week, I realized how drastically my impression of this institution and the world has changed since my last time there over a decade ago. The ideals of the United Nations' founding principles deeply resonated with me back when I was a fifth grader, as I was enjoying the facade of a peaceful and prosperous world while being completely oblivious to the many tolls and human suffering that the world has endured since the end of WWII. Seeing how the UN, other international organizations, and the world superpowers have failed at both containing the coronavirus pandemic that has entered its third year and resolving the many regional armed conflicts, including Russia's blatant disregard of Ukraine's sovereignty, not to mention our apparent inability to mitigate climate change, I must say the future looks pretty grim. Moreover, I cannot see through the dense cloud cast over us how we, the new college graduates, can break the spell. Our society has become more unstable than it was over four years ago. Is there anything that I can do to reverse this downward spiral?

Despite the many expected and unexpected ups and downs, I wholeheartedly enjoyed every moment of my undergraduate experience at Boston University, where I have been given many opportunities to learn and explore both from its academic programs and the greater Boston area. But on top of what Boston University and the city of Boston have offered me, it is the people by whom I am privileged to be surrounded who have ultimately shaped my college experience.

The yearlong lack of face-to-face human interaction during my junior year especially made me realize how indispensable our relationships and connections with others are to our very growth and existence. Words cannot adequately express how grateful I am to my thesis advisor Professor David Rohrlich for all his mentorship and support over these past three years. He has been incredibly generous with his time and ideas, supervising my independent studies in number theory and guiding me step-by-step through the graduate school application process. I am very thankful to all the faculty members who have given me incredibly helpful life advice, especially Professor Carrie Preston and Professor Glenn Stevens. Without the PhD students in the number theory group being my role models, I likely would not have identified pursuing a PhD in math as my next step in life. The friends that I made at the Kilachand Honors College in my first year have since become my closest friends. We rejoice in each other's achievements and support each other through thick and thin. These are the connections that may ultimately be the most valuable things that Boston University has offered me over these past four transient years.

As Dr. Seuss said wisely, "Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened." I will hold all of my memories from college close to my heart. In search of the meaning of life, our journey continues.

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